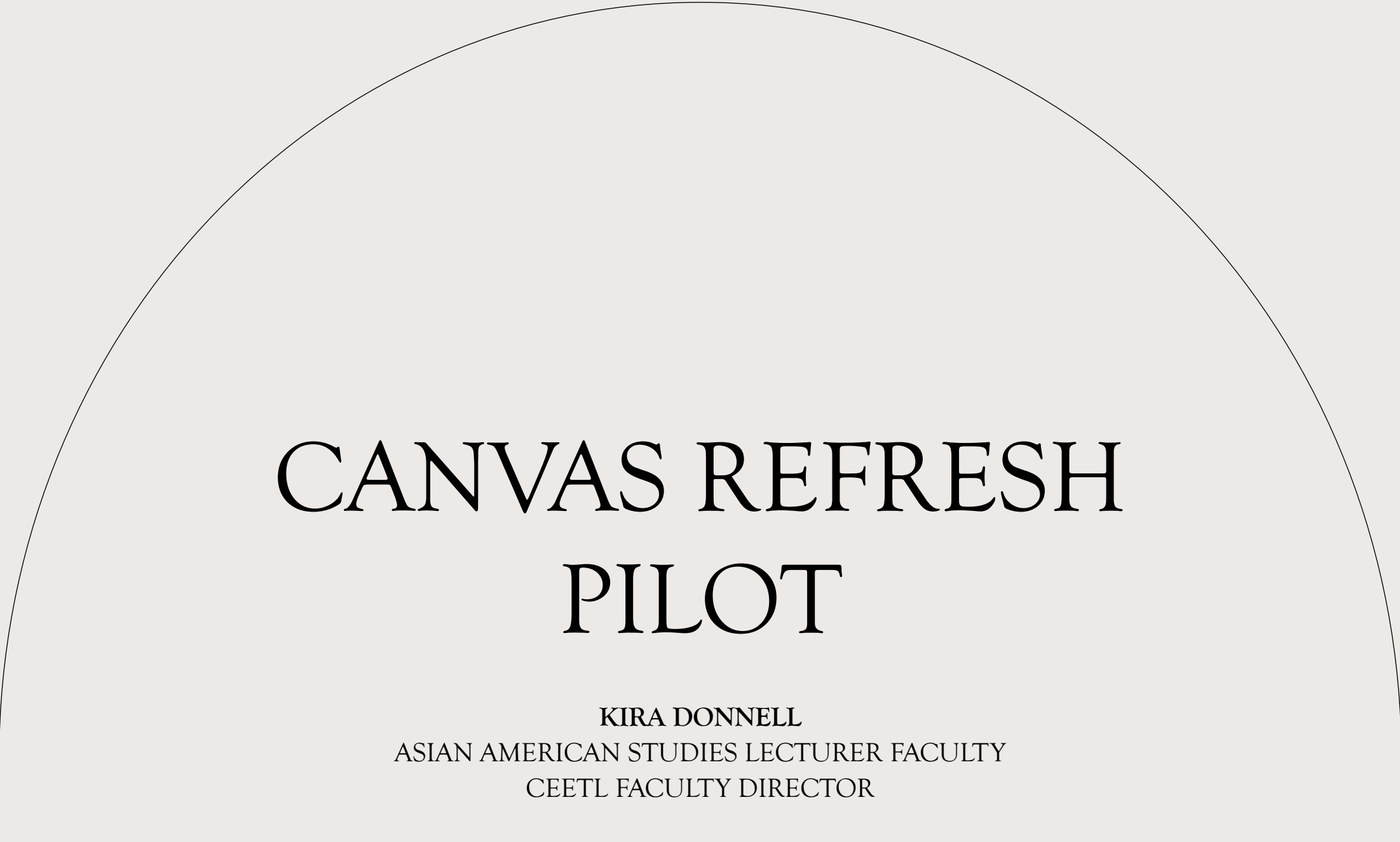




CANVAS REFRESH PILOT

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CEETL FACULTY DIRECTOR

I experimented with the DesignPLUS toolbox to update two classes that I had previous Canvas sites for. The first, **AAS 360: Koreans in the United States**, is an upper-division elective that is fully online asynchronous. AAS 360 is also part of the CourseMatch program, so students from other CSU campuses navigate through the Canvas site as well. The second is **AAS 101: First-Year Experience in Asian American Studies**. This course is designated for incoming freshmen and fulfills students' oral communication course requirement. AAS 101 is a hybrid course; we meet once a week in-person and the students have additional online asynchronous course materials that they work through at their own pace each week.

