The WCC Online Student Desktop

<Your Guide to Creating and Maintaining Your Instructional Website>

Version 1.0, June 1999

http://courses.wccnet.org
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### Acknowledgments

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Introduction

This manual is your guide to creating and maintaining an instructional website. The website itself is called a “Student Desktop”. The Student Desktop contains five links or main areas of navigation:

- Instructor: information about you
- Course Materials: class handouts and other information, organized by course
- Learning Links: helpful URLs that you specify for students to use
- Reference Help: links to WCC library resources
- Communication: links to gradebooks, quizzes, student emails, chats, forums, etc.

What’s in a Name?

Why is your instructional website called the Student Desktop, rather than a “Personal Page” or “Instructor Page”?

We call it the Student Desktop because it is your students’ desk away from campus. It is a place students can find course information and communicate with the instructor outside of the classroom.
Finding the desktop

There are multiple points of access on the college website to the class websites. These include:

- WCC Home Page
- Courses and Program Page
- Faculty and Staff Page
- Students Page

The Online Student Desktop at http://courses.wccnet.org
Finding your site

The URL for all Student Desktops is
http://courses.wccnet.org

Your individual URL is
http://courses.wccnet.org/~username

When you or your students click on a link to class websites
or type in this URL, you will arrive at the home page of the
Student Desktops (courses.wccnet.org). From the home
page, you have options to:

- View a complete list of all faculty who have course
  websites
- Search for a class (by faculty member name or by
discipline, such as Graphic Design Technology)
- Get help finding valid instructional websites
- Create an instructional website account
Creating an instructional website account

Click on the “Create an Instructional Website” link off of the home page of courses.wccnet.org. Fill in your LOGIN name, PASSWORD, name as you would like to see it on your website, and discipline codes. Then, click on the radio button that says “Create a Student Desktop Website for Me”. Then, click “Make It”.

What happens after you click “Make It”?

- Your name is added to the instructor list and is made searchable by the discipline code(s) you indicated.
- An entire web site, complete with instructor, course materials, research help, learning links, and communication sections is created for you.
- You are able to update and maintain your site online, using the online maintenance feature.
- Directions are emailed to you indicating where to find documentation and helps for using the maintenance feature.
What’s so great about the Student Desktop?

We know that our students really appreciate the benefit of extra communication and information from us, but what about the benefits for the faculty? Creating and especially maintaining a course website (keeping it current) take valuable time and energy—often above and beyond your existing obligations. The next section explains how you can maintain an instructional website without the fuss.

About the Maintenance Feature

What is the WCC maintenance feature? It is your way to keep your site updated throughout the term. You make all changes online right from your own website. Changes can be made from a MAC or a PC, with any type of web browser, such as Netscape or Internet Explorer.

This means you do not have to know HTML (the code behind web pages) or FTP (a way to send files from your disk to the web server).

From the maintenance feature, you have the ability to:

- Update instructor information
- Add/ Delete/ Modify course listings and materials for each course you teach
- Add/ Delete learning links (URLs) for each course you teach
- Update online communication features, including:
  - Quizzes
  - Gradebooks
  - Forums
  - Chatrooms

Simply click on the section you would like to update (such as “Update Instructor Information”) and follow the step-by-step instructions in that section. Pay special attention to information that is required vs. optional.
Help

Helps are available throughout the site. Help for a particular section can be obtained by clicking on the icon next to the topic for which you need help. This icon will bring up a help screen for the topic you requested. Helps include: instructions for each step along the way, helps for related topics, and details about what to do if you have made a mistake. A table of contents is also available in the upper right hand corner of the help screen for your convenience.

Alert!

When making changes on your site, you may run across a icon. It is important that you read the information next to this icon. The alert icon is customized for your desktop. It tells you which pages you are about to add/delete/modify so that you can make sure you are in the right section and making the right decisions before executing.

HTML

Knowledge of html is not required to update pages on your site, but can often be very useful. For example, if you want to make your name bold, you can type in:

\[\text{<b>My name</b>}\]

in the name field. Simple HTML commands are listed in the helps section of the site. Simply click on any of the icons and choose “HTML Basics” from the contents list.
Maintaining Your Site
Logging In

From the home page of your site, click on the “Admin” button (on the bottom left of the page). You will be prompted to enter your ID and PASSWORD. This is the same ID and PASSWORD you use for your college email.

**Note:** when making changes to your site using the “Admin” feature, you may occasionally be asked to re-enter your ID and PASSWORD (for instance, if there has been a long period of in-activity since you last logged in). This is for security reasons. Simply re-enter the information and continue with your changes.

