

The Center for Innovation in Teaching, Assessment, and Learning

CITAL NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 20, 2026

Between Midterms and Spring

With midterms behind us and before finals start to take over, I wanted to take this moment in between to jump ahead for a second and talk about preparation for next semester. I have been asked a few times when course shells for Spring courses would be available to get ready and you can now expect all course sites to be available 12 weeks before the term begins. Spring semester courses will be created October 21 st. In this month's newsletter, I want to take the opportunity to talk about why we are using an online course system and the two minimum things you should do in Canvas to create a consistent learning experience for all Valpo students. We are aiming to make the beginning of the semester as smooth as possible for both faculty and students alike so that you can focus on your course content and the magic in the classroom by putting the systems in place to support you that blend seamlessly in the background to support you.

Sincerely,



The Two Basic Things To Do With Every Course

Whether you use Canvas extensively or you find it just a tech thing on the side, Canvas is actually an integral part of the student experience. Students coming in from high school most likely utilized Google Classroom for their classes, in which they had a dedicated course site that contained the information needed about the class they are taking. Think of it like a collection of folders in their virtual backpack that they use to keep course materials at the ready.

The same extends here to Valpo. Each student has an online site that houses the basic information pertaining to their classes: Canvas. As their instructor, it is your discretion how much or how little you use it. However, there are best practices on a fundamental note that provides consistency and clarity to the students. To this end, we ask all of you to do these following two things each term:

Post your Syllabus in Canvas

Each course is required to have a syllabus uploaded to Simple Syllabus. There is a link in Canvas to have that display in your Canvas site. Please upload your syllabus and make sure it's visible there!

Publish/Activate your course

About a week before the start of the semester or term, please be sure to go into Canvas and make your course visible to your students. This will not only let the students know that they are set for your course, but they can also check the syllabus and, if applicable, check that their book is accessible in Canvas from the Beacon Books program (or through any other activation key necessary) before the first day of class. How to publish/ activate your course: [How to Publish your Canvas Course](#)

That's it. Two steps. This ensures consistency in the student experience across the board and in that consistency, students don't have to think about what tech is in what spot and the technology can blend away to the background so that the content is highlighted and is the focus. That is the aim for all instructional technology.

Warm Regards, CITAL Team (Joann, Cindy, and Gina)

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Students Also Need Books

In addition to the courses being created, the Bookstore has sent Spring Semester book requests. We would like to ask that you be sure to enter in your book requests to ensure that the materials will be available on campus on time for our students. You can access the system at: [Adoption & Insights – Login](#).

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How Valpo Faculty are using (or not using) AI in the Classroom

In late July, CITAL hosted a two-day Summer Faculty Institute on AI as part of the Lilly Endowment's "AI in Higher Education" planning grant that Valpo received. Over 60 faculty attended and 29 faculty and staff presented on how they use AI in the classroom.



This fall we asked faculty who had attended what they got out of the institute. We heard from AI enthusiasts as well as AI skeptics.

[ReadMore](#)





The Reverse Centaur's Guide to Life After AI

Will A.I. Make Your Brain Lazy? Here's What the New Research Actually Shows

Your CITAL Team





Joann Martyn, M.A.
Executive Director

joann.martyn@valpo.edu
Kretzmann Hall, Room 120



Cynthia Rutz, Ph.D.
Director of Faculty
Development

219.464.5960
cynthia.rutz@valpo.edu
Kretzmann Hall, Room 119



Gina Rue, Ms.Ed.
Senior Instructional
Designer

219.464.5124
gina.rue@valpo.edu
Kretzmann Hall, Room 123

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