I chose these two courses to implement changes in because I see one of the strengths of DesignPLUS is its Canvas organization and navigation. For fully asynchronous students and for incoming first-year students, making the user experience and navigation of my Canvas site uncomplicated and straightforward will hopefully support students' academic success and enjoyment in the course.

DesignPLUS made it easy to add personal touches and humanizing elements to Canvas, including a content block template to **introduce** myself to students and provide them with necessary contact and office hours information.

Meet the Instructor content block

Meet the Instructor



 Kira Donnell
 donnell@sfsu.edu
 Zoom: [6162092626](https://sfsu.zoom.us/j/6162092626)  PW 044908
 Office Hours (Mondays 11:30-1:30)

About Me

Hello! My name is Kira Donnell (she/her/hers). You can call me Professor Donnell, Dr. Donnell, Professor Kira, or whatever you feel comfortable with. I am currently located on the historic land of the Ramaytush Ohlone people. I'm a graduate of SFSU's AAS MA program and I've been teaching in the AAS department since 2015.

I'm a transnational, transracial Korean adoptee. I grew up in Michigan and moved to SF in 2008 for grad school. I received my PhD in Ethnic Studies where my research looked at representations of Korean adoptees and orphans in Korean and American film and television. My free time is spent exploring the world with my nine-year-old daughter, Paisley.

I've taught AAS 360 since 2015, but the course has been on a recent hiatus for the past couple semesters. I'm also currently experimenting with some new Canvas platform tools so I'm still working on bringing it up to its full digital potential. That said, I'm sure there will be a few bumps in the road as we navigate together through the semester. Bear with me!

Course Resources

[Syllabus](#)

+

[Office Hours](#)

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[Question Cafe](#)

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[Points Distribution](#)

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[Course Policies](#)

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Grading is based on a straight 100-point pool for the semester. There is no curve.

Late Work

-

Unless otherwise stated, assignments will be due by 12 pm noon the day of the due date. In general, late work will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. If extenuating circumstances arise, I am happy to work with you to devise a schedule and plan for you to catch up. Contacting me in a timely manner in regards to due dates will definitely influence my willingness and flexibility to extend deadlines.

[Plagiarism](#)

+

[Use of AI](#)

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Accordion organization

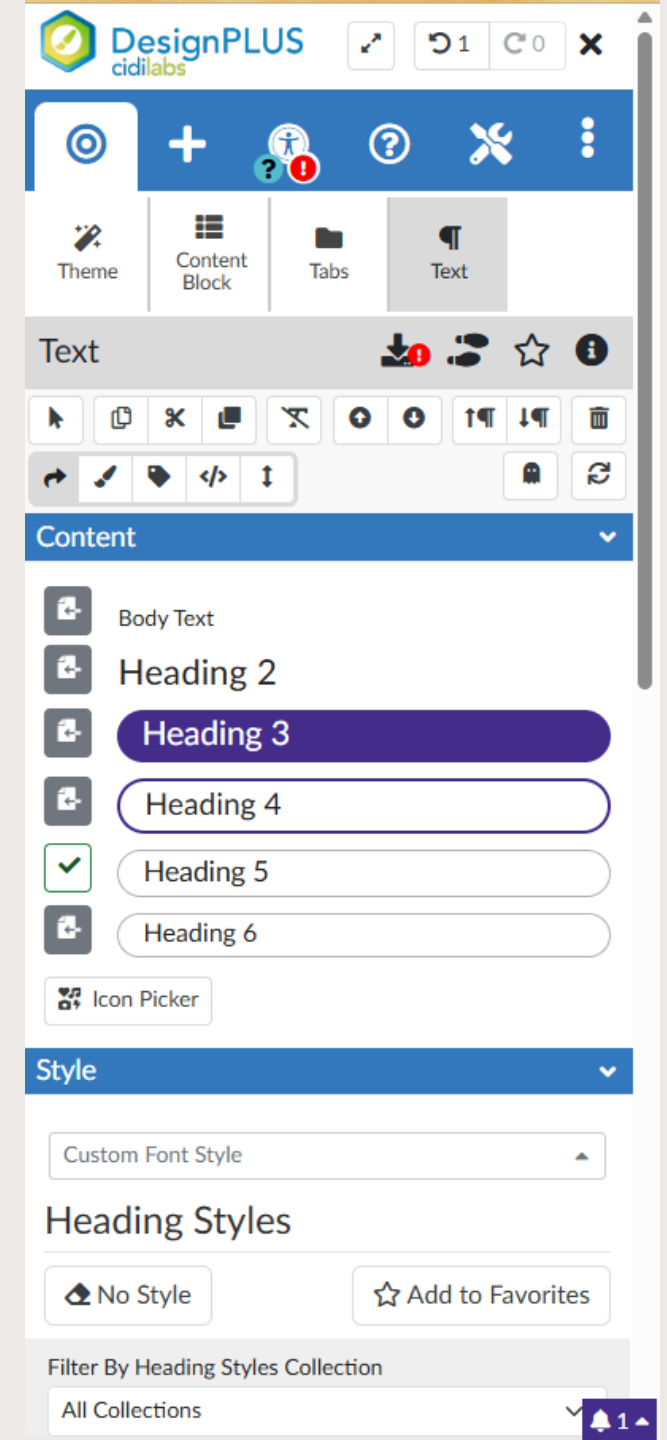
Another feature I made use of was the **accordion** organization. This was helpful to put all my course expectations information in a single place so that students don't have to navigate to multiple pages to find pertinent information. However, the accordion feature enabled me to chunk information so that students aren't faced with an overwhelming wall of text and can focus their attention on the single topic that's relevant to them without getting lost in the entire scope of the course.