If you do not have email with the college, you will need to contact the WCC Help Desk at (734) 973-3456.
Update Instructor Information

This section allows you to update the materials on your instructor page. Simply enter the changes/additions you would like in the appropriate fields, and click “submit”. All fields in this section are optional. If you leave them blank, they will simply appear as an empty cell on your page. Use the “Information” box to add any information you desire. In addition to typing straight text into this box, you may also format the file (add bold, italics, etc.) by using basic HTML tags.

Fill in the form fields and click “submit”

- Name:
- Status: Part-Time Professional Faculty
- Department: Business
- Division:
- Office:
- Office Phone:
- Email:
- Office Hours:
- Other Information:

Visit the department homepages <a href="http://www.wccnet.org/dept/">here</a>.

Submit
Course Materials

This section allows you to manage all information in the Course Materials section of your site. Your Course Materials page lists the course name and pages associated with a course.

Adding a Course Listing

Before pages can be added for a course, you must create a listing for it.

To add a listing type the course ID, section, and full course name as requested.

Add A Course Listing

Add the information and click ‘Add Course Listing.’

Course ID:
(Required)

Section:
(Required)

Name:

Enter Course ID
Enter Course Section Number
Enter Course Name

You can type in multiple sections, such as “01-02,06”
Delete A Course Listing

This section allows you to delete a course listing. Simply click on the button next to the listing you would like to remove.

Keep in mind that deleting the listing will remove all subsequent pages under the listing. For example, if you already added your handout to the GDT 200 listing and then you return to this step and delete the GDT 200 listing, you will also be deleting your handout. If you desire to make a change to the wording or content of the listing, but not remove the entire course, then choose the "Modify" option.

Click button next to the course you want to delete

This will delete all pages associated with this course
Modify A Course Listing

This section allows you to modify a course listing (for example, changing typographical errors or making listings more descriptive). The information in the boxes next to each course represent the information you presently have published in the Course Materials section of your site. There is a "Modify Course Listing" button for each course. To modify the listing, simply edit the text in the boxes and click the "Modify Course Listing" button that corresponds with the listing you are changing.
Add / Delete / Modify a Page

Once you create a listing for a course, you can add as many webpages as you would like to that listing (i.e., handouts, etc.)

You can also modify or delete pages you previously published. A list of the courses and webpages you currently have on your site will be listed in this section. Click on the button corresponding with the task you would like to accomplish (i.e., Add a Page to this Course Listing).

http://courses.wccnet.org

You will be notified that you are adding a page on the next screen. Be sure to read the alert and confirm that it is correct.
Add a Page

This option allows you to add a page (such as handouts, assignments, etc.) to the Course Materials section of your site. Pages are organized by course (such as GDT 125). Once you click on “Add a Page to this Course Listing”, you will be presented with two options for adding the pages. You may either (a) Create a page online, or (b) Attach an .htm or .html file you already created.

(a) Create a Page Online

To create a page online, you must enter the title of the page and the desired text. The title you type in will be the link the students will see in the Course Materials section so be as descriptive as possible. After you have entered the title and text, simply click “Add Page” and a page will be automatically created for you.

The title you type in will be the link the students will see in the Course Materials section so be as descriptive as possible.

You can copy and paste from a word processor, however, be aware that you will lose formatting such as bold and italics.

Remember, HTML tags are allowed.
(b) Attach an .htm or .html file

If you have created a page using HTML or a web page editor such as FrontPage or Dreamweaver, you can send it to the web using this feature.

To attach the page, you must enter a title and select the file from your hard drive or disk. After you've done this, click on “Add Page” to add the page to the course listing.

The title you give also becomes the link from your Course Materials page, so be descriptive in your title. Be sure not to use spaces, hyphens or other odd characters when naming your .html files. If you do, the maintenance feature will ask you to rename them.

Site maintenance tip: For the most control over the look and feel of your site and to avoid keeping duplicate copies of your files on your computer and the web, we suggest attaching .htm files whenever possible (as opposed to creating online). Creating or modifying your page online is an attractive option when you need to make a quick update or change, but may cause more trouble in the long run.

If you already have copies of your handouts and other class materials in Microsoft Word or Word Perfect, it makes very little sense to copy and paste the text out of your files into the maintenance feature. You lose all formatting, and now will have to update both your computer copy and your web copy when you want to make a change.

