Weekly Update #23 – Talis Course Reading Lists Update

This week we share an update on the Talis Course Reading Lists project, including some information on the training timeline. We also share some of the commonly asked questions from recent Discovery and Faculty Champion introductory sessions and introduce the new ‘Canvas feature of the week’ section.

Talis Course Reading Lists

Eileen Tollan, Projects Librarian at the University’s Libraries and Learning Services, provides us with an update on the Talis Course Reading Lists* project including when staff will be able to start creating their course reading lists. Eileen also presents some feedback from a student involved in trialling Talis. *Talis Aspire is a cloud-based software solution that enables users to easily create and manage course reading lists

“The Library has been receiving positive feedback about Talis Course Reading Lists from staff and students participating in pilot courses, including the Canvas early adopter courses. The feedback has been very useful in resolving issues, simplifying reading list processes and revising training.

From 21 September, Libraries & Learning Services will begin rolling out Talis Course Reading Lists in the University. Additionally, there will be a new website featuring guides and information on how to get started on your 2016 reading lists, plus information on where to get training and support. Libraries & Learning Services staff are currently liaising with individual Faculties to determine how Talis training can be offered locally as a complement to Canvas training.

Teaching staff should note that in 2016 all online reading lists should be created using Talis, and that no copies of readings will be migrated directly from Cecil or Moodle to Canvas. This is being done to ensure there are no breaches of copyright. Talis reading lists remove the need to load copies of readings in two ways:

1) Talis allows students to link directly to readings online. From the feedback we’ve received, students really appreciate this type of access: “I love how all the readings I need for the course are readily available online. And, if it’s a journal or a book that has a lot of pages, it is helpful that we are able to go straight to the chapter that is going to assist us best.”

2) Where you have high-demand readings that are currently only available in print, Talis allows you to request digitisation; your request is automatically checked for copyright compliance, the Library ensures that the reading is digitised, and then your list is updated with a link to the reading.

Canvas early adopters may have noticed in the past week that several issues with the integration of Talis reading lists into Canvas have been resolved. This means that teaching staff will have the option to link to their full Talis list in the Course Navigation menu in Canvas, or to link sections of their reading list in to the corresponding Canvas modules (e.g. Week 1, Week 2).”

Canvas feature of the week – Discussions

In this new, weekly section we’ll be highlighting the many useful features and functions in Canvas; helping you to get the most out of the platform. This week, we focus on the uses and benefits of the Discussions feature.
The Discussions feature is part of the Communication and Collaboration tools in Canvas. It allows lecturers (or students) to create and participate in online 'conversations' directly in Canvas.

Discussions can be useful for getting students to think about specific topics; allowing teachers to gauge understanding and see who is actively participating and engaging with the subject matter (it’s possible to set up discussions as a form of graded assignment, contributing to a final course mark).

Discussions can be used as:
- primers for upcoming lectures
- forums for students to pose questions about material covered during lectures
- forums for student groups to talk through collaborative class exercises

Discussion topics can be edited or deleted, as can individual posts within a discussion. It’s also possible for teachers to pin a thread to the top of a Discussions page, ensuring it is viewed by all students.

**Common Questions**

*Will there be formal training in Canvas, and will I be able to get my questions answered quickly when I’m setting up my course in the new Learning Management System?*

Full training will be available from October for your Faculty (some Faculties are starting early – your transition team will notify you of the schedule in your Faculty). This training will be provided by your Canvas Facilitator, supported by your Canvas Champion and a full suite of training collateral and support. The support will include 24/7 options of online live chat through Canvas and an 0800 number, plus a University of Auckland support email contact point. Further information will be provided during September. Please go to [Canvas Home](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides) for more common questions about the University of Auckland transition and to the [Canvas Community](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides) to find answers about Canvas functionality.

*Some users in my Department already have access to Canvas. When will I receive my login and why did they receive theirs early?*

Canvas will be accessible for staff from Thursday 1 October. Two rounds of access (31 August & 14 September) are being provided to priority users who have been nominated by their Faculty. For any queries, contact lmsreview@auckland.ac.nz or your Faculty Champion.

*My early observation is that Canvas looks good and is easy to use. However, there are some features I believe could enhance its functionality. Is there any way to influence the future development of Canvas?*

If you wish to see a feature or functionality added to Canvas, you can register your request with Instructure by going to the Canvas Guides and clicking on the ‘Suggest Feature Idea’ button ([https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides)). Your suggestion will then be voted on by other users in the global Canvas community. If your request receives more than 100 votes, it will be considered by Instructure for addition to the Canvas product roadmap. As a managed service, there is not a great deal we can do to customise the system.

For more information please contact lmsreview@auckland.ac.nz or [Canvas LMS Home](https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides)