

UW Colleges Instructional Technology

Building a D2L Course – Content Tips

Please check in!

Baraboo	Manitowoc	Richland
Barron	Marathon	Rock
Fond du Lac	Marinette	Sheboygan
Fox Valley	Marshfield	Washington
	Waukesha	

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What will be covered?

- How to create content for a D2L course site
- How to bring the content into D2L
- How to organize the content within the site
- How to make use of D2L's internal navigation

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What won't be covered?

- Converting face-to-face classes to online classes
- Specific course elements
- Example: Creating a syllabus section, but not what to include in the syllabus
- Example: Building lessons, but not what to include in each lesson

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First things first

- Content Display Settings
 - Sidebar List Style (General Settings)
 - set to Current top-level module expanded and Save
 - Title (Format Strings)
 - change to Content (or whatever else you would prefer)
 - Module and Topic (Format Strings - lower panel)
 - delete text prior to {URLStart} and Save

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Setting up the Content page

- Modules are headings that provide outline of structure
 - Syllabus
 - Modules/Units/Sections
 - Lessons/Topics
 - Course Content

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Creating Modules

- Dropdown box provides outline
 - (create major divisions first)
- Title displays in Content window
- Short Title displays in Navigation Pane
- Hide enumeration for headings (*Best Practice*)
- Other settings can be adjusted later
- Save or Save & New

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Setting up the File Structure

- Just like computer file structure
- Create folders that match content page
(Best Practice)
- Think about special needs
- Plan for ways to reduce access speed and potential mapping problems

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Types of files

- Wherever possible use html files (FrontPage or Dreamweaver)
 - Can create plain text file and paste into web application
 - Can copy and paste from Word – clean up tool
- Next best option, use pdf files that open in separate windows
- Can use Word files, but avoid if possible
 - If using Word files, link and open in separate windows

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One method of filling content (fast)

- Create zipped folders that contains content
(match D2L file structure you created)
- Use Manage Files area of D2L
- Upload zipped folder into appropriate file area and unzip
- Select files for a specific heading using checkboxes

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Filling content (con't...)

- Click Create Topics icon
- Check to make sure location is correct (dropdown box)
- Adjust names of topics (if necessary)
- Click Create

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Titles (Best Practice)

- Full titles appear down the viewing window of the content page
- Short titles appear in the navigation window of the content page
- For full titles try to use a max of 50-60 characters (including spaces)
- For short titles try to use a max of 10-15 characters (including spaces)

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Adjust Titles (in bulk)

- Manage Content (Content page)
- Pay attention to Edit Mode dropdown box
- Titles first (apply and then print)
- Short titles second (don't forget to apply)

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Other changes

- Reorder within modules with up/down arrows
- Move to different module using move icon
- Delete individually or in bulk (only removes link, not file)
- Edit specific topics (content, release conditions, etc.)

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Controlling Content Timing

- Use edit button for individual topics or for modules
Select Release Conditions tab
- Timers for modules affect all items in that module
- Don't hide topics (*Best Practice*)
 - delete if not used
 - control release with timers if part of course
- Pay attention to time of day as well as date
- Don't forget to Save

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Controlling Access to Content

- Can create groups and limit access by group
 - Can be used for modules (sets of information) or specific topics
- Alternate method is based on scoring
 - This could be used to provide remedial or advanced information for specific students
- Don't forget to Save

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Creating New Topics (on the fly)

- Middle two are variations on what we have seen
 - Course File uses current course file to create a new topic
 - Upload brings in a single file and then uses that file to create a new topic
- Create New File creates new topic from scratch
- Quicklink can be handy for accessing other pages on the internet or personal web pages
 - No need to recreate them

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Creating New Topics (con't...)

- If you use Create New File:
 - Be sure to clean content copied from Word document
 - Format using WSIWYG editor if needed
 - This window is relatively small (disadvantage)
 - Integrate file into existing file structure

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Other bits and pieces

- Keep structure consistent across topics
- Consider breaks between topics (still images, title page, simple flash animation)
- Use pages with embedded links for long topics (multi-part commentaries)
- Open embedded links in new browser windows

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