We suggest saving your Word or Word Perfect file as an HTML document (File menu --> Save as HTML). You will retain much of the formatting of your original file. Next, return to the maintenance feature and use "Attach an .htm or .HTML file" (see above). Later, if you would like to make a change to that page, return to your original Word file, make the changes and repeat the steps. This way, you will always have one file that is used for on-campus work as well as online.
Adding .jpg, .jpeg, and .gif images to your page.

Whether choosing option 1A or 1B, what you actually did was send your file to the web server. If the web page you added included an image, you will also need to send the image to the server. Click "Add Image" to send the image to the web server.

After you click on "Add Image" another screen will appear. Click "Browse..." and select the image you would like to add from your hard drive or disk and click "Upload File". Keep repeating this step until you have added all images for your page.

The image will only show up if you referenced it in your file (i.e., `<img src="button.gif">`).

Be sure not to use spaces, hyphens or other odd characters when naming your images. If you do, the maintenance feature will ask you to rename them.

Select the file from your hard drive and click "Open", then click "Upload File". Remember to choose "All Files" from the scrolldown menu so you can see your images in the list. All images must be either a .gif or a .jpg.
Learning Links

Add a Link

To add a link to your Learning Links page, simply enter the information listed below to add a link and then click on the “Add Link” button.

The name for each link must be unique. Link names will be listed in alphabetical order. For this reason, it is a good idea to begin your link with the course number or topic the link for (for example “GDT 200 - Help Pages”). Also, pay particular attention to the spelling and case of your URL.

- **Name of Link (Required):**
  - for example: GDT 200 - Adobe Website

- **URL (Required):**
  - `http://`
  - for example: `http://www.adobe.com`

- **Brief Description:**
  - for example: This is the Adobe Website. Be sure to download Acrobat Reader when you visit the site.

Click “Add Link” when finished.

Delete a Link

To delete a link from your Learning Links page, simply click on the “Delete Link” button which appears next to the link.

If you make a mistake, simple delete the link and add it again with the correct information.
# Online Gradebook

This section allows you to create and update online gradebooks for each course you teach. Gradebook accounts are created using the maintenance feature. The gradebook itself is a Microsoft Excel file that must be downloaded from the web and then edited on your desktop. It has many options for customization.

After changes are made offline, gradebooks are published online using the maintenance feature. Students view their grades using their WCC IDs and PASSWORDs in the "Communication" section of your site.

## Creating and Deleting Gradebook Accounts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Add A Gradebook</th>
<th>Delete A Gradebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add the information and click &quot;Add Gradebook:&quot;</td>
<td>Click &quot;Delete&quot; next to any gradebook that you want to delete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: for example: &quot;Design and Publishing on the Internet&quot;</td>
<td>GDT 125 Q1 S1999  Delete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline: for example: &quot;GDT&quot;</td>
<td>GDT 126 S1 S1999  Delete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number: for example: &quot;200&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section: for example: &quot;02&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester: Winter 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To delete a gradebook, click on the "Delete" icon next to each gradebook that is listed.

To keep gradebooks for multiple sections of the same course, simply add a separate gradebook for each section. You may also keep gradebooks for more than one semester of the same course (i.e., CIS160 01 S1999, CIS160 02 W1999) by adding a separate gradebook for each course.
Downloading the gradebook file

The gradebook is a Microsoft Excel worksheet. It can be downloaded from the web in either MAC or PC format. You will need to unzip the file if you are a PC user or unstuff it if you are a MAC user.

Step 2.
Download the gradebook file.

The gradebook file is an .xls (Microsoft Excel) file that can be used on MAC or PC.

PC users - Click here
MAC users - Click here

Set up your gradebook using Microsoft Excel

The gradebook consists of three "sheets". The "help" sheet, the "gradebook" sheet, and the "comments" sheet. The gradebook sheet is the place where you will enter the numeric or letter grades for your students. The comments sheet allows you to provide a comment to the student for each grade you give them.

Help Comments

There are help comments throughout the gradebook file that guide you through customizing your gradebook. These are essential, as they often remind you of required vs. optional fields and give suggestions for customization. A commented cell is indicated by a red triangle in the upper right corner of a cell.
Customizing the gradebook

Required Fields
Although the gradebook is extremely customizable, there are several required fields. These include:

**CCID**: This is the student's WCC ID. It can be found in the right hand column of your official roster. Typical IDs are "aga206" or "gadams21".

**Name**: The students name is required. It is up to you how you would like it displayed (first name first or last). Add the students' names directly below the "generic" student. Feel free to add as many rows as you need.

**Extra Text**: This text must appear, as is, at the bottom of your gradesheet. Any text you type in the rows following the text will be included as notes at the bottom of your grade sheet.

