

Working with Moodle as an Instructor: Icons, Resources, & Activities

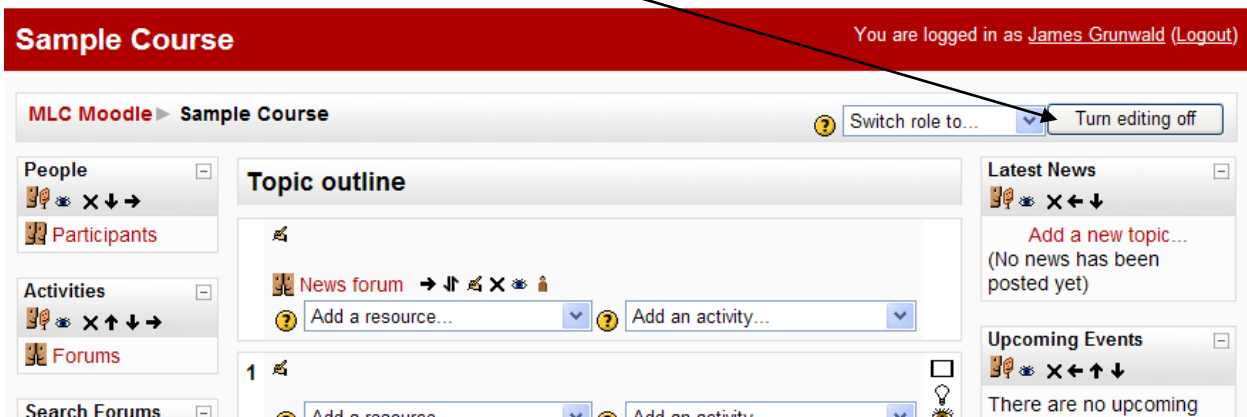
Getting Started:

As a course instructor, this document is designed to give you an overview of the types of **resources** and **activities** that you can add onto your course home page.

Once you have entered your course, select the "**Turn editing on**" button in the upper right hand corner to display various icons and links you can use to add, delete, or editing content on your course home page.







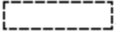
The button will then display "**Turn editing off**" and the page will display various editing icons and drop down menu buttons as shown below.





Editing Icons:

The icons used for editing existing items appear to the right of the item and have the following purposes. Many of these can be seen in the above course home page image.

-  - the **Edit** or **Update** icon lets you update whatever resource or activity it is next to by taking you to its setup page.
-  - the **Help** icon will pop-up a relevant help window.
-  - the **open-eye (Show)** icon means an item is visible to students. Clicking it will make the item invisible to participants and change the icon to the closed eye.
-  - the **closed-eye (Hide)** icon means an item is hidden from students. Clicking it will make the item visible to participants and change the icon to the open eye.

- the **Move right** icon is used to move items to the right (indent).
- ←- the **Move left** icon is used to move items to the left (un-indent).
- ⇅- the **Move** icon allows course elements to be moved up or down throughout the course.
- - the **Move here** icon appears when moving a course element. It appears only after you've clicked the Move icon, and indicates the destination of the item you're moving.
- ✕- the **Delete** icon will permanently delete something from the course after you confirm a warning on a second page.
- 💡- the **Highlight** icon allows you to make a section current, which will be indicated by a highlighted bar to the left and right of the topical area.
- the **one-rectangle** icon indicates all sections of the course are currently displayed on your page. Clicking it will cause only its section to be displayed, hiding from view the other sections, and the icon will change to a two-rectangle icon.
- the **two-rectangle** icon indicates that only one section of the course is being displayed. Clicking it will cause all sections to display and will change the icon back to one-rectangle.

Adding additional items to the Course Home Page:

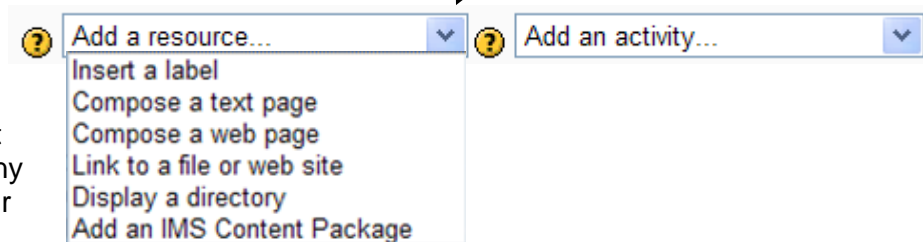
New items are added to the course home page through the "**Add a resource...**" and "**Add an activity...**" drop down menu items, as displayed below. Begin by clicking on the *drop down arrow head* and selecting the item you wish to add. Once an item is selected, an additional screen will appear. Many of the items on the screen will have  **Help** icons next to them which can be selected for additional information. Also, at the bottom of these screens you should see a  **Moodle Docs for this page** link which can be selected for content specific online help.

