



<https://ldl.georgetown.edu/ellipsis/>

Ellipsis, originally created as the software engine underlying MyDante (<http://dante.georgetown.edu>), is currently in development as an independent tool which will be customizable for a wide range of text analysis projects. The hallmark of Ellipsis is flexibility: it offers instructors the freedom to adapt and redefine the application to suit various contexts.

**In essence, Ellipsis is simply a tool for annotating texts.** If you start to think broadly about what could be included in the category of “texts,” and what it might mean to “annotate” them, you’ll begin to realize how vast the range of potential pedagogical applications of Ellipsis might be.

For example, an Ellipsis application could allow students to:

- make comments on sections of a film
- add explanatory footnotes to scientific papers
- analyze metaphors used in a political speech
- pair contemporary paintings and music with a historical primary source document
- parse grammatical constructions in foreign language texts
- provide feedback on texts produced by their peers, for example in a fiction-writing workshop
- create their own collaboratively-written course “textbooks”

Ellipsis categorizes a variety of types of *assets*, such as texts, audio recordings, videos, and images. These can all be annotated by students, as can guides created by the instructor (or perhaps created by students as an assignment). Students can produce different types of *posts*, including annotations, articles, and journal entries; they can also create bookmarks and place assets within the texts.

**Ellipsis adds a collaborative dimension to the act of reading and interpreting texts.** Ellipsis offers incredible flexibility in structuring groups (*workspaces*) within applications. Instructors can customize the application to:

- create a closed workspace for a particular course, e.g. Prof. Ambrosio’s “Dante and the Christian Imagination,” where students can view one another’s annotations and images and share ideas on a discussion board
- combine workspaces with a group of students from another department, course, or institution, to allow all kinds of collaborations – for example, students from different departments could all annotate a text in an exercise in interdisciplinary scholarship, or students from different schools could combine to form a single virtual discussion section
- divide a class into smaller workspaces for group projects, so that groups could create their own versions of annotated texts or multimedia reading guides

**Ellipsis provides a way to record students’ work over time.** A single login will allow access to all of a student’s Ellipsis sites, which will become more useful as additional versions of the application are developed and integrated into courses. This will be valuable for students, who can access their archived work after a particular course has ended or combine work from different courses into a digital portfolio, and for faculty and administrators, who can track student progress over time.

*We welcome new collaborative partners as the development of Ellipsis progresses. Please contact Bill Garr, Assistant Director of Research & Development at CNDLS ([wjg8@georgetown.edu](mailto:wjg8@georgetown.edu)), if you’re interested in finding out more about Ellipsis, or if you have ideas about how Ellipsis might be used in your courses.*