**Assignments**: Assignments/Tests/Etc. are completely customizable (they can be named whatever you like). However, they all must appear on the same row as the CCID and name (as shown in the visual). Feel free to add as many columns that you need and to change the Assignment cells to whatever text you would like.
Entering Grades

After you have entered all of the students' names and IDs, you are ready to enter grades. You may display grades in any format you would like (i.e., formulas, letter grades, etc.).

Note that a "generic" student has been added as the first student. Leave this student in the first row. All other students can be added below the generic student.

Entering Comments

You have the opportunity to add a comment for the student to read next to each grade they receive (such as “Great job Gretchen. Be careful to document your steps next time, though.”).
The comment sheet must be an exact duplicate of the gradebook sheet. You should first customize the gradebook sheet to your liking and insert all of the student IDs and names. Then, choose “Edit” from the scrolldown menu and “Move or Copy Sheet”. Select the gradebook sheet and indicate that it is a copy. Click okay. A new sheet will be added with the same name as your gradebook, followed by a (2). Double click on the tab and change the text to a more descriptive name, such as “GDT 200 Comments”. Then, simply type right over the grade that is in the cell with the comment.

Saving Your Gradebook

Once you finish editing the gradebook, save your gradebook as a regular Microsoft Excel Workbook. Give it a descriptive name, such as “gradebookmaster.xls”. We suggest making a copy/backup of the “generic_gradebook” file, rather than saving over it.

You may keep several gradebooks and comments in one workbook, if you desire. Simply change the names of the tabs (double click on them and then edit) to reflect the exact course name (such as, “GDT200gradebook” and “GDT200comments”). Then, choose “Insert”, “Insert worksheet” and add new gradebook and comments sheets for your additional courses, or, choose “Edit”, “Move or Copy Sheet” to retain formatting of a prior sheet.

One workbook can contain several gradebooks and comments
Preparing your gradebook for the web

After you've made all of your changes and saved your file as a Microsoft Excel Worksheet, you are ready to prepare your file for the web.

Each sheet (gradebook and comments) must be prepared for the web separately. Go to the gradebook sheet first. Choose “Save as” from the File menu. Choose “Text (Tab delimited)” from the scrolldown menu and click “Save”.

It is a good idea to give the file a very descriptive name, preferably something different from your gradebook master (such as “gdt200gradebook”). After saving, a notification will appear that reminds you that when saving as a .txt file, you may only save one worksheet at a time. Click OK.

Now, go to your comments file and do the same thing. If you did not use comments, then ignore this step. Remember to use a descriptive file name, such as “gdt200comments”.

This warning reminds you that you can only save one worksheet as a text file at a time. Click “OK”.

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Once finished, close the file. Excel will ask if you want to save the file again, or may even say that you didn't save the file. Ignore this comment (Click on “No”). Whenever you save as “.txt”, Excel wants you to go back and save again as a workbook.

DO NOT MAKE ANY CHANGES TO THE .TXT FILES, AS THEY WILL NOT BE REFLECTED IN THE MASTER GRADEBOOK. ALL TABULATIONS ARE LOST WHEN YOU SAVE AS .TXT (A TEXT FILE IS MADE OUT OF THE GRADEBOOK).

If you need to make any additional changes to the gradebook, you would re-open the “gradebookmaster.xls” file, make the changes, and then follow the above "Prepare Your Gradebook for the Web" steps again. You may save right over the old .txt files.

Excel will ask you to save the gradebook in .xls format after saving it as a .txt file. Click on “No”.
Putting the gradebook on the web

Return to the gradebook section of the maintenance feature to put your gradebook online. Click on “Browse...” to locate the “gradebook.txt” file from your computer or disk. Then, choose your class from the scrolldown list. Identify (by clicking on one of the radio buttons) if this is a gradebook or comments file. Finally, choose the appropriate semester.

Click on “Browse...” to locate the “gradebook.txt” file from your computer or disk

Choose your class from the scrolldown list

Identify (by clicking on one of the radio buttons) if this is a gradebook or comments file

Choose the appropriate semester

When finished, click “Upload”
Checking the results online (see what your students see)

Students view results from the “Communicate” section of your site, choosing the appropriate gradebook from the list.

Enter "generic" as the ID and "generic" as the PASSWORD and click "Find Grade". You now see what your students see.

If you removed the generic student, you will not see the results.

Click Here to see your grades for BMG 109 01, Winter 1999.

Click Here to see your grades for BMG 209 01, Winter 1999.

