Connect

Wiki Guide

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WHAT IS A WIKI?

"A Wiki is a website that uses Wiki software, allowing the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked Web pages, using a simplified markup language or a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) text editor, within the browser. Most Wikis serve a specific purpose, and off topic material is promptly removed by the user community. Such is the case of the collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia. In contrast, open purpose Wikis accept all sorts of content without rigid rules as to how the content should be organized." (Wikipedia)

Wiki is the Hawaiian word for quick. "Wikiwiki" means really quick. In Connect, course members can contribute and modify one or more pages of course related materials. This allows for sharing and collaboration between all members of the class from Instructors, TAs, and students. Any member of the class can create and edit pages, while the system tracks changes and additions. Wikis in Connect can be created for one or more members to contribute and can even be created for specific groups to use for collaboration.

Students use a wiki to collaborate on shared content from different times and locations. They can view previous changes, comment on content or changes, include new content, and revise existing content. Similar to the discussion board, you act as a facilitator instead of the provider of all course content. Unlike a blog, which can be quite personal, wikis require intense collaboration, where information is linked to and built upon.

WHY CHOOSE A WIKI?

Because of the flexibility of Wikis, the class can actively participate in curating a knowledge base for your course. Because there is a History trail through edits, any vandalism can be seen, and reverted if necessary. By building a collaborative knowledge base, all students can benefit from this. Furthermore, a component can be used towards participation or class marks. In Connect, Wikis exist for each individual class and are private to each class. This is different from Wikipedia, or UBC Wiki where those avenues can be changed by anyone with an account. Connect Wikis mean for each class you have a blank slate for students to build their knowledge upon and through their intraclass collaboration they can help each other learn things and build a repository of information and topics covered in class.

WHY CHOOSE A WIKI? (CONTINUED)

- Wikis support simple, collaborative authoring.
- Wikis can be edited by anyone with access to the wiki system you are using.
- Wikis are about collaborative resource development and easy sharing.

HOW TO RESOURCES

Explore the following resouces about Wikis in Connect at:
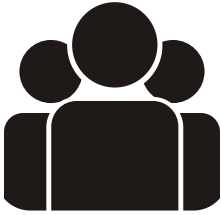elearning.ubc.ca/connect/resources/

Using Wikis in Your Course
Create and Edit a Wiki Page
Linking between Wiki pages
Grading Wikis

STRATEGIES

Strategy **#1** Student development and Course environment

In Chapter Six of *How Learning Works*, Ambrose et al goes into detail about creating a hospitable environment for students as their viewpoints and prior knowledge may conflict with other pupils. A Wiki, being an open space that students can freely contribute, can assist in resisting a singular answer. Textbooks are great for information presentation, in a very linear fashion. Knowledge however, is constantly generated and contested. With a wiki, you can engage students in submitting various viewpoints and have the multitude of opinions be in a central repository.
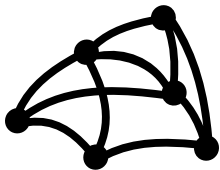
Given that a Wiki can revert changes and see user submissions, you can even encourage students who support their opinions with evidence as an assignment. This would help prevent students from grade grubbing where tests and assignments are asked or pleaded for a remark on the notion that personal opinions are subjective and cannot be fairly graded without personal bias. Because everyone can see history and user submissions, you should provide an alternate route for students to be anonymous, as some students may be meek in presenting their opinions and views publicly. Since in Connect, all submissions will be tied to the students CWL, it is not possible to have an anonymous account. However, by making an effort to learn students' name, and providing one-on-one interaction time, can help break down barriers between students and instructors.

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

Strategy **#2** Organizing Knowledge

In the book How Learning Works, Ambrose et al writes that "The way people organize their knowledge tends to vary as a function of their experience, the nature of their knowledge, and the role that that knowledge plays in their lives."

Experts who have a holistic grasp of the topic at hand form deep meaningful knowledge structures that support learning and performance. On the other hand, novices and students tend to build sparse superficial knowledge structures. An example of this can be seen when students attempt to memorize all the details in the course rather than finding out how each event or topic is inter-related. For a more concrete example, refer to page 44 in How Learning Works. As experts in your domain, you have already created highly efficient knowledge structures, but you cannot assume the same for your students.

Examples:

With a Wiki, you can provide students with an organizational structure for the course and create connections amongst various concepts really explicit. For example, a Wiki can be created solely on the core topics of the course, and link to each individual wiki that students can contribute to organize the course. Furthermore, students can share their work with other students quickly by posting on the respective Wiki.

TIPS TO EFFECTIVELY USE AN WIKI

Using Wikis effectively is not a difficult task. Using it effectively and to its full extent can be daunting as there is no requirement to follow any structure or form. Here are some tips to organize, incorporate and some examples of existing Wikis at UBC.

#1 Organization

Since the Wiki will become your repository of information, it is important to organize and categorize information so the content can be found at a later date (usually via the search function). Wiki's generally do not have a traditional structure to them, but rather you can pull together various sources into a multitude of categories, remixing and amending as you please. Also, while there is a delete function, generally you would not need to use this function.

#2 Ways to incorporate wikis

- **Group projects:** Wikis are a great way for large and small groups to collaborate on projects, build a shared resource/knowledge base for a class - or group authoring on a topic.
- **Presentation:** Presentation: you can use a Wiki to plan individual and group presentations. It can be a rich resource for presentation and can be shared within Connect.
- **Encyclopedia entries:** if you have a knack for Shakespearian rhyme scheme, game theory in economics, or finding free and cheap things to do on campus, sharing your knowledge by creating a Wiki page, or editing a previously created page by adding more information is a great way to build the wiki as a learning resource.
- **Learning Resources:** students have created some fantastic learning resources to share with other students. Check out the Tutoring Wikis developed by students involved in tutoring through the AMS. Students can replicate a similar idea as the Tutoring Wikis on the Connect Wiki.

EXAMPLES OF WIKIS AT UBC

The following are examples of Wikis that are being used at UBC, but external to Connect. These examples are applicable to how the Wikis feature in Connect can be used.

#1 An incredible exercise in which UBC students authored articles on Latin American literature for Wikipedia, most achieving "featured article" or "good article" status. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Murder_Madness_and_Mayhem

#2 Professor Jon-Beasley-Murray's reflections on the Murder, Madness and Mayhem Wikipedia project. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Jbmurray/Madness

#3 ETEC 510 Design Wiki (iterated over a number of course offerings). http://sites.wiki.ubc.ca/etec510/Main_Page

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ambrose, Susan A. *How Learning Works: Seven Research-based Principles for Smart Teaching.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010. Print.
- Nagel, I. (2013, April 15). *Ian/Nagel/How Learning Works.* Retrieved June 20th, 2013 from http://wiki.ubc.ca/Sandbox:IanNagel/How_Learning_Works.
- Cover: Globe icon designed by Richard Schumann from The Noun Project
- Page 4: Group icon designed by Tobias F. Wolf from The Noun Project
- Page 5: Mesh Network designed by Lance Weisser from The Noun Project