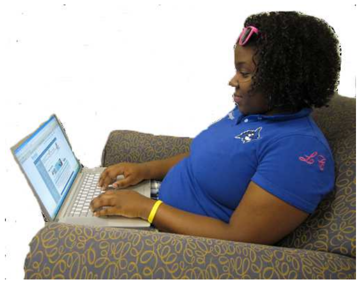
PLATO

People Learning and Teaching Online

Center for Instructional Technology
Wilson Hall, Room 114 - 413-572-8130
www.westfield.ma.edu/plato
Open Mon-Fri 8:30AM to 4:30PM



Getting Started with Plato

Resource Manual to Design, Develop and Create your Course

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Center for Instructional Technology
www.westfield.ma.edu/plato
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Westfield
STATE UNIVERSITY
Founded 1838

Contents

(Last updated March 2, 2012)

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What's New!
Comparison between WebCT Campus Edition 4.1 and Campus Edition 8/Vista 4

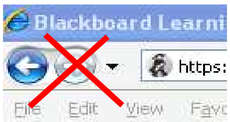
What was called ... in WebCT CE	*Is now called*	*New Functionality*
Content Module	**Learning Module**	•Create links to individual: o Files o Discussion Topics o Assignments o Assessments o Chat Rooms o Web Links •Students can create a printable view of a learning module from within the module •Show/hide items within the table of contents •Selective release can be used on items within the table of contents
URL	**Web Links**	•All web links are automatically collected in the **Web Links** page •Can be annotated
Glossary Image Database	**Media Library**	•Create a database of media files: o text o image o video o audio •Group entries into collections
CD-ROM	**Local Content**	•Provide links to content on any local storage device (e.g. CD-ROM)
Compile Function	**Printable View**	•Compiles content onto a single page for easy printing
Index Tool	***Not Available***	
Not Available	**Announcements**	•Create notices for students, TAs, or other instructors •Optional pop-up message feature
Syllabus	**Syllabus**	•Import an existing syllabus or build one from scratch
Discussions	**Discussions**	•Create threaded discussions, journals, or blogs •Add descriptions/instructions •Use a single screen to view posts by individual students and assign grades

Chat Whiteboard	**Chat**	•Optional whiteboard: o chat only o whiteboard only o both at once •Whiteboard can show images or slideshows •Create unlimited rooms with custom names •Moderate discussions using Handraise Mode to call on students waiting to "speak"
Calendar	**Calendar**	•Create links to activities (e.g. discussion topics, quizzes, assignments) •Create calendar listings automatically when building assignments or assessments
Mail	**Mail**	•Each instructor/designer has their own identity •Send messages to individual students, specific groups, or the whole class •CC and BCC sending options
Not available	**Who's Online**	•See students/faculty/TAs in your course who are logged into Vista and chat with them online •Specify your visibility and availability to chat with others
Assignments	**Assignments**	•Students submit homework to a drop box •Release assignments to the whole class, specific groups, or individual students •Return assignments to students for revision before grading
Student Homepages	***Not available***	•Similar functionality can be accomplished with the **Assignment Tool**: create an ungraded assignment where students submit a web page, then publish the submissions
Student Presentations	**Group Manager**	•Create an assignment for a group – one member submits the work, all members receive the same grade •Create groups in various ways: o Sign-up sheets o Assigned groups o Random groups •Create discussion topics and chat rooms for each group
Quizzes	**Assessments**	•Additional question types: Combination o Fill in the blank o Jumbled sentence o True/False •Grade by question

Manage Students	**Gradebook**	•Freeze name columns for easier/faster scrolling and searching
Homepage	**Course Content**	•Items can be annotated •Layouts can be customized
Organizer Pages	**Folders**	•Items can be annotated •Layouts can be customized
Update Student View Function	*Not Available*	•Student view updates automatically
Student View	**Student View**	•Student view tab is an actual student view – test assessments, assignments, gradebook, and content as a student •No re-logging in or separate accounts
Track Students	**Tracking**	•Section tracking reports: o Overview of general student activity o How often tools (e.g. Assignments) are used o How often items (e.g. a quiz) are used o Overview of the files viewed most frequently o Detailed summary of activities for individual students
Actions **Options** **Designer Links** **Control Panel**	**Action Links** **Course Tools** **Designer Tools** **Instructor Tools**	•All tools are located under the **Course Tools**, **Designer Tools**, and **Instructor Tools** menus the tools you want to use •Actions are listed under the **Action Links** icon next to each item's title
Not available	**Repository**	•Share common departmental documents (e.g. academic honesty policy)
Not available	**Selective Release** **Map**	•Comprehensive list of all course content and links •Show/hide items or make them available to specific students, on certain dates, etc.

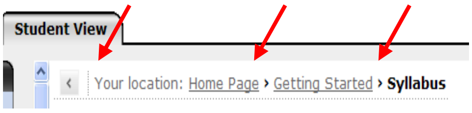
First Things First

Things to Remember while working in Plato



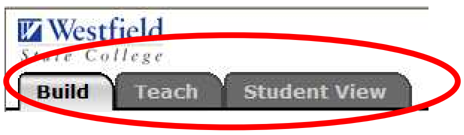
Avoid the back button on your browser.

1. Only use links on the page, avoid your browser's toolbar Because PLATO is driven by a behind-the-scenes server, using the *Back*, *Next* or *Refresh* buttons on your Web browser can lead to unexpected results. Instead, always use the buttons on the screen to navigate the course.



Use "breadcrumbs" to navigate.

Click **Home** in the *breadcrumbs* or **Course Content** in the *Course Tools* menu to return to the first page of the course.



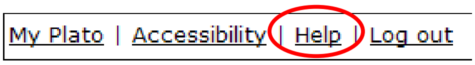
Be sure to use the correct tab.

2. Choose the correct tab for building, teaching, previewing
At the top of the screen there are tabs that let you toggle between the different views of your course. When you work in an active course section, you have three: *Build* for editing, *Teach* for interacting with students or their work, and *Student View*, which allows you to see the course as your students see it.

If you build a template, there are two: *Build* for editing and *View Template* for previewing the course from the students' perspective.

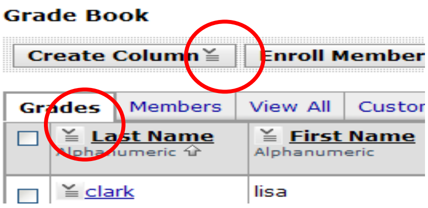
"Save" is the most common Submit button.

3. All pages are Web-based forms
PLATO is, simply, a series of Web forms. Most editing involves clicking a button or filling in a field. To make the edit happen, you click a **Submit** button to make the change(s). The *Submit* button may have different names (e.g., "save", "send" etc.), but it performs an equivalent function.



Confused? Check the Help link.

4. Refer to the Help link
The PLATO manual is built into the system. Click the **Help** link (top right) on any screen to access help. The *Help* link displays help topics that are specific to your location within the course.

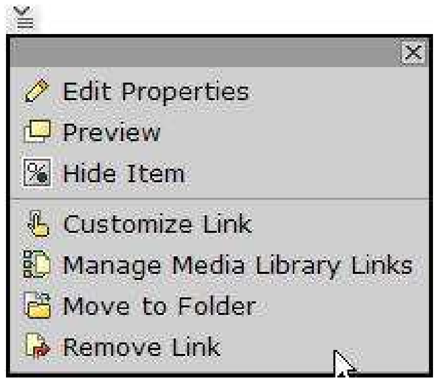


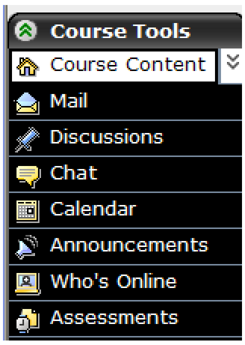
Edit Content with the Action Link Drop Down Menus.

5. Edit content with the Action Links drop-down menus
Every editable item on the screen has a small, gray *Action Links* button next to it. Click the **Action Links** icon next to an editable item to open a menu that lets you access all the functions you can perform with (or to) that item. In some cases, there is an *Action Links* icon next to the title of a page that leads to specific functions for that tool or page.

Action Menu

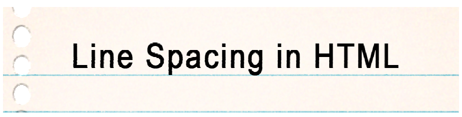
6. Action Menu:





7. The Course Tools Menu: This menu is available under all tabs and displays a link to each of the tools you have included in your course. Under the *Build* tab, clicking on an icon will allow you to edit the individual and global settings for that tool. Under the *Teach* tab and *Student View*, clicking an icon will allow you to use the tool itself. If the course tools menu collapses into a thin strip of icons, simply click the desired tool's icon to open it again.

If you don't want students accessing a tool directly, you can hide individual tools in the menu in the *Manage Course* Screen.



8. Shift/Enter: Hit the Shift and Enter buttons simultaneously to single space.

Login to PLATO VISTA

1. Launch a supported web browser such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, or Safari.

2. In the URL address bar type:
   - if on campus: **plato/plato**
   - off campus: **westfield.ma.edu/plato**

-Then Click **GO** or press **Enter** on the keyboard to retrieve the page typed in the URL address bar.

-You can also access PLATO on the college's main website (www.westfield.ma.edu). Under "Logins" locate "PLATO/Online Learning".

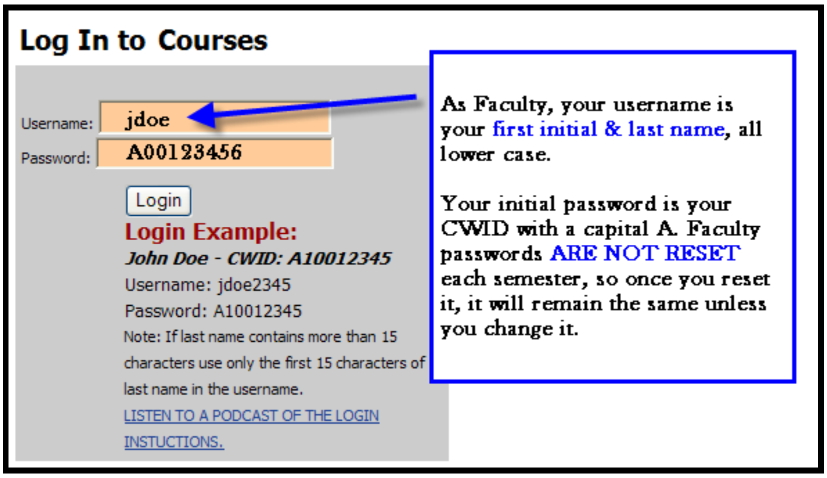
3. The page that you should see next is the PLATO Login page with login fields as shown below.

- **Faculty Login:**

  Ex. John Doe – CWID: A00123456

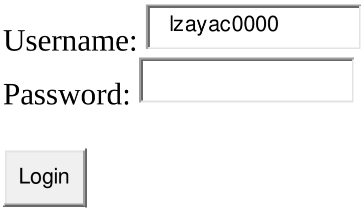
  Username: jdoe (your first initial of your first name along with your last name all lowercase)

  Password: A00123456 (CWID)



If your CWID does not work as your password, please contact CIT for assistance.

- **Student Login:**
  Example for Lynn Zayac – CWID: A00000000
  Username: lzayac0000 (first initial of first name, last name, last 4 digits of CWID)
  Password: A00000000 (CWID with "A" capitalized)

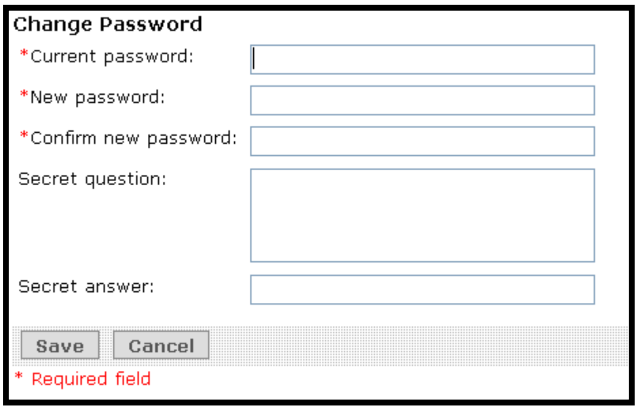


Login Example:
John Doe - CWID: A10001234
Username: jdoe1234
Password: A10001234

Click here for a tutorial on logging into Plato.

Alternative PLATO Login

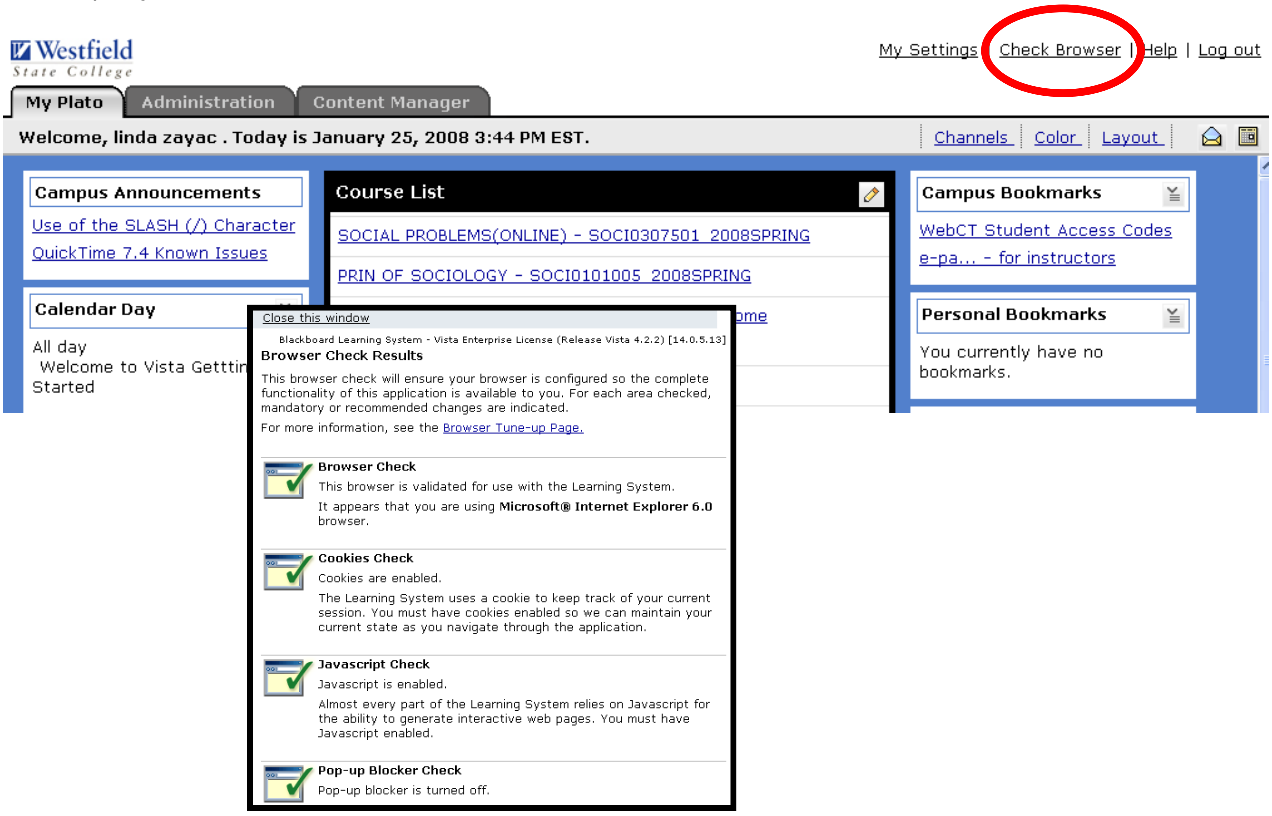
4. If you are logging in for the first time, the system will prompt you to change your password. Your new password must be a minimum of six characters. When you have completed the required fields indicated, click "Save".



-After changing your password, the system will log you out and you will have to log back in with your new password.

Browser Settings- Check Browser

1. While PLATO VISTA works with most web browsers, some of the latest versions may not yet be fully supported. It is important to run the browser check. Once you login into PLATO VISTA for the first time, you should first make sure your browser is properly configured. You can check this by clicking on “Check Browser” in the top right corner of the browser window.



3. Once you have done a browser check, if you find that you are having Java issues, uninstall any Java on your computer and download the compatible version. From the Plato login page, click ‘Online Learning Resources’ (on the right) and then ‘Download Java Runtime’.

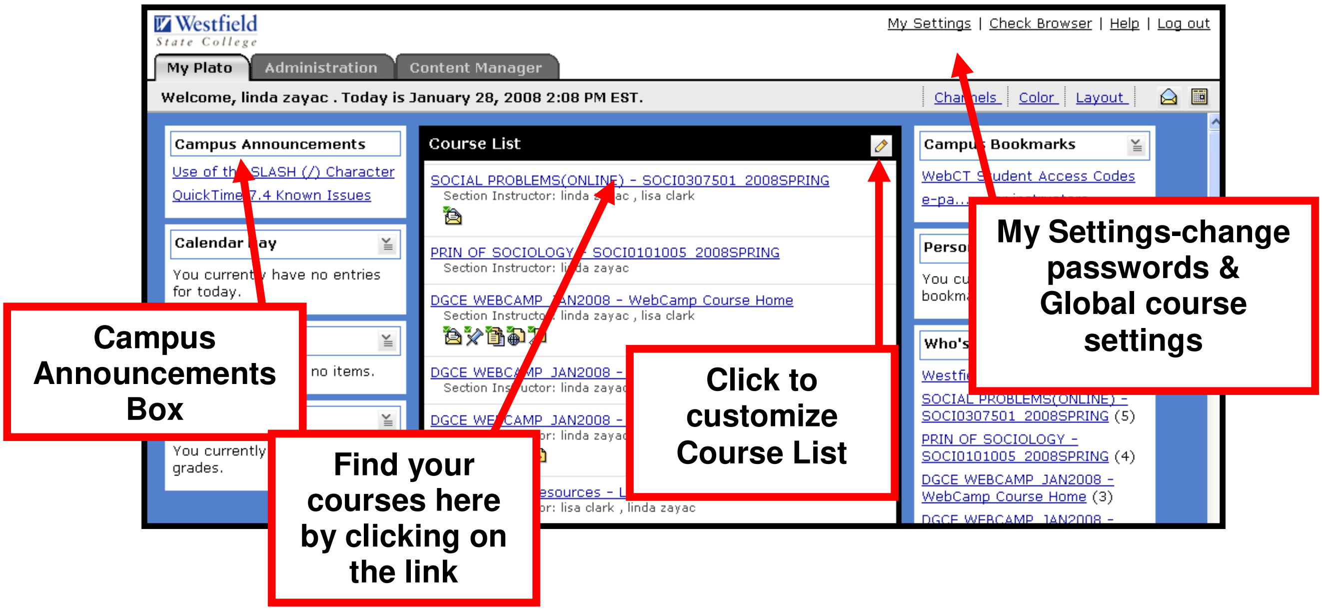
- **Note:** You can access 24/7 help by clicking on the Plato Support Live Help icon located on the PLATO Home Page.

My PLATO

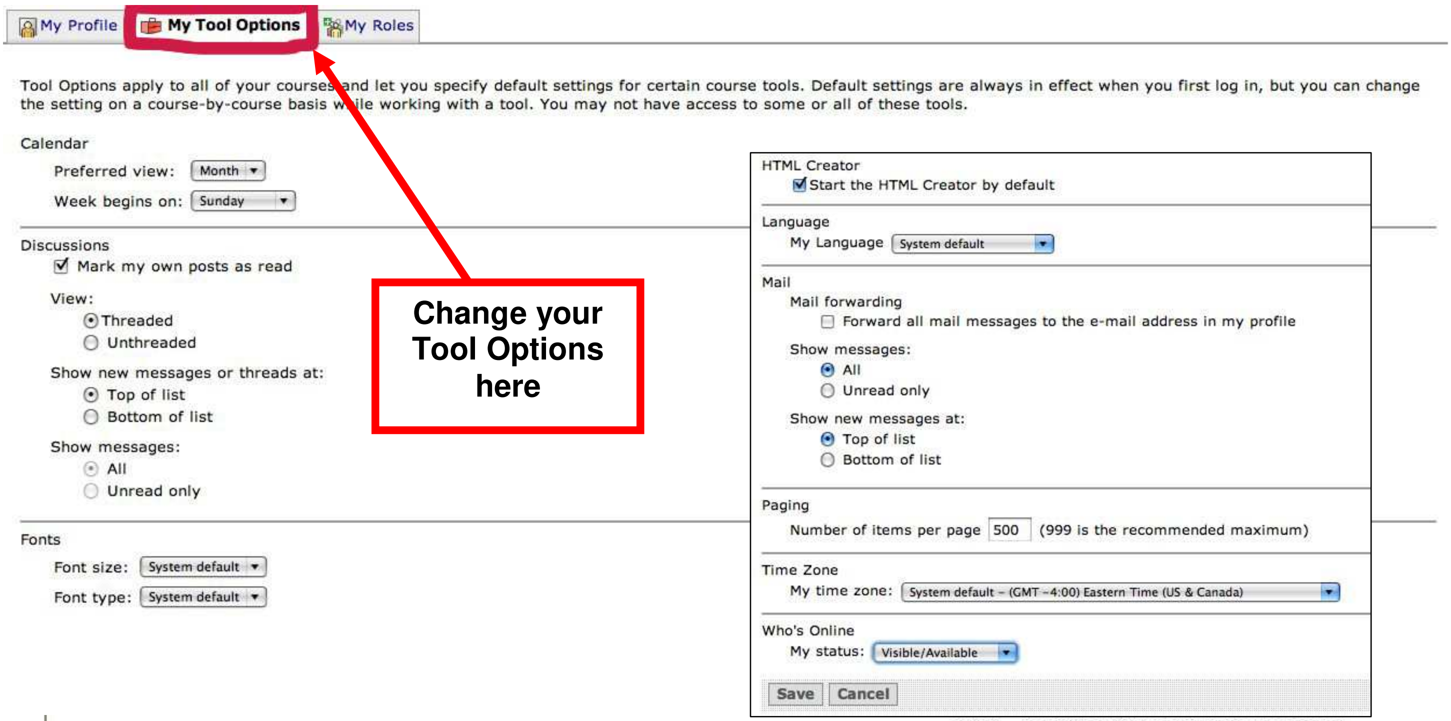
1. **My PLATO** is the first screen you see after you log in. The primary function of the My PLATO area is to provide a single point of access to all courses in which you are enrolled.

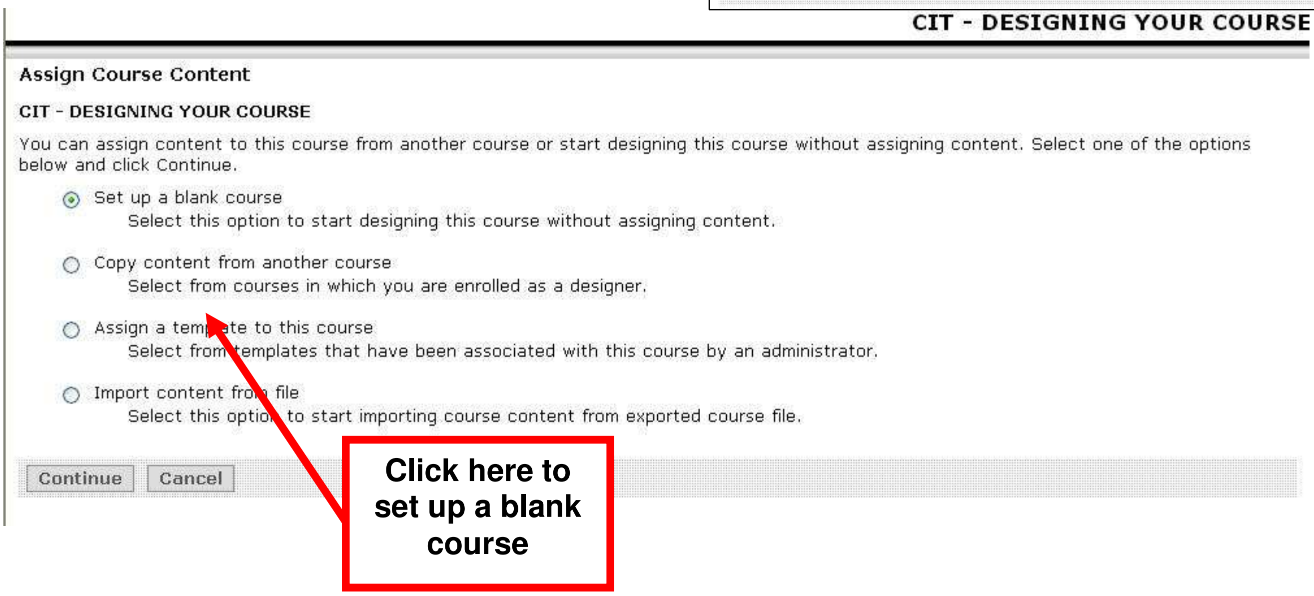
2. The **My Settings** link allows you to modify tools options, change your password, and see your assigned role.

3. You can also customize the order of your course list and hide certain courses by clicking on the pencil icon 




Westfield State College
My Settings | Help | Log out
My Plato
Administration
Content Manager
Welcome, cit staff . Today is August 13, 2008 11:26 AM EDT.
Channels
Color
Layout
My Settings
My Profile
My Tool Options
My Roles
Public
User name: citstaff
First name: cit
Last name: staff
E-mail: cit@wsc.ma.edu
Edit Profile
Change Password


My Profile
My Tool Options
My Roles
Tool Options apply to all of your courses and let you specify default settings for certain course tools. Default settings are always in effect when you first log in, but you can change the setting on a course-by-course basis while working with a tool. You may not have access to some or all of these tools.
Calendar
Preferred view: Month
Week begins on: Sunday
Discussions
Mark my own posts as read
View:
Threaded
Unthreaded
Show new messages or threads at:
Top of list
Bottom of list
Show messages:
All
Unread only
Fonts
Font size: System default
Font type: System default
HTML Creator
Start the HTML Creator by default
Language
My Language System default
Mail
Mail forwarding
Forward all mail messages to the e-mail address in my profile
Show messages:
All
Unread only
Show new messages at:
Top of list
Bottom of list
Paging
Number of items per page 500 (999 is the recommended maximum)
Time Zone
My time zone: System default - (GMT -4:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
Who's Online
My status: Visible/Available
Save
Cancel
Change your Tool Options here


CIT - DESIGNING YOUR COURSE
Assign Course Content
CIT - DESIGNING YOUR COURSE
You can assign content to this course from another course or start designing this course without assigning content. Select one of the options below and click Continue.
Set up a blank course
Select this option to start designing this course without assigning content.
Copy content from another course
Select from courses in which you are enrolled as a designer.
Assign a template to this course
Select from templates that have been associated with this course by an administrator.
Import content from file
Select this option to start importing course content from exported course file.
Continue
Cancel
Click here to set up a blank course

Westfield
State College

My Plato | Accessibility | Help | Log out

CIT - DESIGNING YOUR COURSE

Quick Start

The option to set up a blank course was selected. A blank course does not contain any content. To create content, you add tools to the course. Add tools to the course by selecting the check boxes. Remove tools by clearing the check boxes.