BMG 109-01- Introduction to Home-Based / Small Business Management

Spring/Summer 99; Instructor, Granville Lee

Below are the grades for Student, Name (BMG109-01)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID#/ Date Revised:</td>
<td>000-00-0000 June 21, 1999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile (24)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum Introduction (24)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test: Part 1 (2)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 (12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check-In #1 (6)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having your students check their grades

In order to see their grades, the students must have a WCC email account. To obtain a WCC email account, have them begin by clicking on the "Students" section of the WCC site. They should then click on "Student email" and follow the instructions for getting an account. Be sure to remind them to write down their passwords.

Students can use this account for email and for the gradebook. Their ID for their email and their gradebook will always be their ID for the gradebook (i.e., “aga206” or “gadams” for Adams, Gretchen Anne). If they forget their password, they will need to call the help desk at (734) 973-3456.

A Link to the Student Email is available on the Students section of the WCC website.
Quizzes

You may create and maintain online quizzes from the maintenance feature of your site. You have many options for quizzing. Some of the more noteworthy features include:

- Multiple choice, short answer, true/false, essay
- Password protection
- Adding images, video, and sound
- Automatic grading
- Answers or hints after each question
- Partial grading
- Section breakdowns
- Comprehensive results
- Customized notes and backgrounds
- Designer test previews/try-outs

Creating quiz accounts:

Because of the complexity of authenticating users and maintaining privacy, setting up initial quiz accounts for each class you teach requires that you contact the web staff. You should bring your class roster(s) with you when you meet with the web staff. At this time, your students will be added to the system and be given special quizzing passwords (for security purposes). They will keep the same ID as their WCC email. Also at this time, you will be given a "designers" account and receive a quick tutorial on how to create and edit quizzes online. From that point on, you can create and edit the quizzes online and assign students to appropriate quizzes.

The student view

Students will locate their class quizzes from the "Communication" section of your site. They will only be able to do this if you have set up an account with the web staff (see Creating Quiz Accounts section above).

They simply type in their ID and special quizzing PASSWORD and then click on the "Testing Center" icon. A box will appear that lists the tests that the instructor has made available to that student. They select the test they would like to take and click "Take Test".

The students will be removed from the system after the last week of the term

A complete set of online helps is available from your site after initiating your quiz account.
Forums

You may create and maintain online forums from the maintenance feature of your site. The forum software is very robust. Some of the more noteworthy features include:

- Post attachments
- Expand/contract topics
- View all comments for a thread at once
- View one comment at a time
- Password protect a forum topic
- Authenticate users
- Moderate forum topics

Because a separate software package is used from the WCC maintenance feature, forum accounts must be initiated by the web staff. When you meet with the web staff, come prepared with both class roster(s) and class information (i.e., GDT 200, section 02) for the classes you would like to create forums for.

You will be given a “designers” account and receive a quick tutorial on how to administer the forums. You will also specify some of the specific forum features you would like, such as including a “filth filter”, password protecting a forum, or allowing attachments. After the initial account and specifications are set-up, you will have complete access to create, edit, and moderate forums online from your desktop using the maintenance feature.
Chat

You may create and moderate chatrooms from the maintenance feature of your site. The chat software has many customizable options. Some of the more noteworthy features include:

- Create public and private rooms
- Send images
- View a message history (whiteboard)
- Send private messages
- Send customized banners to students in the class
- Authenticate users
- Moderate chat rooms

Because a separate software package is used from the WCC maintenance feature and because we have a limited license for the number of simultaneous chatters per term, chat accounts must be initiated by the web staff. When you meet with the web staff, come prepared with both class roster(s) and class information (i.e., GDT 200, section 02) for the classes you would like to create chat rooms for.

You will be given a “designers” account and receive a quick tutorial on how to moderate the chatrooms. After the initial account it set-up, you will have complete access to moderate chatrooms from your desktop using the maintenance feature. If you need to add a new room, however, you will need to contact the web staff.
Conclusion

The WCC Student Desktop was programmed right here at WCC with input from our own faculty, staff, and students as well as from considerable research of the industry standards in the market today.

We think you will find that both the students and instructors benefit from the desktop. It provides students with a consistent interface that they can become familiar with across courses, while allowing instructors the creativity to customize the course for the content at hand. And, of course, it makes it extremely easy to keep instructional websites current and accurate through its online maintenance feature.

Future upgrades to the desktop are already underway. The web staff is more than happy to take requests from faculty and students for future upgrades. Let us know what works and what doesn’t by sending an email to the web staff.

We will continue to update the manual as new features are added. In addition, the “help” section of the maintenance feature will always have links to the latest *.pdf files for you to download.

Happy publishing.