I will be honest, getting the hang of the DesignPLUS toolbars and updating my Canvas courses took a good amount of time and effort. The learning curve for becoming proficient and intuitive in using the editing sidebar was somewhat steep at least in my experience.

And there is definitely a front-end heavy lift in updating pre-existing Canvas courses fully which took much more time and precision than simply cloning an old Canvas course from a different semester.

I'm hopeful that in future semesters, recycling DesignPLUS Canvas courses will be quicker and easier than the initial upgrade endeavor.

DesignPLUS editing sidebar





[Placeholder: Assignment Instructions]

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Assignment Steps:

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[Additional Assignment Support]

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Another template I found useful is the Assignment template, which would be very easy to implement the TILT framework (transparency in learning and teaching) for assignments. TILTING curricula structures course assignments and activities into three components: Purpose, Task, and Criteria, which gives students clear steps and expectations for academic success.



Check Your Comprehension

Sort the following items into their correct categories.

Answer Bank

Tonghak Rebellion

Natural disasters

Ban on Chinese immigration

Precarity of Korean Social Hierarchy

Hawaii Sugar Plantations

Traditional economic systems collapsed

Need for Cheap Labor

American Dream

Push Factors

Pull Factors

✓ Check Answers

🔄 Shuffle

↺ Reset

Time 0:00



Matching interactive exercise

One tool that I added to my Canvas page that I'm hoping will increase students' engagement and retention of course materials are zero-stakes interactive exercises. These include activities like drag and drop matching, flip flashcards, fill in the blank, sorting, and multiple choice questions. While native Canvas quizzes can be set to "practice" or 0 points to provide no-stakes comprehension checks, these content blocks can be placed on the same page as your content so that you don't lose students navigating to a different part of Canvas. You can also check the statistics of students' engagement with the activities, and enable the tool to hide the "Next" button until they've completed the exercise, which encourages students to take 90 seconds to interact with the content and activity before moving on.

While DesignPLUS provides Canvas sites with organizational, interactive, and novel features, I do want to stress that users must start from a strong pedagogical foundation. DesignPLUS is definitely not a pedagogical shortcut and won't automatically make you a better teacher. Rather it is a tool that can support an already thoughtful and student-centered pedagogical approach if the implementor is deliberate and intentional in their use of the tool.

I caution users to be thoughtful in how they implement updates to Canvas with DesignPLUS and ensure that there are specific pedagogical motives for each change made. Adding accordions, link grids, and flashcards just because they look cool won't support student success, but may in fact hinder students from having a successful and positive academic experience with the Canvas platform. Instructors should also bear in mind that Canvas is just one aspect of a course. Ensure that the use of DesignPLUS is in harmony with all the aspects of your course including in-person interactions, assessments, communication, etc. A well-designed Canvas course should complement a well-designed course, not carry it.