

HOLYOKE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Introduction

A Content Module is a page of links to course materials and resources, organized as an outline. In a WebCT course, content refers to the materials an instructor brings to class in the form of handouts, assignment schedules, additional readings, videos, etc. A Content Module is intended to be a page from which students can access and retrieve any type of course resources (readings, video clips, audio clips, etc.).

Adding content using the content module tool is a three-step process:

- ❑ Convert the files to a Web-ready form (htm, html, pdf, etc.)
- ❑ Upload files
- ❑ Connect Files to the Content Module Table of Contents

Converting Files to Web-ready Form

This topic could be a whole series of courses on its own. The following contains some general information about the process as it relates to course content.

Note: The limitations for the types of files that can be posted in a WebCT course are based on the software available to the instructor and students. For example, if an instructor posts a Microsoft Word or Excel file in a WebCT course students will be unable to open and view those files, unless they have a software package that can open a Microsoft Word or Excel file. It is therefore highly recommended for instructors to publish files that can be viewed on all computers, regardless of the software package installed on them, such as PDF and HTML files. These two file types are described below.

PDF Files

PDF stands for Portable Document Format. It is a type of file created by Adobe Acrobat. PDF files can be opened, saved, and printed using Adobe Acrobat Reader, a scaled-down version of the full version of Adobe Acrobat. Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from the Internet for free to be used as a plug-in with both Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. The benefit of using the PDF format is that it is accessible to anyone with Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.

Note: It is important to be aware of copyright laws when duplicating materials.

HTML Files

HTML stands for Hyper Text Markup Language. It is the language used by Web browsers to read Web documents. Computers with Netscape Communicator have an HTML generator that works much like a word processor. HTML files can be created using Netscape's Composer program, which can be launched from Netscape by choosing Composer from the Window pull-down menu.

Image Files

When including images in HTML documents, it is important to pay close attention to the file size of any images used. Images (graphics) are notorious for being large files, which means they take a long time to view on an Internet browser. This is especially important for those who access courses from a slow Internet connection (28.8K or 56K modem). It is recommended that image files be smaller than 50K if possible.

Note: Again, it is important to be careful of copyright infringement when working with images gained from an outside source.

Audio/Video Files

There are several widely used formats for audio and video on the Web. Commonly used audio formats are RA, MP3, and MIDI. Audio recordings must be converted to a Web-ready format because sound files are very large in file size and the conversion process compresses them so they can be downloaded efficiently. Some examples of programs that can be used for this purpose are Real Jukebox, Real Producer, and Sound Forge (by Sonic Foundry). Commonly used video formats are RM, AVI, and MOV. Like audio recordings, video must also be converted to Web-ready format because the files are very large in file size, much larger even than audio files. Some examples of programs that can be used for this purpose are Real Producer and Vegas Video.

Note: Each of these formats requires a plug-in for the user to hear or view the clip. For example, RA files require the Real One Player, which can also play MP3 files and MIDI files. AVI and MOV files require QuickTime player.

Upload Files

Once a file is Web-ready, it needs to be copied from the computer's hard-drive or floppy disk to the WebCT course. The process of transferring files from the hard drive or disk to the course site is called "uploading."

Note: When uploading a group of files, the files must be zipped together before being uploaded. Once the zip file is uploaded, it can be unzipped. Instructions for this process are included in the *Uploading a Group of Files* section of this chapter.

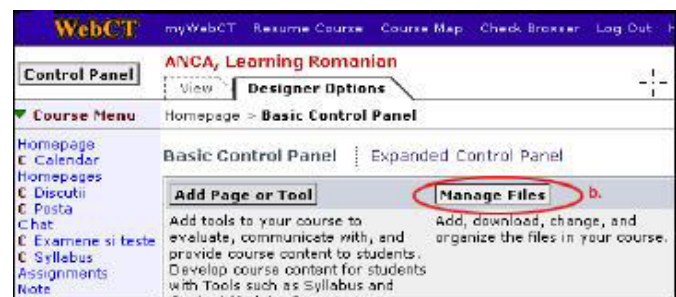
When files are uploaded to a WebCT course, those files are stored in an area called *Manage Files*. The *Manage Files* area works much like a computer file system. The user can create folders, rename files, move files, and delete them while in this area. It is recommended that folders be created in the *Manage Files* area as a first step in order to keep track of files and prevent accidental overwriting of files. Each new folder will be created in the main *My-Files* folder in the *Manage Files* area.

