

## Peer Review Assignments in Canvas

Creating an Assignment that requires Peer Review is a great feature in Canvas, but one where using the usually all-powerful **Student View** will not do you any good to picture what your students are seeing. There are also a few caveats when setting one up that you should know about, which are discussed below. A basic overview provided by Canvas is also available from the Instructor's Guide here: [How do I create a peer review assignment?](#)

This document deals with the most common type of peer review: as an **Assignment**. You can, however, also create a graded Discussion that includes peer reviews. The Canvas documentation has a separate page on that topic here: [How do I create a peer review discussion?](#) (Be aware that you cannot create an *anonymous* peer review if doing one as part of a discussion.)

### Creating the Assignment

You create an assignment requiring peer reviews like any other assignment, though in addition to requiring a **Submission Type** of **Online** you must also enable the checkbox to **Require Peer Reviews** (number 1, below). There are important things to know when deciding how to assign reviews (number 2, below):

Peer Reviews

**1**  Require Peer Reviews

**2** **How to Assign Peer Reviews**

Manually Assign Peer Reviews

Automatically Assign Peer Reviews

Reviews Per User

1

Assign Reviews

Must come after due date. If blank, uses due date.

**Anonymity**

Peer Reviews Appear Anonymously

**Manually Assign Peer Reviews** requires you to assign students manually to each student reviewer. The process is described below. (You will also need to know how to manually assign a review if a student

submits something late after all other reviews have been assigned, even if they were otherwise automatically assigned.)

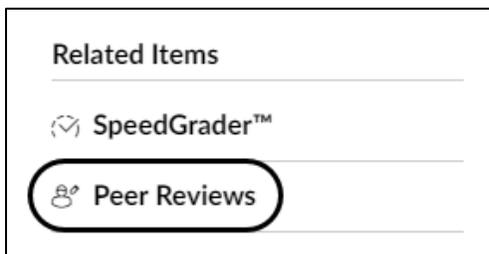
**Automatically Assign Peer Reviews** lets Canvas do the heavy lifting, but there are a few things to be aware of, especially regarding the **Assign Reviews** due date box below those options.

Read the fine print under the **Assign Reviews** due date area carefully! It says: **Must come after due date. If blank, uses due date.** So, if you leave it blank (the default), peer reviews are automatically assigned to students who submitted something after your due date—and usually within a few minutes or so. *However*, if any student submits the assignment **late**, it will be up to **you** to then assign that late-submitting student some peer reviewers *manually*. For that reason, you may want to allow some “wiggle room” with this date if you allow late submissions on an assignment. (See **Late Submissions** section, below, for more information.)

The **Reviews Per User** on the above dialog box is self-explanatory; that’s how many reviews each student will have to complete.

**IMPORTANT:** While you can assign a date when peer reviews are assigned to students, you **CAN NOT** assign a due date for when the peer reviews themselves are due!

Once the peer review assignment has been created, when you go back to the Assignment you will see a new **Peer Reviews** button immediately below the Speedgrader option on the far-right sidebar:



After the date for assigning peer reviews has passed you can click on that button to get a run-down of which student has been assigned which peer, *including when you specified an anonymous review*. (YOU can always see the students assigned as peer reviewers for each submission, regardless of the setting.) See the next page for a screen capture. Remember, if you automatically assigned peer reviewers, you will not see assigned reviewers until after the due date.

Also, be aware that if you have a grading rubric created within Canvas for the assignment, a peer review is not considered “complete” until the reviewer both writes a comment **AND** completes a rubric. You are reminded of the latter at the very top of the **Peer Reviews** page in Canvas:

## Essay Two - To be peer reviewed Peer Reviews

Student peer reviews will be considered complete when students have commented at least once on the page and filled out the rubric form for the assignment.

## The Late Submission Conundrum

A student who submits an assignment late may be an issue for you with peer reviews in Canvas. In the example below, student **Mona Lisa** did not yet submit a paper by the due date and therefore was not assigned someone else to peer review. In the meantime, however, peer reviewers have been assigned, since the assigning of peer reviews was set to be automatic:

### Essay Two - To be peer reviewed Peer Reviews

Student peer reviews will be considered complete when students have commented at least once on the page and filled out the rubric form for the assignment.

