SHENANDOAH™
U N I V E R S I T Y
Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology

The Power of Collaboration to Engage Students

Why Google?

It's easy. Really easy.

It's Collaborative. You can create a file and share it with one or a group of students and they can work together on it at the same time. Alternatively, students can create assignments that they share with you to turn them in. You can insert comments into a Google Doc or Slides as you grade. This way students get feedback more quickly because they don't have to wait for the next class for papers to be returned.

It's cloud-based. Since files are stored online, changes are saved almost instantly and backups are handled automatically.

Getting to Google Drive

Chrome works best, but Firefox and Safari work, too.

Login to your Shenandoah gmail or Google Chrome account. Click the grid icon at the top right of the gmail window and select Drive. When Drive opens, you will see a list of options in the left navigation.
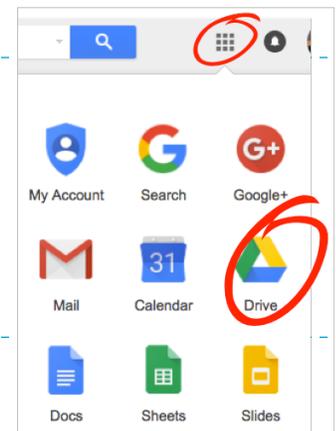
Types of Files in Google Drive

Click the **NEW** tab on the left navigation to view file types. Click **More** at the bottom to reveal additional file options.

Docs. Similar to MS Word, you can create text-based documents that may include tables and images. The editing functions work just as you would expect.

Slides. If you know PowerPoint or KeyNote, you already know how to use Slides. While some of the features are limited compared to other presentation software, it is quick to use and easy to share. Note that the template called "Lesson Plan" is conveniently in Shenandoah colors!

Sheets. This is a simple tool that functions much like excel for working with numerical data. You can insert functions and charts, and even images. To navigate on an iPad, single tap to select a cell and double tap to edit a cell.

Forms. You can create simple forms for polling and surveying students*. It can also be used as a sign up sheet for groups or peer review. The survey responses are saved in a downloadable spreadsheet (Sheets).

Drawings. This tool allows you to create text items with outline shapes, such placing text into a scroll or callout. Unlike other applications, the background surrounding the shape will not show as white. You can also draw freehand and create custom shapes.
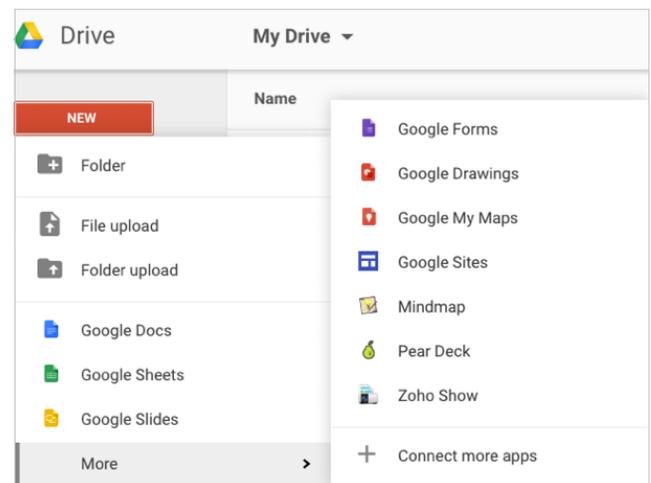
Maps. The Maps tool integrates with Google Maps but allows you to customize your map by adding text, lines, measurements, and other layers of information.

* Surveys of students for research purposes require IRB approval. Please visit the <u>IRB Webpage</u> for details.

What About Folders?

Just as you would expect, you can organize files you create and those shared with you into folders you create in your Drive. You can share entire folders and individual files with others, to View or Edit based on the preferences you set. Folders and files can be moved by dragging and dropping, or otherwise managed by using the More Actions icon on the top right. Click on a folder or file to reveal the file options menu.
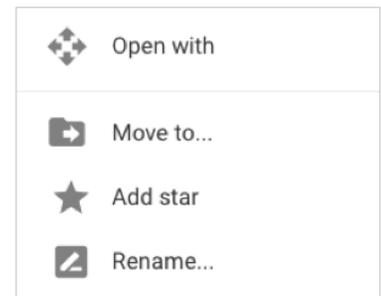
Get a sharable link · Share · Preview · Send to trash · More actions
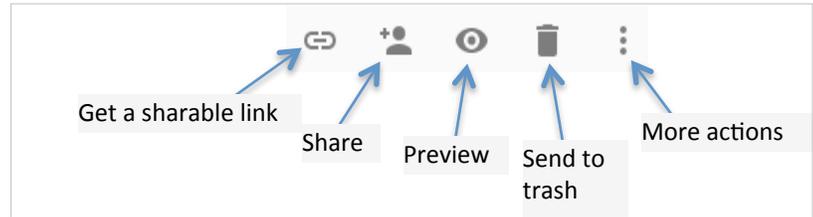
More Actions:

Open with - Lets you choose a different application to open the file (usually automatic)

Move to… Select the folder to move the file into

Add star - Note important files with a star

Rename… Change the name of the file

Open with · Move to... · Add star · Rename...

## So How Does All This Help Me Teach and Students Learn?

We know that the best way to promote deep learning is to have students actively engaged and part of a learning community facilitated by an instructor who is mentoring and providing feedback.

Google Drive for Teaching and Learning:

1. Icebreaker to help form a learning community: Create a Google Slides presentation and share it with your students. Ask each student to create a slide with a picture that best represents them, then use it to introduce themselves to the class.

2. Introduce a topic to give students some foundation. Then divide students into teams and assign each team a theme to research that reinforces the topic you introduced. Ask each team to create several slides in a Google Slides presentation that they will present to the class. Make sure they are writing their own words and providing citation as needed. This type of exercise works well because

   A. You have provided "scaffolding" by introducing the topic and providing an outline.
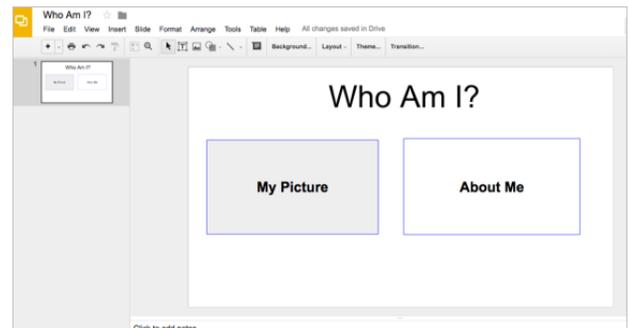
B. Students engage in reading, analyzing, and re-articulating.

C. Working in small groups allows them to develop critical reading and thinking, and teamwork skills.

D. They practice written and oral presentation skills with proper citations.

3. When it's time to review for an exam, instead of going over a study guide that you have prepared, open a Google Doc and ask students to build their own study guide. This approach offers these benefits:

A. Students are active, not passive, participants in the activity.

B. You have a way to track participation if you want to.

C. You have an opportunity to correct misunderstood concepts and omissions in preparation prior to the exam.

4. When you are presenting material that lends itself to quantitative analysis, have students use Sheets to create a spreadsheet for calculating percentages, averages, or making charts. Not only will they have opportunity to practice quantitative skills, but this will also serve as reinforcement.
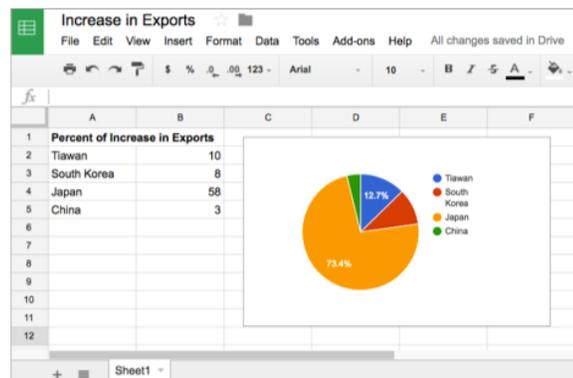
Practice!

Try these short exercises in your Drive:

1. Working in teams, create a Google Presentation where you each create a slide that describes what you like about teaching. Be sure to include at least one image.

2. Create a Sheets spreadsheet. Enter some hypothetical students and their test scores. Enter a formula to calculate an average and create a chart displaying the results.

3. Make your own assignment! Try using one of the Google tools to create a class exercise for one of your classes.

Tips

1. Are your students distracted by FaceBook? In Slides, click the chat icon and encourage students to discuss the topic you are presenting to get them to focus.

2. If you have trouble with Google tools in Safari or Firefox, try using Chrome.

3. If you need help outside normal hours, click the Training for Google Apps icon found at the top right side of your Chrome browser window.