☐ **Select All Tools**

Organizational Tools

☐ **Calendar**
Enter important events and deadlines, and allow Students to enter their own events.

☐ **Search**
Search for content in the course.

☐ **Syllabus**
Provide course requirements, objectives, and policies.

Communication Tools

☐ **Announcements**
Post important information in a central location.

☐ **Chat**
Chat with other users in the course in real time, or use the Whiteboard to display images.

☐ **Discussions**
Post and respond to messages on specific topics.

☐ **Mail**
Send messages to other users.

☐ **Roster**
Roster

☐ **Who's Online**
Chat with other users who are logged in to the Learning System.

Student Learning Activities

☐ **Assessments**
Create quizzes, self tests, and surveys.

☐ **Assignments**
Create assignments for Students to submit online. Students can work independently or in groups.

☐ **Goals**
Create goals that list the qualitative and quantitative performance expected in your course.

Content Tools

☐ **Learning Modules**
Organize and present content and activities to Students.

☐ **Local Content**
Allow Students to easily access large files from a portable medium, such as CD-ROM, instead of downloading the files from the Learning System.

☐ **Media Library**
Create a glossary or image collection.

☐ **SCORM**
Import SCORM-compliant packages, or modules, to be used as course content. SCORM modules can be added to the Home Page, other folders, and learning modules.

☐ **Web Links**
Create links to Internet resources.

Student Tools

☐ **My Files**
Allow Students to store their own files.

☐ **My Grades**
Allow Students to check their grades.

☐ **My Progress**
Allow Students to track their own progress.

☐ **Notes**
Allow Students to take notes.

Save

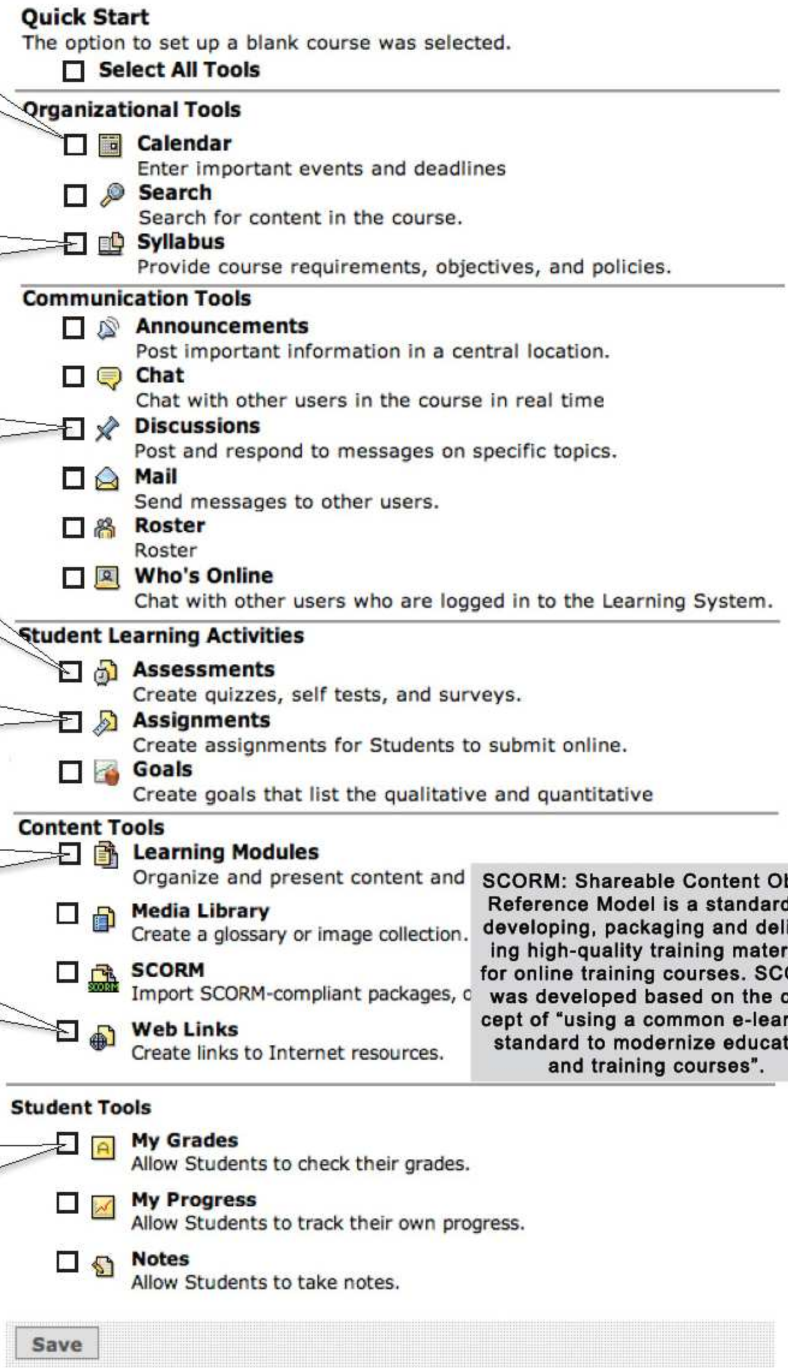
The Quick Start Screen

Add/Remove Tools

You can add and remove tools after you set-up the course. In the *Designer Tools* menu under the Build tab, click **Manage Course**. In the *Manage Course* screen click **Tools**. In the *Tools* screen, you can add and remove course tools.

The *Quick Start* screen appears the first time you access a template or a section to begin building a course. This page lists all the tools available in ***Campus Edition 8 or Vista 4.***

To select tools for your course, check the box next to each of the tools you want to include, then click **Save** at the bottom. You can always add more tools later, so only select the tools you are certain to use.



The **Calendar** is a useful tool for posting important dates. If a student has multiple courses, events from all courses will appear on their calendar.

The **Syllabus** tool provides a location for you to post a syllabus and offers a syllabus template if you have not yet created one.

The **Discussions** tool allows students to share ideas though standard threaded discussions, blogs and journals.

Enable the **Assessments** tool if you plan to put quizzes or surveys online.

The **Assignments** tool provides a location for you to organize and collect assignments submitted online.

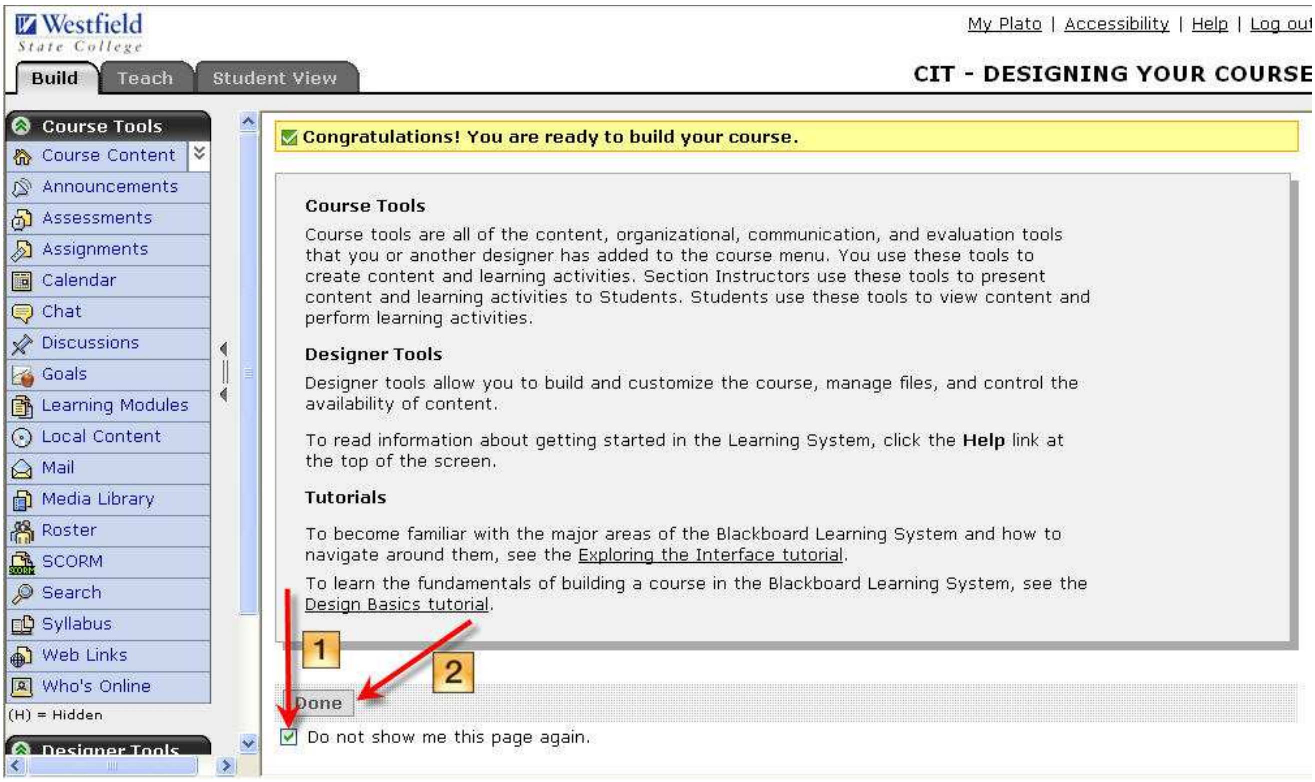
The **Learning Modules** tool is useful for organizing and posting course content.

Web Links lets you create links to Web pages, and allows you to organize them into groups.

The **My Grades** tool gives students access to any of their grades that you release from the grade book.*

*In compliance with FERPA, students only see their own grades.

SCORM: Shareable Content Object Reference Model is a standard for developing, packaging and delivering high-quality training materials for online training courses. SCORM was developed based on the concept of "using a common e-learning standard to modernize education and training courses".


Westfield
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My Plato | Accessibility | Help | Log out
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Assessments
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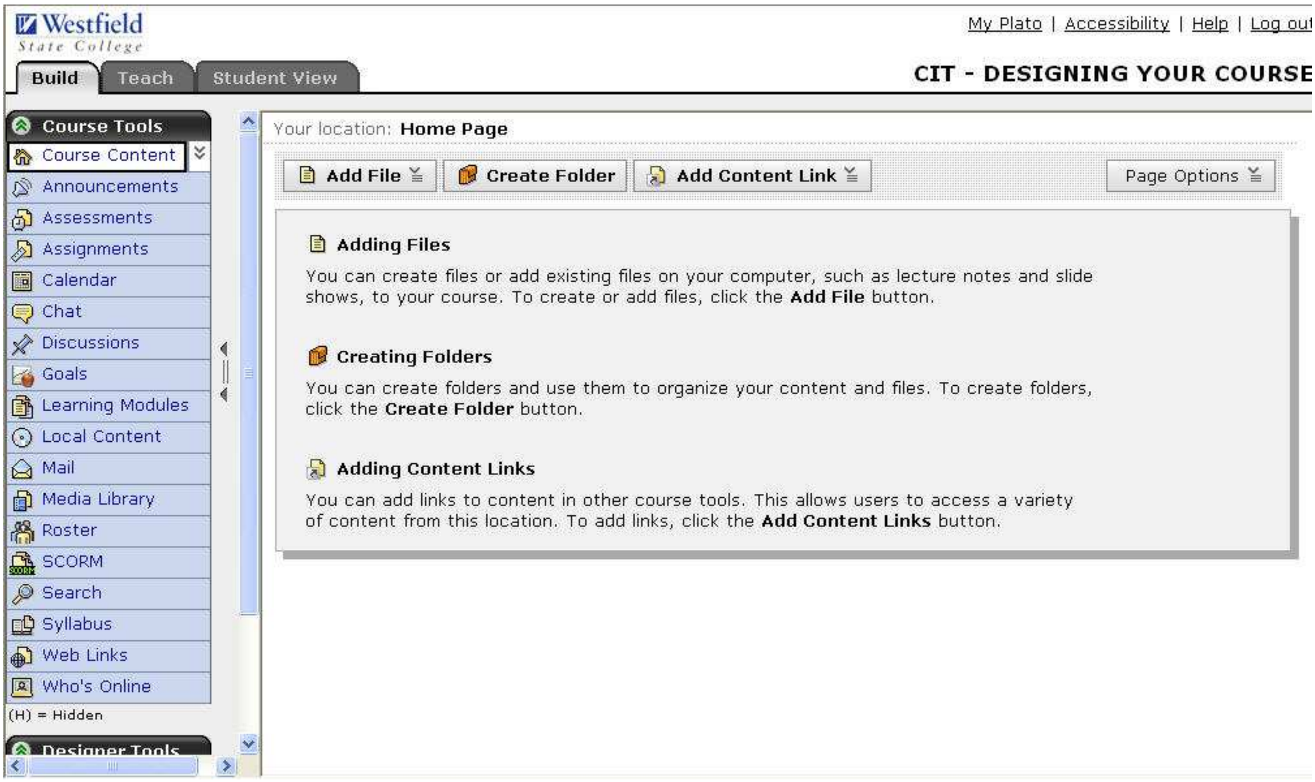
Calendar
Chat
Discussions
Goals
Learning Modules
Local Content
Mail
Media Library
Roster
SCORM
Search
Syllabus
Web Links
Who's Online
(H) = Hidden
Designer Tools
Congratulations! You are ready to build your course.
Course Tools
Course tools are all of the content, organizational, communication, and evaluation tools that you or another designer has added to the course menu. You use these tools to create content and learning activities. Section Instructors use these tools to present content and learning activities to Students. Students use these tools to view content and perform learning activities.
Designer Tools
Designer tools allow you to build and customize the course, manage files, and control the availability of content.
To read information about getting started in the Learning System, click the Help link at the top of the screen.
Tutorials
To become familiar with the major areas of the Blackboard Learning System and how to navigate around them, see the Exploring the Interface tutorial.
To learn the fundamentals of building a course in the Blackboard Learning System, see the Design Basics tutorial.
1
2
Done
Do not show me this page again.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Local Content
Mail
Media Library
Roster
SCORM
Search
Syllabus
Web Links
Who's Online
(H) = Hidden
Designer Tools
Your location: Home Page
Add File
Create Folder
Add Content Link
Page Options
Adding Files
You can create files or add existing files on your computer, such as lecture notes and slide shows, to your course. To create or add files, click the Add File button.
Creating Folders
You can create folders and use them to organize your content and files. To create folders, click the Create Folder button.
Adding Content Links
You can add links to content in other course tools. This allows users to access a variety of content from this location. To add links, click the Add Content Links button.

Build/Teach/Student View tabs

-These three tabs contain all of the links and functions associated with specific roles in a specific course.

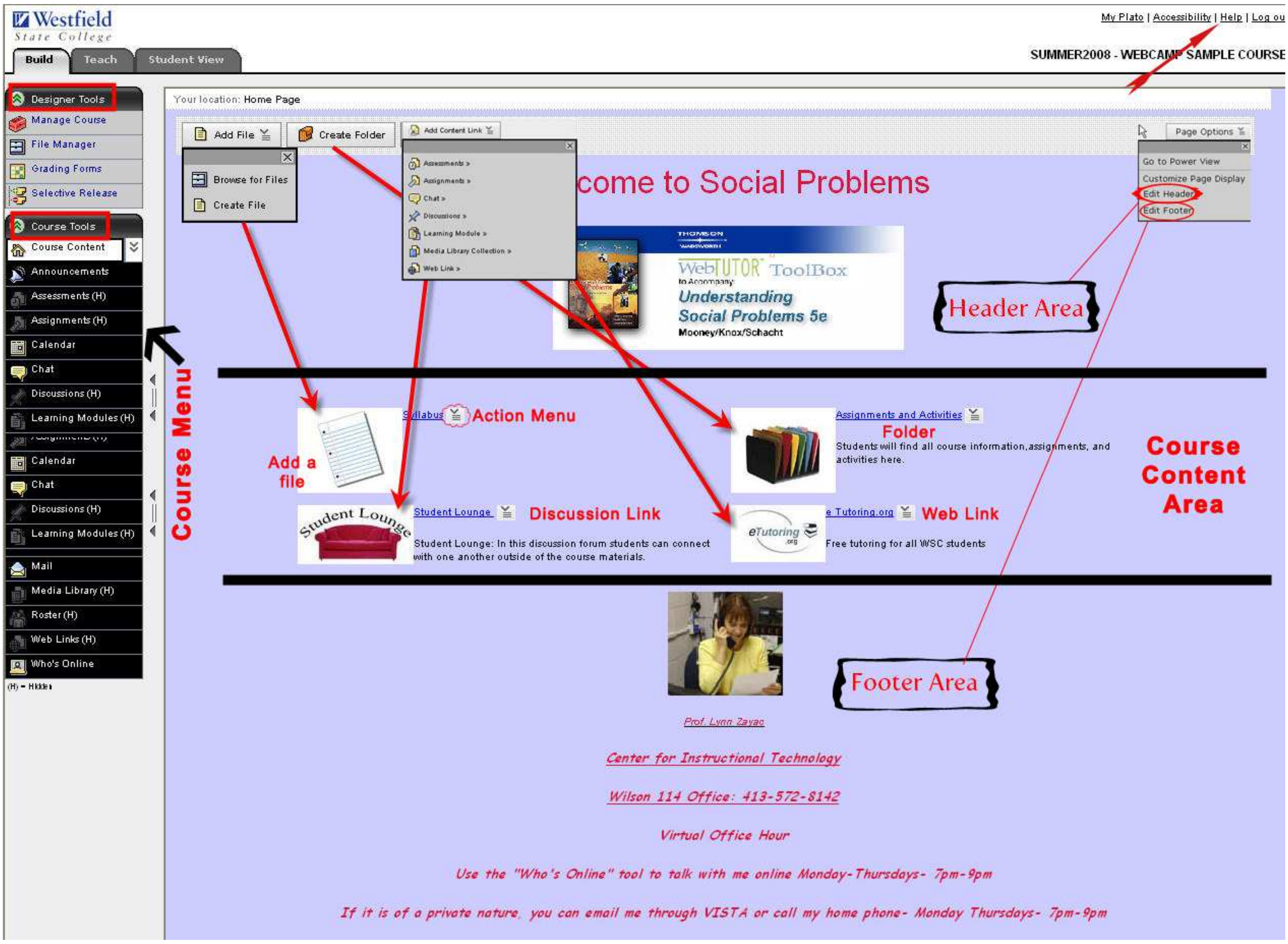
Build Tab
-The designer creates, manages, and organizes course content from this tab. The designer can change the visual presentation of the course, add tools, and create content items such as quizzes or discussion topics.

Teach Tab
-Instructor activities such as reviewing student work, managing grades, or interacting with students occur on the “Teach” tab. Access to instructor tools such as Assessment Manager, Assignment Dropbox, Grade Book, and Group Manager are found only within this tab.

-You will Manage and teach your course from the teach tab. With the “Teach” tab, you can:

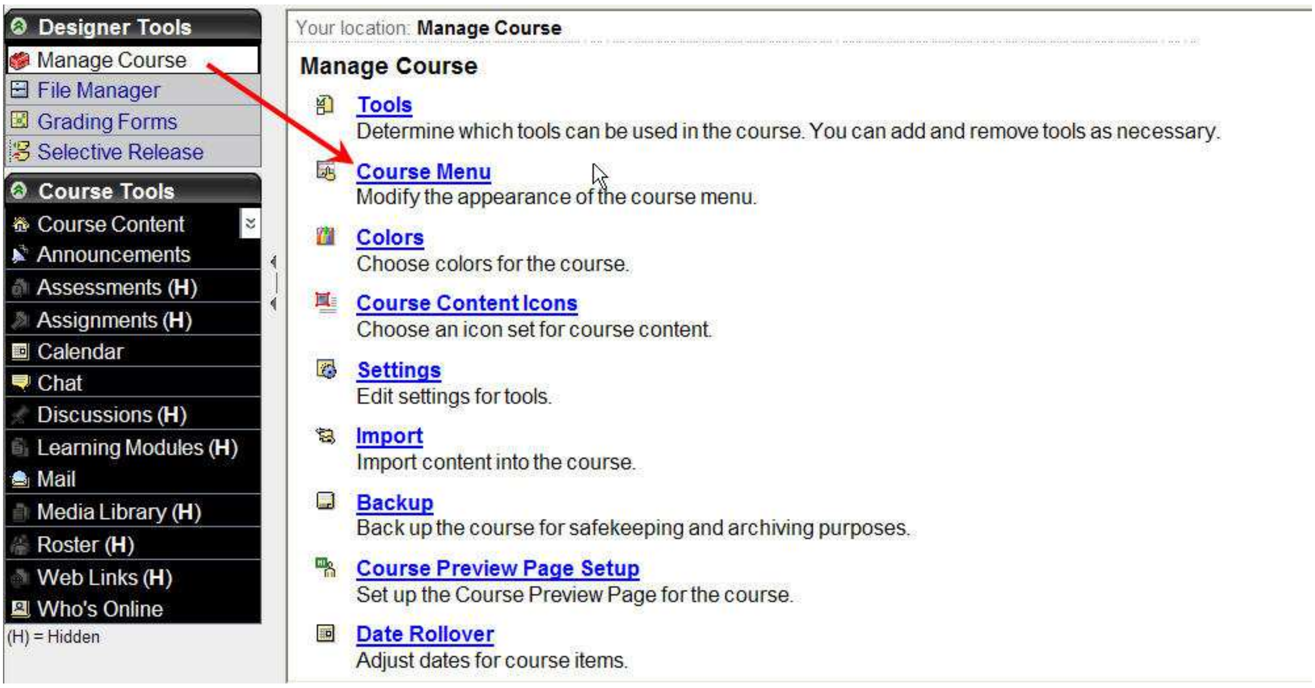
- Manage students
- Track students
- Grade discussions, assessments, and assignments

Student View Tab
-This tab allows you to experience the course as a student, including testing out assessment and assignment submission.



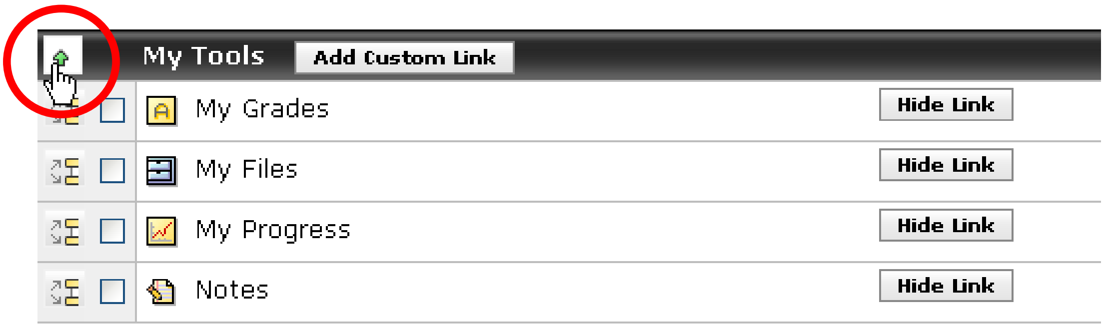
Customizing Your Course

Step 1: Customizing your course menu



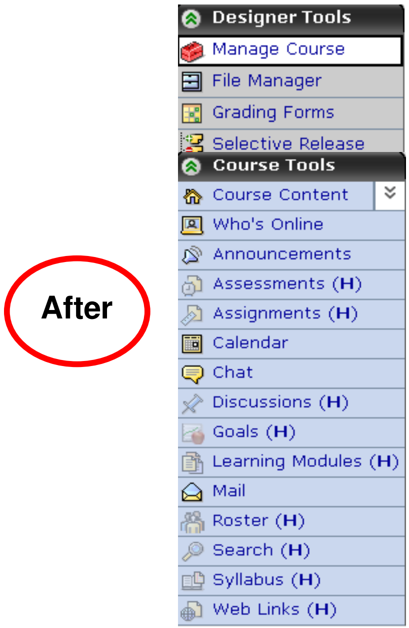
Shifting Course & Designer Tools in the Menu Bar

Scroll down to where it says “My Tools”. To the left of “My Tools”, click on the green arrow pointing upward.



-“My Tools” will then switch place with “Course Tools” so that on your side menu bar, “My Tools” will display on top of “Course Tools”.

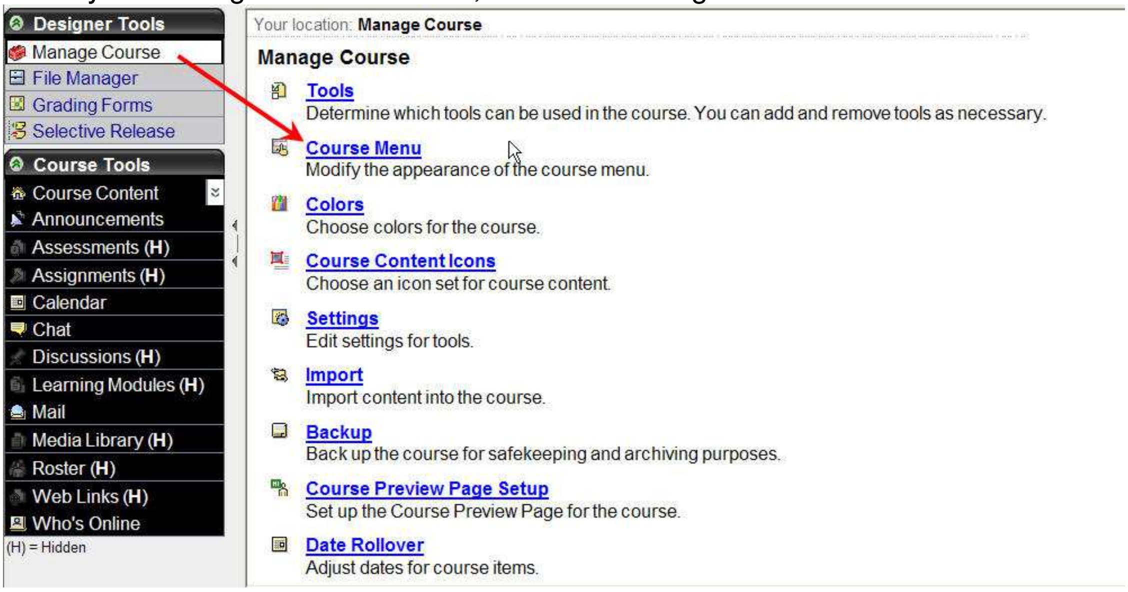
Switching the side bars will make it easier for you to navigate as an instructor.