**Coyote, Wile E.**  
 Samary, Jeanne ←  
 Give Wile E.Coyote another submission to assess +

**Duck, Daisy**  
 Coyote, Wile E. ←  
 Give Daisy Duck another submission to assess +

**Lisa, Mona**  
 None Assigned ←  
 Give Mona Lisa another submission to assess +

**Madison, Dolley**  
 Duck, Daisy  
 Give Dolley Madison another submission to assess +

The name of the student assigned to a reviewer appears just under each student's name. (The exclamation point symbol indicates the review has not yet been submitted.)

Student **Mona Lisa** does not have any assigned reviews because she has not yet submitted her own assignment. However, Canvas will automatically assign a reviewer even when she does. Automatically-assigned reviews will only be handled by Canvas **right away**; any future submissions will have to be assigned peer reviewers by you manually.

In a worst-case scenario, in theory Mona Lisa can submit her paper AFTER all other students have both completed their submissions AND completed all of their peer reviews:

### Essay Two - To be peer reviewed Peer Reviews

Student peer reviews will be considered complete when students have commented at least once on the page and filled out the rubric form for the assignment.

**Coyote, Wile E.**  
 Samary, Jeanne  
 Give Wile E.Coyote another submission to assess +

**Duck, Daisy**  
 Coyote, Wile E.  
 Give Daisy Duck another submission to assess +

**Lisa, Mona**  
 None Assigned  
 Give Mona Lisa another submission to assess +

**Madison, Dolley**  
 Duck, Daisy  
 Give Dolley Madison another submission to assess +

**Mouse, Minnie**  
 Rubens, Peter  
 Give Minnie Mouse another submission to assess +

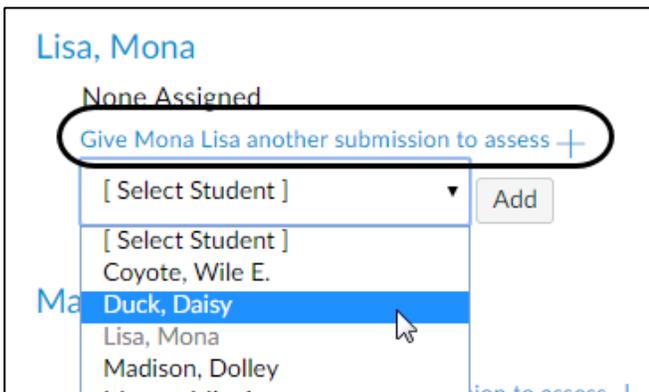
Peer reviews have been completed by all students, indicated by the checkmarks next to their names.

Student **Lisa, Mona**, however, was never assigned a peer review.

In the example above, you see that **all** peer reviews have been completed, as indicated by the checkmarks. At this point, you can manually assign a student to do a peer review of Mona Lisa's paper, but in that case the student would have to complete a *second* peer review, since by the time of the late submission all other students had a review assigned. (Additionally, you have to determine if you want Mona Lisa herself to complete her own review of another student.)

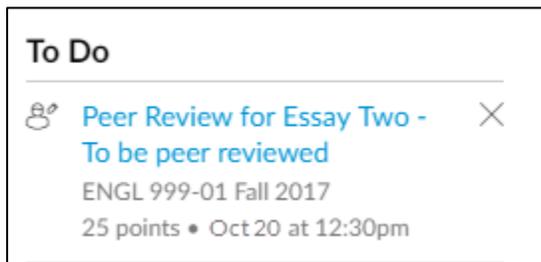
### Manually Assigning Peer Reviews

To **manually assign a peer review**, simply click the link immediately below the student's name, right next to the plus symbol. The resulting screen will show a drop-down menu of other students in your class, and you can select one:



### Student's View of a Peer-Review Assignment

Students will see that they have been assigned a peer review on their the **To Do** list on the far-right side of the screen when they first login to Canvas:



It will also appear on the **To Do** screen within the course site itself. Clicking the link from the **To Do** screen will lead them immediately to the screen shown at the end of the next page.