Creating a folder

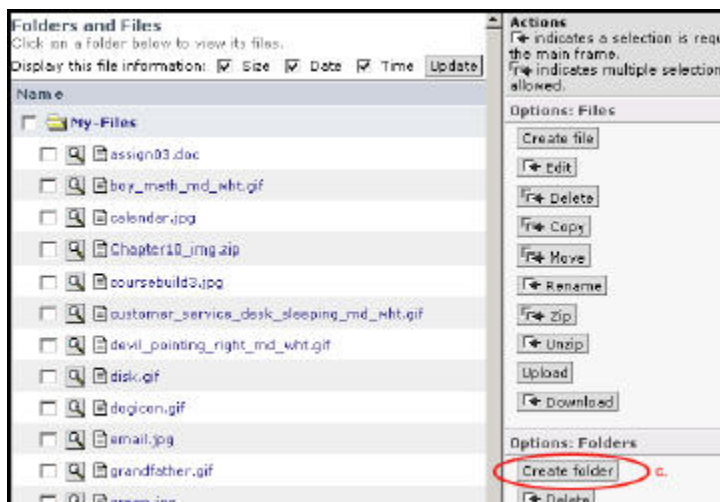
a. To create a folder, click on **Control Panel** on the homepage of your course.



b. On the *Control Panel* page click on the **Manage Files** button.

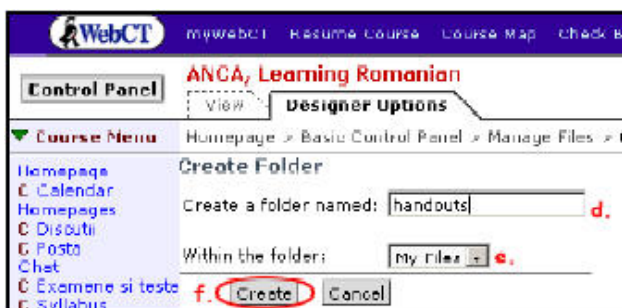


c. On the *Folders and Files* page click on **Create Folder**.



d. The *Create Folder* screen will appear. Type the name of the folder into the **Create Folder** field.

Note: Folder names cannot have spaces or any other non-alphanumeric characters, such as a forward slash, period or question mark. However, an underscore or hyphen may be used



e. From the pull-down menu select the folder within which the new folder should be placed. If other folders have been created, the new folder can be added within an existing folder, making it a subfolder.

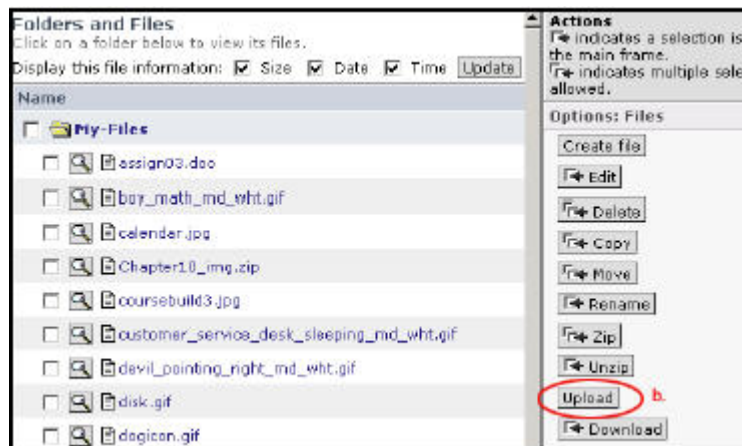
f. Click **Create**. The screen will return to the *Manage Files* area.

Uploading a File

a. To upload a file, click on **Control Panel** on the homepage of your course, then on **Manage Files**.

b. On the right hand side of the screen, under *Options: Files*, click **Upload**.

c. The *Upload File* screen appears. Click the **Browse** button.



d. At this point another screen appears in which a file on a computer can be located to upload in to the Manage Files area of WebCT. Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator have slightly different processes for this task. The following explains the steps involved for both browsers to perform the process.

1. **Internet Explorer**

a. In Internet Explorer this new window will be labeled *Choose File*. Locate and highlight the file to be uploaded.

b. Click **Open**.

2. **Netscape Navigator**

a. In Netscape Navigator this new window will be labeled *File Upload*. Locate and highlight the file to be uploaded.

b. Click **Open**.

e. The *Choose File/ File Upload* screen will disappear, returning the browser to the *Upload File* screen in WebCT. Click the **Upload** button. The *Manage Files* screen reappears.