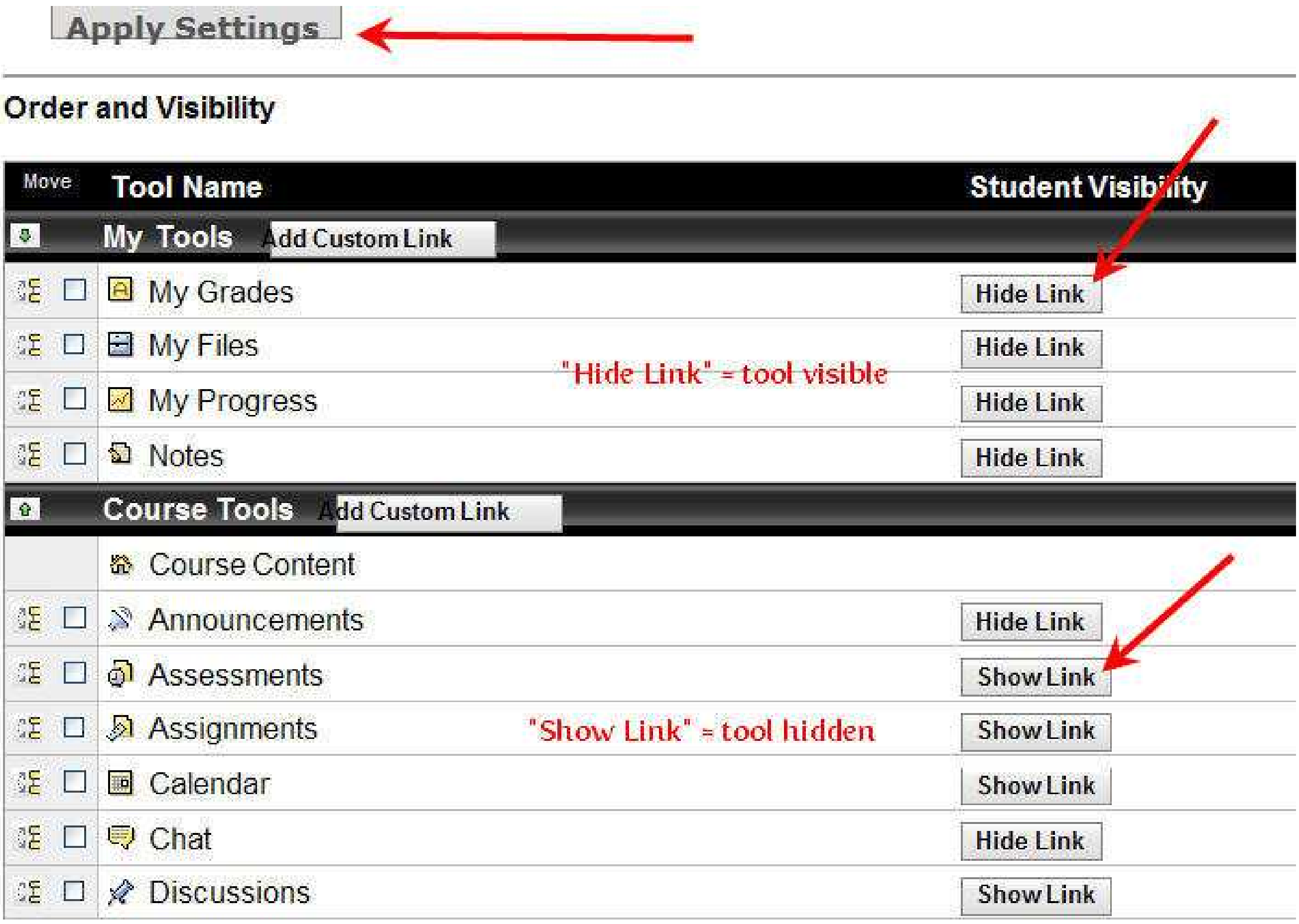


Hiding Course Tools on the menu from Student View and Navigation

-Next thing you want to do before continuing to build your course is to hide unnecessary course tools on your side menu so that it’ll be viewable to you (instructor) but hidden to the students. Reason for this is to prevent students from navigating using the side menu.

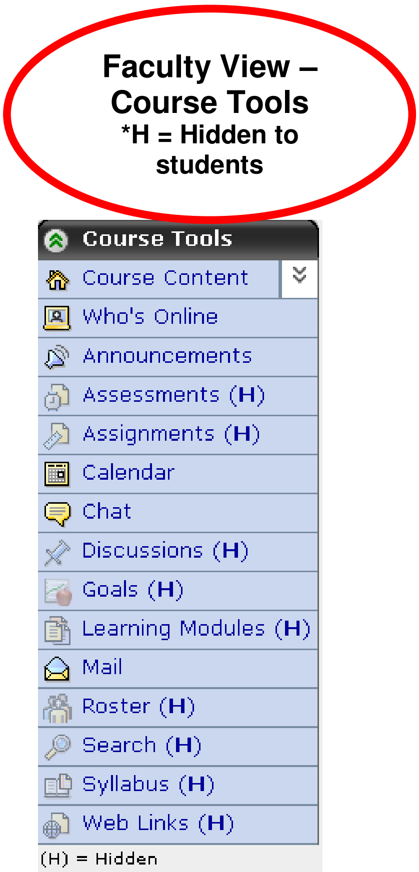
1. Under your “Designer Tools” menu, click on “Manage Course” and then Course Menu

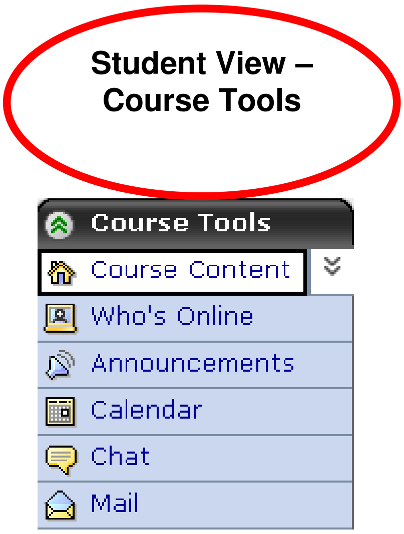




Special Note: “Hide Link” indicates a link that is currently visible on the tool bar.
“Show Link” indicates a link that is currently hidden on the tool bar.

2. To the right of each tool, there is a button that says "Hide Link". Click on "Hide Link" to hide the link. The link will then turn into a "Show Link". To unhide the tool, simply click on "Show Link" to the right of the hidden link.





- Hide the following tools:
  - Assessments
  - Assignments
  - Discussions
  - Goals
  - Learning Modules
  - Roster
  - Search
  - Syllabus
  - Web Links

Special Note: "H" denotes that the tool is hidden from student view.

Creating your course Home Page in PLATO/VISTA

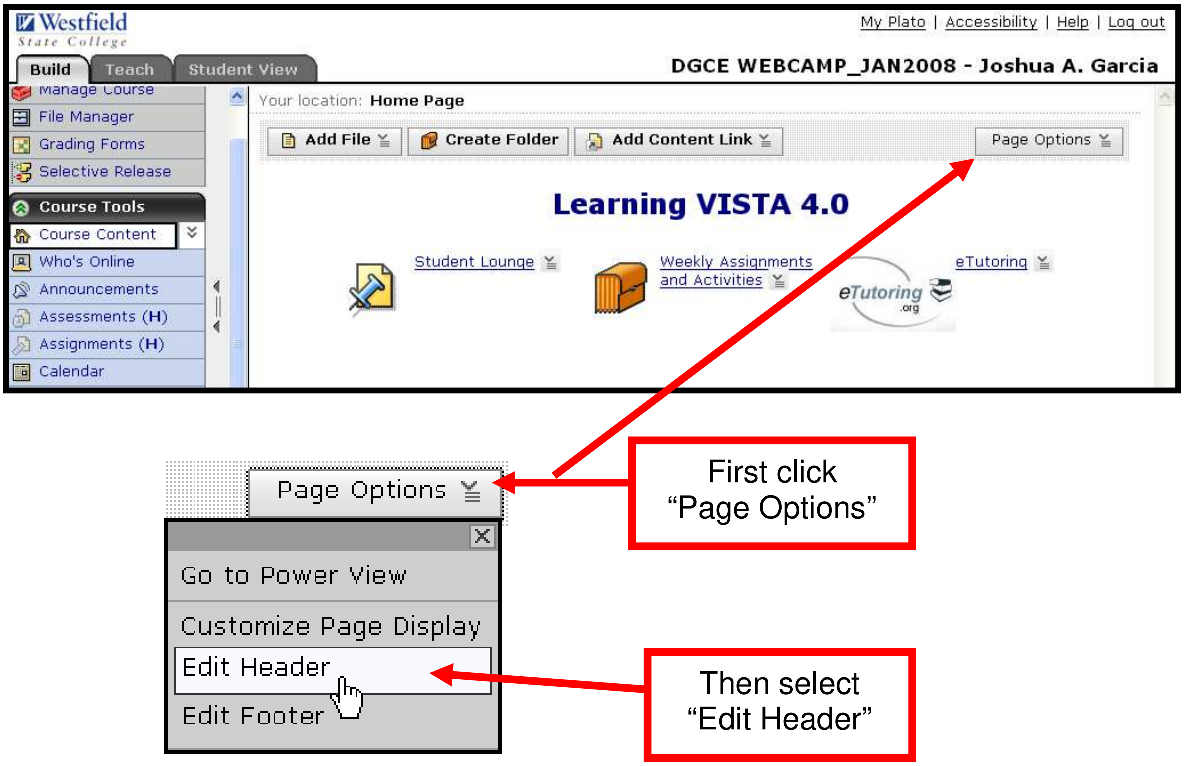
1. Keep your Home Page simple. VISTA is a folder/organized system. The Home Page should have only a few icons.

2. Below is an example of a developed Home Page.

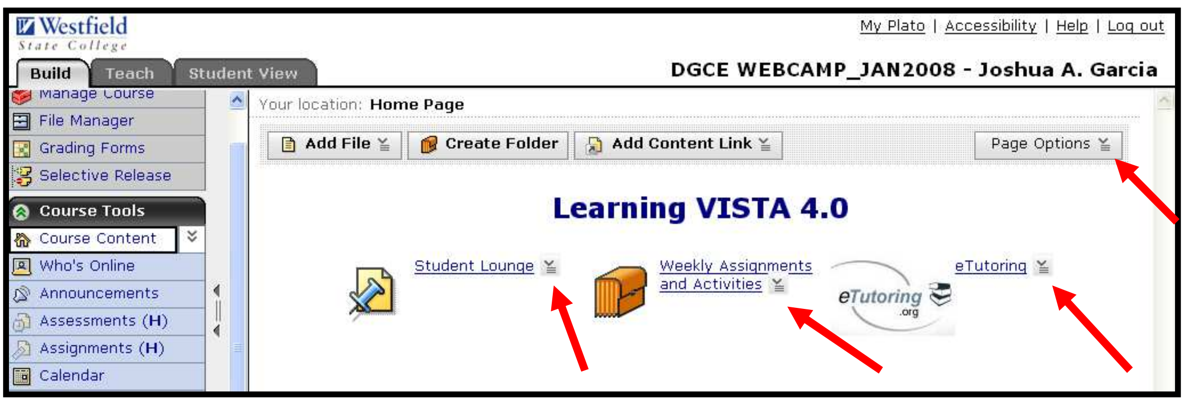
3. When you are ready to develop your Home Page, the Home Page should include the title of the course in the header and 3 components similar to the picture below.

Note: See "Adding Components" on page 28 & 63 to know more about different components.

4. The first thing to do is to create the title of the course in the header. To do this, click on "Page Options" on the top right side of your screen, and select "Edit Header".

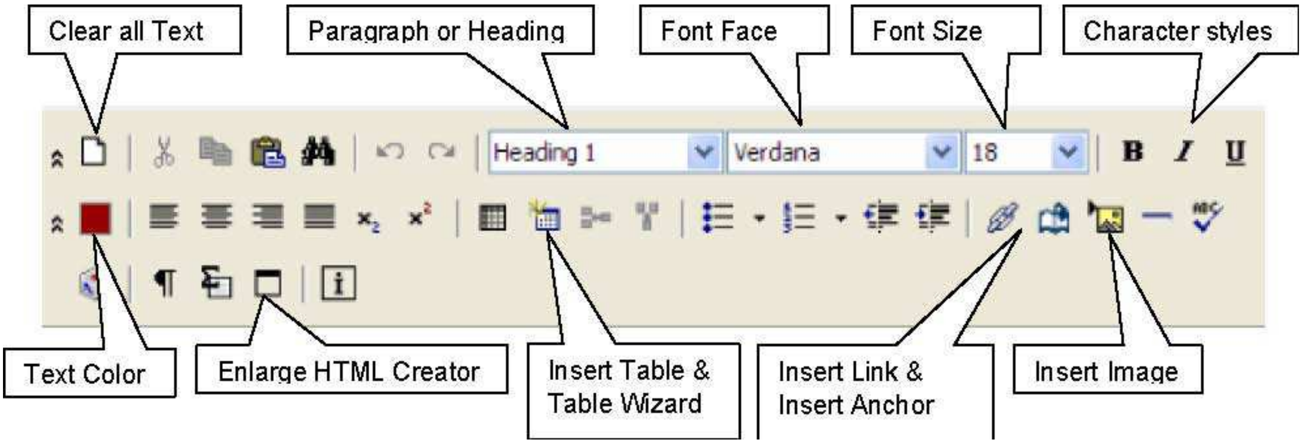


Make Changes to a Page, a File, a Link, or an Icon-Use Action Menu



Using the HTML Creator

Overview of the HTML Creator Toolbar



Tools and What They Do

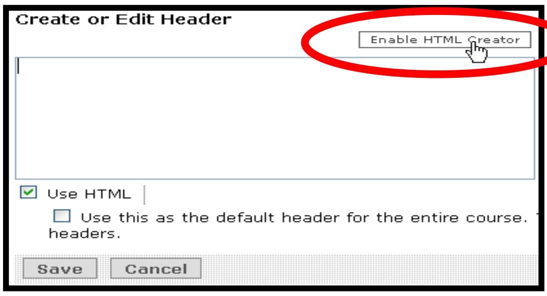
Tool	What It Does
New	Clears the Content box.
Undo	Use to undo mistakes.
Redo	If you decide you do not want to undo an action, use the Redo button.
Paragraph Format	Applies various paragraph formatting to selected text. Choose from Paragraph, Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.
Font Face	Changes the font face of the selected text. Use only these Standard fonts: Arial, Georgia, Times, Times New Roman, Trebuchet, Verdana
Font Size	Changes the size of the selected text.

Insert Table	To insert a custom table: Place your cursor where you want to insert a table and click the Insert Table button. Under Number of rows/columns, select the number of rows and columns. Enter the table, row, column, cell, and color properties you want and click OK.
Insert Table Wizard	To insert a basic table: Place your cursor where you want to insert a table and click the Insert Table Wizard button. Drag to highlight the number of rows and columns that you want to insert and then click your mouse.
Insert Row	Inserts a row into a table.
Insert Column	Inserts a column into a table.
Insert Link	To insert a link: Place your cursor where you want the link to appear and click the Insert Link button. To insert a link to a file on your computer, click Browse and select the file. To insert a link to a file on the Internet, enter the complete URL of the file into the URL text box. *Tip: Rather than typing the complete URL, copy the URL from a web browser and paste it in the text box.* In the Link Text text box, enter the text you want to represent the link and click OK.
Insert Named Anchor (Bookmark)	A bookmark is an invisible marker in a document (the equivalent in HTML to a named anchor, or internal link within a page). You can link to a particular location within a document by first inserting a bookmark and then creating a link to the bookmark. To insert a bookmark: Click where you want the bookmark, then click the Insert Bookmark button. Enter a name for the bookmark (no spaces!) and click OK. The bookmark is inserted in the editing area. A flag signifies the location of the bookmark. *Tip: To rename the bookmark, right-click the flag and choose Bookmark Properties. Edit the name and click OK.* To create a link to the bookmark:

	Place your cursor in the location in which you want to create a link to the bookmark and click the Insert Link button. Next to Link type, select File Browse or Upload and in the text box, enter a pound sign (#), followed by the name of the bookmark. *Example: To link to a bookmark named Top, enter #Top.* In the Link Text text box, enter the text you want to represent the link and click OK.
Insert Image	Inserts an image. *Note: Only .gif, .jpg, or .png images can be used in the HTML Creator.*
Insert Horizontal Line	Inserts a horizontal line.
Check Spelling	Checks the text spelling.
Insert Symbol	Inserts a symbol (e.g. ©, Ω, ç).
Show All	Shows paragraph and other formatting marks.
Document Statistics	Shows the number of words, characters, paragraphs, and images in the text.
Frame Window Mode	Opens the HTML Creator in a new window that can be resized.

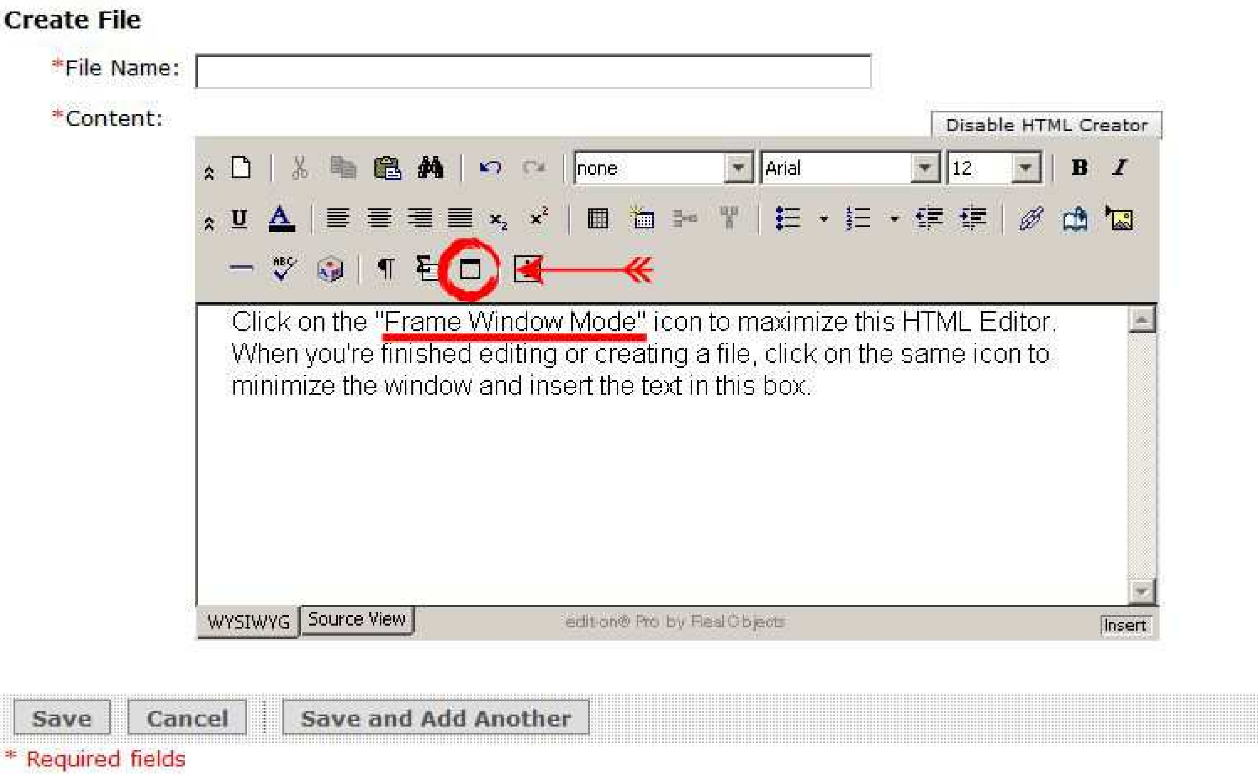
Using the HTML Header

-Once you have opened the "Edit Header" or "Edit Footer", type in the information you would like displayed in the header or footer of the page. Use HTML code to style your text, select the "Enable HTML Creator" option to do so. When you are done, click "Save".

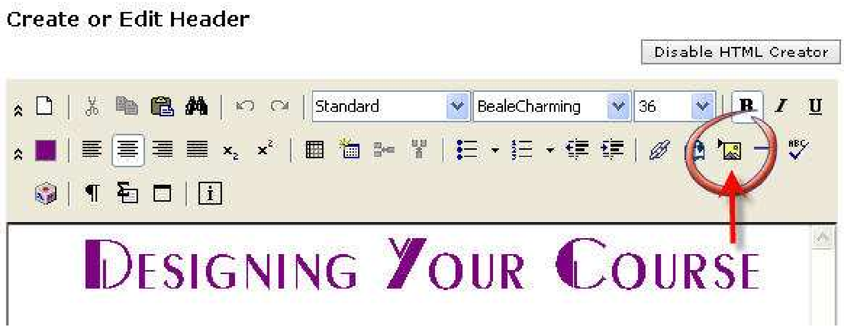


When using the HTML editor, use the Enter to double space and Shift/Enter for single space.

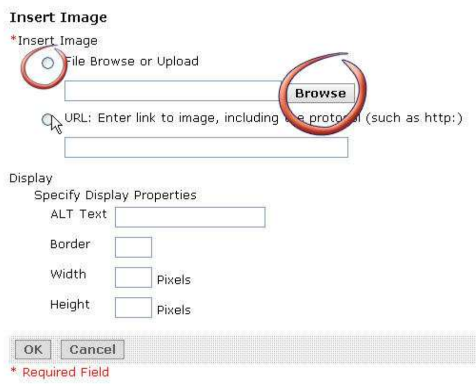
-Once the HTML Creator is enabled, put the title of the course within the text box as in the example below. You can bold, italicize, change font, change color, etc., when you using the HTML Creator. When you are done, click “Save”.



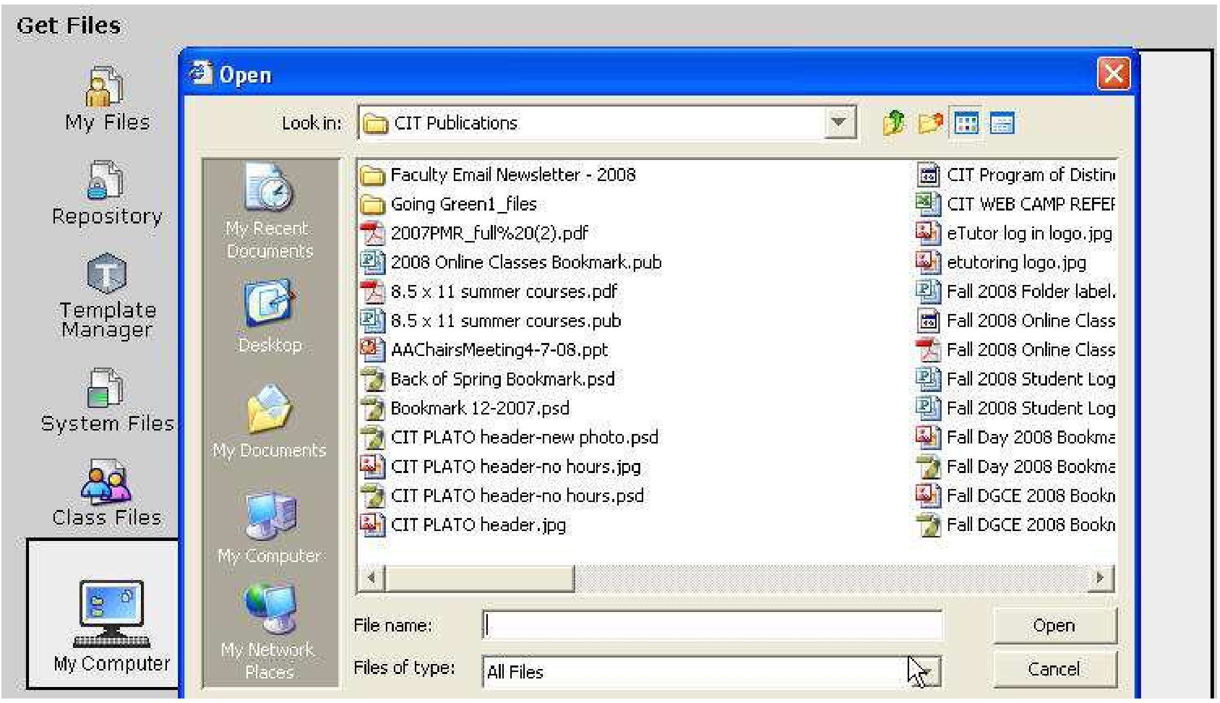
Adding an Image – While in “Edit Header”, you can add an image to your page by clicking on the Picture icon.



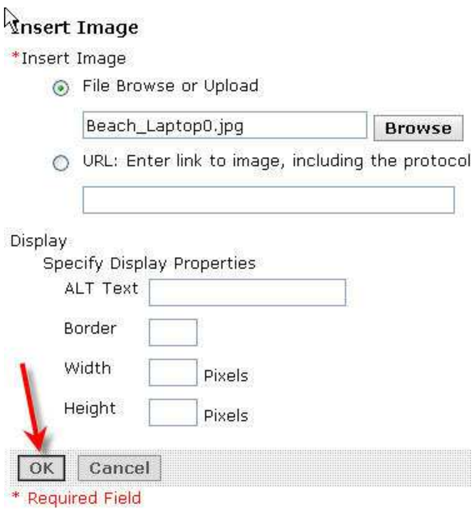
After clicking on the icon, a dialogue box will open that requests the location of the image file:



Once you select “File Browse” and click on the “Browse” button, another dialogue box will open to aid in selecting the image file you want to use:



Select your file and click “Open” and next you will see:

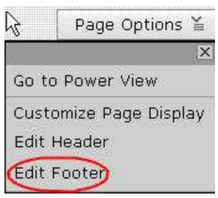


Click on OK and then Save. The image will now be a part of your header on the home page.

Creating or Editing a Footer – Begin by clicking on Page Options as you did for the header but instead, select “Edit Footer”. The process is the same as creating or editing a Header.

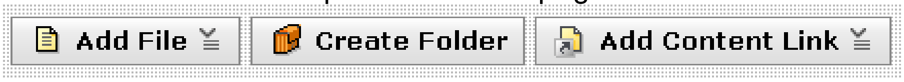
Good items to include in a footer would be:

- your name
- office location
- office hours
- phone numbers



Adding Components

1. In order to add any components, you must be in the "Build" mode by clicking on the "Build" tab. You will see three components on the page as shown below.



2. These are several types of things that can be added to the Home Page.

- **Folders:** Like organizer pages, these allow you to categorize the other links on the Home Page

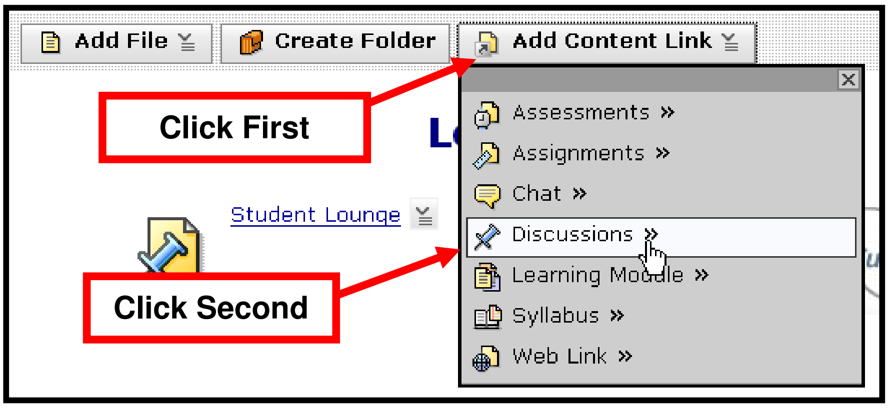
- **Files:** anything you upload to VISTA that is not a tool within VISTA

- **Content:** VISTA tools and instances, i.e. discussions, quizzes, etc.