However, unless students check that **To Do** area (and many do not!) you must remind them to click on the Assignment itself—much as though they were submitting it—and look to the far right of the screen. On that screen, they will see their own submission as well as their assigned peer review(s):

**Submission**  
 ✓ Turned In!  
 Oct 10 at 11:39am

[Submission Details](#)  
[Download Realities of Genre-1.docx](#)

Assigned Peer Reviews  
[Dolley Madison](#)

Comments:  
 No Comments

Student's own submission.

Name(s) of student(s) to whom this student was assigned to do a peer review.

### Student View of *Non-Anonymous* Peer Reviews

A help screen that Canvas created for students on submitting a peer review assignment [can be found in the Student's Guide online in Canvas](#). That help screen also includes links to others available.

On the Assignment page, students will see their own submission as well as their assigned peer review(s), as shown immediately above. To complete the peer review, the student need only click on the name of the student s/he has been assigned to review. This will be the resulting screen:

**Peer Review** [Show Rubric](#)

Essay Two - To be peer reviewed. The rubric must also be completed if one was included.

This peer review is not finished yet. For it to be considered finished, you need to leave at least one comment and fill out the rubric form to the right.

[The Rubicon of Narrative.docx](#) 15.5 KB [View Feedback](#)

As a peer reviewing student, you will only see comments written by you.

Add a Comment:  
 Teachers and submitter will be notified of all comments.

[Media Comment](#) [Attach File](#)

[Save](#)

Student reviewers can download the original submission by clicking here **OR...**

...click the **View Feedback** link to view and comment on the submission online in Canvas' DocViewer previewing program.

Notice in the directions at the top of the screen the student is warned that at least one comment must be made, *and* s/he must *also* fill out the rubric—assuming the Assignment had one attached to it. Given the size of that reminder at the top, this is very easy for students to overlook.

Students have the same Canvas DocViewer that you do in SpeedGrader, only theirs is from the **View Feedback** link as shown above. Comments made in the DocViewer *should* count as a "comment" in the way Canvas expects one for the assignment to be considered complete. To play it safe, however, a student may also want to leave a brief comment under **Add a Comment:** for the peer review to be considered complete. **Students cannot see another student's reviews in either the DocViewer or the comment area in cases when more than one peer reviewer has been assigned. This is true whether for anonymous peer reviews or non-anonymous peer reviews.**

When the Assignment is considered **complete**, the student will see checkmarks next to the assigned reviews when they return to this same area:

**Submission**

✓ **Turned In!**

Oct 10 at 11:39am

[Submission Details](#)

[Download Realities of Genre-1.docx](#)

Assigned Peer Reviews

✓ [Dolley Madison](#)

Comments:  
No Comments

You, as well, will see that a review has been completed after clicking on the **Peer Reviews** link on the assignment page:

[Rubens, Peter](#)

🔒 [Mouse, Minnie](#)

[Give Peter Rubens another submission to assess +](#)

[Samary, Jeanne](#)

✓ [Madison, Dolley](#)

[Give Jeanne Samary another submission to assess +](#)

### Student View of Anonymous Peer Reviews

Student reviewers cannot see the names of the students they are reviewing, nor can the student *being* reviewed see the names of his/her reviewers.

For anonymous peer reviews, on the Assignments page students will see their own submission as well as their assigned peer reviews. In this case, however, student(s) they have been assigned to do a peer review for will simply appear as **Anonymous User** over on the far right of the Assignment page:

**Submission**  
 ✓ Turned In!  
 Oct 11 at 7:55am

[Submission Details](#)  
[Download Realities of Genre.docx](#)

Assigned Peer Reviews

[Anonymous User](#)  
[Anonymous User](#)

Comments:  
 No Comments

Student's own submission.

Links to student submissions assigned for peer reviews.

Once a student clicks on either **Anonymous User** link, they will see the following screen:

**Peer Review**

Essay Three, Anonymous User submitted Oct 10 at 5:59pm

This peer review is not finished yet. For it to be considered finished, you need to leave at least one comment and fill out the rubric form to the right.

