

CourseDen: Why You'll Love Your V8!

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Overview

A New Name.

When we move to WebCT Vista version 8 (V8) in January 2009, what was formerly called WebCT Vista will be renamed CourseDen. The servers will still be supported by the state's GeorgiaVIEW.

It will take us some time to update all the documentation and get used to the new name, but in the long run it'll be better, as it will give us a name what can stay the same no matter what products we use in the future!

What else will be different in CourseDen?

- ◆ Performance should improve (pages will load faster). The central BOR office is moving the state from it's current three server clusters to ten.
- ◆ The navigation is much improved (no more tiny menu in the top right—now there's a large course menu sidebar that can be hidden and expanded as desired).
- ◆ There are new features such as Blogs, Journals, and a Roster tool (with student photo capabilities)
- ◆ Gradebook has an easier and more efficient navigation with the ability to perform various grading tasks from one central grid.
- ◆ A new smart views feature allows customized views filtered by groups and course sections, and letter and numeric grades can now be displayed simultaneously.
- ◆ Grading Forms (rubrics) to make grading and peer review much easier.
- ◆ Safe Assign is Blackboard's plagiarism prevention service now integrated into version 8. Initial testing indicates that it produces similar results to Turnitin. We cannot, however, give an ETA for when the powerlink will be implemented.

The following resources are available from Blackboard to help faculty learn how to use the new features effectively:

Tutorial - Exploring the Interface: <http://tutorials.webct.com/exploring/interface.htm>

Tutorial – Design Basics: <http://tutorials.webct.com/exploring/design.htm>

More New Features, Lots to Love

In more detail, new features include:

- ◆ Roster -- allows instructor and students to create profiles with photos and contact info
- ◆ Users can hide channels on their myCourseDen page—including Who's Online
- ◆ Goals tool—allows you to set up goals by category and associate them with different tasks, assessments, assignments, files, etc.
- ◆ “Organizers” are called “Folder” now—and that makes a lot more sense! :-)
- ◆ One click editing added in some tools!
- ◆ A “repository” for sharing files with other faculty
- ◆ A “Custom Page Display” for the homepage and Folders
- ◆ A “Local Content” allows you to distribute media on a CD and then link to it from within your course, as needed. (This has been problematic in the past, though)
- ◆ Public “Course Preview Page” is now available, so that you can have a publicly accessible page to introduce your course or provide instructions to students BEFORE the course start date.
- ◆ We *hope* you'll be able use full-functioning student tracking again.

Assessments:

- ◆ Can add a Description of the Assessment
- ◆ Edit Assessment Settings is now Edit Assessment Properties and includes new options like:
 - ⇒ Release statistics to students after releasing the score
 - ⇒ Release the score only after availability has ended
 - ⇒ Add “custom instructions” and “display custom instructions on every question” (the latter, perhaps, to include java-script to prevent copying)

Learning Modules

- ◆ The first page students see can be set to the Table of Contents

Calendar

- ◆ Add files and times to calendar entries
- ◆ Has a “repeating” option

Gradebook

- ◆ Hide unenrolled member data

One of our favorite new features is the improved Discussions tool! It includes the options for creating blogs for collaboration— and private journaling areas.

Create Discussion Topic

What type of discussion topic would you like to create?



Threaded topic.

Create a threaded topic for a more traditional online discussion. Users post and reply to messages. Replies that are associated with the same post are grouped together, creating message threads that can be expanded and collapsed.



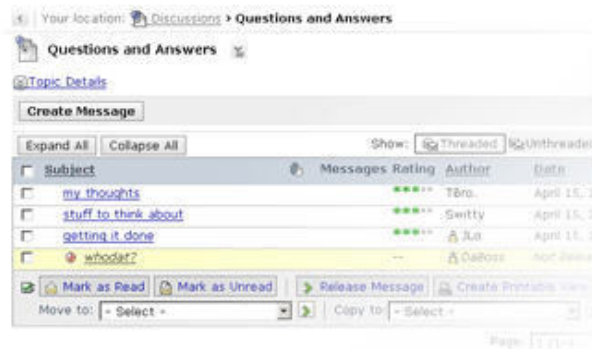
Blog topic.

Create a collaborative blog (weblog) space by allowing participants to post a chronological series of entries on a particular topic. Participants can then add comments to any blog entry.



Journal topic.

Create a journal topic to give Students a place for their own writing. The journals can be kept private between the Student and the Section Instructor or shared with the class.



The new Discussions tool also allows for “Peer Review” and “Topic Behavior Options”.

Peer Review (Expand this area to see more options.)

- Do not enable peer review in this topic
- Allow Students to review messages using a simple rating scale (all messages in topic may be reviewed)
- Allow Students to review messages using a grading form (Only the first message in each thread may be reviewed)

Topic Behavior Options (Expand this area to see more options.)

Student Posting Rules

- Students can post messages and reply to messages
- Students can post messages but cannot reply to messages
- Students can reply to messages but cannot post messages
- Students can edit their messages after posting them
- Lock this topic for Students (Section Instructors can post in a locked topic)

Author Identification


- Authors are identified by user names
- Authors are anonymous to Students

There are options to make these review **Anonymous** and to **Create the Scale** by which students can rate postings. For example, you might use a 5-star scale.

There are also options for students to see reviews **ONLY** of their own messages...

Peer Review (Expand this area to see more options.)

- Do not enable peer review in this topic
- Allow Students to review messages using a simple rating scale (all messages in topic may be reviewed)
[Create Scale](#)
- Allow Students to review messages using a grading form (Only the first message in each thread may be reviewed)

Grading Form in use: [A1: Grading rubric for Assignment Dropbox trial](#) 

Peer review visibility:

- Students see reviews of their own messages only
- Students see reviews of all messages
 - Make other reviews visible only after submitting a review
- Make reviews anonymous

Peer Review (Expand this area to see more options.)

- Do not enable peer review in this topic
- Allow Students to review messages using a simple rating scale (all messages in topic may be reviewed)
[Create Scale](#)
- Allow Students to review messages using a grading form (Only the first message in each thread may be reviewed)
[Select Grading Form](#)

Topic Behavior Options (Expand this area to see more options.)

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