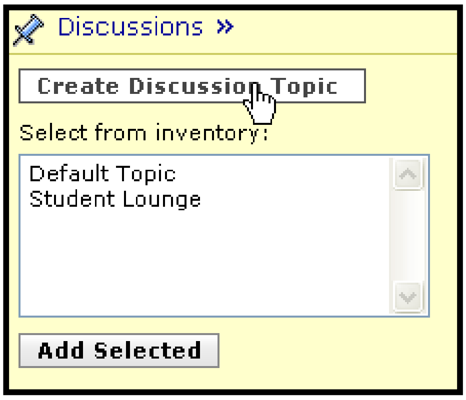
➢ **NOTE:** See page 63 to learn more about adding

Student Lounge Discussion Forum - The first component to add is the Student Lounge. The student lounge is an opportunity for students to share discussions with each other. Student Lounge is created by creating a "discussion forum".

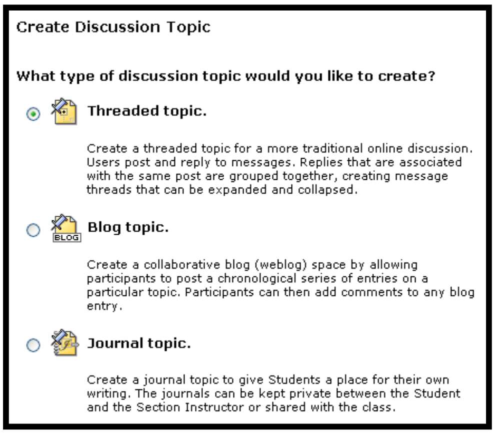
-To create a "Student Lounge" go to "Add Content Link" and click on "Discussions".



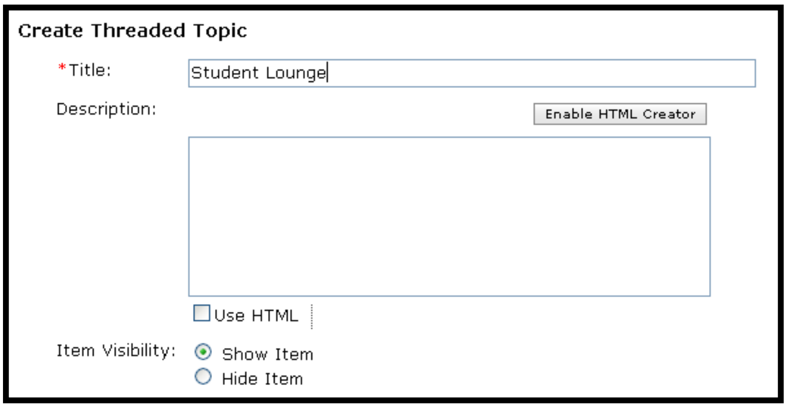
-Click on "Create Discussion Topic"



-Choose "Threaded topic"



-Title the Threaded topic "Student Lounge" and click "Save".

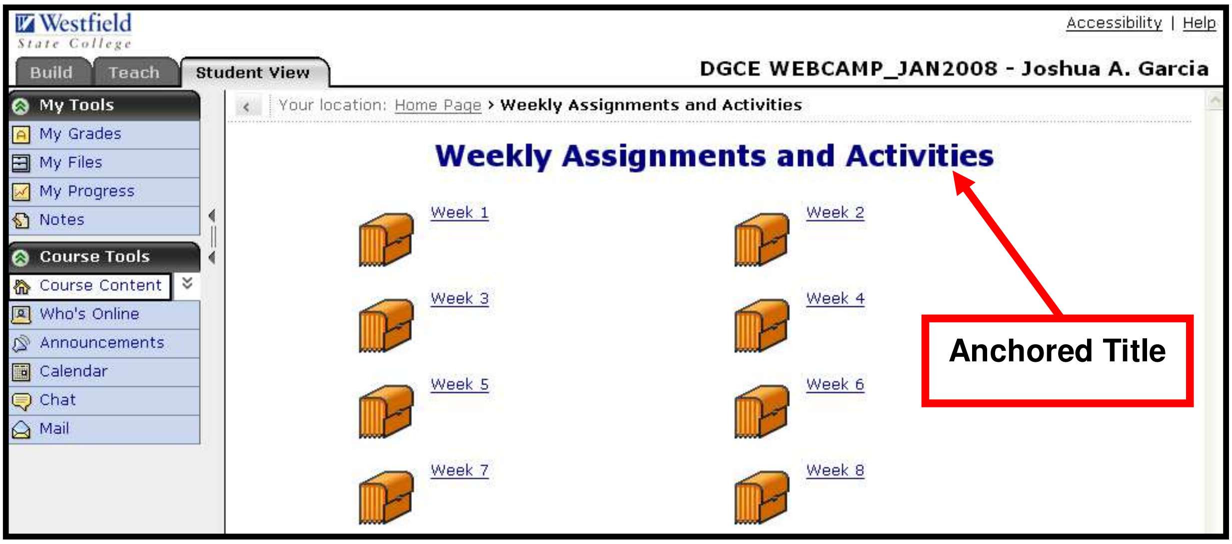


- **Note:** See “Creating Discussion Topic” on page 48 to learn more about building Discussion Forums.

Weekly Assignments and Activities folder system

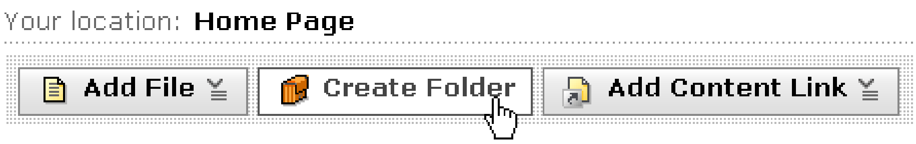
-The Weekly Assignments and Activities folder system is a simple structure that allows you to organize your course and make it easier to navigate for students.

Weekly Folders - The second component on the Home Page is the Weekly “Assignments and Activities” folder. This folder will contain a series of other folders providing weekly assignments and activities. Therefore when students click on the “Weekly Assignments and Activities” folder, they will see a screen similar to the example below.



- Within these weekly folders, you will post the assignments and activities for that week.

-To create a folder, click on “Create Folder”



-A “Create Folder” box will appear. In the title field, type in the week (i.e. Week 4) and click “Save”.

-Be sure to go into that Week 4 folder created and title the folder the appropriate week in the header.

Click “Add Another Folder” to add additional folders

1. The first thing you want to add in a Weekly Assignments and Activities folder is a “Getting Started” folder.

   -The Getting Started Folder should include the following elements.
   - Syllabus
   - Course Texts (include access codes or any other software simulations)
   - Course Materials (head set for Elluminate web cam)
   - Link to Bookstore
   - Used Text Book link to purchase an access code
   - Page with viewers or downloads students will need for your course
   - Link to Course Preview Plan
   - Discussion Forums Participation Rubric
   - Disability Etiquette
   - Academic Honesty Policy
   - Any other resources your students will find helpful or will use in class

2. After creating the Getting Started folder, create an additional 15 Weekly Folders anchored for the week or however you are going to chunk the learning.

   -Week 1 Folder
   - Follow Lynn’s KISS RULE
     - **K** – Keep
     - **I** – It
     - **S** – Simply
     - **S** – Structured for students and you

-Keep your week 1 activities to simple warm up activities – have students post their bio in the student lounge, send you an e-mail, post in a discussion forum, do an assignment non graded, take a practice quiz, and orient themselves to the course structure. Students will add /drop during this week and may not be able to log in or know how to log in, or may experience technical difficulties setting up their class on their computers.

-Lynn Zayac usually has students do course work this week but in a non graded/ non threatening fashion. This sets the stage and allows Lynn to move quickly in the following weeks.

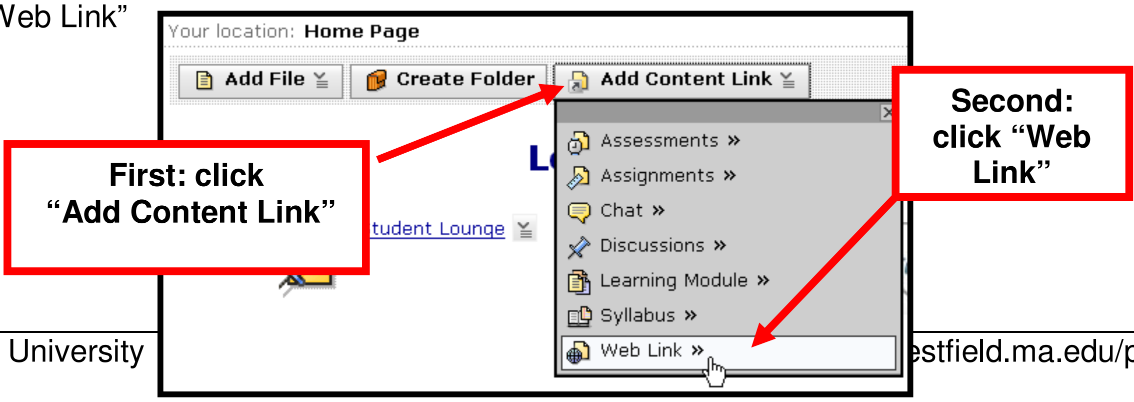
-Week 2 Folder

- Week 2 should contain the following samples. You may hide or delete these later if you choose to copy this class.
  - “Start Here” single file instructions for the week
  - Graded Discussion forum
  - Assignment
  - Assessment (Quiz) using Respondus or the VISTA internal test generator
  - Web Link
  - Chat
  - Other tools you may use in your class. Examples: podcast, tutorial, and or an Elluminate session

The 3rd component is an eTutoring Web Link.

- eTutoring.org is an online tutoring platform which allows tutors to work with students synchronously and asynchronously, answering questions in real time, or replying to questions and essay submissions that students have left for review and commentary.
- Inside the eTutoring platform, **students** and **tutors** have access to:
  - **eQuestions**: online question submission with an archive of previously posted questions & answers.
  - **eWriting**: online writing lab with an archive of previously submitted papers and revisions
  - **eChat**: live communication tool that allows tutors and students to chat, whiteboard, share files & applications, as well as use audio & video tools.
  - **Resources**: vast collection of tips, techniques and additional links to help students improve their writing skills.

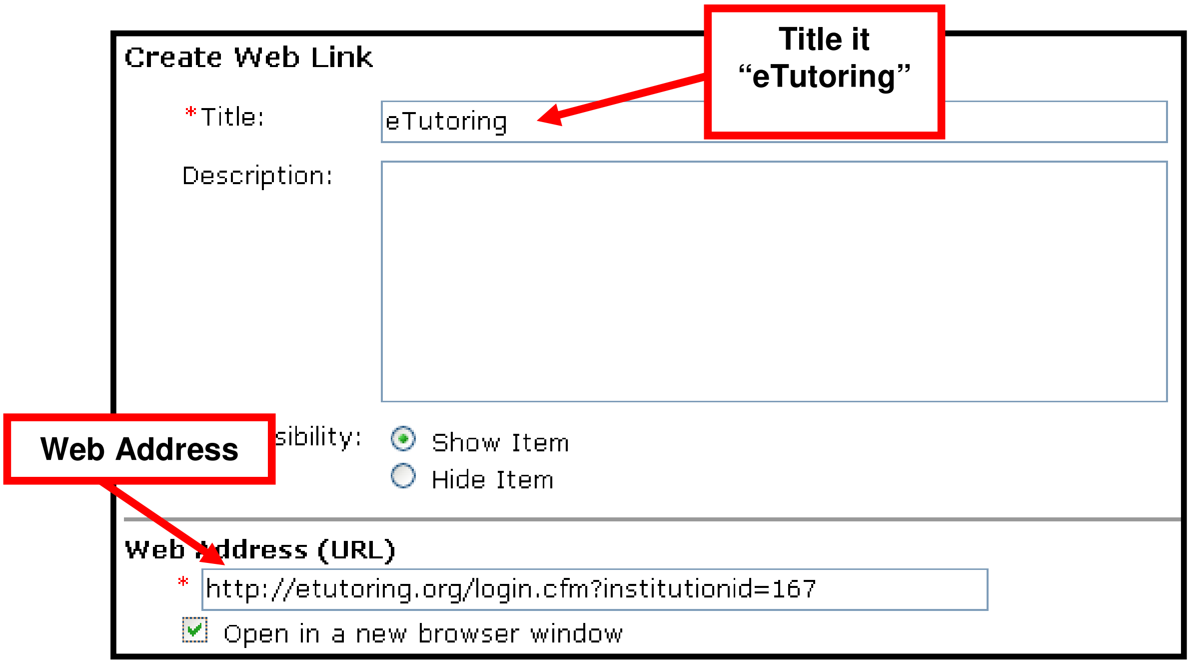
-To create an eTutoring link on your page, go to “Add Content Link” and click on “Web Link”



Third: click “Create Web Link”

-A “Create Web Link” box should appear on your screen. Just like the image below, title the link “eTutoring” in the title field.
-The Web Address (URL) goes in the “Web Address (URL)” field. The eTutoring link could be found on the PLATO Home Page if you would like to copy and paste the URL address instead of typing the address.

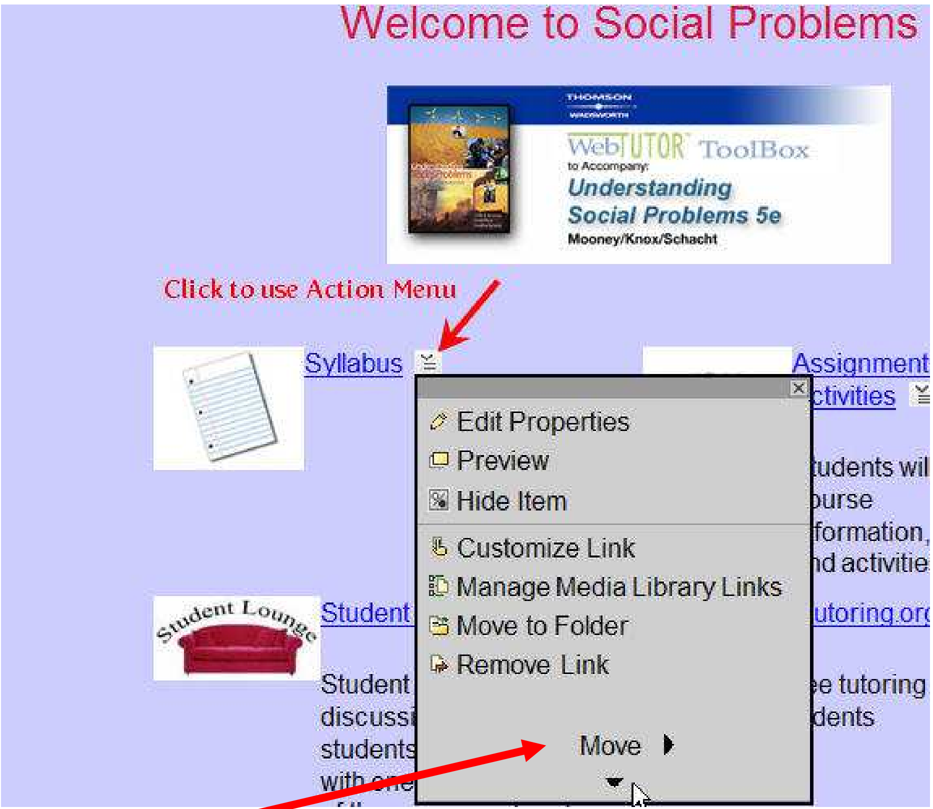
-Check off the “Open in a new browser window box” so that when the link is clicked on, the web page will show up in a new window.



-Click “Save”

NOTE: To know more on how to create Web Links (i.e. eTutoring link), see page 65.

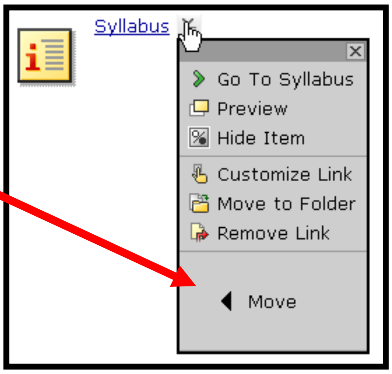
Make Changes to a File, a Link or an Icon-Use Action Menu



Moving Icons

1. You can change the order of objects placed on your Home Page. Click on the dropdown menu next to the icon you want to move. Choose the arrows to move it to the right, left, up or down.

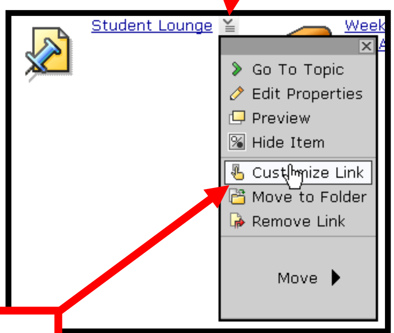
Click on arrow to move direction



Dropdown arrow which leads to a dropdown menu

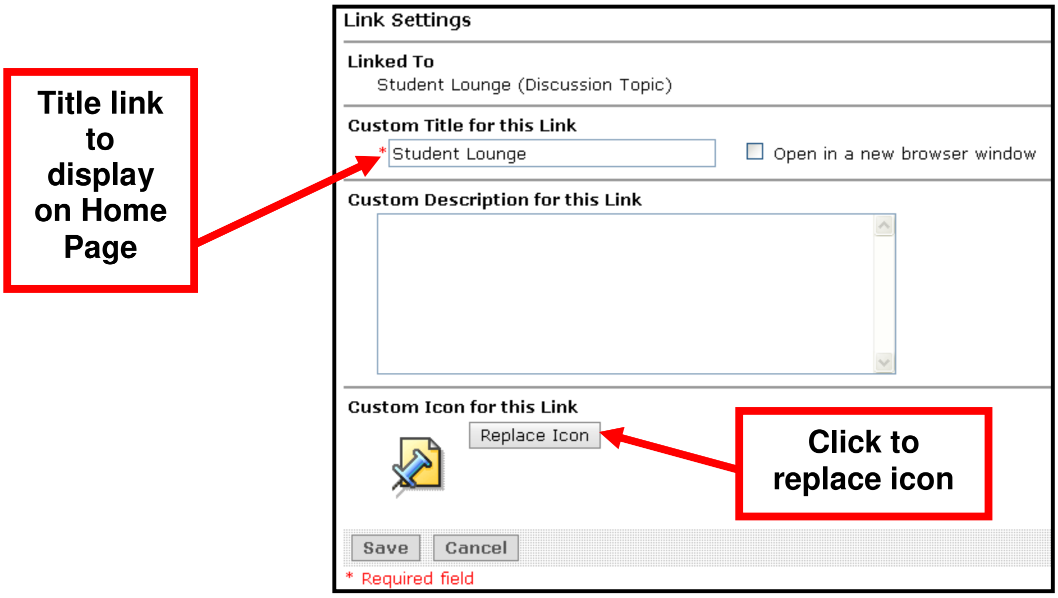
Customize your Icons

1. You can customize your icons with images, descriptions, and titles. Choose "Customize Link" from the icon dropdown menu of the icon you would like to customize.



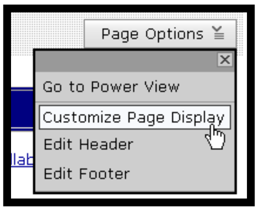
Click to Customize

2. Add a title to your link to display on the Home Page. Give your link a description to be displayed next to the icon on the home page. Note: keep descriptions short and simple. Replace your current icon with a new image or choose to revert to the standard icon created by VISTA. The select “Save”.

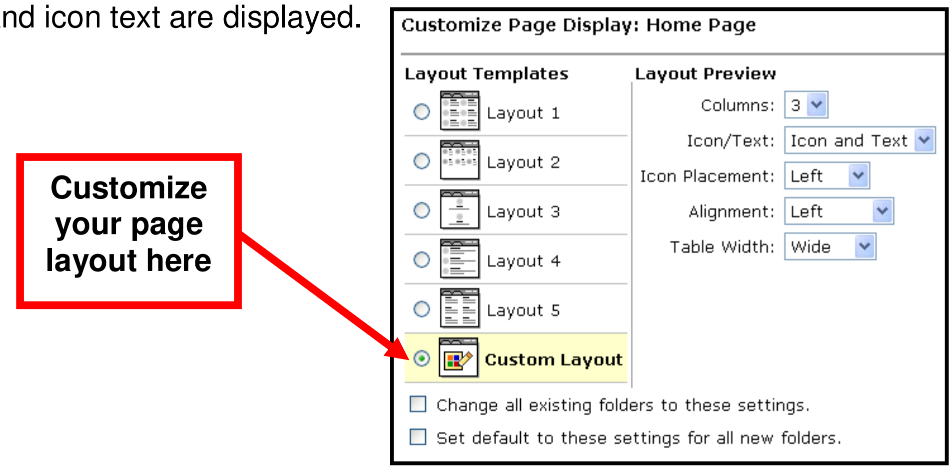


Customize the Page Layout

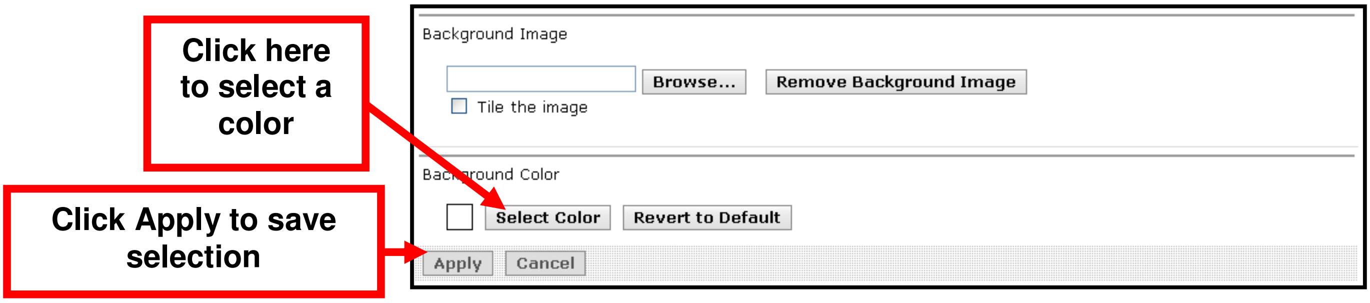
1. To customize the Home Page, click on “Page Options” and choose “Customize Page Display.”



2. The first section allows you to customize the layout of your page icons and text using WebCT layout templates. In the layout preview section you can choose how your icons and icon text are displayed.



3. The background section allows you to set an image background or background color on your page. Click Apply to save choice.



Adding your Syllabus File

- **NOTE:** See How to Upload Files (i.e. Syllabus) into VISTA below.

How to Upload Files in VISTA

Uploading Files

1. Make sure you are on the “Build” tab and click on “File Manager” from the left-hand side of the page under the “Designer Tools” menu.

2. Before you can use a file within your course, it must be uploaded to the file manager first. To import a file, select “Get Files”

3. You will be directed to a new window to browse for your file. Select the location of your file from the list on the left. You can select from my files, repository, template manager, class files, or my computer. “My Files” allows you to navigate around your personally uploaded files. Selecting “My Computer” will open a second window for you to navigate around your desktop. After you have selected your file, it will be placed in your course files. You can select more than one file to upload at one time – up to ten depending on the file size.

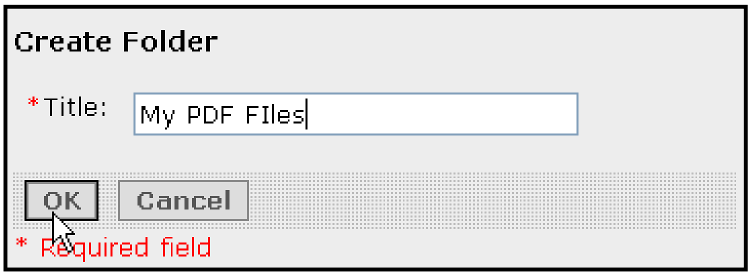
Select “My Computer” to browse for files within your flash drive or personal computer

Creating and using folders inside Your File manager

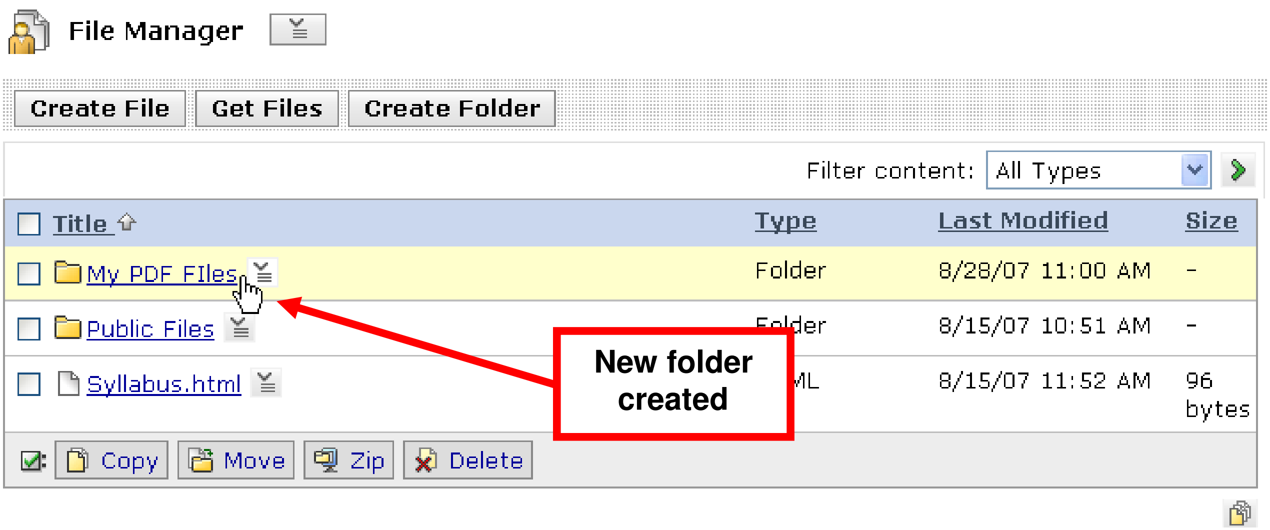
-It is suggested that you create different folders to organize your files. For example, you can put all your pictures in a folder called "Images". Or you can put all the PDF files of your notes under a folder called "Notes". You can also divide up the content by chapters or topics, whichever makes it easier for you to find your materials within your file manager.

1. To create a new folder, select "Create Folders" from the options under the "File Manager" title.

2. Name your folder and select "OK".



-The new folder will be added to the file manager window



1. If you put a file in the wrong place, you can use the "Move" button in the "File Manager" area to put the file in the proper folder. You can also Copy, Zip, and Delete folders using this same toolbar at the bottom of the File Manager window.