The purpose of the rest of this document is to familiarize you with the various resources and activities that are available to you as the course instructor. Think of **Resources** as materials for the student to view and/or read. Think of **Activities** as things students need to do and for which they will often receive a grade.

The **Editor's Note:** following each item is my recommendations on the usefulness of the item for MLC faculty. The most useful *resources* for someone new to Moodle will probably be **Insert a Label**, **Compose a Web Page**, and **Link to a File or Web site**.

Resource types

Moodle supports a range of different resource types that allow you to insert almost any kind of web content into your courses.



Insert a Label

Labels are a little different from other resources because they are text and images that are actually embedded directly among the other activity links in the course page.

Editor's Note: Labels can be very useful for placing dividing lines between sections on your course home page or for writing very short notes to students on the home page.

Compose a text page

This type of resource is a simple page written using plain text.

Editor's Note: Skip this one. Most likely you will want to work with a web page instead of a text page. See next item.

Compose a Web Page

This sort of resource makes it easy to develop a complete single web page within Moodle, especially when you are using Moodle's WYSIWYG HTML editor.

The page is stored in the database, not as a file, and you have a lot of freedom to do almost anything you like using HTML, including Javascript.

Editor's Note: This is one resource type that you will want to use in order to type paragraphs of information for your students. However, you could type the same information into a Word document and then upload the document into Moodle, as explained in the next item.

Link to a File or Web site

This resource type allows you to link to any web page or other file on the public web. It also allows you to link to any web page or other file that you have uploaded into your course files area from your own desktop computer. (This includes Word, PDF, PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher, MP3 files, etc.)

Normal web pages are simply displayed as they are, while multimedia files are dealt with more intelligently and may be embedded within a web page. For example, MP3 files will be displayed using a built-in streaming player, as will movie files, flash animations and so on.

There are many options for displaying your content in popup windows, framed windows and so on.

Editor's Note: This is the number one resource type that you will make use of in your course. Specific instructions on how to use it have been written in the document "***How to Upload a File in Moodle***", available on the [MLC Moodle Tips](#) page, in the *Moodle Tips for Faculty Folder*.

Display a Directory

The directory resource can display a whole directory (and its subdirectories) from your course files area. Students can then browse and view all those files.

Editor's Note: This resource can be used to display student's submitted papers or projects to other students toward the end of the course.

IMS Content Packages

IMS content packages can be created and edited using a variety of content-authoring software. Content is usually displayed over several pages, with navigation between the pages. The content-authoring software produces a zip file, which can then be uploaded to your course in Moodle.

The zip file is unzipped automatically in Moodle, and the content of the package displayed.

There are various options for displaying content in a popup window, with a navigation menu or buttons etc.

Editor's Note: Skip IMS Content Packages unless you see an immediate use.



Activity Modules

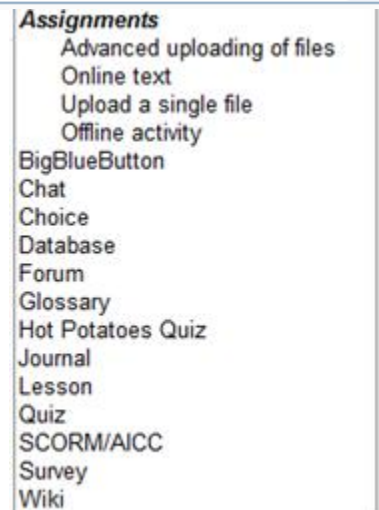
Moodle contains a wide range of activity modules that can be used to build up any type of course.

Assignments

Assignments allow the teacher to specify a task that requires students to prepare digital content (any format) and submit it by uploading it to the server. Typical assignments include essays, projects, reports and so on. This module includes grading facilities. Note that there are four assignment types.

Editor's Note: Assignments will be a common activity in your online course. Of the four assignment types available,

Advance uploading of files is the most flexible since it allows the instructor to control how many files can be uploaded, allows students can add notes, etc.



BigBlueButton

Editor's Note: BigBlueButton is a powerful add-on synchronous web-conferencing tool that supports chat, audio, web-cam, white board, file upload, and desktop sharing capabilities. It is useful for small or large group synchronous communications between students and/or instructor.

