

Vista Quick Start Guide



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Overview

UBC is in the process of implementing a new enterprise level online Learning Management System (LMS). This system called *Vista* will replace the aging *WebCT Campus Edition* (CE) version 4. The first phase of transition commenced in January 2007. Once the upgrade is complete, *Vista* will be the LMS used at UBC to deliver mixed mode and fully online courses. It's tools allow you to present a wide variety of instructional materials (text, audio, video, etc.), interact with students, facilitate peer-to-peer interaction, manage grades, all within a secure environment (users login via their CWL),

Session Description

In this hands-on workshop, you will gain a basic understanding of *Vista's* tools and components. You will experience an online course as a student and as an instructor/designer. This session is an important prerequisite to more advanced *Vista* sessions and will cover the fundamentals needed to get you started!

Session Objectives

Upon completion of this *Vista QuickStart* session, you will be able to:

- 1. Navigate confidently within the *Vista* course development environment.
- 2. Distinguish between the **Build**, **Teach** and **Student View** tabs.
- 3. Explain the differences between the various user roles in *Vista*. Create and customize simple course content.
- 4. Understand the main features of *Vista's* tools and how they could be used in your course.



An Overview of Vista's Tools

Here is summary of the various tools and improved functionality in Vista.

Organizational Tools

Calendar - Enter important events and deadlines, and allow Students to enter their own events.

Search - Search for content in the course.

Syllabus - Provide course requirements, objectives, and policies.

Communication Tools

Announcements - Post important information in a central location.

Chat - Chat with other users in the course in real time, or use the Whiteboard to display images.

Discussions - Post and respond to messages on specific topics.

Mail - Send messages to other users.

Roster - View profiles for course members. Users can edit their own profile.

Who's Online - Chat with other users who are logged in to *Vista*.

Student Learning Activities

Assessments - Create quizzes, self tests, and surveys.

Assignments - Create assignments for Students to submit online. Students can work independently or in groups.

Goals - Create goals that list the qualitative and quantitative performance expected in your course.

Content Tools

Learning Modules - Organize and present content and activities to Students.

Local Content - Allow Students to easily access large files from a portable medium, such as CD-ROM, instead of downloading the files from Vista.

Media Library - Create a glossary or image collection.

SCORM - Import SCORM-compliant packages, or modules, to be used as course content. SCORM modules can be added to the Home Page, other folders, and learning modules.

Web Links - Create links to Internet resources.

Student Tools

My Files - Allow Students to store their own files.

My Grades - Allow Students to check their grades.

My Progress - Allow Students to track their own progress.

Notes - Allow Students to take notes.





Part I: The Student Perspective

My Vista

Log-in to *Vista* using your UBC Campus Wide Login in the **User name** field, and your password in the **Password** field. Note that both fields are case-sensitive.

Vista: http://www.vista.ubc.ca/

Training: http://training.vista.ubc.ca/

This will bring you to the *myVista* screen. *MyVista* provides a single point of access to your courses. It also enables you to:

- access tools such as Calendar, Mail, and File Manager.
- create a personal to do list.
- access external courses (online courses that reside on other servers).
- · create personal bookmarks, access campus bookmarks, and read campus announcements.

The myVista interface is similar for designers, instructors, and students.



The screen contains:

• **Logo Bar** - An institution can customize this frame to reflect the school's colours and logo. It is always present and it contains links to Help and Log Out.



- **Toolbar** Contains icons for Mail, Calendar, and File Manager. The tools may vary depending on administrator settings.
- **Course List Channel** Provides access to the courses in which the user is enrolled. Notification of new announcements, calendar entries, mail, discussions, assessments, and assignments for each course may also appear here.
- **Content Channels** Each channel contains a category of content, such as My Grades, To Do List, Personal Bookmarks, and External Courses.
- **Content Manager** Every *Vista* user (including students) has their own personal file storage area that is accessible from any of the courses they are registered in or from the *MyVista* page.
- **Help** In the upper right corner is a link to *Vista* text-based help. It is contextual, so wherever you are in *Vista*, you will find help that relates to that screen, and always there.

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Hands-On Practice: MyVista

- Explore and make a change in My Settings
- ° Add a To Do Note
- ° Add a Personal Bookmark
- ° Customize Channels, colour and layout

Exploring the Course Interface

For the purpose of this workshop, you should see a course called **Orientation to Vista for Instructors and Designers**. This is a course all faculty and instructors can access. It contains print-based documentation and interactive Flash tutorials on *Vista*. It is different from most courses your students will experience in that it is a self-help resource; there isn't a weekly flow to working through the course. However, it does use several of the tools you may use in your courses.