2. You can now place these files (any files uploaded in file manager) any where in your course: Home Page, an organizer page, a learning module, or within the action menu of a learning module.

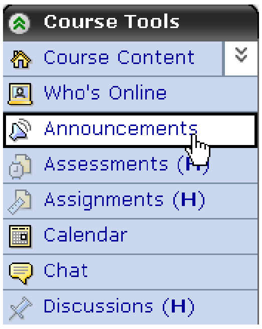
Communication Tools

Creating Announcements in VISTA

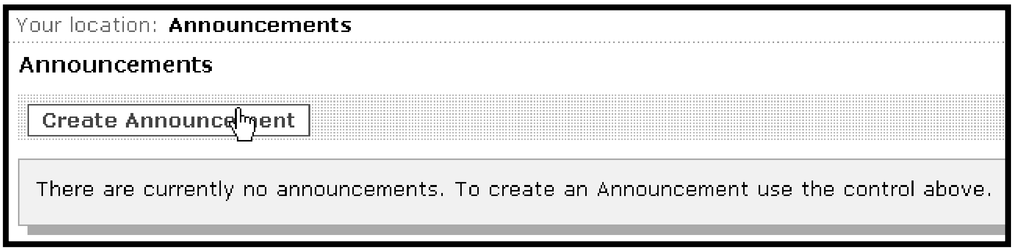
-When to send an announcement instead of private mail to everyone:

- If you are sending a message that doesn't need to be replied to, send an announcement. An announcement can be a reminder, a notification of a change, or something you only wanted posted for a specific amount of time.

1. To create an Announcement in VISTA click on "Announcements" under "Course Tools" in the "Build" or "Teach" tabs.



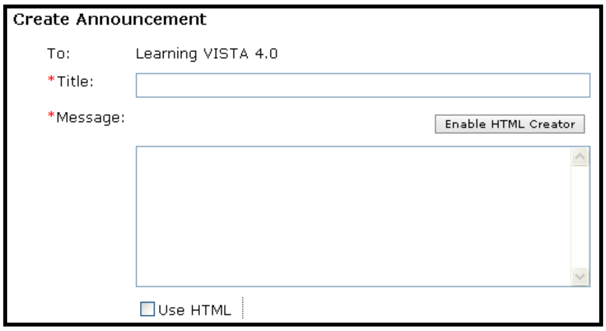
2. Now click on "Create Announcement" as shown below.



-There are three areas you must complete to create the announcement: Announcement Information, Recipients, and Delivery Dates.

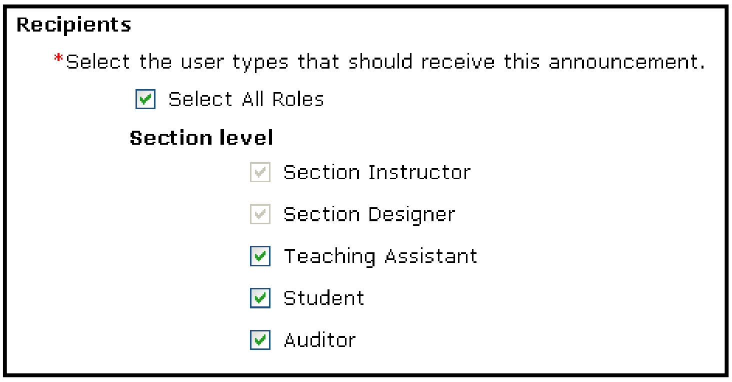
Announcement Information:

-Two pieces of information need to be filled out under announcement information. The first piece is the Title. The title is very important, especially for archival purposes. If you or a student is searching for a particular announcement, the name is what you will go by without having to open each one. The next bit of information that is needed is the Message. What do you want to tell the students? Be explicit and concise.



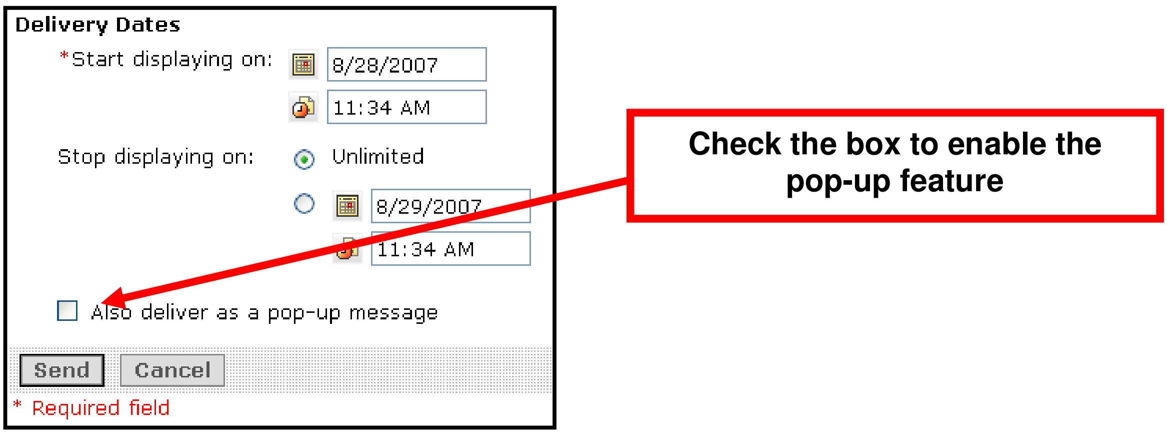
Recipients

-You must then decide who is going to receive your message. You can select a particular role; for example, student or teaching assistant, or you can send it to more than one role. If you want to send it to everyone, select the box next to “Select All Roles” as shown below.



Delivery Dates

-The last piece you need to determine when creating an announcement is when do you want the announcement to be available and for how long. The beginning date is important. You can set up your announcements ahead of time and they will appear on the date that you select. If you want the announcements to be an archive for students, you should select “Never” as the end date. If you don’t want it be an archive, you can select a particular date when they will no longer be able to view the announcement. This could be useful to award students that view VISTA often, to let them know about pop quizzes or other course surprises.



-You also have the option to have the announcement pop-up as soon as the student enters the course. To do this, check the box next to a pop-up message as shown above.

NOTE: Use the pop-up feature so students will see the announcement even if they are passive within your course.

-When you have completed filling in all the information, click on “Send”.

-Be aware, if you click on the announcement to edit it, make sure you click on send. If you select cancel, you will loose the opportunity to edit the announcement.

-For the students to view the announcements, make sure you have it showing within the course tools.

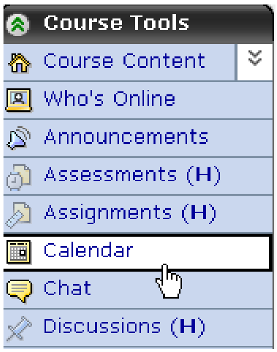
-To test an announcement, click on “My Plato” on the top right hand corner of your screen. This will allow you to see what the pop-up will look like.

-Now you and your students have the opportunity to view and retrieve class announcements.

Using the Calendar in VISTA

Making the Calendar Available for Students

-In order for the students to have access to the calendar, you will need to add the Calendar tool under Course Tools.

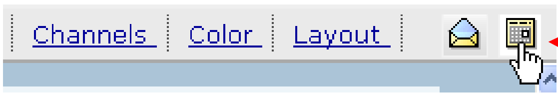


Accessing and Viewing the Calendar

-Calendar allows you to view and create entries for campus or personal events.
Entries can be viewed for a day, a week, or a month on the

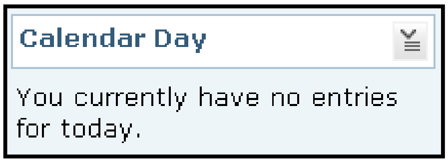
→ My PLATO page
→ In your sections

-On your "My Plato" page, you can click on the Calendar icon on the upper right-hand side of the screen.



Calendar shortcut located on "My Plato" page.

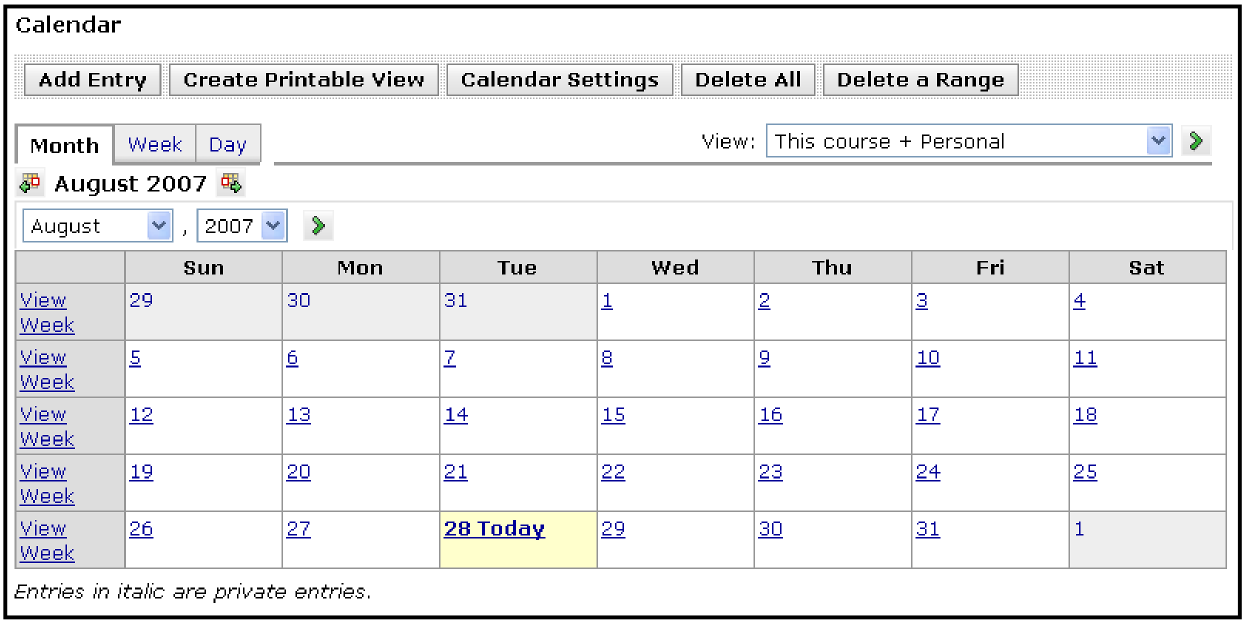
-You can also see the entries for that day under "Calendar Day", below the list of courses and Campus Announcements.



Section

-From within your section, click on "Calendar" under "Course Tools" as shown above.
You can access the calendar from both the "Build" and "Teach" tabs.

Month View



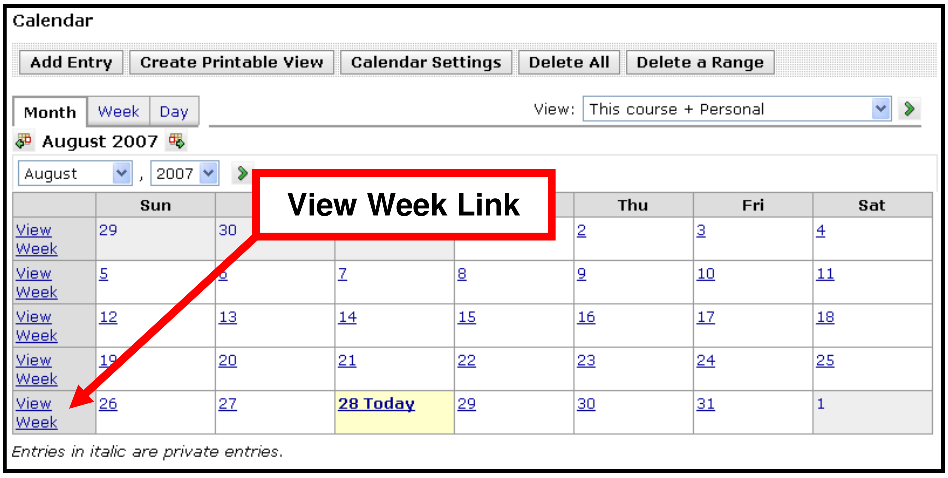
-The "Month View" displays entries for the current month, with the current date highlighted. Entries do not show the detail.

-To display entries for the previous or next month, on either side of the month name, click the previous month or next month icon.

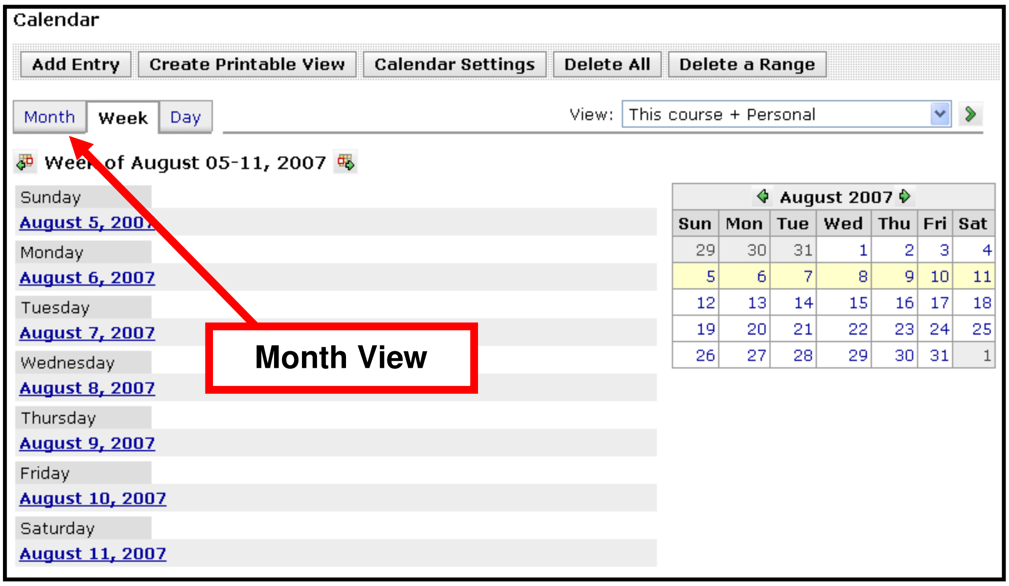
-To quickly select a month that is not adjacent to the current month, select the month and year from the dropdown list and click the green arrow icon.

Week View

-To view entries for a particular week, click the "View Week" link that is next to the week that you want to see.



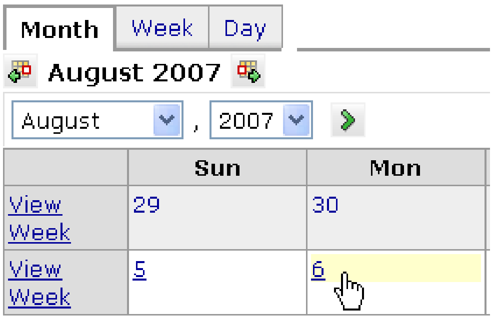
-The week screen appears which displays full entries, including summary and detail.



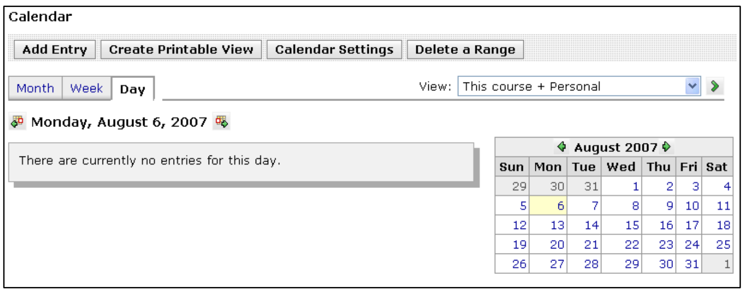
-You can toggle back to Month View by clicking on the “Month” link.

Day View

-To view entries for a single day, click on the date. The Day screen appears.



-The Day screen displays the fully entry for the day, including summary and detail. To display entries for the previous or next day, on either side of the day name, click the Previous Day or Next Day icon.



Calendar Settings

-The calendar can display three types of entries in the "View" dropdown box:

1. **<u>Course-related</u>**: Entries that are public (viewable by all section members) or private (viewable only in your calendar).
2. **<u>Personal</u>:** Private entries that are not related to the course but are for personal reminders.
3. **<u>Institution</u>:** Entries created by the institution administrator to communicate campus events that are viewable by all institution members. (These are not being created at the moment).

-As a section instructor, you can create course-related or personal entries. It is up to you to grant privileges to your students and teaching assistants to create course-related entries that are public.

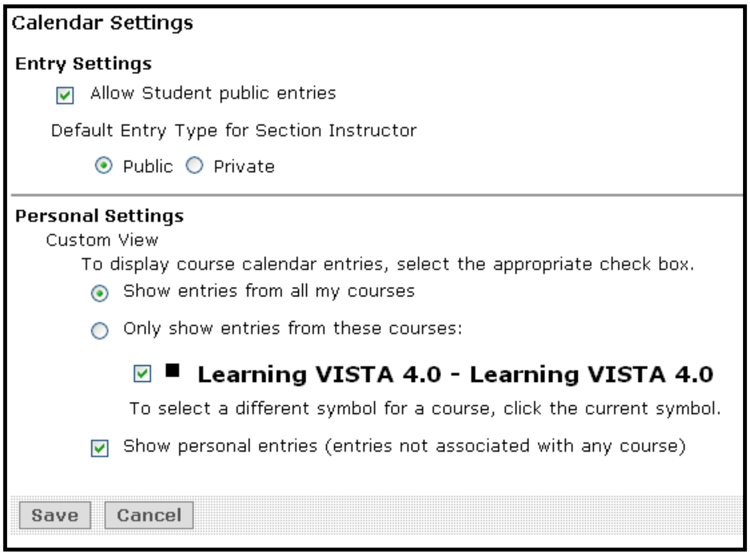
-On the "Calendar Settings" page, you can change the types of entries the calendar can display for you and your students.

-You can allow students to add public entries. If you do not check this textbox the students by default cannot make entries for everyone to see.

-The default entry type for the instructor is Public. You can change this to Private if you do not want your entries to be seen by everyone, you will have to change this to Public if you want people to see your entries. You would want to keep the Calendar private if you are using it for personal purposes.

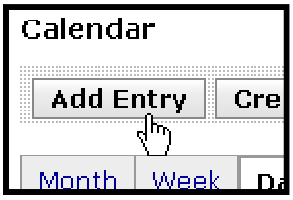
-You can view calendar entries by month, week, or day and start the week on a day of your choice. You can also choose to display

- Entries associated with all courses
- Entries associated with specific courses
- A symbol of your choice to associate with a course
- Personal entries



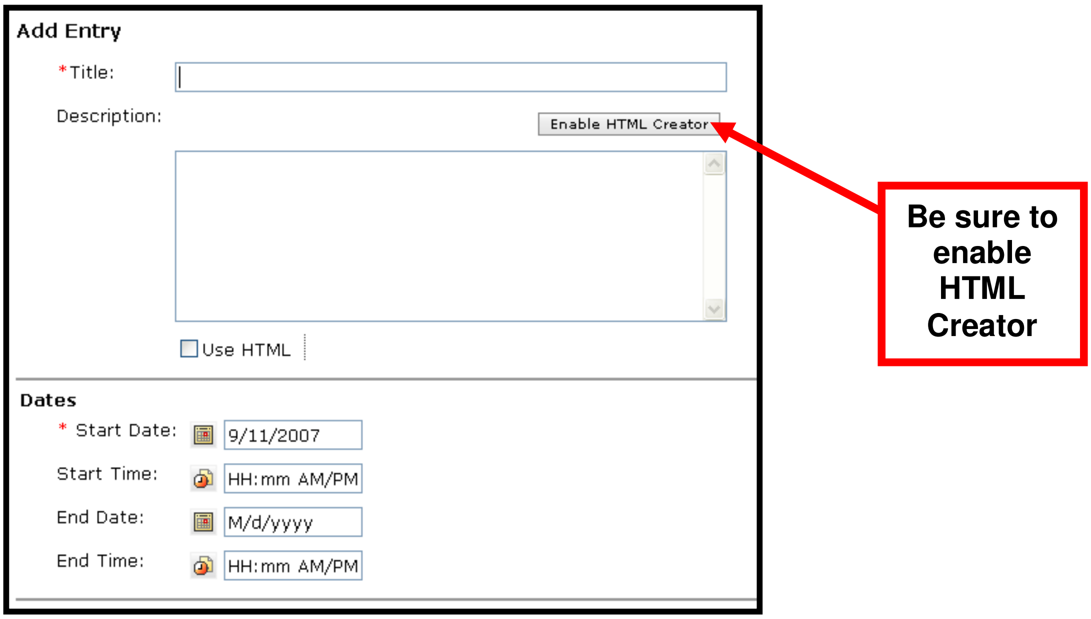
Adding a Calendar Entry

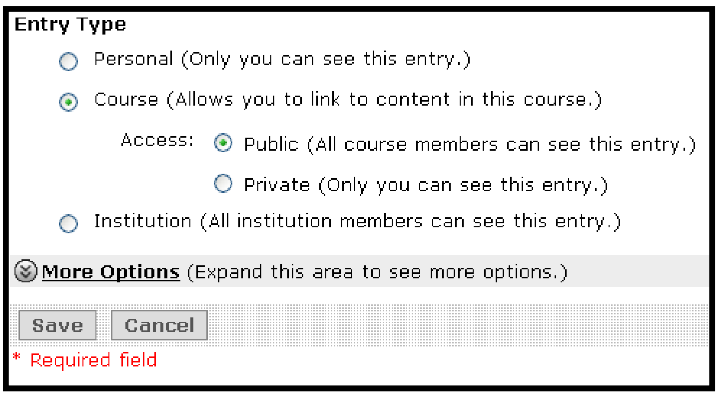
1. To add a new entry to the calendar, click on the day you want to add the entry to. This will take you to the Day view. Then click on the “Add Entry” tab.



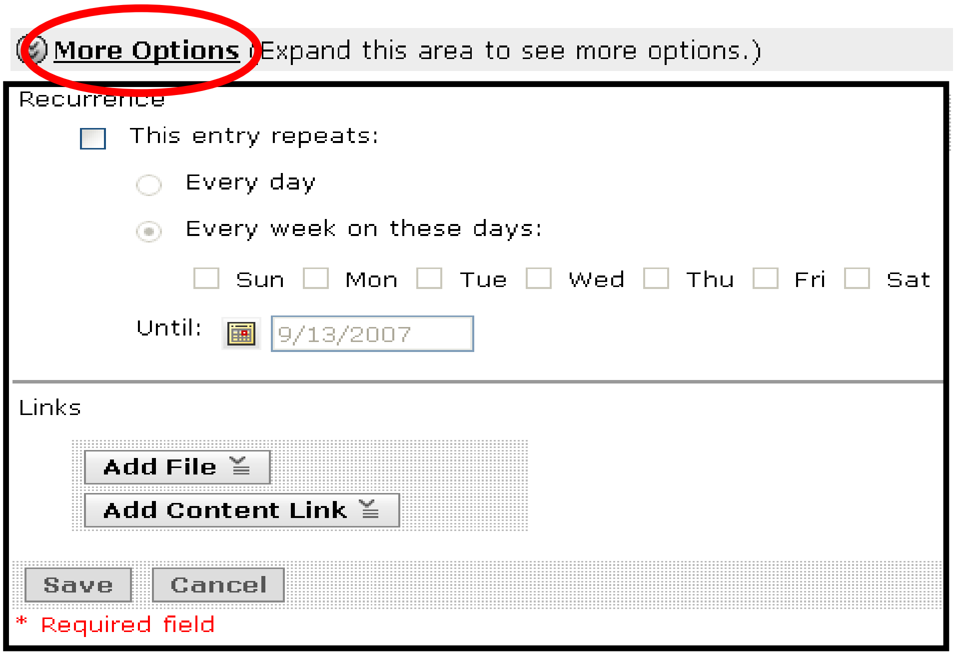
2. Put in a title for the entry and create a summary for the entry. This is a short descriptive title for the entry, which will be shown on the calendar. Determine a start and finish day and time for the entry under the subtitle “Dates”. If this is an all-day entry, click the related textbox.

3. Choose the type of entry. It can be personal or associated with a course. Next, choose an access level. Course-related entries can be private or public. Personal entries can only be private. Type a detail for the entry.





4. For additional settings, click on “More Options”.



-With these options you can provide a link to a component in your course or to an outside URL. You can also repeat this entry every day or every week on the days of your choice, until a certain date. Be aware, though, if you decide to repeat this entry, you need to make the summary generic; for example, “Weekly Quiz” instead of “Quiz 1”. You also need to make sure that if you are repeating every week, the start date, end date and the date repeating must be the same for all the calendar entries.

Using Discussion in VISTA

-Discussion boards are a great way for the students to discuss course materials. It can give an area for groups to work together and a space for students to get to know one another. The “Discussion” tool is an asynchronous tool, which means that participants do not need to be online at the same time to communicate. They can compose and post their messages at any hour or from any place with an internet connection. This tool is one of the most widely used tools in VISTA.

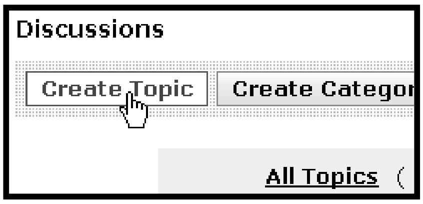
-In VISTA, you will be given the opportunity to decide if you want the discussion topic graded. If you do, VISTA will create a column in the grade book for you and you will be able to look at all of the students’ posting to determine the grade.

1. To create a discussion topic, click on “Discussions” under “Course Tools” on either the “Build” tab or “Teach” tab.

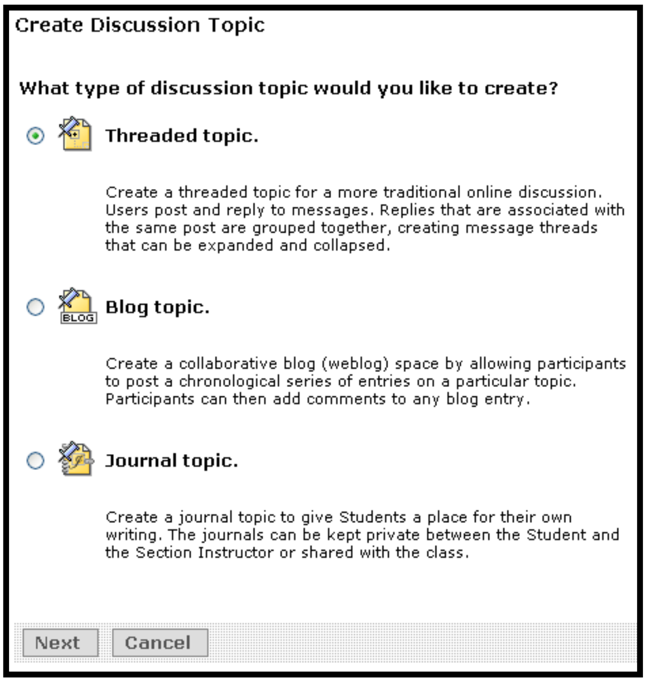
-You have the opportunity now to either create a topic or to create a category. The difference between the two: you cannot post a message in a category, but you can in a topic. The category is an area that topics are grouped and organized. You do not have to use categories if you do not feel it is appropriate for what you want to create.

