

HOLYOKE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Course content may include a diverse array of materials. Any type of media you may view online may be included within your WebCT course (as long as you do not violate any copyright laws). This may include text-based materials, graphics (e.g., line drawings, colored drawings, photographs), animations, video and audio clips and simulations. The diversity of web-based materials that you may integrate into your course may provide you with additional teaching strategies and approaches that are not available in the face-to-face classroom. Today's Quick Hit will focus on the use of text-based materials, but much of what you learn is applicable to other types of content.

Text-base materials that you may wish to make available in your WebCT course include items such as your syllabus, lecture outlines, study guides, sample exams and quizzes, assignments, and solutions to homework problems. There are a number of benefits of using online content, including the use of hyperlinks, inclusion of imbedded colored graphics and animation, no excuse for losing materials, and anytime, anywhere availability of materials.

Acceptable File Types

Most of the materials you will be posting in your course you will have created in Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint or Corel WordPerfect. Keep in mind that not all of your students will have access to these programs. To provide materials to your students that are equally accessible, you need to **convert** your original file to a more universal file type. There are two file types that are commonly used in the online environment: HTML and PDF. Each type has their pros and cons:

HTML Format		PDF Format	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Displayed by all browsers; no plug-in required	May lose formatting and control over page breaks	Maintains formatting exactly as shown in original file	Requires a free plug-in to be read
Can now use "Save as HTML" command in word processor to create HTML files	Lots of extraneous HTML code is produced that doesn't interact well with WebCT	No HTML knowledge is necessary	Requires the full version of Adobe Acrobat (~\$70)
Can hyperlink terms in an HTML page to glossary	Must have some knowledge of HTML or Netscape Composer	PDF handles the online delivery of Excel and PowerPoint files very well	Terms in a page cannot be linked to the glossary definitions
Files are searchable within the course	Very messy with Excel and PowerPoint file formats		Files are not searchable within the course
Student usage of files are tracked by the Student Tracking feature in WebCT			Student usage of files cannot be tracked by the Student Tracking feature
Files may be edited directly within the WebCT course			Any editing must be done on the original file and the file resaved as PDF

Four Basic Steps for Adding Content to WebCT

Unless you are comfortable with creating and editing HTML files, we recommend using PDF files in your WebCT course. Here are the four basic steps for adding materials:

1. Create your material and convert to PDF

Create your material in the usual fashion, whether it is in Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. Be sure to save the file in the original format. Then, using Adobe Acrobat, “print” to a PDF file. In the case of PowerPoint files, we recommend “printing” handouts, preferably three slides per page. Do not include any spaces in your filename!

2. Upload your files to your myFiles folder

From your course homepage, click on “**Control Panel**” and then on “**Manage Files**”. If you are only uploading one or two files at a time to your myFiles folder, then you may upload them one at a time using the *Upload* feature. If you have a large number of files to upload, then you should consider using a compression program, such as WinZip or MacZip to create a single .zip file to upload and later unzipped within WebCT.

*Note: You may **not** use an external FTP program such as WS_FTP or Fetch to transfer files into your WebCT course*

3. Add a Content Module to your course

Return to your course homepage, click again on “**Control Panel**” and then on the “**Add page or tool**”. Click on **Content Module** under “Course Content Tools”. Enter a title for the module, such as *Lecture Outlines* or *Assignments*. Remember that you may add as many Content Modules as you would like to your course. Choose where to put the link (on the course homepage, on the navigation panel, or both) and select the icon you would like to use. Click “**Add**” when done.

Note: If on the “Add page or Tool Page” the option “Use a wizard when available” is checked, you will be able to see the wizard when adding the content module tool to your course.

4. Link your Materials in the Content Module

From the homepage of your course click on your **Content Module** icon and then select “**Designer Options**”. Click on “**Add files**”. A window containing the list of your HTML file appears. Select the radio button next to “*Show all files in the My-Files folders in Manage Files*”. Select the files you want by holding down the Ctrl key and clicking on each of the files. Click on “**Add**”. The link that is displayed on the Table of Contents page will read *Untitled*. Click on “**Edit titles**”. Now you may edit the titles to read anything you wish. You may also rearrange the order of files and add headings to better organize your Table of Contents.

Creating Usable HTML Files

If you would like to use HTML files in your course and are not familiar with HTML editors such as Dreamweaver, there are two approaches you may use. The first is to use Netscape’s composer, a free HTML editor, to create your files from scratch. You may enter text into Composer just as you would in Word. However, HTML code is being created behind the scenes and the file you create is an HTML file ready for use.

The second alternative is to open your Word (or WordPerfect) file, select All, then Copy, and Paste the material into a blank Composer file. You will need to reformat the file in Composer, but you will have a clean, HTML file when you are finished.

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