[Daisy and Tom Buchanan in the Great Gatsby-1.docx](#) 11.7 KB

[View Feedback](#)

As a peer reviewing student, you will only see comments written by you.

Add a Comment:  
 Teachers and submitter will be notified of all comments.

[Media Comment](#) [Attach File](#)

Save

The rubric must also be completed if one was included.

Show Rubric

Student reviewers can download the original submission by clicking here OR....

...click the **View Feedback** link to view (but *not* comment within!) the submission online in the DocViewer file previewing program.

**Important:** When grading **anonymous** peer reviews, while reviewing students can click the **View Feedback** link and use the Canvas DocViewer file previewing program to view the submission online, they can **NOT** comment on it with embedded comments in the document. This is because the DocViewer programming does not allow for anonymous reviews, and unfortunately this affects both instructors and students alike. This does not affect a student's ability to leave general comments in the **Add a Comment:** box in the lower right-corner of the above screen capture or comments within the rubric, both of which will remain anonymous.

When the assignment is considered **complete**, the student will see checkboxes next to each assigned review:

**Submission**

✓ **Turned In!**  
 Oct 11 at 5:55am  
[Submission Details](#)  
[Download Realities of Genre.docx](#)

Assigned Peer Reviews

✓ [Anonymous User](#)

✓ [Anonymous User](#)

Comments:  
 No Comments

## Instructor's View of Peer Reviewed Assignments

When you click the **Peer Reviews** button on the far right of the assignment you will be grading, you will see which students have completed the reviews. YOU, as the instructor, *will* see the names of all student reviewers whether you enabled anonymous peer reviews or not. (For anonymous peer reviews, only students cannot see the names of their fellow reviewers.)

**Essay Three Peer Reviews**

Student peer reviews will be considered complete when students have commented at least once on the page and filled out the rubric form for the assignment.

**Coyote, Wile E.**

- ⚠ Duck, Daisy
- ✓ Lisa, Mona
- [Give Wile E.Coyote another submission to assess +](#)

**Duck, Daisy**

- ✓ Lisa, Mona
- ✓ Mouse, Minnie
- [Give Daisy Duck another submission to assess +](#)

In the example above, you see that Wile E. Coyote completed his review of Mona Lisa's paper, as shown by the checkmark, but not Daisy Duck, as it has a caution symbol next to it. Student Daisy Duck, on the other hand, has completed both of her peer reviews.

Students being reviewed will be able to see/view peer reviews *immediately*—even before you submit your own comments and grades. While it is unlikely that they will do this, this capability is always available for them by heading to the Grades area in Canvas or back to the assignment itself and clicking **Submission Details** (for embedded comments in DocViewer) or by seeing general comments on the far right of the Assignment page. One way you can avoid this is by **muting** the assignment.

## Grading Non-Anonymous Peer Reviewed Assignments as the Instructor

Grading a peer review assignment is just like grading any other online submission in Canvas. You can either download the submission or head to Speedgrader. It is only within *Speedgrader*, however, that you can view the peer reviews from other students. The DocViewer program will accept your embedded comments, as always, and you will see any other student comments there.

One thing that is **extremely** confusing with rubrics-based assignments is when you initially go into *Speedgrader* you will see a *completed* rubric, as seen below:

Assessment

Grade  out of 25

[View Rubric](#)

Criteria	Assessment
Structure	No details Just lacking a good bibliography. 14/ 15.0 pts
Contents	Exceeds Expectations 10/ 10.0 pts
Total Points: 24 out of 25.0	

Assignment Comments

A good review of the main issues of the 2nd amendment. ✕

Dolley Madison, Aug 10 at 3:50pm

In the example above, the circled area represents what a student wrote within the rubric as a comment. You will also see the total points assigned by the student peer reviewer immediately below that. However, note that the **Grade** box shown above the completed rubric is blank. You can still type in your own rubric comments and grade by clicking the **View Rubric** button. However, when you click the **View Rubric** button the last student peer reviewer's rubric evaluations and any comments *will still be within the rubric*, leading you think you may be overwriting a student review. You will not. You can type in your own comments (and grades) and it will **not** overwrite the student peer evaluation. When you **Save** your rubric comments/grades, you will then see a drop-down menu below your score that will allow you to switch between rubrics:

Assessment

Grade  out of 25

Show Assessment By: Raymond J. Johnson ▼

- Raymond J. Johnson
- Dolley Madison

[View Rubric](#)

## Grading Anonymous Peer Review Assignments

From your perspective as an instructor, virtually nothing changes when grading an assignment with anonymous peer reviews with *one very important exception* . . .