Creating a Discussion Topic

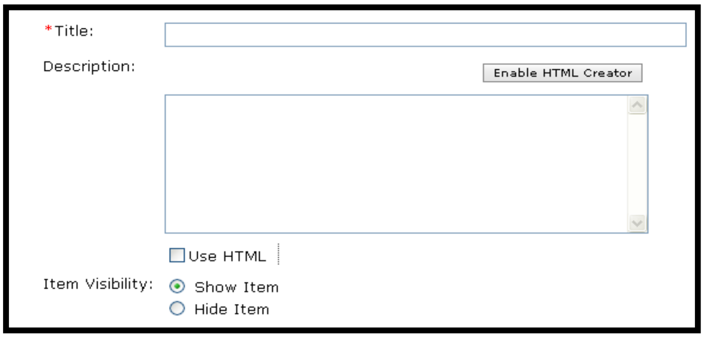
1. To create a topic, click on "Create Topic".



2. After clicking on "Create Topic", you must choose the kind of discussion topic you would like to create. A description of each topic is listed below the discussion topic subtitles. Choose the topic that suits you and click "Next".



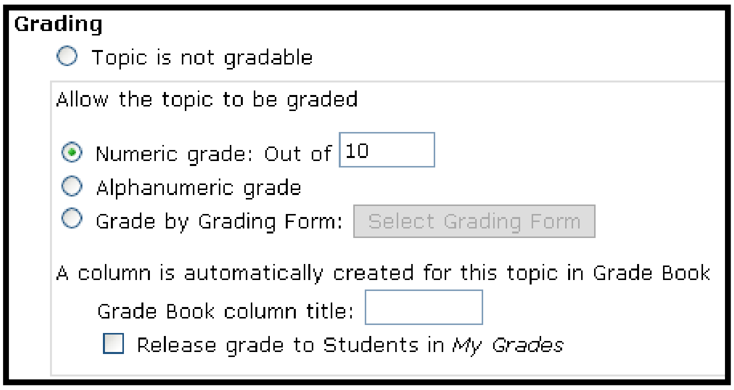
3. You must include a title. This title should be descriptive, but short. You should also include a word, like Discussion, so the students know what type of component they are entering. You can also include a description, which can be a question or an explanation about the topic. This helps the students know what they are going to be talking about with the topic. Be sure to enable HTML editor before doing so.



4. Next you must decide if you want the discussion topic to be gradable. If so, check the box next to the grade method you prefer. If you do not want the topic to be gradable, simply check the box that says “Topic is Not Gradable.

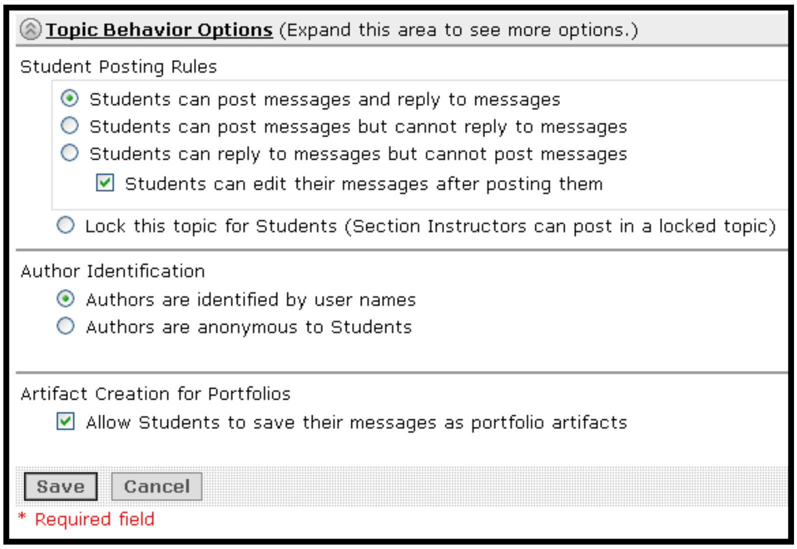
Note: If you are going to use this grade in a calculation within VISTA, it must be the numeric grading method. If it is numeric, include how much the discussion is worth.

Example:



5. You can also set a peer review standard in the discussion. You may choose to allow students to review other student’s messages and rate them using a simple rating scale OR you may choose to allow students to review other student’s messages and grade them using a grading form. You may also choose to not allow any peer review in the topic.

6. The last options you have in the settings of creating a discussion are Topic Behavior options. Under this setting you may control student posting rules, author identification, and artifact creation for portfolios. When you are done selecting your topic behavior options, click “Save”.



Making the Discussion Topics Available to Students

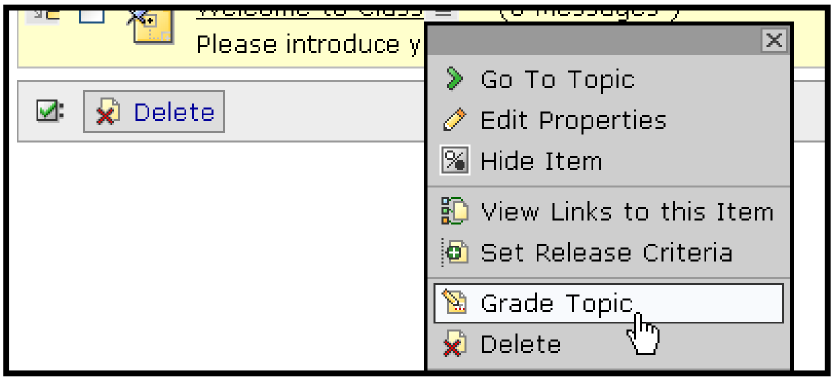
-For students to view the topic there are several locations where you can place the topic within VISTA.

- **Home Page/Folder:** If you have a topic that is general to the entire course, like a Cyber Café, you can include it on the Home Page or in a folder. This gives quick access for participants to view the discussion.
- **Weekly Assignments and Activities folder:** You can place a discussion in each weekly folder.
- **Learning Module:** If you have a topic that is specific to particular content in the course you can place it in the Learning Module along with the rest of the components that pertain to the content.

-Now you and your students are ready to discuss!

Grading Discussion

1. When you are ready to grade a topic, make sure you are in the "Teach" tab. Then click on "Discussions" under your Course Tool menu. Go to the topic you would like to grade and click on the drop-down menu next to the topic and click on "Grade Topic".



2. You will see a list of your students that have either viewed and/or posted to that topic. You will also receive statistics regarding the average number of read messages per student and the average number of both original and replied posts per student. To view an individual student's posts, click on the student's name and click on "View Student Posts".

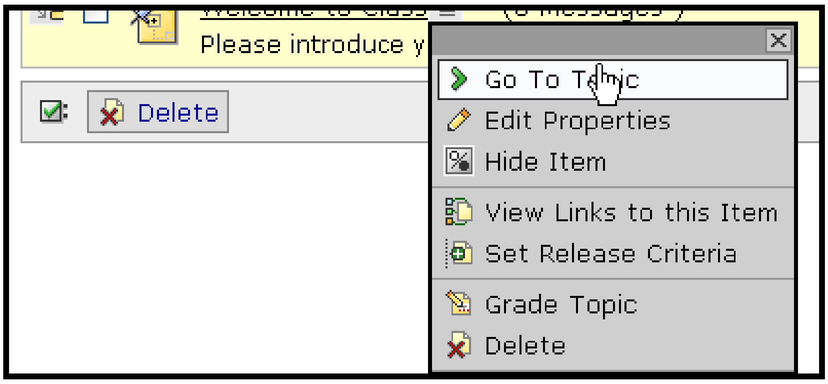
3. This will show you the number of read messages, original posts, and replied posts for the student selected. You will also see all the students' posts for that topic. If you need additional information about the student you can click on the student's name and click on "View Performance Report". This will allow you to view the students tracking within the course, which includes a link to the student's grades.

4. When you are ready to give the student a grade, you can insert it under "Grade" next to the student's name and click "Save".

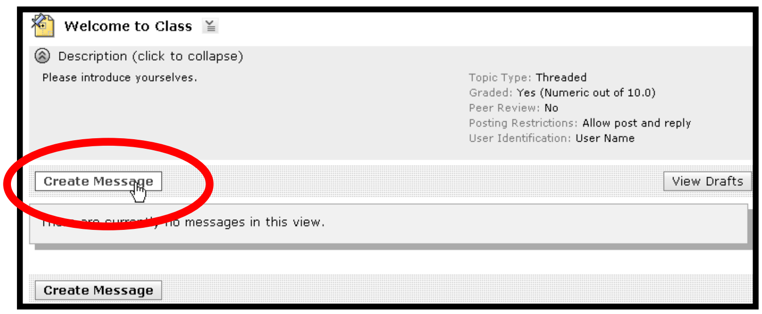
5. This grade will automatically be added to the Grade Book. You can also change the grade by clicking on the current grade, enter the new grade, and click "Save". This change will also be reflected in the Grade Book.

Posting Messages on the Discussion Board

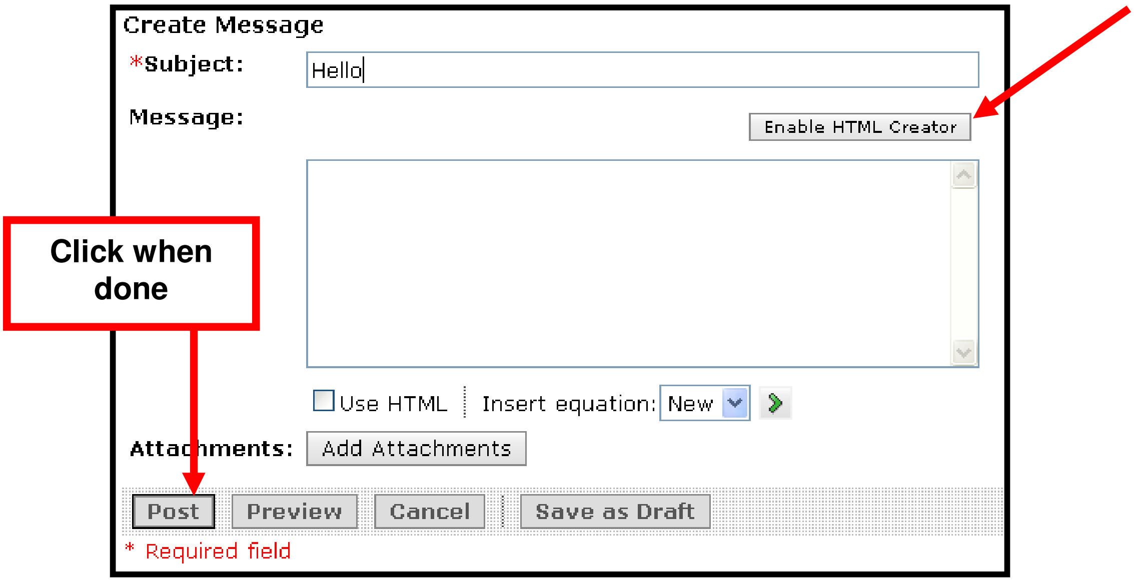
1. To post a message in a topic on the discussion board, go to Discussions under your Course tools. Then click on the topic you would like to add a message too. Or, you can click on the dropdown arrow next to the topic you would like to add a message to and click on "Go To Topic" as shown in the image below.



2. To create a message in a topic, click on "Create Message".

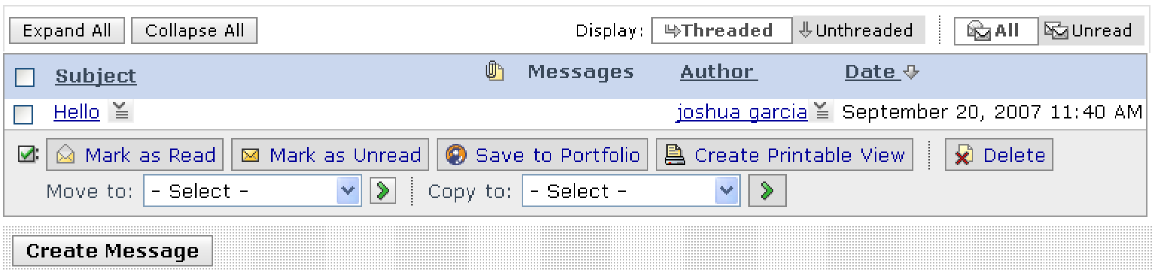


3. -An HTML “Create Message” window will open. You can add your own HTML coding in your post such as bolding, italicizing, changing fonts, adding images etc. by clicking the “Enable HTML Creator.

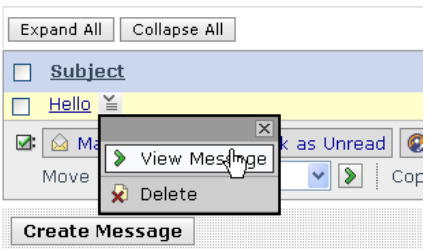


4. You will need to include a subject and you can add a message. Once you are finished creating your message, click on “Post”.

5. When you look at a topic with a message, you will see the screen below. You will see the message subject and who authored it. You will also see when the message was posted. If you are the instructor, you can also delete any posts. Anyone can edit their own posts.

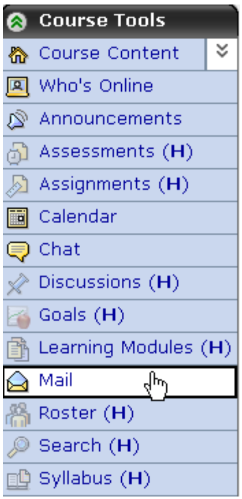


6. To view a specific message, click on the dropdown arrow next to the subject name of the post you would like to view and click “View Message”.



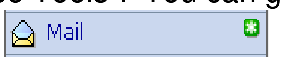
Using Mail in VISTA 4.0

1. To use the “Mail” tool in VISTA, click on the “Mail” link under “Course Tools”.



2. This will give you access to send a faculty member or students in the class a private message.

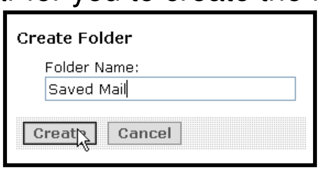
   NOTE: The Mail tool is only useful for your VISTA course. You can only send and receive mail to those enrolled in your specific course. It is not to be confused as Internet Email. HOWEVER, you may forward messages to external email but you can’t reply to the forwarded message.

3. -When you have new mail, you will be notified with the mail icon  appearing on the “MyPlato” page under the name of the section. Also, a little green and white star appears next to where it says “Mail” under your “Course Tools”. You can go directly to the message by clicking on either of the icons. 

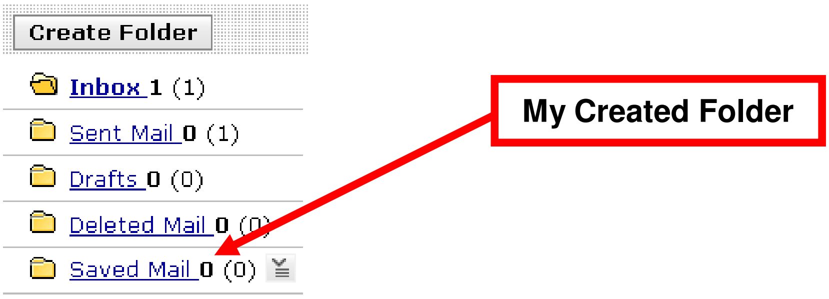
Creating Folders

1. You can use created folders to organize your messages, so they are easier to find later. To create folders in the mail tool, click on “Create Folder”.

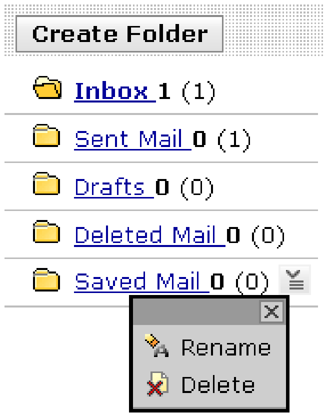
2. -A pop-up box will appear for you to create the folder. Type in the name and click “Create”.



3. When you create a folder, it appears under the default folders in the mail.



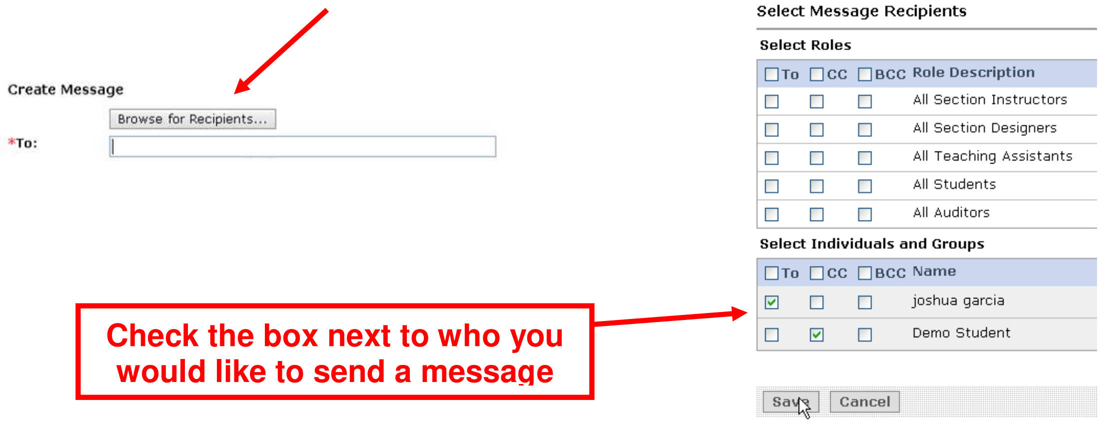
4. If you would like to rename or delete your folder, click on the dropdown arrow next to the folder and choose the option.



Creating a Message

1. To send a private message to someone enrolled in the course, independent of the role they play, click on “Create Message”.

2. To find the person whom you want to send the message to, click on “Browse for Recipients”



3. You can send a message to someone by clicking the box next to that person's name under "To". You can also CC (Carbon Copy) someone, which means you want them to see it, but the message is not actually meant for them, or you can BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) someone if you want them to see the message, but you do not want anyone else to know you sent it to them. If you want to send the message to everyone, you can select the box next to "To" and it will check all the recipients at once. When you are finished selecting the participants, click "Save".

4. Once you have chosen your recipients, you need to include a clear and concise subject and type in the message. If you want to include links or formatting you can use the HTML Creator by clicking on "Enable HTML Creator" or you can type in your own HTML coding. If you are going to type in your own, make sure you select "Use HTML".

5. You can also include an equation and an attachment. Once you are finished, you can preview it, save it as a draft, or send it.

6. -After it is sent, the mail icon  will appear on the MyPlato page under the name of the section and a green and white star will be next to the "Mail" link under "Course Tools" to alert the participants that there is a new mail message.

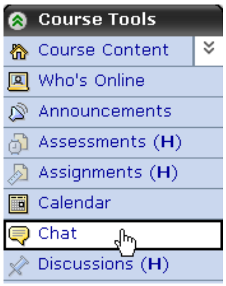
Chat and Whiteboard in VISTA

-The Chat and Whiteboard tool allows you to communicate synchronously (in real-time) with other users in the course. You can use Chat to engage in synchronous conversations whereas you can use Whiteboard to draw objects, enter text, import images, and create slide shows that can be viewed synchronously by other users. You can use Chat in your course to provide office hours, online guest speakers, exam reviews, and study groups. Whiteboard can be used to display images, draw objects or draw freehand and present slide shows.

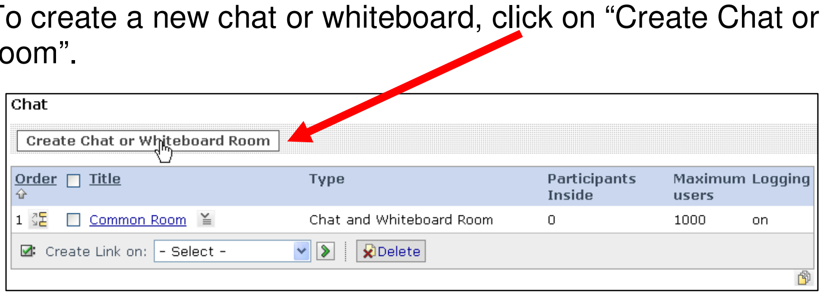
Creating a Chat and/or Whiteboard Room

-A Chat and Whiteboard room, called the Common Room, is created by default. You have the option to create other Chat rooms, Whiteboard rooms, or combined Chat and Whiteboard rooms, which will be demonstrated below.

1. -To access the Chat and Whiteboard tool, click on the "Chat" link under Course Tools.



2. -To create a new chat or whiteboard, click on "Create Chat or Whiteboard Room".



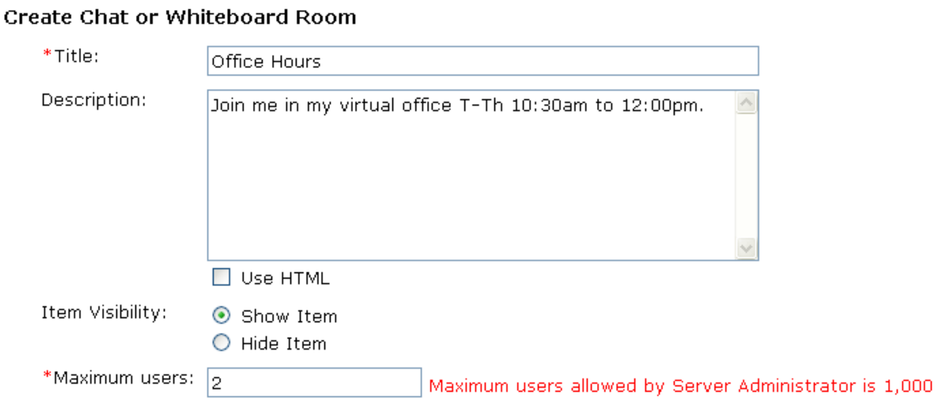
-When creating a chat or whiteboard room, there is several areas you must decide on. The first setting you must include is the name. The name should be descriptive of what the room will include.

-You will also include a description of the room. This is also extremely important, so the students know what they are supposed to learn about.

-Maximum number of users is another setting. This depends on what the room will include and how much discussion is happening between participants.

- **Online Office Hours:** You may want to have this set for 2, for you and someone else. This way another student does not barge into the room when you are talking with a student.

- **Review Sessions:** You can include everyone that is in your class that wants to participate, but have ground rules. For example, they must send you a question before the chat begins and you will discuss each one during the review session.
- **Group Work:** Only the members of the group and you.
- **Class Discussion:** Break the class down into Learning Circles with approximately 4-5 people in them, so the students are not completely overwhelmed by a huge volume of messages.

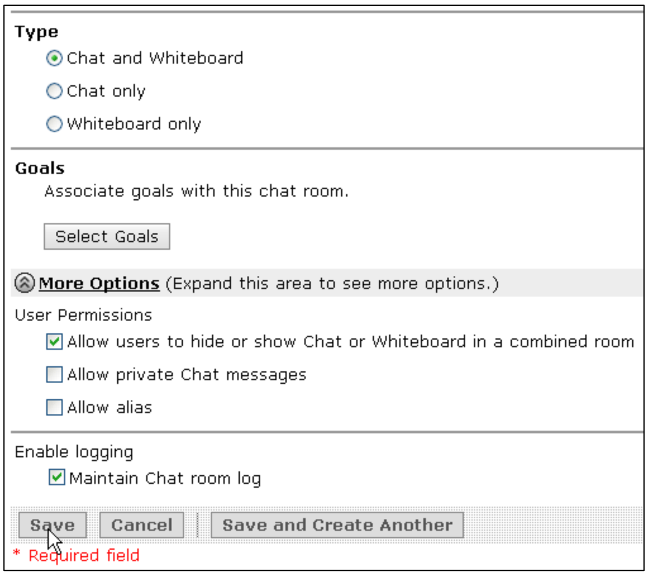


You also have the ability to decide if you want the room to be chat only, whiteboard only, or both. A combined room is nice, since the students can hide the part that is not being used, but it is available if the need arises.

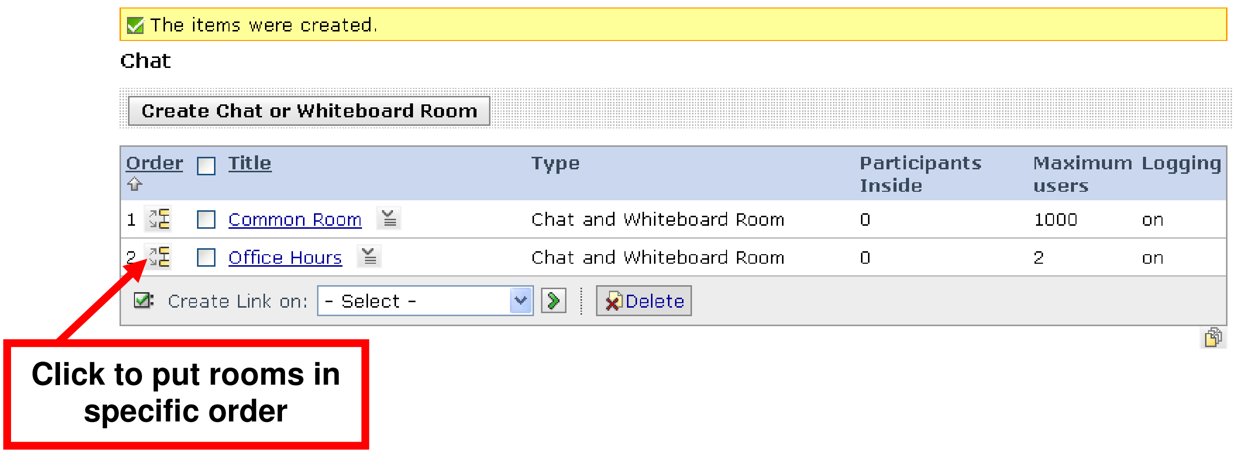
-There are additional options available under "More Options".

- The first setting allows users to hide or show the chat or whiteboard in a combined room. This is important to select if you are using combined rooms, because you do not always need one or the other. Let students know when they need to open up the other area if they have closed it.
- "Allow private chat messages" is important if you want someone to facilitate the chat by having the questions flow through him or her. Important note: private chat messages are not recorded in the log.
- "Allow alias" allows the student to enter the room anonymously. It is difficult to give credit to individuals for participating if they use an alias. You may also want to be careful with aliases. A student that is online is already more willing to discuss topics than face-to-face. An alias may bring out the worst in people!
- The last option "Enable logging" is to maintain the chat room logs.

-Once you decide on all the settings for your room, click "Save".

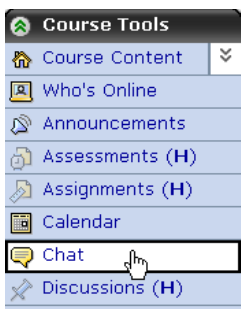


-VISTA will tell you that it has been created successfully and it will show you the room. You will see all the settings that you have decided on. This is also what the students will see. Therefore, they will see the name of the room, the description, and how many participants are inside the room. As an instructor, you have the availability to turn the room on and off by hiding the item from the dropdown menu. There are several options, which include linkages, settings, logs, selective release, and delete.

