

How to Request Partial Credit for Canvas Quizzes

Math 1050-90

The score you see when you submit a quiz in Canvas is not always the score you deserve. That's because Canvas does not give partial credit for correct work (but incorrect answers) or for answers formatted differently than in the answer key. You now have the opportunity to REQUEST RETROACTIVE PARTIAL CREDIT.

But you do not get points back without some work on your part. You need to request them. Also, you need to think about your mistakes, demonstrate that you know what they are and that you now have a better understanding of the material, and summarize this process in writing.

HOW TO START:

- A. Open up your old quiz through the GRADES link on Canvas. (If you open it up through ASSIGNMENTS, or QUIZZES, you will not have the option to send me comments on it.) In general, you can do this starting the Monday morning after the quiz closes. Look for the comment box on the right hand side. You can type your request here, upload a word-document, or scan a neatly hand written request.
- B. Open the worked solutions to the quiz. (These are found in the Files section of Canvas.)
- C. Now look over your quiz. You will need to submit a request for partial credit for EACH problem or part of a problem for which you wish to have partial credit back. Note, Canvas already gives partial credit for the parts you got correct if a problem is multi-part. You only need to request for the parts which were marked as incorrect.

If having looked at the worked solutions, you still do not understand how to do a problem, you can write your instructor questions about the problems. See details on what to include on the following pages.

- D. Submit your request by the Thursday following the close of the quiz. It's good if you submit it sooner. Your instructor or the TA (teaching assistant) will look it over and inform you whether each request gets credit or ask to provide more explanation and resubmit (usually within two days).

TYPES OF ERRORS AND WHAT TO WRITE IN YOUR SUBMISSION.Formatting Errors

A student described the Canvas quiz grader as a robot. An answer is marked as correct if it matches the answer in the key symbol for symbol. Unlike other more sophisticated websites, it can not even tell that “a+b” is the same as “a + b”. The first does not have spaces, the second does. At the start of the quiz, there is a list of formatting instructions. If you do not follow these and are marked as incorrect, you should request partial credit. In your request you should state which direction you did not follow.

EXAMPLE: Formatting Error where your answer is correct, but not in the specified format.

1. Problem: Find the y-intercept of the equation $y=4x+7$. Enter your answer as a point. Use the directions at the start of the quiz for entering answers. (Note, the directions at the start of the quiz state, points should be entered in the form “(a,b)”, without the quotation marks.)

EXAMPLE: Formatting Error where your answer is correct, but not in the specified format.

2. Problem: Find the product $(2a+3b)(2a-3b)$. (The directions are no spaces, no unneeded parenthesis, use the carrot symbol to express exponents, for example “x^2” for x^2 .)

Your Answer: $-9b^2+4a^2$

Correct Answer: $4a^2-9b^2$

***Partial Credit Request:** In Problem 2, (because of the commutative property of addition), my answer is equivalent to the correct answer. The directions did not state that the term with a^2 should come before the term with b^2 .*

***Instructor Response:** Full credit.*

When I write your quizzes, I try to think of every possible correct way you can enter the answer. But sometimes I miss one. If your answer is marked wrong and did not violate any of the directions, then you should also request credit back.

Calculation Errors

When you make a calculation error, your request needs to include

1. Your work which led to the WRONG answer from the first step to the answer you entered in Canvas.
2. Identification of the mistake(s). Be specific. It's not enough to say you made a calculation error. Instead, state what it is and where it occurred.
3. (Optional) If it helps you in your learning, you can supply the correct solution. However this is not necessary, as the worked solutions are provided in the modules.

You will be given partial credit if you supply all of the above AND if the approach you took to finding the wrong answer was going in the right direction.

EXAMPLE: Calculation Error.

2. Problem: Find the y-intercept of the graph $x^2+2y=9$

Your Answer: (0,3)

Correct Answer: (0,9)

Partial Credit Request: *In Problem 3, I answered (0, 3) instead of (0,9/2), these were my calculations:*

$$\begin{aligned}x^2+2y&=9 \\x^2+2(0)&=9 \\x^2&=9 \\sqrt{x}&= \sqrt{9} \\x&=3\end{aligned}$$

My mistake was in the second step, where I incorrectly substituted zero for y and solved for x. I should have substituted zero for x and solved for y.