Chat

The Chat module allows participants to have a real-time synchronous discussion via the web. This is a useful way to get a different understanding of each other and the topic being discussed - the mode of using a chat room is quite different from the asynchronous forums. The Chat module contains a number of features for managing and reviewing chat discussions.

Editor's Note: A very simple chat feature for synchronous communication between students or between students and course instructor.

Choice

A choice activity is very simple - the teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses. It can be useful as a quick poll to stimulate thinking about a topic; to allow the class to vote on a direction for the course; or to gather research consent.

Editor's Note: This can be a very effective tool for students to select from a list of topics.

Database

The Database module allows the teacher and/or students to build, display and search a bank of record entries about any conceivable topic. The format and structure of these entries can be almost unlimited, including images, files, URLs, numbers and text amongst other things. You may be familiar with similar technology from building Microsoft Access or Filemaker databases.

Editor's Note: I have never used this.

Forum

This activity can be the most important - it is here that most discussion takes place. Forums can be structured in different ways, and can include peer rating of each posting. The postings can be viewed in a variety of formats, and can include attachments. By subscribing to a forum, participants will receive copies of each new posting in their email. A teacher can impose subscription on everyone if they want to.

Editor's Note: Forums are often a common and very powerful type of activity.

Glossary

This activity allows participants to create and maintain a list of definitions, like a dictionary. The entries can be searched or browsed in many different formats. The glossary also allows teachers to export entries from one glossary to another (the main one) within the same course. Finally, it is possible to automatically create links to these entries from throughout the course.

Hot Potatoes Quiz

This module, the "HotPot" module, allows teachers to administer **Hot Potatoes** quizzes via Moodle. The quizzes are created on the teacher's computer and then uploaded to the Moodle course. After students have attempted the quizzes, a number of reports are available which show how individual questions were answered and some statistical trends in the scores.

Editor's Note: On MLC's Moodle server, we might soon disable this activity type because a better job of can be done though Quiz activity in Moodle.

Journal

This module is a very important reflective activity. The teacher asks the student to reflect on a particular topic, and the student can edit and refine their answer over time. This answer is private and can only be seen by the teacher, who can offer feedback and a grade on each journal entry. It's usually a good idea to have about one Journal activity per week.

Editor's Note: Moodle has not supported this assignment type for some time and will eliminate it completely by fall 2011. Their thinking is that it would be replaced by the Assignment type: **Online Text**.

Lesson

A lesson delivers content in an interesting and flexible way. It consists of a number of pages. Each page normally ends with a question and a number of possible answers. Depending on the student's choice of answer they either progress to the next page or are taken back to a previous

page. Navigation through the lesson can be straight forward or complex, depending largely on the structure of the material being presented.

Quiz

This module allows the teacher to design and set quiz tests, consisting of multiple choice, true-false, and short answer questions. These questions are kept in a categorized database, and can be re-used within courses and even between courses. Quizzes can allow multiple attempts. Each attempt is automatically marked, and the teacher can choose whether to give feedback or to show correct answers. This module includes grading facilities.

Editor's Note: The Quiz activity type is very powerful and useful, especially in undergraduate level online courses, where quizzes and chapter tests are commonly used.

SCORM/AICC

A SCORM package is a bundle of web content packaged in a way that follows the SCORM or the AICC standard for learning objects. These packages can include web pages, graphics, Javascript programs, Flash presentations and anything else that works in web browsers. The Package module allows you to easily upload any standard SCORM or AICC package and make it part of your course.

Survey



The Survey module provides a number of verified survey instruments that have been found useful in assessing and stimulating learning in online environments. Teachers can use these to gather data from their students that will help them learn about their class and reflect on their own teaching.

Editor's Note: Don't waste your time with this activity. It cannot be used to create surveys.

Wiki

A Wiki enables documents to be authored collectively in a simple markup language using a web browser. "Wiki wiki" means "super fast" in the Hawaiian language, and it is the speed of creating and updating pages that is one of the defining aspects of wiki technology. Generally, there is no prior review before modifications are accepted, and most wikis are open to the general public or at least to all persons who also have access to the wiki server. The Moodle Wiki module enables participants to work together on web pages to add, expand and change the content. Old versions are never deleted and can be restored.

Editor's Note: Some online instructors have found this activity to be useful.

As mentioned earlier, additional help can be found through the use of the  **Help** icons and  **Moodle Docs for this page** links once you have selected a particular resource or activity. Another source of help are some topic specific instruction documents available on the **MLC Moodle Tips** page, **Moodle Tips for Faculty Folder**, where you will find documents such as *How to Upload a File in Moodle*.