

HOLYOKE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Overview

Course designers have the ability to change a number of parameters that control how their course looks. Page colors, graphics, layout, etc. are all customizable from course to course. A few small changes allow the instructor to set the look and feel of their course and to add a personal touch. The focus of this Quick Hit will be on your course homepage, although most of what you will learn here will be applicable in other portions of your course.

Homepage Customization

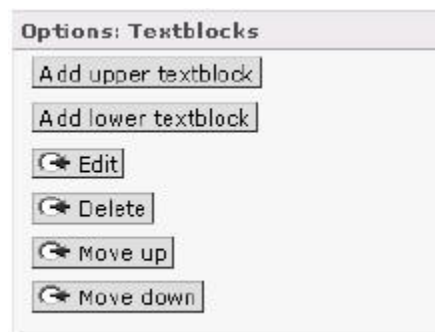
To modify your course homepage, select **Designer Options** on the menu bar at the top. At the right hand side of the page are the options available for customization. They are grouped into three main areas:

Modify selected link	Links refers to the icons on your homepage that link to various tools and areas of your courses. You can customize the titles of links to tools, pages, and URLs. You can also select whether a link appears as text, icon, or both and you can select the image file for the icon. You can select which students will see the link and when it will be released.
Modify selected textblock or add text	You can use textblocks to add text and images to the Homepage. An upper textblock is like a header and appears above the links on the Homepage. A lower textblock is like a footer and appears below the links on the Homepage (see image below).
Customize Layout	You can format your Homepage by adding a banner or background image, changing the colors, and arranging the layout of links.

Modify selected textblock or add text

Let's go ahead and add an upper textblock to learn more about the options listed here:

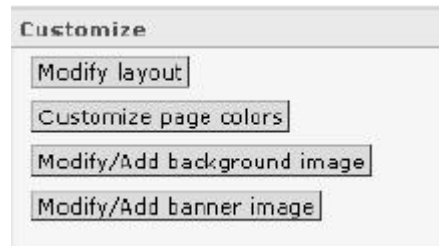
1. On the right hand side Under "**Options: Textblocks**", select **Add upper textblock** or directly click on the body of the page where it says "**Add Upper Textblock**".
2. Specify any of the following information:
 - Under **Layout**, select the background color
 - Under **Text Heading**, set the alignment, style, color, size and content of the text heading.
 - Under **Text**, set the alignment, style, color, size, and content of the textblock.
3. We will not be adding any images for now, so ignore this area of the page.
4. Click **Add** at the bottom of the page when you are finished entering text.



You may choose to **Edit** or **Delete** your textblocks at any time. Be sure to select the radio button next to your textblock before choosing to edit or delete. Also, if you edit your textblock, remember to click on Update at the bottom of the page when you are finished. If you have more than one textblock, you may also rearrange the order they are displayed by using the **Move up** or **Move down** feature. You will find all these four options under the “**Options: Textblocks**” on the Designer Options page.

Customize – Modify layout

The **Modify layout** option refers to the arrangement of icons on your course homepage. Using the **Modify layout** options, you can specify the position of icon labels and text associated with the icons. You can also select the number of columns the icons are arranged in. To edit the *Page Layout*:



1. Under “Customize”, click on **Modify layout**.
2. Select your layout preferences and then click **Update**. You may want to experiment with the various settings to determine which combination works best with the links your course is using.

Customize – Page colors

Modifying page colors from the course homepage results in setting page colors JUST for the homepage.

1. Under “Customize”, click on **Customize page colors**.
2. You may choose a preformatted color scheme or create a custom color scheme:
 - To choose one of the preformatted color schemes, select the radio button for the appropriate set in the Set No. column (A-D) and then click on **Update**.
 - To use the default color scheme as specified in Change Settings, click on **Course default**.
 - To create a custom color scheme, select the radio button next to **Custom**. Click in the small box labeled *Set Text Color*. Select a new color and then click on **Update**. Repeat for *Link*, *Visited Link*, and *background*.
3. Click **Update** when you are finished.

Note: If you would like to set a customized color scheme for your entire course, you must use the Control Panel->Course Settings->Customize Course Color->Colors Set procedure.

Customize – Modify/Add Background Image

If you choose to use images in your course, you must first upload these images into your Manage Files area. Images must be saved as .gif or .jpg files. WebCT does provide you with a limited selection of background images and clip art in the WebCT-Files or you can also select an image file from outside the WebCT-Files and upload it to your my-Files folder.

Any image may be used as a background. To add a *background image*:

1. Under “Customize”, click on **Modify/Add background image**.
2. Select the radio button next to “Use file”, and then click on **Browse** to locate your image.
3. Click **Add Selected** when you are done.
4. You can also Browse for the file, upload it on your My-Files folder and select the image then click **Add Selected**.
5. If you decide to remove the Background image, repeat step 1 above and select the radio button next to **None**. Remember to click **Update** when you are finished.