First, let's take a look at some navigational areas of the course interface:

- **Menu**: *MyVista*, Help, Log out
- **Course name**: (in this example: *Orientation to Vista for Instructors and Designers*)
- Course Tools: contains the tools that have been added to this course.
- **My Tools:** Student tools may include My Grades, My Files, My Progress and Notes. These tools will change when we look at the Designer and Instructor view later on.



Course Tools

Course Tools includes only the tools that were added to the course by the designer. If a tool has not been added, it is not accessible by any user. In the student interface, only tools that are available (not hidden) appear. Some of the tools you may use are:

- **Content organization:** Learning Modules are used for organizing course content; they store content in various forms, and organize learning so you can add direct links to applicable quizzes or discussion areas for a more integrated learning experience. Content is also displayed in the WebLinks, where all URLs are collected and the Media Library.
- **Communication links:** such as announcements, chat, discussions, and mail. Discussion boards are open for anyone with access to this course; post your questions here, post your findings from exploring *Vista* etc.
- **Assessment tools:** such as the assignment tool, where students can drop off assignments, or assessments, which includes quizzes, self-tests or surveys.

My Tools menu

My Tools provide access to tools for student use including My Grades, My Files, My Progress, and Notes. The course designer controls the availability of these tools.

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Hands-On Practice: Exploring the Section Interface

- Explore 'Unit 2' in Student View.
- Complete the quiz.



Part II: The Designer & Instructor Experience

Learning Outcomes:

In the second half of this workshop we will explore the instructor and designer tools in *Vista*. Upon completion of this part of the workshop, you should be able to:

- Add a tool to your course container
- Recognize and use Action Links
- Create weblinks and add files to your course content home
- Change page display

Planning Your Course

Designing a course in Vista requires some planning and forethought; for example:

- What do you want to do/what do you want students to do and learn? I.e., What are your intended learning outcomes?
- What content and assessment will be used to support students in meeting those outcomes?
- What tools in Vista can help you reach the learning outcomes?
- How will students communicate/interact with each other and the instructor?
- How will students be assessed?
- How will content be structured and organized?

Accessing the Practice Course

Now you will have a chance to experience *Vista* as a course designer.

Use the *myVista* link in the upper right corner to return to the list of courses. Click on the name of the course identified by the session facilitator. You will each be in a different copy of the same course as a course designer.

The Course Interface

Upon entering the course, you'll notice that the interface is organized into three tabs: **Build**, **Teach**, and **Student View**. Related tasks are grouped under the relevant tab.



Build Tab – The designer creates, manages, and organizes course content from this tab. The
designer can change the visual presentation of the course, add tools, and create content items
such as quizzes or discussion topics.

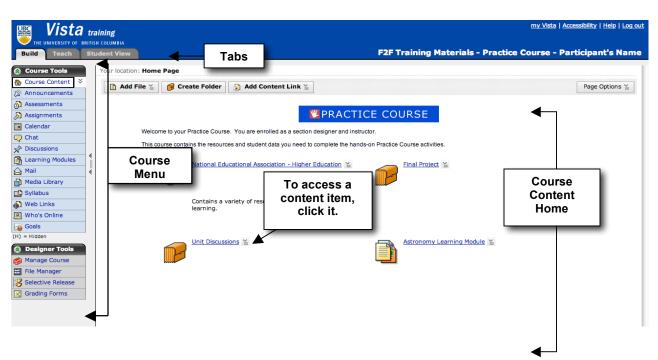


- **Teach Tab** Instructor activities such as reviewing student work, managing grades, or interacting with students occur on the Teach tab. Access to instructor tools such as Assessment Manager, Assignment Dropbox, Grade Book, and Group Manager are found only within this tab.
- **Student View Tab** allows you to experience the course as a student, including assessment and assignment submission.

In this workshop, all three tabs are visible because you are currently enrolled in the combined role of Designer/Instructor. Users can also be enrolled in single roles:

- Users enrolled as Designers see only the Build Tab and the Student View Tab.
- Users enrolled as Instructors see only the Teach Tab and the Student View Tab.

