

WebCT Users Group Meeting

Minutes for November 19, 2004

In attendance at the WUG meeting : Burt Bartram, Vince DiFranco, Liz Dorland, Ma. Alma Garza Cano, Amadou Gaye, Vaswati Ghosh, Linda Gregg, Chuck Hall, Bob Klassen, Laura May, Bren Nielsen, Annemarie Pajewski, Otis White, Scott Gustafson, Greg Pratt, Terri Martinez, Deb Weberg, Kat Emmelkam, Melanie Kroening, and Peg Johnson.

Brenda Nielsen, Kat Emmelkamp, and Deb Weberg shared ideas on how they utilize WebCT with their traditional students (on-campus classes). Melanie Kroening showed discussed the Student Presentation Tool, Student Homepage Tool, and showed a Camtasia demo.

BREN NIELSEN

Brenda Nielsen, CIS faculty member at MCC's Red Mountain campus, teaches traditional, hybrid, and online classes in CIS and Microcomputer Usage and Applications. She uses WebCT for all her classes.

Bren is an experienced instructor. She has taught for 29 years, 15 of those for MCC. Bren provides all her students an online course calendar and class syllabus. Objective tests are delivered online via WebCT. Grades are available via the online WebCT Gradebook, any time the student wishes to access them. The course tool links takes students to Acrobat files (pdf) and a link to download the free Acrobat player. Links and directions are also provided for Zip Central.

Students make postings on WebCT's discussion board. Here they share ideas and can ask general questions of the entire class. All three of her classes post to the same discussion board.

Bren designed her course website so that everything the student needs to access is "just one click" away. She uses lots of icons on her course homepage to facilitate this structure, which is very student friendly.

One icon provides "instructor info". The instructor's schedule and other information is provided at this site. Bren has created Powerpoint

presentations that include screen shots. These presentations provide detailed step-by-step instructions for:

1. Creating an MCC student email account
2. Logging into the class WebCT link
3. Orientation to the class homepage (WebCT) - class tools

Bren is willing to share these templates with any faculty who want to use them. Bren's email address is bnielsen@mail.mc.maricopa.edu

Bren plans on using Breeze to add audio to these Powerpoint presentations.

Bren uses a textblock on her course homepage to post class announcement and tips. This site provides additional information or gives tips for FAQ's (frequently asked questions). These are then stored for the previous week through a "Helpful Hints" icon on the course homepage.

Students submit their assignments through the WebCT DropBox. Clicking on the DropBox icon brings students to list of their assignments, due dates, and how many points each assignment is worth.

All class emails are handled through WebCT Mail. This means that Bren's MCC email account is not cluttered with student email messages. Each student message also contains the student's name (this is sometimes missing when students send messages from a friend's account). She checks the WebCT Mail more frequently than the MCC email account. Students thus have the ability to ask questions and get answers outside of class time.

Periodically Bren polls her students to see how they like any changes she has implemented in the class. This can be accomplished by using the bulletin board (discussion board) or having students complete a survey. WebCT's survey option (set up just like a quiz) allows students to answer questions anonymously, but the instructor can tell whether or not a student has answered the survey (if they wish to give credit for this assignment).

Students who have completed Bren's on-campus classes are comfortable enough with the technology that they feel quite comfortable subsequently enrolling in online classes.

KAT EMMELKAMP

Kat is an adjunct faculty member in the business department who teaches at both Red Mt. and Southern and Dobson campuses. Kat has created one homepage for her BPC 110 class but it includes two class schedules on it. These schedules are conditional, so a student sees only the schedule that applies to their class (e.g. TR versus MWF). Kat makes it conditional based on the section number in which the student is enrolled. She sorts by section number in the gradebook to keep her classes organized. (Go to Manage Course>Manage Students and then sort by section number.)

Kat uses a flashing icon for a message to indicate there is a test today when the student clicks on the course homepage. Once the student clicks on this message, it stops flashing. Kat uses WebCT's ability to hide files that students don't need to see now but that she wants to have uploaded. Kat has a icon that takes students to questions/answers about their assignments.

She provides sample documents that the student cannot download. They have been saved in Acrobat (pdf files) with the security set so they are not printable or downloadable. On the CTL homepage is a link to directions Melanie Kroening wrote for how to accomplish this task. Students view these pdf files using the free Acrobat player they download. Kat's email address is emmelkamp@mail.mc.maricopa.edu

DEB WEBERG

Deb Weberg, Business faculty member at MCC's Southern and Dobson campus, teaches traditional and online classes. She instructs classes such as Survey of Computer Information Systems, E-commerce, and Web Development. Deb plans on teaching an E-portfolio course in the spring, 2005, semester.

She is the course liason for faculty who instruct CIS 105. Deb just passed the CIW (Certified Internet Web) Foundations exam. Deb has a very helpful icon on her course homepage "If you need help". This file gives students assistance on using WebCT, accessing the internet, and computer problems.

Like Bren, Deb posts timely class announcements in an extra textblock on the course homepage. This might be something like "Remember these things

are due...." Deb has a CyberCafe where students can have discussions online of a general nature. She also includes an FAQ icon (frequently asked questions) on the course homepage.

Deb has created an online "Toolbox" for CIS 105 students and another one for faculty. You can access these terrific tools at this link: <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/dept/d07/cis105/index.html> This extensive site provides such things as an overview of CIS 105, the syllabus, directions on how to set up an MCC email account, data students can download, and directions for accessing Prentice Hall's resources for the course. CIS 105 utilizes many adjunct faculty as instructors. They are often hired at the last minute and make use of any resources that can help.

The Faculty Toolbox that Deb has created requires a password. The site provides a sample syllabus for the current semester, zip files of all the files the instructor might utilize, suggested activities to meet course competencies, and critical thinking options.

Information is also provided for students needing adaptive/assistive technology. Deb's Faculty Toolbox includes powerpoint presentations for each chapter (condensed from publisher materials). It also includes three WebCT Templates for instructors teaching traditional (on-campus) classes.

The instructor can choose the full template (calendar, dropbox, all assignments included), the basics template (stripped down version with modular options to select from), or a week-based template (week 1 activities, week 2 activities etc.). Deb also likes using WebCT's dropbox for assignment submission. She gives students five days beyond the due date but penalizes them 10% for day they are beyond the due date.

Deb's course includes a PhotoGallery- photographs of the students in the class that Deb requests. Deb's email address is debweberg@mail.mc.maricopa.edu

MELANIE KROENING

Melanie showed the WebCT Student Presentation Tool, which Emi Ahn uses for her online Japanese language course. Students are able to create an

online portfolio that other students and the instructor can view. It includes a web page and audio files.

The student creates the web page and then links to the index.html page with other files they want to include. Emi has created an extensive, detailed list of instructions for students to use this tool.

Melanie also discussed WebCT's Homepage Tool. This allows each student to create one page that can include a single photo, two textblocks, and links of their choosing.

Students must be cautioned to use photos of small file size. Melanie then showed a file she created in Camtasia. This software records videos of screen activity. The videos thus created can be edited, text and/or audio files added and streamed via Flash. This is new software that presents exciting options for creating online materials. Stay tuned for more information on this software from the CTL.

Melanie's email address is melanie.kroening@mcmail.maricopa.edu

COMING ATTRACTIONS

If you have your 2005 calendar already, pat yourself on the back for being organized! Then pencil in Friday, Feb. 11, from 1 to 2 P.M. for our next next WebCT Users Group meeting. Melanie Kroening will show us templates she and other CTL staff have created for forms in WebCT. This may save you a lot of time with your students. It's too early to register for this meeting, but I'll send you a reminder next semester.

Peg Johnson