Customize – Add/Modify a Banner

A banner differs from a background image in that it only appears once at the top of your homepage. To add a banner:

1. Under “Customize”, click on **Modify/Add banner image**.
2. Select the radio button next to “Use file” and **Browse** for your image.
3. Select whether you want your banner **Left** aligned or **Center** aligned and then click **Update**.

Note: If you select “Use text”, any text you enter will appear within a WebCT banner. NOT the banner you may have chosen!

Modify Selected Link

There are a number of different actions you may impart on a link. You must remember to select the specific link by clicking on the radio button next to it.

Note: Links may appear just on the course homepage, just in the Course Menu or in both areas. Modifying a selected link in one area does not modify it in the other!

Below is a table that describes what each of the “Modify selected link” functions does:

Edit link	Edit Link allows you to change the link title and link appearance. You may use this option to change the icon associated with a given link. It also allows you to select release criteria that specify which students will see the link and when they will see it.
Delete	Self-explanatory. You may delete any link you choose to remove. However, if you remove a Content Module that has had files added to it, you will have to recreate the contents if you decide to re-add it.
Hide/Reveal	The Hide option will hide the link on your homepage from all of your students. Be aware that if this link also appears in your <i>Course Menu</i> , you will have to hide it there through Control Panel->Course Settings->Edit Course Menu! The Reveal option is used to “unhide” a hidden link.
Specify selective release	This allows you to selectively release a link to students based on their WebCT ID or based on a variety of other criteria (e.g., section number, grade on a quiz or assignment).
Move backward/ Move forward	The Move forward/ Move backward options allow you to reorder the links on your home page. You may move only one link at a time and only one position at a time.
Move to organizer page	If you use Organizer pages, you may move links from page to page.
Move to course menu	You may use this option to move a link off of your course homepage and onto the Course Menu.
Copy to course menu	This option will allow you to copy a link from your course homepage onto your Course Menu.

Change Settings – Navigation Bar

Using **Course Settings**, you can modify the instructor’s name; customize the Course Menu; and change the overall appearance of your course.

Edit Course Menu

The course menu is the list of links in the navigation bar to various parts of your course. It is critical to realize that editing a link on your homepage does not affect the link in the course menu. The two must be edited separately!

- Click on **Control Panel** in your navigation bar, then click on **Course Settings**.
- On the right hand side of the page click on “**Edit Course Menu**”.

Renaming a Course Menu Link

- Under **Edit Course Menu**, select the link that you want to rename.
- Under Options, next to “**Rename Link:**” enter the new name and click on “**Go**”.

Delete a Course Menu Link

- Under **Edit Course Menu**, select the link that you want to delete.
- Under **Options**, click on **Delete**.

Copying a Course Menu Link to another Page

- Under **Edit Course Menu**, select the link that you want to copy.
- Under **Organize**, click on Copy to organizer page.
- Then select the organizer page and click **Copy**.

Hiding/Revealing a Course Menu Link

- Under **Edit Course Menu**, select the link that you want to hide.
- Under **Options**, click on **Hide link**. An “**H**” will appear next to the link.
- To reveal a hidden link, select the link that you want to reveal.
- Under **Options**, click on **Reveal link**.

Selectively Releasing a Course Menu Link

- Under **Edit Course Menu**, select the link for which you want to set the release criteria.
- Under **Options** click on **Edit**.
- The Update Link screen appears. Select any of the following release criteria:
 - Release to
 - Release based on
 - Release after date
 - Release until date
- Be sure to click **Update** after setting the criteria.

Setting the Course News

Course News is displayed in **myWebCT** and notifies users of content additions to Assignments, Calendar, Discussions, Mail, My Grades, and Quiz. You can select how each tool's Course News is displayed.

- From the **Course Settings** screen, scroll down to the bottom of the page.
- Under **Customize Course News**, select how you would like each tool's Course News to display on the users' myWebCT. From the drop-down list, select from:
 - Do not display
 - Display with link
 - Display without link
- When you are finished, remember to click **Update**.

Many faculty prefer to NOT allow their students to go directly to various locations in their course from the myWebCT page. Students may miss new materials posted on the course home if they are allowed to do this. Furthermore, when no new email, discussion postings, grades, etc. have been posted, the message that appears on the myWebCT page beneath your course title is “There is no news for this course.”. Students tend to interpret this message to mean that there is no reason for them to access their course when in fact the instructor may have posted new material other than email discussions. To ensure that this message is never displayed, you should select “Do not display” for all of the options.

Equation Editor

The equation editor is a feature that is available to your students by default. It appears in the Discussions area, Private Mail and in the Quizzes and Surveys tool. If you will be having your students create and share equations, this is a great feature. However, if you are not going to be using equations in your course, this feature may actually confuse your students. We recommend that you choose “**Hide equation editor interfaces throughout the course**”.

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