The Tab Structure



All three tabs contain these elements:

- Course Content Home
- Course menu



Course Content Home

Course Content Home may contain links to:

- content items (e.g., learning module, discussion topic, chat room)
- content folders, which contain related content items
- content files (e.g., a single HTML page)

From any tab, you can access a link on Course Content Home by clicking it. What the link looks like and the privileges that you have will vary depending on if you are in the **Build Tab**, the **Teach Tab**, or the **Student View Tab**. For example, if you click the Syllabus icon from the **Build Tab**, you can both edit and preview the syllabus; from the **Student View Tab**, you can only view the Syllabus.

The Course Menu

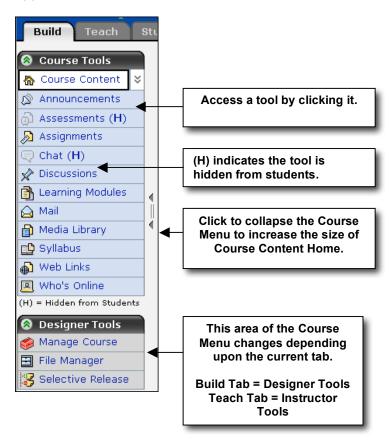
The Course Menu is accessible from anywhere in the course. It contains:

- Course Tools
- Designer/Instructor/My Tools
- Course Content Map



Course Tools

Course Tools includes only the tools that were added to the course by the designer. If a tool has not been added, it is not accessible by any user. In the student interface, only tools that are available (not hidden) appear.



Designer Tools/Instructor Tools/My Tools

The content of the lower section of the Course Menu is dependent upon the current tab. **Build Tab** contains Designer Tools, **Teach Tab** contains Instructor Tools, and the **Student View Tab** has My Tools.

- **Designer Tools** help you to manage and create the course by adding and removing tools and changing course settings. Access to File Manager and Selective Release are also located here.
- **Instructor Tools** include the utilities needed to view and grade assignments and assessments, manage grades, and handle other instructional tasks. Access to Assessment Manager, Assignment Dropbox, Grade Book, Group Manager, Tracking, and Selective Release are available here.
- **My Tools** provide access to tools for student use including My Grades, My Files, My Progress, and Notes. The course designer controls the availability of these tools.



Designing Your Course: The Basics

In this module, we'll explore the basic steps for building a course. You will learn how to choose and add tools, create content, and organize content using features of the **Build Tab**.



Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- identify three major steps in course design in Vista.
- add Course Tools, reorder them, and determine whether they are visible to students.
- create content using Course Tools.
- organize content by adding links, files, and folders to Course Content Home.
- customize visual aspects of your course such as colours, page layout, icon sets, and headers/footers.

Design Features of the Build Tab

The **Build Tab** is where you construct a course by enabling tools and creating and organizing content.

Course Design Overview

There are three major steps in course design. We will look more closely at each one.

- · Adding Course Tools
- Creating Content
- Organizing Content

Adding Course Tools

Depending on how your section was created, some tools may already appear on Course Tools. Tool choices depend on the type of content that you want to include in your course. For example, if you want to include quizzes in your course, you would *add* the Assessments tool.

After you've added the tool, you can *create* quizzes and make them available to students. You can *organize* access to the quiz by placing a link in a learning module or on the main page. Some tools, such as Search, do not need any further set up. Once you have added them and made them visible, students can use them immediately. Students see Course Tools on every page of their course and can use it to go directly to the main page of a tool, which lessens the need for numerous links on Course Content Home. Course Tools, by itself, is a major organization feature of your course.

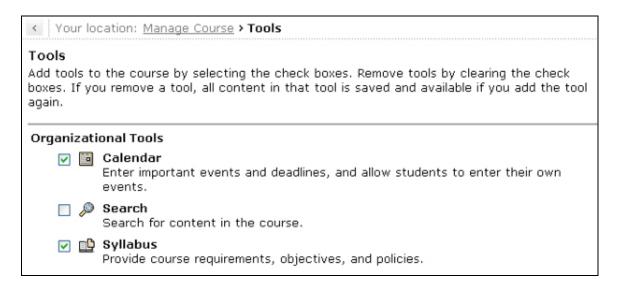


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\Rightarrow To add tools:

- 1. From Designer Tools, click **Manage Course**. The Manage Course screen appears.
- 2. Click **Tools**. The Tools screen appears. There is a checkmark next to those that already appear on Course Tools.



