

# FOCUS ON FACULTY



CENTER FOR TEACHING & LEARNING @ UCM

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## CHECK THIS TECH! *innovative teaching tools & services*

### ProWritingAid—Your Personal Writing Coach (free!)

*“A grammar guru, style editor and writing mentor in one package”*



Just copy some text into this online app and it goes to work checking multiple aspects of your writing. The Summary Report gives a quick overview plus some key actions that will make the biggest difference in the shortest amount of time.

I awake, and, just for an moment, I have forgotten the pain. I very slowly open my eyes and reach for my cane that always hangs at my side. You can imagine how hard it must be to get in and out of a hammock at my age. I need all the help I can get. Every day the weariness is even worse than before. Could this be my last day. O dead, either one would be a shall emerge, reborn, a beau that, between the pain of my empty sleep is a welcome lu

Sticky Sentence. Try to reduce the number of glue words to make this sentence more readable. 63.2% glue of 19 words. Glue words: can, how, must, be, to, get, in, and, out, of, a, at

k as a cocoon from which I 'ns set me free. The irony is don't have many dreams; even

The app generates reports on readability measures, overused words, sentence structure, writing style tips, grammar check, sticky sentences, dialogue and much more. Check each suggestion in detail and accept or ignore the advice. Suspected grammar issues are highlighted in the Grammar Report, where you see each error highlighted with suggestions for improvement. Their Word Explorer provides a wealth of different types of information, history and usage of that word, as well as a thesaurus to help spark more creative choices. This may be an app that really helps elevate your students' writing skills!

See ProWritingAid explained in this [short two-minute video](#) tour!

## Did you know?

### Subscribing to Discussion Board Forums or Threads

Keep track of new posts in your Blackboard Discussion Board Forums with the “Subscribe” feature. Enabling this feature in the Forum Settings allows both instructor and students to be notified when there are unread posts on the current discussion. View this short [3-minute video](#) to learn how to turn on subscriptions and see some process tips on related settings inside Blackboard.



Click [here](#) for the AY 2018-19 Planning Calendar!



## Faculty Watercooler

*Faculty discussions on subjects that matter to you*

*Dear Debbie,*

**Q:** My course list in Blackboard is all cluttered with classes from past semesters. Is there a way that I can get rid of some and make my list more manageable? ~Hoping for A Neat List

**A:** Dear Neat List, Yes! You can clean up your Blackboard course list. All you need to do is email the course IDs of the sections you want removed from your Blackboard course list to [blackboard@ucmo.edu](mailto:blackboard@ucmo.edu), requesting that those sections be deleted.



Remember, if you are the only instructor listed in the section we will remove the section from Blackboard and you will no longer see it or have access. If you are listed with other instructors in the section we will remove **you** from the section but leave the section in Blackboard.

Also, before you request the section(s) be removed it would be a good idea to [export material to your computer](#) that you think you might need in future semesters. You should also create an archive and download it to your computer for a permanent electronic copy of the class.

## Keeping Up

*The latest in Teaching and Learning*



### Ditching the Due Date? *From the Chronicle for Higher Ed*

When professor Tobias Rush started teaching, it seemed he spent more energy judging excuses for missed assignments than communicating the material. His solution: Drop the deadlines. Instead, his music-theory students at the University of Dayton can turn in homework late, with as many re-dos as they want. It helps everybody, he says in [this week's issue of Teaching](#). Students learn better and stop making excuses — and he gets to stop playing "judge and jury."

Applying this *suggested* due dates policy to his first and second-year student assignments, Rush sees a mixed result of time-management skills reflected. He does feel this more flexible policy allows those struggling with the content to take additional time to understand the material, rather than give up.