

Moving from OC 8.4 to OC 9.1

OSU is moving from Online Classroom 8.4 to version 9.1 very soon. This short paper lists the improvements that you can expect to see.

Instructional Design Wizard & Course Builder

The Course Design Accelerator provides direction and some assistance in the task of building a course site. The tool provides a structure that helps you organize your online course in a pedagogically-sound manner. You can think of it as a course design road map. The course builder allows you to manipulate and define modules, topics, grade items, quizzes, discussions, and QuickLinks.

Accessible Rich Internet Applications

Online Classroom's makers, Desire2Learn, have committed the course management system to the Web Accessibility Initiative meeting the standards of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). W3C states that "Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite, defines a way to make Web content and Web applications more accessible to people with disabilities." As a result, the new version does not employ frames. With this version, pages are more useable for assistive technology users.

Other accessibility improvements include navigation bars no longer use frames. The skip to main content link is now the first link on the page and visible when tabbed to, making it easier for assistive technology users to find.

Deep linking, on the World Wide Web, is making a hyperlink that points to a specific page or image on a website, instead of that website's main or home page. This release of Navbars allows deep links allows faculty to show the navigation bar for the destination page as well as the page contents.

With version 9.1 comes changes to the email tool that makes the address book layout more accessible. In addition, the My Courses widget now uses a list for courses versus the previous table.

And, the "Previous Page" and "Next Page" icons displayed to users taking multi-page quizzes or surveys have been replaced with labeled buttons and are now left-aligned on the page. In addition, the "Go To Submit Quiz" button is now left-aligned.

Content Permissions

Version 9 will allow faculty to have more control over access to content files based upon enrollment.

Content Browser Widget

With version 9.1 comes the new content browser widget that enables easy access to content from a course home page. The load-on-demand navigation enables the user to drill down to find specific topics or bookmarks and open them. And upon return to the course home page, the widget remembers where you last were. To use, this widget must be added to the course home page.

Equation Support in the HTML Editor

The HTML editor now includes additional input options that enables faculty to input math and scientific notation in their preferred method (graphical editor, MathML and LaTeX format). All areas that provides the HTML editor, (News, Content, Quizzes, Dropbox, Discussion, and others), employs the same tool so the operation is consistent.

Manage Files

The Manage Files area features a new, optimized user interface and is able to handle complex file structures with fewer refreshes. The interface is much easier to understand and to use. It is easier to copy and paste multiple files, edit files and folder names in place, directly edit HTML and TXT files with the what-you-see-is-what-you-get editor, and supports Unicode file names.¹

Navigation Bars

This release includes a number of changes to Navbars to make them more accessible, resizable, and customizable. The interface for creating and managing Navbars is improved. The faculty member can edit and rearrange Navbar links and graphics with ease. Links can include text and/or graphics. In addition, it is now possible to easily create your own link in the Navbar.

Profile Images in Discussions and Classlist

You can now put a face with a name in Classlist and Discussions. An organizational unit level configuration option allows faculty to see student pictures in the two tools. However, the display of profile images adheres to use security and privacy settings. If the user does not have

¹ [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa365247\(VS.85\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa365247(VS.85).aspx)

the role permission to view other user's profiles, or if the user chose not to upload a picture to the profile tool, viewers will see only a default icon next to the person's name.

Release Conditions

When you define a set of release conditions on an object, such as a quiz, there is now an option to conditionally release the object when all or any one or more of the conditions are met. There are also new criteria operators for role in current Org Unit, Score on a Quiz, and grade value on grade items. The condition type role in current Org Unit, now includes a new criteria operator, Not Enrolled As.

The condition types, Score on a Quiz and Grade value on Grade Items, now include two new criteria operators: !=(not equal to) and Not Between.

Rubrics

This release expands upon the Rubrics tool to support the evaluation of multiple assessment criteria within a single rubric known as Analytic rubrics.

Time Zone Support in User Preferences

Individual users can now choose their preferred time zone from User Preferences. All times and dates in the system will reflect this preference, which they can change at any time. This feature greatly helps those engaged in distance learning.

User Progress

Faculty can now go directly to User Progress from grades, enabling convenient access to the big picture when evaluating students. Feedback for grade items, quiz attempts and dropbox submissions now display in User Progress supplying faculty with important context for those assessments.

Last Course Access

System login information now displays on its own page from User Progress. This page includes the last time users accessed a selected course's homepage. Last course access dates are also available from Classlist under a column named "Last Accessed" displaying the date and time of the last visit to the course.

OC Goes Mobile

Desire2Learn2Go Mobile Web provides access to the course management software, Online Classroom. With version 9.1, mobile access is available for News, Bookmarks, Grades, Content,

and Calendar wherever they are regardless of device: iPhone, BlackBerry, and Android based smart phones.

Microsoft Live@edu Integration

Live@edu is a collection of Web-based services (Email, skyDrive, Calendar, Tasks, Office applications, etc.) from Microsoft for education. Faculty can place the widget for these tools on their My Home or course home page in a widget. These tools are accessible through single sign on (SSO).

Email Notification for Discussions Tool

Faculty and students can now receive email notifications for discussion forums, threads, or messages that they want to follow. The new feature sends emails to users' external email, which provides an opportunity for them to follow a discussion even though they're not logged into the system. Notifications can be configured to either send email immediately when new items appear or as a daily digest of activity.

Notification Area Message Improvement

"Saved Successfully" and other status messages displayed throughout the platform are now more visible. Notifications appear in the lower, right-hand corner of the screen in higher contrast and no longer block navigation links.

Updates to Inserting Images from the HTML Editor

Though changed with version 9, the HTML editor received more attention with version 9.1. The faculty member can now enter an image's URL to add it in the HTML editor.

Insert Stuff

Insert Stuff replaced Insert Object tool. The new tool enables faculty to embed media, such as YouTube and Flickr videos by referencing their URL into the dialog. The tool also offers the ability to embed media by pasting an HTML embed code.

Would you like more information? Watch the Online Classroom's companion Website at <http://classroom.okstate.edu>.