3. Select the tools that you want to add and click **Save**. The tools are added to Course Tools.

Choosing Tool Visibility

When you add a Course Tool it is automatically visible, meaning that students can see the tool and access any content that you have created with the tool.

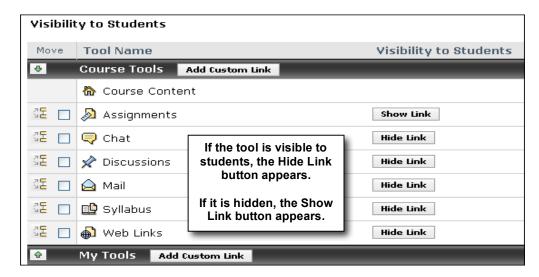


If you are developing content for a course that is in progress, set the visibility to hidden until you are finished.



To change the tool visibility:

- 1. From Designer Tools, click **Manage Course**. The Manage Course screen appears.
- 2. Click Course Menu to display the tools that are currently in Course Tools and My Tools.



3. To change the visibility of the tool, in the row for the tool, click **Hide Link**. The link to the tool is hidden from students and an (H) appears next to the tool name on Course Tools on the Build and Teach tabs.



Hands-On Practice: Add Tool and Set its Visibility

- Add the Mail tool to your course.
- · Remove the Goals tool.
- Hide one of the course tools (Learning Module) in the course menu.
- Go to the Student View tab and note which tools are available.



Creating Content

In *Vista*, you create content items, such as assessments, assignments, and discussion topics, by utilizing Course Tools. The items are then added to that tool's inventory. Students can access the items from Course Tools by clicking on the appropriate link. Alternatively, you may add links to the items from the Course Content Home or content folders.

Creating a Content Item

In this example, we will use the Web Links tool to add a new content item (website) to its content inventory. You can create content with other tools using the same basic steps.

To add a Web Link:

- 1. From Course Tools, click **Web Links** to display the tool's inventory of any existing Web Links.
- 2. Click **Create Web Link**. The Create Web Link screen appears.



- 3. Complete the Title and URL textboxes and select the option to **Open in new browser window**, if desired.
- 4. Choose whether you want the Web Link to be visible to students. If you choose Hide Item, the link can be viewed from the inventory on the **Build** and **Teach** tabs, but it is not visible to students.
- 5. Click **Save**. The Web Link is added to the inventory and students can access it by clicking Web Links from Course Tools.



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Hands-On Practice: Creating Content

- Add an announcement.
- Add a web link (link to www.library.ubc.ca).
- Go to Student View tab to see how web link appears.

Organizing Content

After you have created content, you can organize it to best suit your pedagogical requirements. You may choose to have students access content via the Course Menu OR a content link within Course Content Home, content folders, or learning modules.

Adding a Content Link to Course Content Home

There are several ways to add a content link to Course Content Home. Let's start by using the Add Content Link feature to add a Chat room link.

- ⇒ To add a content link from Course Content Home:
 - 1. From Course Content Home, click **Add Content Link** to display its menu.
 - 2. Click **WebLink** to display the list of URLs.
 - 3. Select a URL and click **Add Selected.** The URL is added to Course Content Home.
- ⇒ To add a content link starting from Course Tools, select the item from the tool's inventory and select a location from the *Create Link On* menu.

-



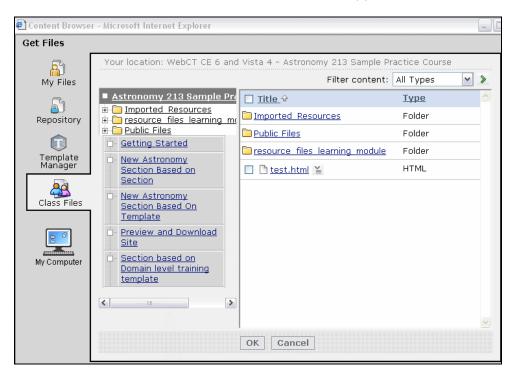
Adding a File to Course Content Home

In addition to adding content links such as chat rooms, discussion topics, and quizzes, you may also add links to files. You can link to an existing file or you can create one with HTML Creator. Any file type can be added, including HTML, word processing documents, text files, images, and PowerPoint presentations. Your students may require appropriate software to view the file if it is not in HTML format.