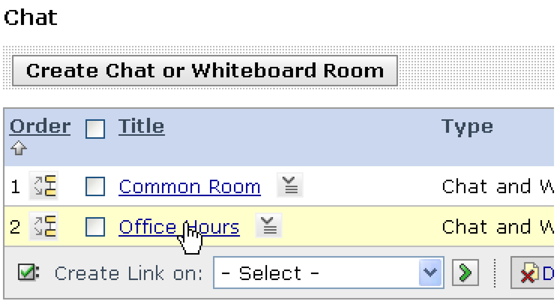


Using Chat in VISTA 4.0

-To use the Chat and whiteboard feature in VISTA you first need to access a room. If the Chat and Whiteboard tool is under course tools, you will click on the link from the left-hand side of your course.

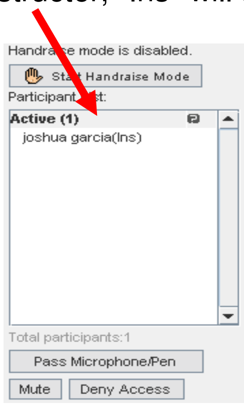


-Remember, students will see ALL rooms that are available to them from this link, if the link is available to them. To enter the room, click on the name of the room you wish to join.



Instructor Features

-Everyone will be able to see the list of participants listed on the right side of the window. If you are the instructor, “Ins” will appear next to your name.



-As the instructor you receive certain privileges. You can turn on and off handraise mode. This makes the students raise their hand to speak (in this case, type). To do this, the instructor passes the microphone/pen.
-You can also mute individuals by selecting their name and click on mute. That particular student will not be able to talk or raise their hand, they can only view (lurk). You can also deny an individual access. This drops them from the chat/whiteboard room.

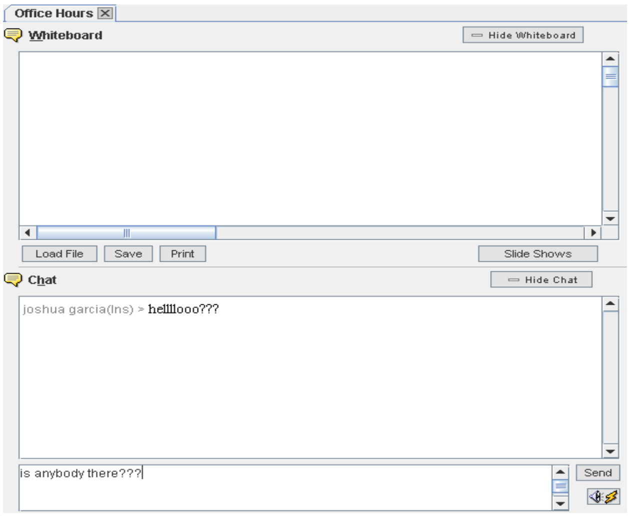
Note: It is a very important to explain to the students that this is a synchronous tool, which mean they are communicating at the same time. If they show up late, they will not see what has previously been sent.

-It is a good idea to have guidelines and rules for class chats, for example, no profanity, respect others, send a question to the facilitator and not to everyone. It is helpful to have the students decide what they think is important within a chat and have them draft the policies and procedures. This also helps with buy-in and participation from the group.

Chat Feature

-The chat feature is a way for you to talk with your students and allow your students to communicate with each other in real time.

-You type in the bottom box what you want to say and either click on “Send” or type “Enter” on your keyboard.
-Notice above the room that you can hide the chat room. If you hide it, there will be a button to ‘show chat’ so you can retrieve this part of the room again. This feature will not be available if you did not check “Allow users to hide or show Chat or whiteboard in a combined room”. tThis feature is only available in combined rooms.



-You can upload a file through “Load File”, create a slide show with “Slide Shows”, print the board, type directly on the board, and draw lines, ovals, rectangles, and use freehand. You are also able to change the color you are using and change the font information if you are typing as with the chat, you can hide the whiteboard with the button above the room. When you hide it, you will see a button to show whiteboard to open it up again.

Learning Modules in VISTA 4.0

-The learning module is a component in VISTA that allows you to organize your materials for a course in a logical order. Below is what the learning module looks like from the “Build” view with information in it.

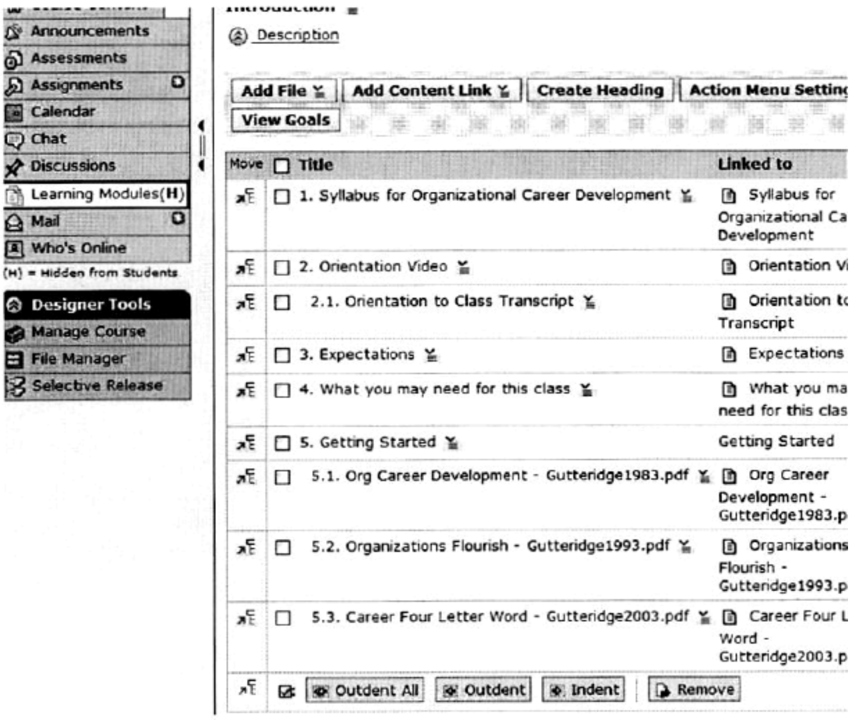
Here are some things to think about when creating a learning module

-Do you want the students to navigate through the module linearly or should they be able to move around freely?

-How do you want to “chunk” your information?

-What components should be in a learning module and which ones should be placed somewhere else?

-Do you want them to be able to view all the modules or one by one throughout the semester?
-Should the modules be placed on the Home Page or in a folder?



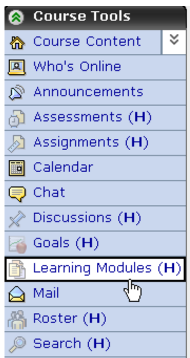
Developing the Learning Module

-While building a learning module you can add various components. This includes assessments, assignments, chat/whiteboard rooms, content files, discussions, media library collections, and URLs. You can see this area above the module.

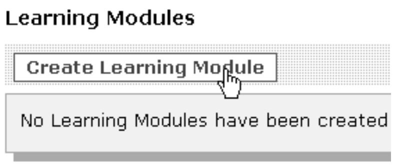
-When a component is added to the learning module, an icon is added under Linked to Component. Each tool has a specific icon and is used to distinguish between links in the learning module. For example, is used for the discussion board and is used to designate assignments. This is helpful for the instructors, so they can distinguish between the different links in the learning module as they are developing. In the drop-down menus for each component, you can modify settings (which will allow you to change the name, numbering, and table of contents), preview, modify the action menu, view the links, or delete each component. You are also able to add headings. This is an effective way to organize your materials. The heading component does not have an icon associated with it and you can only edit and delete it.

Creating a Learning Module

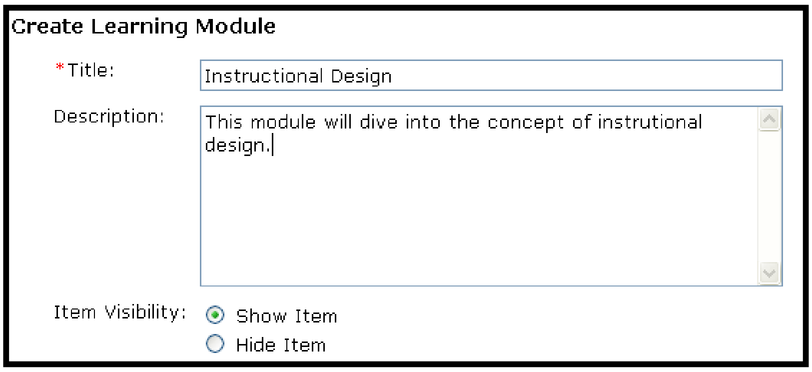
-To create a Learning Module, you need to be on the "Build" tab and click on "Learning Module" under Course Tools.



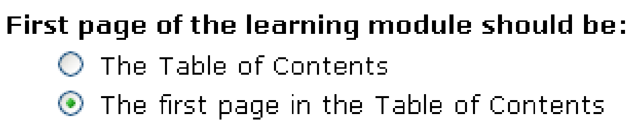
-Click on “Create Learning Module”.

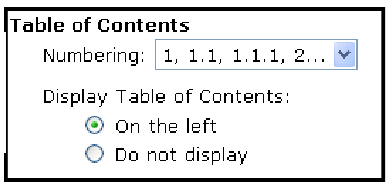


-The title of your learning module needs to be short but descriptive. You also need to keep the labeling the same across learning modules. You can use generic titles like Unit 1, Chapter 1, or Module 1, but students will not have an idea of what is in each module until they click on it. Plus, it makes it more difficult for students to go back and reference a topic. You can also create them by date, Week 1 or 06/30/04, but you will be doing a lot of changes every semester. The best way to create the modules is by topic as shown below. If you want to include a designation so the students know which order to go in, you could include a number with your title. However, the best way to order them is to put the modules in the order you want students to go in.



-The second setting you must attend to is how you want your table of contents numbered. You have the option of a complete number system; for example, the first entry is 1 and the second is 2 and if you indent it will be 2.1. Or, you can use a combination of numbers and letters. The order of the numbering by indentions would be I, a, 1, ii, etc. You can also decide if you want the table of content displayed or not. If you want students to be able to navigate where ever they wanted to go, then you should display the table of contents. If you want students to only go through the modules in a linear format, then you do not want to display it.





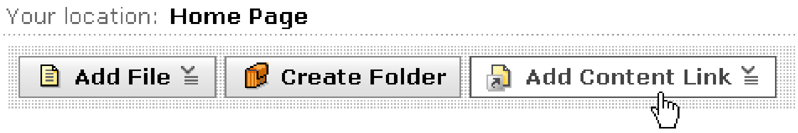
-The last setting is how you want the students to first enter the module. Do you want them to go directly to the first page or do you want them to see the table of contents first? Now you can add components to your learning modules.

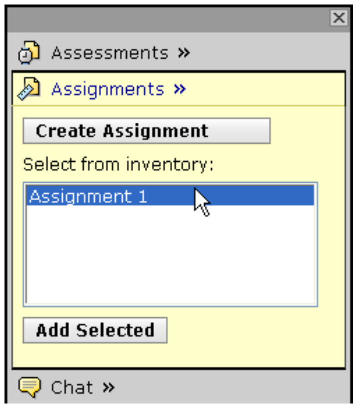
-Once you are all set, click “Save”.

Adding a Component

-To add a component to the learning module, click on the type of component you want added from the top. This includes file, content, or heading.

-If you want to add an assignment, you would click on “Add Content Link” then click on “Assignments”.

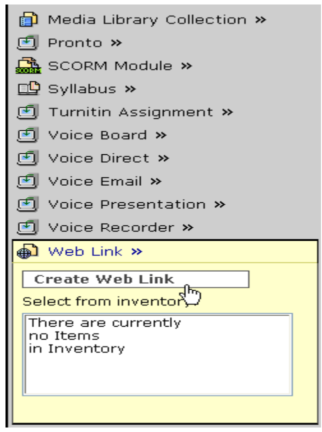




-When you click on the “Assignment” link, you will see all the assignments that you have created. To add an assignment that is already created click on the title of the assignment; as in the example above, Assignment 1 would be an assignment previously created. Once you have chosen your assignment, click “Add Selected”. The component will then be added into the Learning Module. You can add more than one assignment at a time by selecting all the ones you want to add while holding down the Ctrl key.

Creating a Component

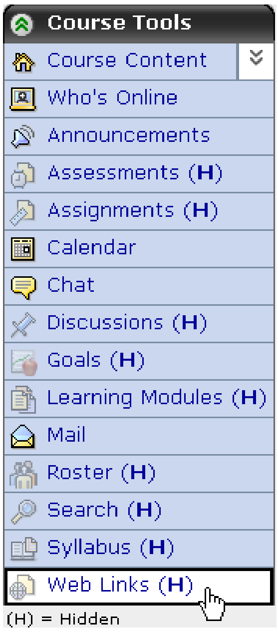
-If you have not created the component, click on “Add Content Link” and then select the component you want to add. As in the example below, you can click on “Create Web Link” and you will be direct to the Web Links tool. It is suggested that, until you are comfortable with the VISTA system, to create the components first instead of as you design your course.



-Once you click on “Create Web Link”, VISTA will now take you to the tool and allow you to create it. When the component is created, it will be added automatically to your learning module in the spot that you specified.

Creating URLs in VISTA

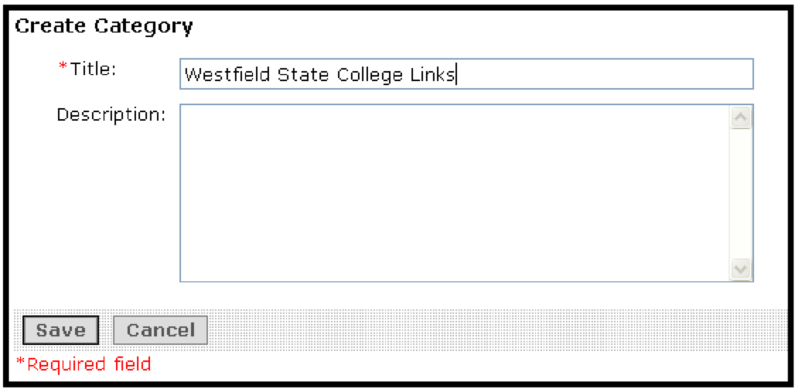
-To create a URL in VISTA go to your “Course Tools” and select “Web Links”.



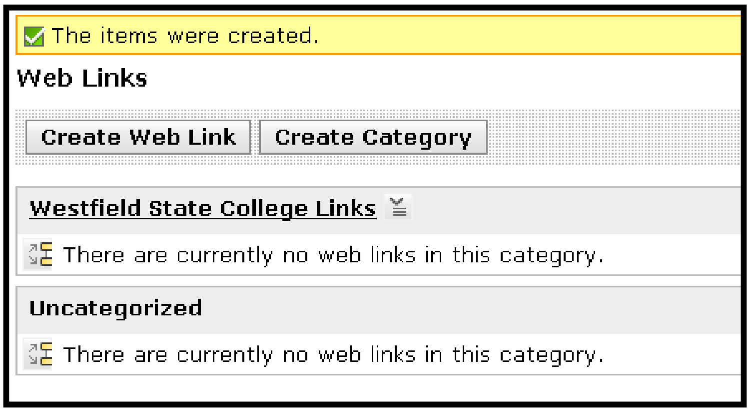
-Once you are on the “Web Links” page, you will notice two different options: “Create Web Link” and “Create Category”.

- **Create Category**

  -Click on create category. As the example below, title your category that relates to the links you would like to put up. If you would like, you may also put in a description of this specific category. Then click “Save”.



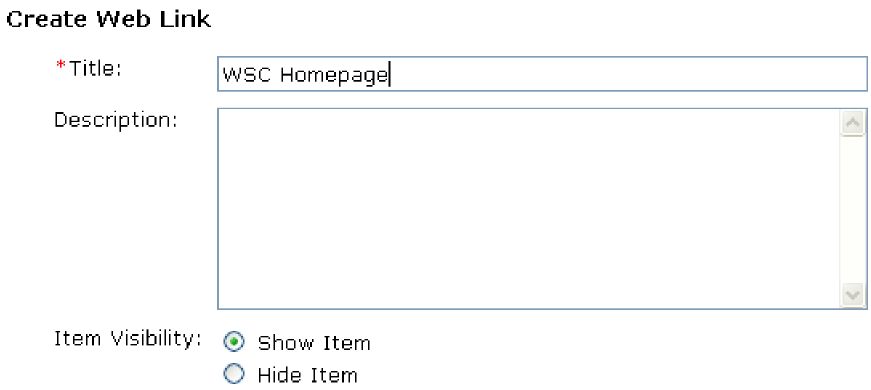
-Once you have saved your category, it will appear in the “Web Links” page as shown in the example below.



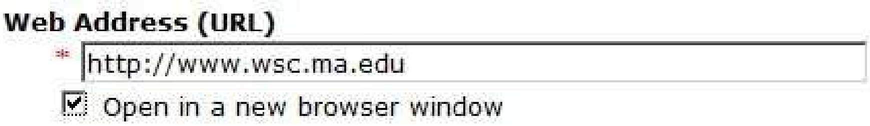
Create Web Link

-Click on “Create Web Link” to create a web link. You have several options to choose under this tool.

- Give the link a title name. Example: WESTFIELD Home Page. If desired, you may enter a description of this link.



-The next option is to put in the web address (URL). This is important because without the URL, there will be no purpose creating this link. You may choose to have this URL open within another window by clicking on the checkbox that says “Open in new browser window”. This is recommended.



-The next option is to put it in a category. If you didn’t create a category, you may choose “none”. If you did create a category and you would like to put this link under a specific category that you have created, click on the dropdown menu next to “Select

Category" and choose the specific one you have created.

-Once you have finished, click "Save". You will be directed back to the "Web Links" page. You will notice your link created on the page.

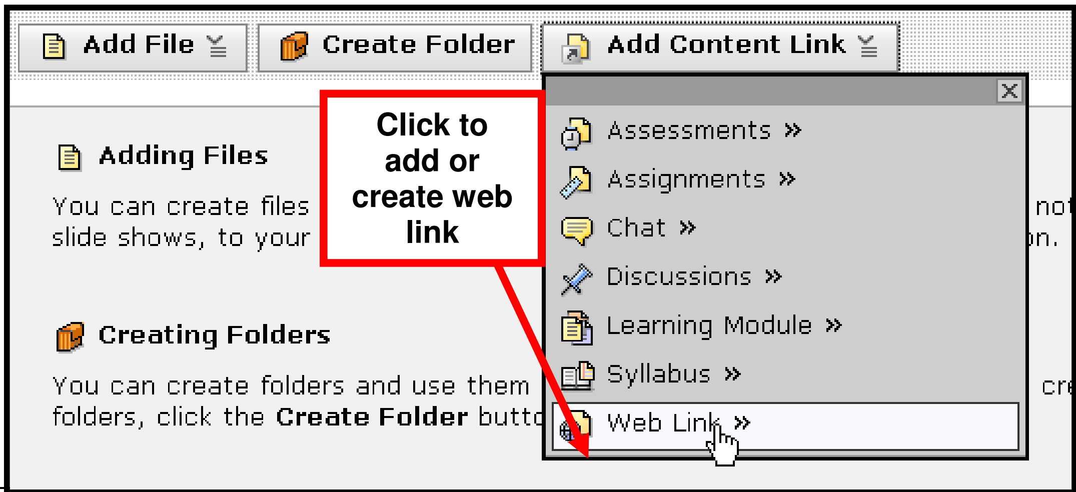
Example:

- **Note:** All links that are uncategorized will show up under the "Uncategorized" section.

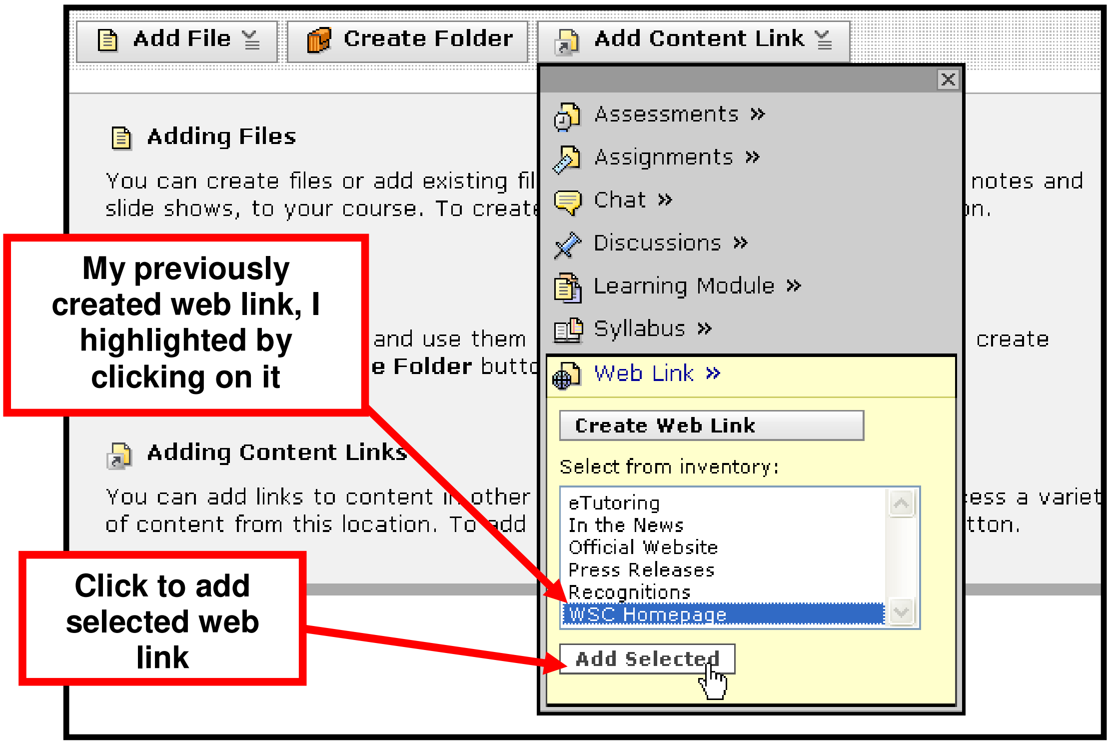
-You can copy the link to another page in your course by selecting the checkbox next to the link and then choosing the page to add it to from the dropdown menu where it says "Create Link On:". Click on the green arrow after making your selection.

- **Note:** You can link to anything that has a web location, including pages, sites, images or audio. You can also link to a streaming video that is housed on a web server.

-To display the web link on a specific page, go to "Add Content Link" and click on "Web Link".



-If you have previously created a web link, highlight the link preferred in the box under where it says “Select from inventory”. Once you have done so, click on “Add Selected” as shown in the image example below.



-After clicking on “Add Selected”, you will see the web link on the page.

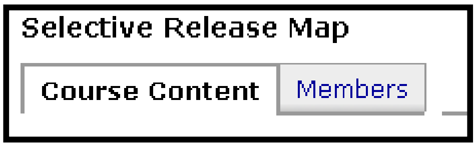
- **NOTE:** To change/customize the icon, see page 34.

Selective Release

-Selective release is a way for the instructor to provide the students with content and components in a course based on one of four criteria: date, member, group, and Grade Book.
-The selective release link is located on the “Designer Tools” menu on both the “Build” and “Teach” tabs.

-Selective Release gives you two option tabs: **Course Content or Members**.

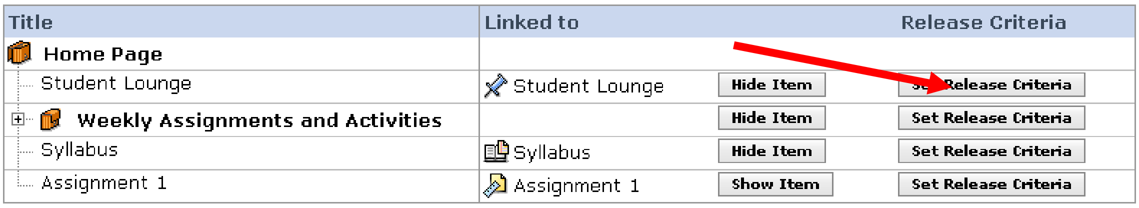
-Course Content: You use the “Course Content” option to release specific components in the course.



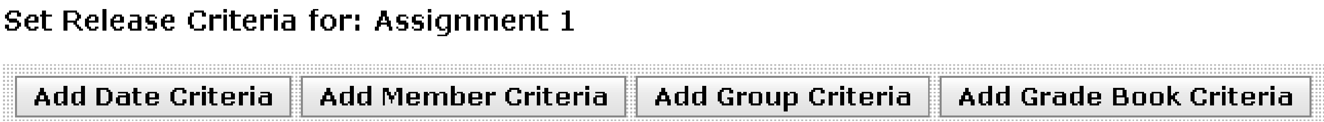
-When you click on “Course Map”, the page will display all the components that have been added to the course Home Page, including the components in learning module.

-You can selectively release the entire learning module or the different components within the module or both. You may want the module to be released by date, but different components released by member or group. In VISTA, this is all possible.

-To selectively release a component, click on “Set Release Criteria”, which is located on the far right of the column for the component you want to set, shown below.



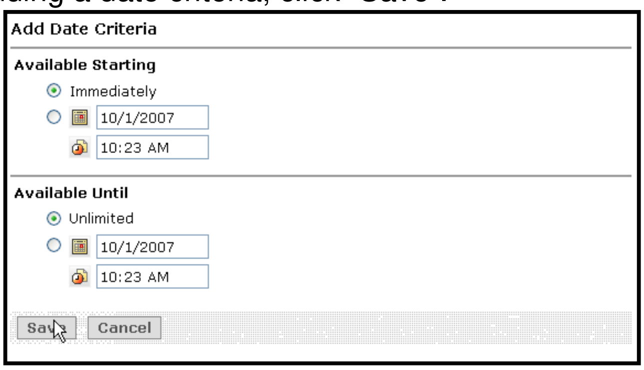
-When you click on the icon, you will get a criteria screen. You then choose if you want to release by date, member, group, or Grade Book. (In the template you can release by date, group, or Grade Book. You can’t release by member since the students are not enrolled in the template).



Date Release

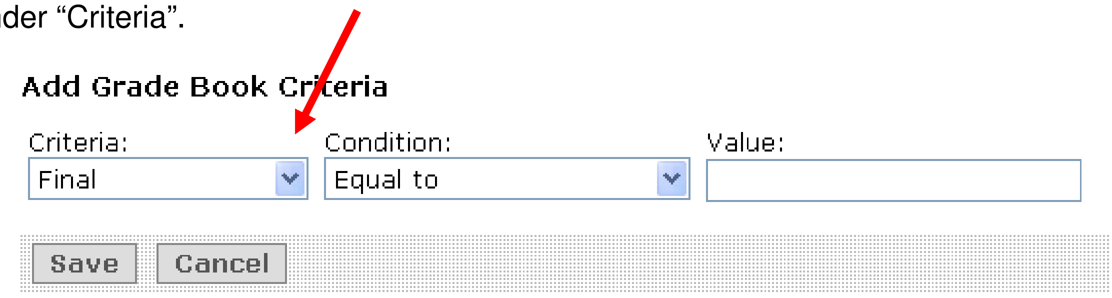
-For example, to release by date, select the “Add Date Criteria” button and the dialog box to make your date selections. After adding a date criteria, click “Save”.