**Important:** When grading **anonymous peer reviews**, neither YOU nor student peer reviewers will be able to use the DocViewer file previewing program to create embedded comments on the submission. While you can still *read* the document in DocViewer, the ability to leave comments is disabled for all. This is because the DocViewer's programming currently does not allow for anonymous reviews, and unfortunately it is an “all or nothing” setting that affects both instructors and students alike. This does not affect your ability to leave general comments or comments within the rubric, nor (of course) your ability to type in a final grade.

Like the issue described above in the non-anonymous peer reviews section, when you click the **View Rubric** button, it will appear the rubric has already been filled out, though in fact that was only from the last student reviewer. **You will still be able to input your own scores and comments without worrying about possibly overwriting a student review**, even though on the screen it will appear you are overwriting it. Click the **Show Assessment By:** drop-down menu to go through the rubric ratings from each student reviewer, as well as your own:

Assessment

Grade  out of 25

Show Assessment By:

Raymond J. Johnson ▼

View Rubric

Raymond J. Johnson

Wile E. Coyote

Daisy Duck

Criteria	Assessment
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## How Students Retrieve Peer Reviews

For the student, it's probably easiest for them to retrieve all peer reviews as well as the final grade from the **Grades** area. Once there, they can see all comments by clicking the “word balloon” icon (see arrow on screen capture below). Since this was an anonymous review shown below, note that only the instructor's name is shown here. (In the case of non-anonymous reviews, all student reviewer's names are shown, as well.)

• Essay Three Oct 11 by 8:30am 23 25

**Comments** Close

An excellent essay, overall. Anonymous User, Oct 11 at 8:23am

A thoroughly enjoyable essay outlining the primary points of the work. Anonymous User, Oct 11 at 8:24am

As your student colleagues noted, this was a very good paper and extremely well-written. The only point deductions were due to not having a detailed bibliography. Raymond J. Johnson, Oct 11 at 9:05am

**Rubric** comments (and scores) can be seen by clicking on the clipboard icon at the far right (see circled area in screen capture above). If comments were made within the rubric, they are seen just below the rubric **Criteria**. (See circled areas, below.)

[Close Rubric](#)

Essay Rubric				
Criteria	Ratings			Pts
Structure	Exceeds Expectations 15.0 pts	Meets Expectations 7.5 pts	No Marks 0.0 pts	14 / 15.0 pts
Instructor Comments It was only lacking a bibliography with at least three sources. (You had two.)				
Contents	Exceeds Expectations 10.0 pts	Meets Expectations 5.0 pts	No Marks 0.0 pts	10 / 10.0 pts
Instructor Comments				
				Total Points: 24.0

 Anonymous User

[Close Rubric](#)

Essay Rubric				
Criteria	Ratings			Pts
Structure	Exceeds Expectations 15.0 pts	Meets Expectations 7.5 pts	No Marks 0.0 pts	14 / 15.0 pts
Instructor Comments Nicely done! The bibliography is the only part that needs a bit of work in that not enough resources were used.				
Contents	Exceeds Expectations 10.0 pts	Meets Expectations 5.0 pts	No Marks 0.0 pts	10 / 10.0 pts
Instructor Comments				
				Total Points: 24.0

Unfortunately, even student peer reviewers have rubric comments labelled as **Instructor Comments** for rubric comments. The fact it is a student review, however, is shown by the arrow above, which indicates **Anonymous User**. The instructor's rubric comments are not labelled that way at all. (And are likely going to appear as the very last rubric on the screen.) For non-anonymous peer reviews, of course, the student will see the student reviewer's name immediately below the rubric.