- ⇒ To add a file to Course Content Home:
 - 1. From Course Content Home, click **Add File**. The Add File menu appears.



2. Choose **Browse for Files**. The Content Browser appears.





3. Click **My Computer**. Your computer's file browser appears.

Note: You may also select files that already exist in File Manager rather than browsing your local computer.

4. Double-click the desired file (or select the file and click Open). The file automatically uploads and appears as a link on Course Content Home.

Folders

Folders enable you to visually group related course content. For example, a folder called *Group Projects* could include a sign-up sheet for group projects, private group discussion topics, instructions on working well in groups, and a link to the group assignment.

To create a folder:

- 1. From Course Content Home, click Create Folder.
- 2. Enter a Title and optional description on the Create Folder screen.
- 3. Click **Save**. The folder is added to Course Content Home.
- ⇒ To add content to a folder:

Now that a folder has been created, we can add content to it. This process is the same as adding content links to Course Content Home, except that you must first go to the folder. Let's add a discussion topic to the folder.

- 1. Click the ActionLink menu for the folder you created previously and select **Go to Folder**. The empty folder is displayed.
- 2. Click Add File and select Create File.
- 3. Create a title for the file. Call it "introduction".
- 4. Write a short introduction to the folder. Why is this content important for the students?





Hands-On Practice: Create a Learning Module & Organizing Content (see handout for more detail)

Part 1

- Start at Course Content Home
- · Click Add Content Link drop down menu
- Select Learning Module
- Click on Create Learning Module
- Title it Unit 1

Part 2

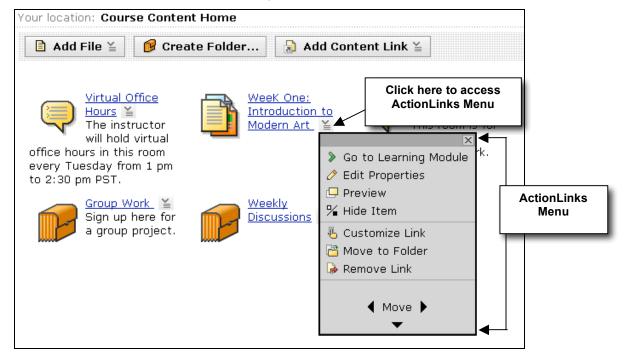
- · Click on Unit 1
- Add HTML file (select a file from the File Manager)
- Add a link to an Assessment
- Add a Discussion topic
- Add a Web Link
- Click on Student View tab & view Unit 1



Using ActionLinks Menus for Content Links

Each item added to Course Content Home has an ActionLinks menu, which is accessed by clicking the arrows next to the item title. The options that appear vary depending on the item. Generally, you can use the ActionLinks menu to edit item properties, customize the item link, and preview, hide, move, or remove the item.

⇒ To access an item's ActionLinks menu, click the arrows next to the item title.





Customizing Links

When customizing a link you can:

· Change the title of the link

Title is changed only for the selected instance of the link. The title of the actual content item remains unchanged in the tool's inventory.

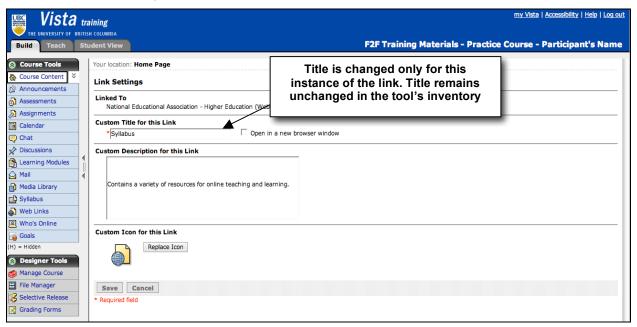
Add a description to the link

Text appears below the icon to let students know where the link will take them.

· Replace the icon

You can select a new icon from File Manager or your local computer.

- ⇒ To change the link's description:
 - Locate the link that you want to customize, click its ActionLinks menu and select Customize Link.
 The Link Settings screen appears.



- 2. Complete the *Custom Description for this Link* textbox. The text will appear below the link on Course Content Home.
- 3. Click **Save**. The link description has been added.





If Customize Link does not appear in the ActionLinks menu for the link you chose, try Edit Properties. For example, ActionLinks for folders do not contain the Customize Link option, but you can change the description from Edit Properties.

