Students' ability to view module progress of other students on a given assignment to encourage peer collaboration and self-organizing of fluid grouping

Idea will be open for vote Wed. June 3, 2015 - Wed. September 2, 2015  Learn more about voting...

One feature I think would be invaluable would be when students are on a certain assignment step of any given module, they would be able to see three categories of other students in the same class embedded on that assignment’s page. One category would be a list of students who are also currently in progress on this assignment. Another category would be students who have recently completed the assignment. And a third category might be students who are close to approaching this assignment. Student names should probably be linked to their profiles so students working on a given assignment would have the ability to message that student directly or engage with them in person.

One of the biggest challenges I’ve had this year using Canvas to facilitate a mastery assessment model is helping students find peers to self-organize with in order to collaborate productively on their assignments. While the concept of ‘groups’ is fine, it relies on the instructor making assumptions about which students will likely be good matches to work together, and doesn’t do much to facilitate fluid shifts in terms of student grouping. Under a mastery assessment model, one of the things it’s done, among many others, is to totally blow the lid off of the accuracy of my preconceived notions about which students will meet standard at what pace. Having the option to turn on a feature such as the one detailed above would allow student groups to be fluid and self-organized, and also allow the instructor to make ongoing, differentiated peer group suggestions for students based on their progress on any given module. Moreover, I think the most significant benefit of this system would that it would radically speed up the learning process, as students would have access to their peers on a regular basis to help them get ‘unstuck’ from those minute sticking points in their understanding of an assignment, concept or skill that are so often what manifest as the largest barriers to student success.