Uploading a Group of Files (a zip file)

It is possible to upload a group of files, including their folder structure to the *Manage Files* area. This is helpful in that each file does not need to be uploaded separately. To do so, these five steps must be followed:

1. Go to the folder where the files are located and create a zip file (A zip utility called WinZip can be downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.winzip.com>).

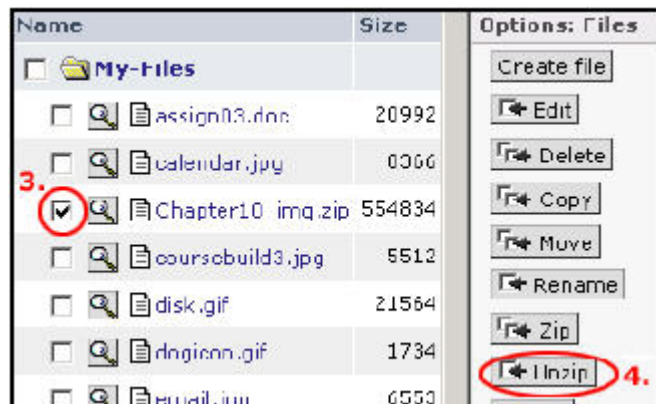
Note: The file name for each file must still meet the WebCT requirement of no spaces or non-alphanumeric characters. Before creating the zip file, be sure that all file names meet the criteria.

2. Upload the zip file to the *Manage Files* area by repeating the steps in the *Upload Files* section of this handout.

3. Select the zip file from the *MyFiles* folder by clicking on the check box next to it.

4. From the *Options: Files* menu, on the right hand side of the screen, click **Unzip**.

5. The files will be added as they were on the original computer or disk, including the folder layout.

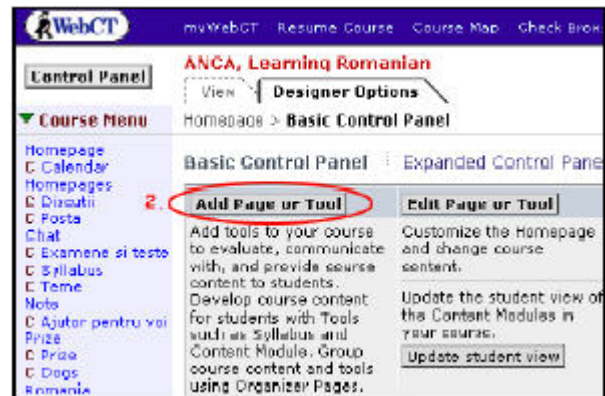


Connecting Files to the Content Module Table of Contents

These steps create a content page where hyperlinks to each file are arranged in an outline form.

A. Adding the Content Module Tool

1. While on the homepage of your course, click on **Control Panel**.
2. Click on **Add Page or Tool**.
3. From the *Course Content Tools* column, choose **Content Module**.
4. On the *Add Content Module* page:



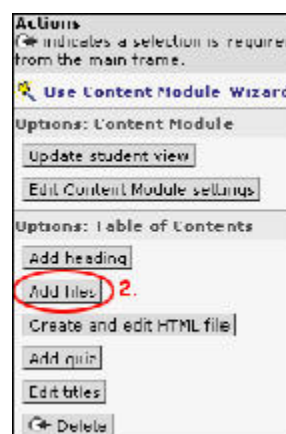
- a. Enter a title for the item.
- b. Decide where to show the link to the item.
- c. Decide whether you want the link to show the item title.
- d. Decide whether you want to use the default icon or a custom icon. If you want to use a custom icon, click the **Browse** button and select an icon.
- e. When you are done making your selections, click **Add**.



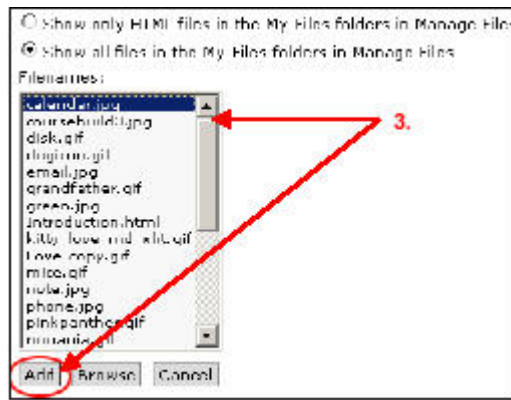
B. Connecting Files to the Content Module Table of Contents

To connect files to the content module table of contents:

1. Click on the content module icon on the homepage of our course and then switch to **Designer Options**.
2. To add files to the content module, under *Options: Table of Contents*, click on the **Add files** button on the right hand side of the screen.



