On Tuesday, September 15, 2015, the Center for Language Excellence (CLE) presented the workshop entitled “Canvas is Your Friend: Using Canvas to Create Assessment Activities”. The workshop had 11 attendees including five CLE/CeLT staff. There were language instructors from four different departments, servicing four different languages (English, Greek, Indonesian, and Spanish). The presentation was led by Maria Shardakova, Director of Language Assessment for the Center for Language Excellence.

This workshop was the fifteenth of a series of workshops offered by CLE. This workshop briefly outlined the principles of foreign language assessment while identifying appropriate assessment goals and targets at different levels of study - e.g., beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Then, participants discussed types of assessment activities for evaluating students’ productive (speaking/writing) and receptive (reading & listening) skills. Finally, participants decided on the arrangement of assessment activities, so that these activities help students move from the controlled to open-ended production and from the proximal to the target-like performance. Participants were presented with sample assessment activities designed on Canvas. The advantages and disadvantages of various Canvas assessment tools were also discussed. During the second part of the workshop, participants developed their own sample assessment activities that incorporated various media and a series of tasks ranging in difficulty. Throughout the workshop, participants shared their experiences and suggestions.

The post-workshop survey evaluation showed that overall the participants said the workshop was very helpful.

Below are what some of the participants had to say about the workshop:

“Thank you very much! I greatly appreciate the instructor teaching us!”
“Great workshop. Very helpful.”
Most helpful: “Concrete examples of putting together a quiz (at the end).”
Most helpful: “Demo of various options there are at our disposal.”
Most helpful: “Thinking about the framework for assessment.”
Most helpful: “Creating quizzes/assignments on Canvas.”