I also made another mistake in line 4. I forgot to include the + or - in front of $\sqrt{9}$. When you take the square root of an equation, you need to include the + or - as both are possible solutions.

(OPTIONAL) *Had I substituted $x=0$ into the equation, these would have been my calculations:*

$$\begin{aligned}(0)^2+2y&=9 \\2y&=9 \\y&= 9/2 \\y\text{-intercept}& (0,9/2)\end{aligned}$$

Instructor Response: *Half credit.*

It will be easiest to write a request for partial credit if you write down your work for the quiz problems and you keep this paper in a place you can find. If you did your work neatly, you can use a colored pen, circle your mistakes and write next to them what they are and how to correct the problem. Then you can scan this and attach it.



Mixing-up concepts

When you mix-up concepts, you may be able to get partial credit, your request needs to include an explanation of what your misconception was and how it led to an incorrect answer. It should also be clear that you now understand the concept. (It should be clear from what you say, not from a statement like “I now understand it.”)

Requests that Turn into Conversations

Sometimes when you make a partial credit request, the mistake you think you are making is not really your mistake. Or, sometimes you know you made a calculation mistake, but you need to think more about what it is.

1. Problem: Simplify the expression $2 \cdot 5 - 3^2$

Your Answer: 28

Correct Answer: 1

Partial Credit Request: *In Problem 4, I answered 28 instead of 1. These were my calculations*

$$\begin{aligned} &2 \cdot 5 - 3^2 \\ &= 2 \cdot 5 + 9 \\ &= 2 \cdot 14 \\ &= 28 \end{aligned}$$

My mistake was in the third line. I did operations in the incorrect order. From PEMDAS, we do multiplication before addition. I added 5 and 9 first, and then multiplied this by 2. I should have multiplied 2 by 5 and then added 9.

Instructor Response: *You found one of your mistakes, but there is a different one as well, between lines 1 and 2. Please identify it and write back by Thursday.*

Student Response: *I followed the order of operations and simplified exponents first. I squared -3. This gives me 9. I don't see what I did wrong.*

Instructor Response: *Hint: the exponent only applies to the expression to its left.*

Student Response: *Oh I see now, because there were no parentheses around -3, the exponent only applied to 3. The minus sign remains. So the second line should have been $2 \cdot 5 - 9$.*

Instructor Response: *That's it. Half credit.*

If the problem is a multiple choice or true/false problem, you can still request partial credit, though it is harder to get. You have to justify what is partly true about the answer you chose (or for multiple choice, why it would be a better choice than some of the other wrong ones).

If you leave an answer blank, you usually cannot request partial credit. There are occasionally exceptions, for example when the instructions tell you to write “none” if there is no second answer. If you don’t take a quiz, you can not request partial credit. On that note, if you do not attempt a quiz, you will not be able to see the quiz later in Canvas (though you will be able to see the full worked solutions).

I know there are hurdles to requesting partial credit. Let me address a few:

Asking for points is NOT GREEDY! You are getting partial credit for work you have done partly correctly. It's fine to request partial credit if you missed 25 points or if you missed 1.

Do not be embarrassed about your writing/English. Writing about math is a skill and you get better with practice. If I cannot understand you, I will write back and ask questions.

If you do not understand your mistake, then you’re not ready to request partial credit. However, you will do best in the course if you figure it out right away instead of letting misunderstandings pile up to be dealt with (or not) when you prepare for exams. First, look at the worked solutions for that problem. If you do not understand those, seek help (contact your instructor by e-mail, attend office hours, go to the tutoring center, reread that section or rewatch the relevant video, etc.). Do this soon, and then request partial credit by the following Thursday.

You have nothing to lose. If you have any questions about requesting partial credit, ask!

Finally, try to make your requests for partial credit as easy to process and respond to as possible.

Write in complete sentences.

Give the problem number for each request you make.

Make each problem a new paragraph and use two hard returns between paragraphs (so that there is a line between them).

Make your requests in the same order as was used in the Quiz (rather than jumping around; i.e. problem 1, problem 6, problem 3).