-It will then show up in the selective release area for that component. You can at this point add another criteria if applicable.



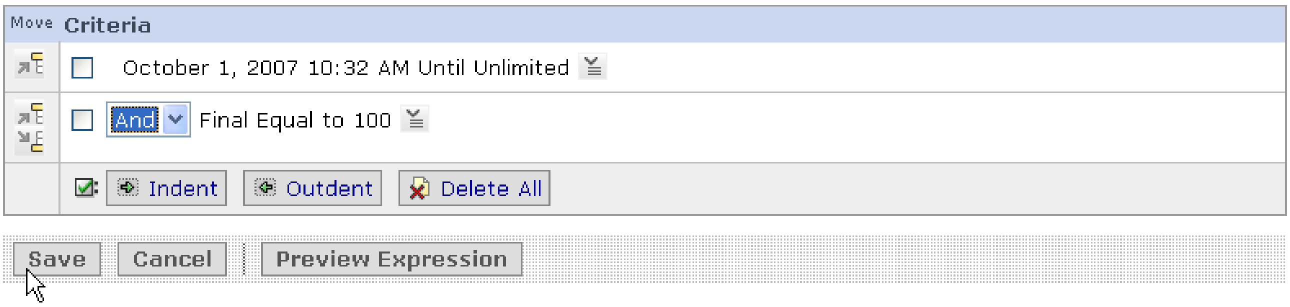
Grade Book Release

-For example, let us release by Grade Book. Click on the “Add Grade Book Criteria” button and select your criteria for the component by clicking on the dropdown arrow under “Criteria”.

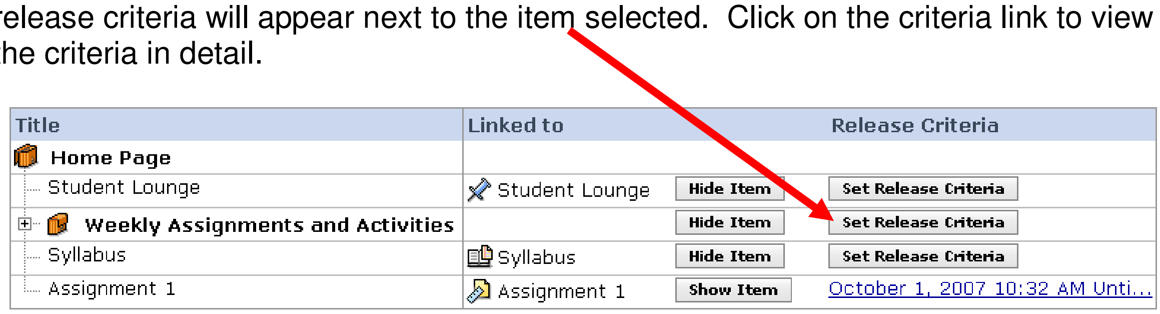


-Once you have added Grade Book criteria, click “Save”. You will then be directed back to the “Select Release Criteria” page.

-Now you have the opportunity to decide if you want it to be released on either criteria or just one by changing AND to OR. You can also use the indent to group criteria together.

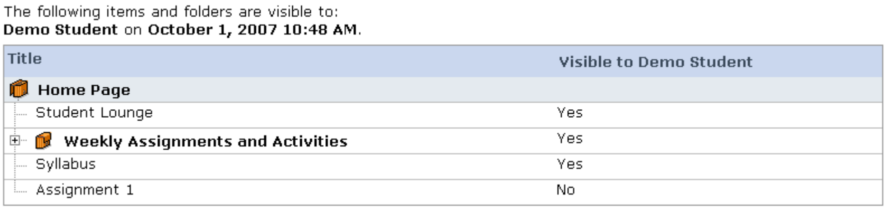


-When you are done with the criteria click on “Save”. When you save, your selective release criteria will appear next to the item selected. Click on the criteria link to view the criteria in detail.



Members

-This option allows you to see what components have been released to a VISTA member. Select the student from the list to view what has been released to them.

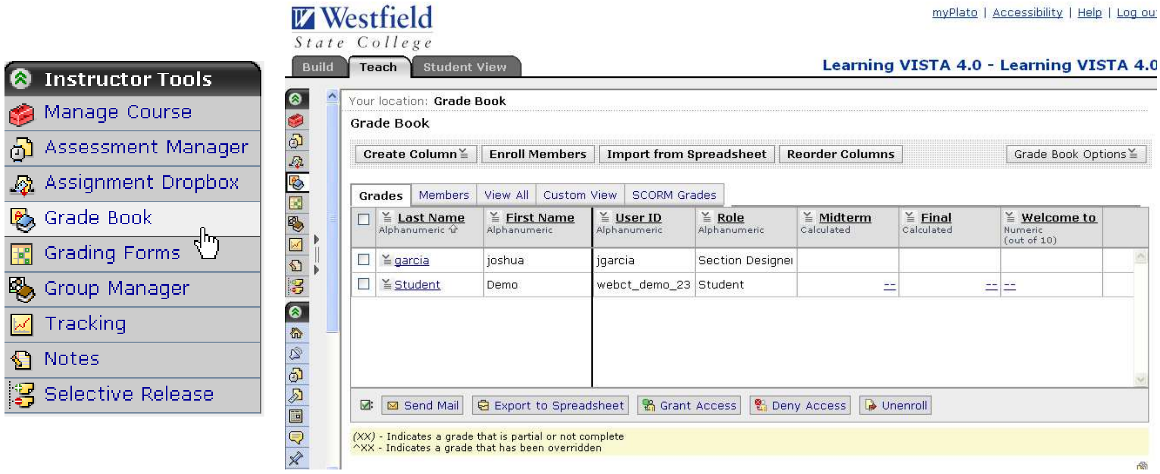

The following items and folders are visible to:
Demo Student on **October 1, 2007 10:48 AM**.

Title	Visible to Demo Student
Home Page	
Student Lounge	Yes
Weekly Assignments and Activities	Yes
Syllabus	Yes
Assignment 1	No

Managing Students

Grade Book

-To begin using the VISTA Grade Book, you first must be an instructor at the Section Level on the “Teach” tab.
-Under “Instructor Tools” in the “Teach” tab, click on “Grade Book” to view the page shown below.



-The Grade Book will automatically show all the instructors, designers, TA’s, and students that are enrolled in your course. You will also have a student called “Demo Student”. This is the account that is used by VISTA when you use the “Student View” tab. You can test your quizzes and assignments and give grades to this student, which will not affect the statistics in the Grade Book. This prevents you from having to use a different ID to view your course as a student.

-As shown in the image above, there are five sub-tabs in the grade book: grades, members, view all, custom view, and SCORM grades.

- “Grades” allows you to view all the people that are enrolled in the section, add columns, edit grades, and edit student information separate from the rest of the class.
- “Members” shows you who is enrolled in your section and with the role they are assigned.

- “View All” is the same thing as “Grades”, but allows you to deny member access. This tab also reorders the “Student View”.
- “Custom View” provides you the opportunity to view a subset of members.
- “SCORM Grades” displays columns that are that are automatically added for gradable SCORM modules, if you have SCORM modules in your course.
    - **NOTE:** The sub-tab that will be discusses in more detail is “Grades.

Grades

-To add a column in the Grades Sub-tab, click on the “Create Column” sub-tab and select the type of column desired.

-The types of column you can add are:

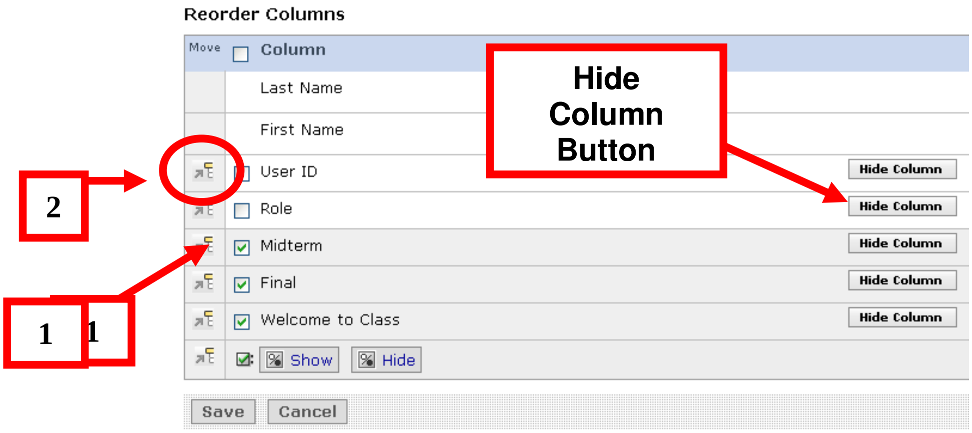
- **Alphanumeric:** add numbers and letters to this column, but cannot be used in a calculated column.
- **Calculated:** create a formula by using any numeric and calculated column and mathematical operations.
- **Letter Grade:** create a percentage range to convert a numeric or calculated column to a letter grade.
- **Numeric:** add numbers to this column, which then can be used in a calculated for a letter grade column.
- **Selection List:** create a dropdown menu to give feedback to students.
- **Text:** able to enter numbers and letters to provide students feedback or to relay information to them.

-Each column has particular settings that you need to decide if you want or not. If you change your mind later regarding these settings you will be able to change them. This will be discusses later in this handout under Column Settings. To learn more about how to add each particular type of column see “Adding Columns in a VISTA Grade Book “Handout”. Columns are added automatically in the Grade Book when Assignments and Quizzes are created.

-Column Display

-To change the order of your Grade Book, click on “Reorder Columns”.

-To move a column, select the column you want to move by clicking on the box to the left of it (1) and then click the arrow icon to the left of the column you want to move it above (2). As shown below, Midterm will be moved above Role. This is also how you move the columns around in the “View All” tab.

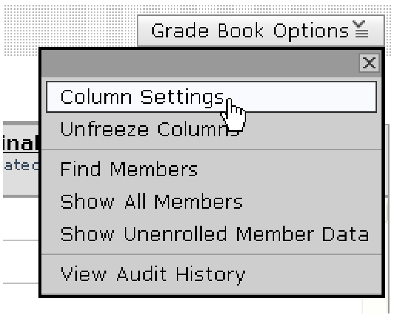


-The above screen shot shows that Midterm, Final, and Welcome to Class will be moved above User ID.

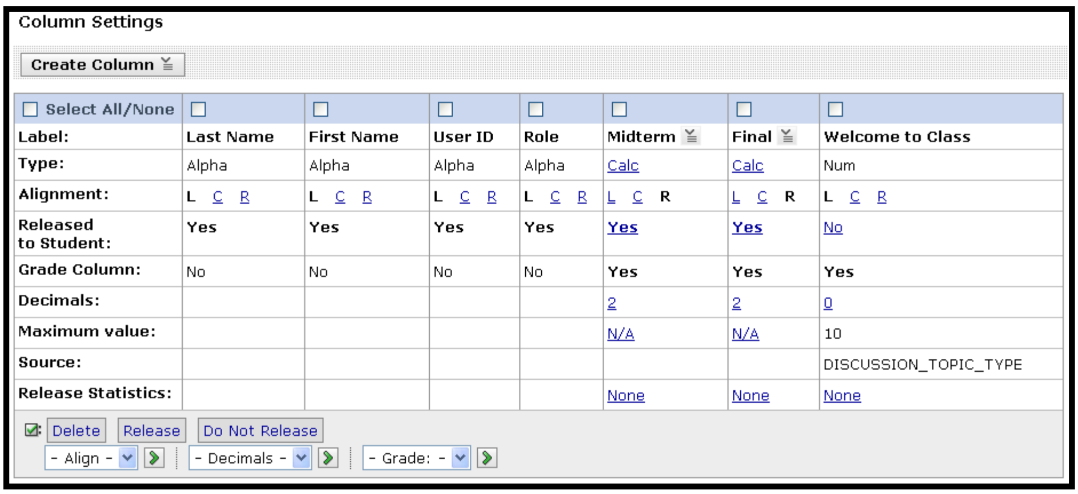
-You also have the option of making the column Visible or not in the Grade Book. If you do not want to see the column, click the "Hide Column" button as shown above.

Column Settings

-If you need to make any changes to the columns you created click on the "Grade Book Options" button and select "Column Settings".



-This link will take you to a page that includes all the columns in your Grade Book along with all the settings that you can change for each column.


Column Settings

Create Column

Select All/None							
Label:	Last Name	First Name	User ID	Role	Midterm	Final	Welcome to Class
Type:	Alpha	Alpha	Alpha	Alpha	Calc	Calc	Num
Alignment:	L C R	L C R	L C R	L C R	L C R	L C R	L C R
Released to Student:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Grade Column:	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Decimals:					2	2	0
Maximum value:					N/A	N/A	10
Source:							DISCUSSION_TOPIC_TYPE
Release Statistics:					None	None	None

Delete | Release | Do Not Release

- Align - | - Decimals - | - Grade: -

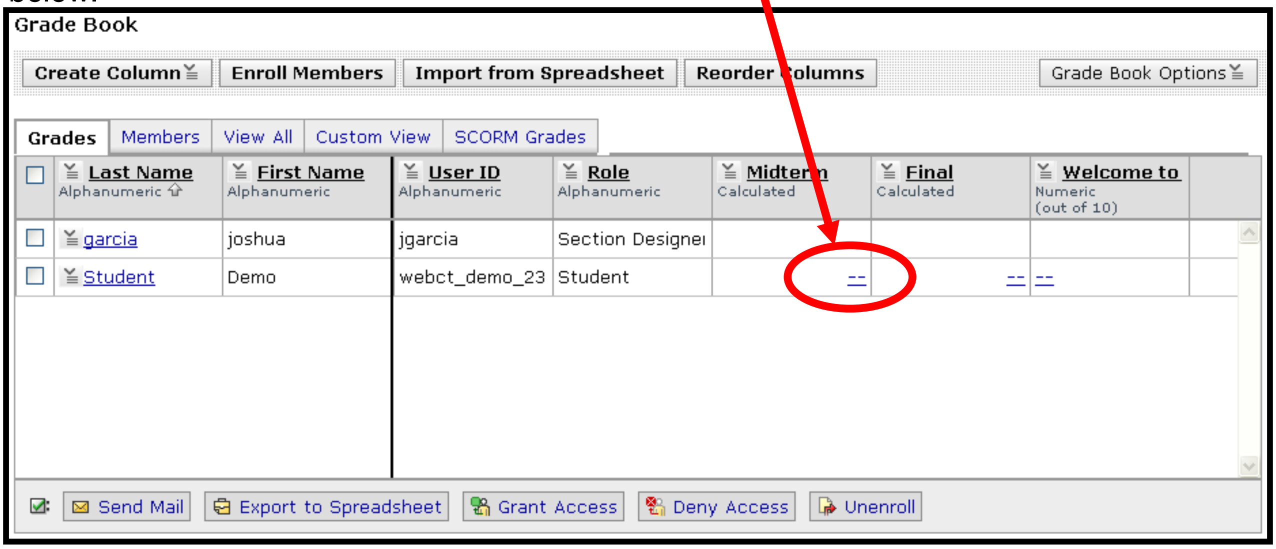
-As shown above, it depends on the type of column which settings you can change. If the column is Alpha (alphanumeric) you do not have options for Decimals or Maximum Value. In addition, the first four columns are VISTA columns; therefore, the only thing you can change is the "Alignment" and you are not allowed to delete it. Similarly, Final and Midterm columns are also automatically generated by the VISTA system to be used for sending grades to the registrar when the systems are integrated in the future.

-If a setting can be changed, it is blue and hyperlinked. You can do one column at a time by clicking on the option you want to modify and changing it. If you want to modify the same option for more than one column, select the box for the columns you want to change and select the option and the bottom, such as, "Align", "Decimals", or "Grade" and click the green arrow next to that option. You can also delete, release, and do not release more than one column at the same time.

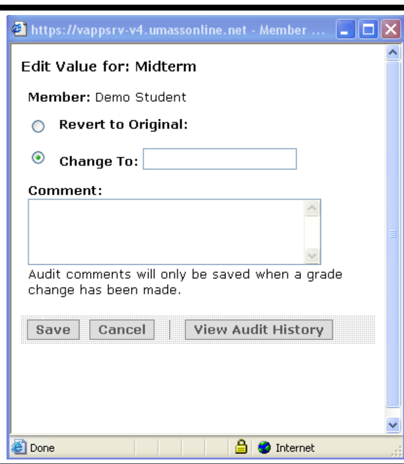
-Presently, column sizes cannot be changed in the Grade Book.

Changing a Grade

-VISTA provides the flexibility to enter grades for a student that did not submit an assignment or complete a quiz through VISTA or if you need to change a grade. To do this, click on the old information or the dashes in the cell for that student as shown below.



-Once you click on the old information or dashes you can change the information and add a comment.



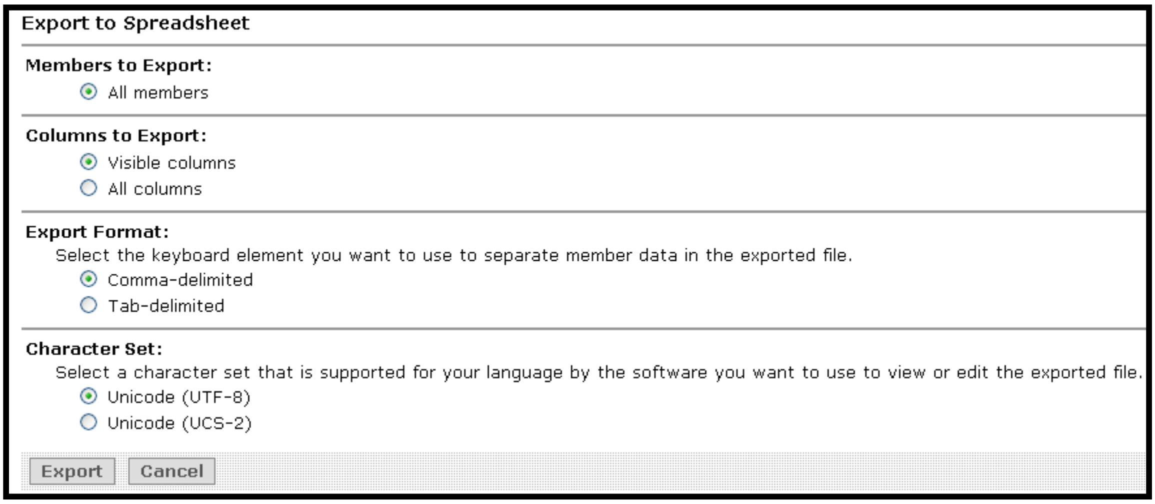
-Once you click “Save”, the information will be changed in the Grade Book.

-If you change or add a grade for an assignment or quiz through the Grade Book as demonstrated above, a carrot is added before the grade ^100.00 so you know that it was not graded in VISTA or that it was changed in the Grade Book. The students do not see the carrot and it is not downloaded when you export your Grade Book.

Exporting the Grade Book

-Once you set up your VISTA Grade Book, you can download it and open it with a spreadsheet program, like Excel. To download the Grade Book, click on “Export to Spreadsheet” at the bottom of your grade book.

-You will receive a screen that will ask you specific questions on downloading your grade book.


Export to Spreadsheet

Members to Export:
- All members

Columns to Export:
- Visible columns
- All columns

Export Format:
Select the keyboard element you want to use to separate member data in the exported file.
- Comma-delimited
- Tab-delimited

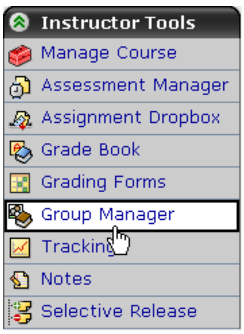
Character Set:
Select a character set that is supported for your language by the software you want to use to view or edit the exported file.
- Unicode (UTF-8)
- Unicode (UCS-2)

Export Cancel

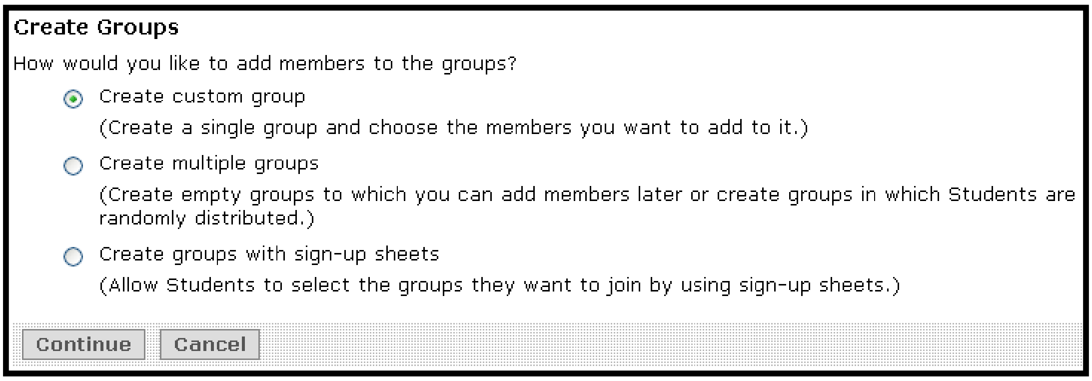
-You will export all members in the Grade Book. You need to decide if you want to export all your columns or just the columns that are visible in the Grade Book and if you want to export as comma or tab-delimited. Once you make your choices, click “Export”. It will ask if you want to open or save and click on “Save”, choose the location and the name of the file and click “Save”. You can now open this in Excel or another spreadsheet application.

Creating and Managing Groups in VISTA

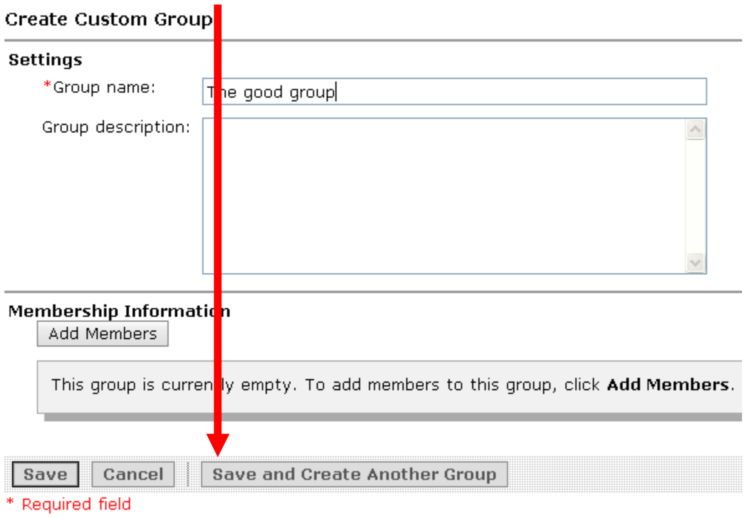
-To create groups in VISTA, you first need to be on the “Teach” tab in your section and click on “Group Manager” under your “Instructor Tools”.



-Click on “Create Groups”. There are three different options you have when creating groups.

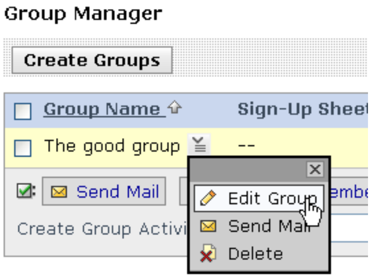


- **Custom Groups:** If you use Create Custom Group, you will create each group individually and add members to it. This is helpful if you want each group to have a different name. To do this, select the radio button next to “Create custom group” and click “Continue”. You will enter a group name. You can also type in a group description; this is optional and can be added later. If you already know the group members that you want to add, click on “Add Members” and select your members. When you are ready, you can “Save” or, if you need to create another group, click on “Save and Create Another Group”.



-Click “Add Members” and check the names of members you want to add to the group.

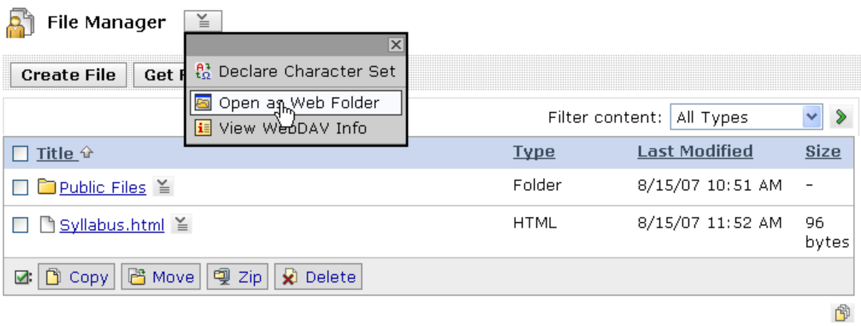
-Once this is created, you will see the group names in the group manager. You can change any of the settings for each group at any time by clicking on the group name and edit group.



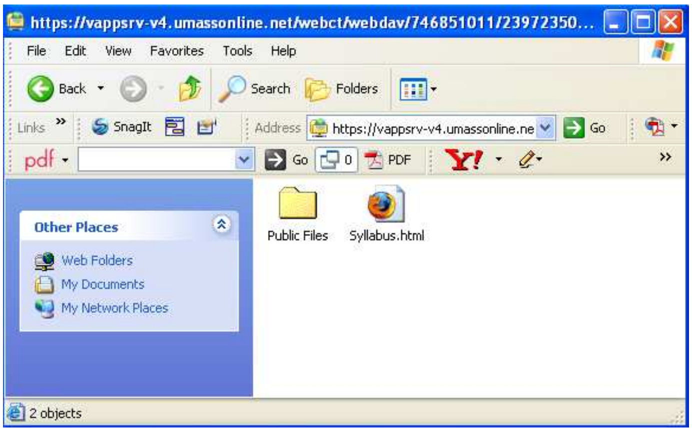
Multiple Groups: If you want VISTA to create the groups for you, you can use "Create Multiple Groups". You enter the word or phrase that you want to precede the number for each group. Example, if you use "Team" as the word or phrase, and you want 3 groups, VISTA will create Team 1, Team 2, and Team 3. You can type in a default topic that will be associated with each group. You can wait until after you create the groups to include a description; therefore, the descriptions will be different.

Using a Web Folder

It is important to know that you must be using Internet Explorer when using a web folder. From the File Manager window select the drop down menu next to the "File Manager" title. Choose "Open as Web Folder" from the list of options.



-The window below will appear. You can now use this window as you would any other window. You can drag and drop (or copy and paste) entire folders, multiple files, etc. into your course files window. You may be limited on the amount of content you can move at one time. Once you have uploaded your files you will be directed back to the file manager where you can locate the files.



Additional Resources

log in to Plato to find

Software and Resources

(Licensed Materials)

on your Plato course list!