Hands-On Practice: Using ActionLinks



- Hide a link.
- Move a link.
- Customize a link by adding a description for it.

Customizing the Look of Your Course

You have added content to your course and organized it. Now you may wish to personalize your course even further. You can create a comfortable and clearly laid out course by selecting pleasing course colours and layouts, providing important information in page headers, and choosing meaningful icons.

Selecting Global Course Colours

Global colour selections will affect the display of Course Content Home, Folders, and tool pages. They will not affect the colours within HTML pages you have uploaded to the course. You can use a predefined colour set, which applies a consistent colour scheme throughout the course, or you can create a custom colour set.



In compliance with the US Rehabilitation Act, Section 508, Vista offers a high contrast colour set, which allows users who have difficulty distinguishing colours to use Vista.

- ⇒ To select course colours:
 - 1. Under Designer/Instructor Tools, click **Manage Course.** The Manage Course screen appears.
 - 2. Click **Colours** to display the colour set options.
 - 3. To select a predefined colour set, click the radio node for the set.



OR

To create a custom colour set, select Custom and, in the right-hand frame, use the **Edit Background Colour** and **Edit Text Colour** icons to select colours. Click **Apply** for each choice made.

1. Click **Apply**. The selected colour scheme is applied to the course.



Hands-On Practice: Selecting Course Colours

- Select one of the predetermined colour sets for your course.
- Select a custom colour set for your course.

Page Options

Page Options enable you to make page-specific changes to Course Content Home or Folders such as:

- Edit headers and footers
- Customize the page display including layout, icons, and background images or colours
- Toggle to Power View provides a tree view of course content





Editing Headers and Footers

Headers and footers can be created with plain text, hand-coded HTML, or by using the HTML Creator. You can have one header and footer per page. A header or footer can be set as the default for the entire course.



Use a header or footer to welcome students and display prominent information such as getting started instructions, instructor contact information, or copyright details.

- ⇒ To add or edit a header or footer:
 - 1. Go to the Course Content Home or the Folder you which you wish to edit the header
 - 2. From the Page Options ActionLink menu, select **Edit Header**. The Create/Edit Header screen appears.
 - 3. Next to HTML Creator, select **On**. The HTML Creator launches.
 - 4. In the HTML Creator editing area, enter the content and/or select the image that you want to appear in the header or footer.
 - 5. Click Save.

Customizing Page Display

You can customize the appearance of Course Content Home or Folders by modifying the layout of icons and the background image or colour.

- ⇒ To customize the page layout:
 - 1. From the Page Options ActionLink menu, select **Customize Page Display**.
 - 2. Under Layout Templates, select the desired layout for page icons.
 - 3. Click **Apply** to implement the changes.



Hands-On Practice: Page Options

- Edit the header on Course Content Home.
- · Add a footer to a folder.
- Change the page layout for Course Content Home to Layout 4.



Modifying Icons

You can select a new icon set as the default for the entire course or select an image file to replace individual icons.

- ⇒ To change the icon set for the entire course:
 - 1. From Manage Course, click **Course Content Icons**. The Course Content Icons screen appears.
 - 2. Click Select New Content Icon Set.
 - 3. Choose an icon set from the pop-up window and click **Select**. The set appears in preview mode.
 - 4. Click **Apply**.
- ⇒ To change an individual link's icon:
 - 1. From a link's ActionLinks menu, click **Replace Image**. Locate and select the image.
 - 2. Click **Apply**. The icon is replaced for that specific course content link.



If you decide to load your own personal icons, the recommended size is 60x60 pixels.

If you change the background colour of your Vista course container, choose an icon set that is "transparent"

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Hands-On Practice: Changing Icons

- Change the icons for your entire course by selecting a new icon set.
- Replace an individual icon with an image file stored in the File Manager.



Part III: Vista Help & Resources

| Login to <i>Vista</i> (with CWL): | http://www.elearning.ubc.ca/vista |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Vista Guides & FAQs: | https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?menuClicked |
| | =16%2F5%2F&p=main%2Fdsp_vista_instructors.cfm |
| Vista Upgrade Project: | http://www.elearning.ubc.ca/vistaproj |
| Workshops & Events: | http://www.elearning.ubc.ca |
| Ask Dr. C Vista Forums: | http://www.blackboard.com/communities/ask_drc/ask_drc_ |
| | Faculty.htm |

Instructional Support Staff

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