3. The *Add Files* screen appears. Click the radio button next to *Show only HTML files in the My-Files folders in Manage Files* or *Show all files in the My-Files folders in Manage Files*. This decision will depend on the file types needed for the Content Module. A list of all the HTML files or of all the files in the *My Files* area will appear. In this list, locate the file you want to add to the content module, highlight it, and then click **Add**.

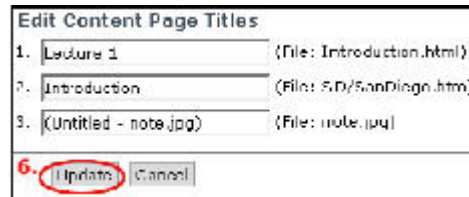


4. Multiple files can be added at once. To add more than one file hold the Ctrl key and click on the names of the files you wish to add to the CM.

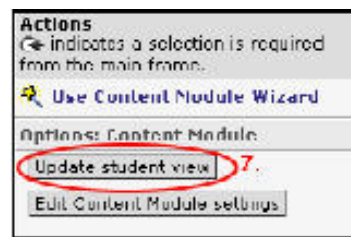


5. Some files may appear as “Untitled” in the content module. To edit their titles, while on the content module page in designer options, click on the **Edit titles** button.

6. On the *Edit Content Page Titles* screen edit the titles of the files and then click **Update**.



7. After all content has been added and the settings have been adjusted, click the **Update Student View** button in order to make changes visible to the students. Until the student view has been updated, the content is in design mode, allowing only the instructor to make changes and work on the module until the content is ready to be released.



Note: The Update Student View process must be allowed to run through to completion, or the course may become corrupted. The more files there are, the longer the process will take.

Content Module Advanced Features and Settings

The following is a list of additional features and settings available on the *Content Module Designer Options* screen. It is beyond the scope of this handout to explain each item step-by-step, so each one will be defined in terms of its function.

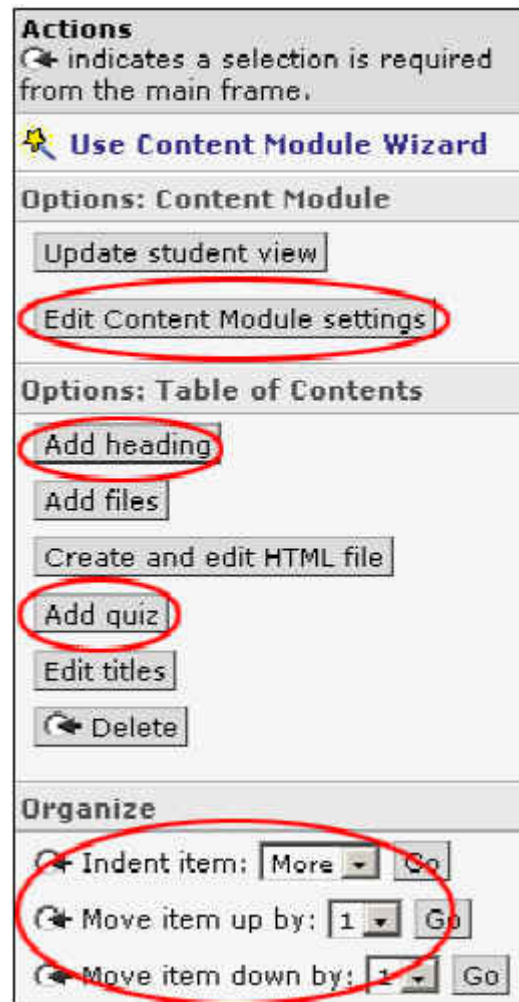
Settings: The *Content Module Settings* screen allows a content module to be selectively released based on student ID, time period, or other criteria. One common selective release practice is making content unavailable until a specific time during the semester.

- **Headings:** Headings are used as separators and concept organizers. Unlike adding a file, a heading does not create a hyperlink to a document.

- **Quizzes:** If a quiz has been set up in the course, it can be connected directly to a Content Module, allowing students to see the cognitive relationship between the quiz and the other information in the content module.

- **Indentation:** Indentation allows files and headings to be organized in heading/subheading relationships. Rather than simply being numbered 1., 2., 3., etc.; items can be indented to show conceptual relationships, similar to an outline.

- **Moving Items:** Items can be moved up or down in the outline with this option by changing the order of items on a page a given number of places.



Please visit the HCC Website at <http://webtide.hccd.org/>

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