Course Tools Overview

Course Tools are usually displayed vertically on the left hand side of the window towards the top and may appear as text, icons, or both. The menu may also display horizontally across the upper portion of the window or be hidden entirely. Not all the tools described below will appear in every course, availability is dependent on the individual instructor’s usage of the system.

**New Items Available**

   This will appear next to a tool when new items are available within the indicated tool.

**Expand/Collapse Menu**

   If the Course Tools are displayed vertically, you can collapse or expand the menu by clicking these arrows.

**Course Content**

   Clicking this tool will return you to the course Home Page where the materials for the course are usually organized and accessible. By clicking the down arrows next to this tool, you will expand the Course Content Map, which is another way to view the organization of and navigate through the course.

**Announcements**

   Announcements are messages from the instructor and may appear as a pop-up when you first log into the course after the message has been released. However, you can access the Announcements at anytime by clicking on this tool.

**Assessments**

   This tool allows you to complete the graded quizzes and/or exams that are part of the course and may also contain self-tests (not graded) and surveys. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Assessments specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.
Assignments
This tool allows you to submit an assignment to the instructor for grading in the form of a typed response or attached file. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Assignments specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.

Calendar
This tool allows you to create personal reminders and view course related entries made by the instructor. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Calendar specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.

Chat
This tool allows you to enter chat rooms to interact with the instructor, other students or both. You can also use a Whiteboard to display images. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Chat specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.

Discussions
This tool allows you to post a question, respond to a post from the instructor or another student, or have a place for your own writing. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Discussion specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.

Goals
This tool may be utilized by the instructor to indicate the performance expected and communicate which activities will support your progress.

Learning Modules
This tool provides a different way for instructors to present the course content. For a more detailed explanation of this tool, how to use it, and how it is different from the standard folder course organization, please refer to the Navigation Overview document located under the Getting Started section of the Orientation.
**Mail**

This tool functions like a standard e-mail account allowing you to compose, read, organize and delete messages. However, this feature can only be used to communicate within the course, it cannot be used to exchange e-mail with an outside account such as AOL, G-Mail, etc.

**Media Library**

This tool may contain a glossary of terms or an image collection relevant to the course.

**Syllabus**

This tool may contain the syllabus detailing the requirements, objectives, and policies for the course. The course syllabus may also simply be a file located on the Home Page, within a folder, or within a Learning Module.

**Web Links**

This tool may contain links to Internet resources provided by the instructor. Simply click on the underlined title of the Web Link to open the resource. The web address for the resource is located to the right of the Web Link title and may be copied and pasted in a new tab or browser window if you do not want to view the page within the course window.

**Who’s Online**

This tool allows you to “see” and chat with other students who are online at the same time. The default Status is “Invisible”. This means that other students are unaware of your online presence, though the instructor will be able to check if he or she wishes. You can use this tool to change your own online status and therefore your availability for chatting. For a more detailed explanation of this tool and how to use it, please refer to the Who’s Online specific document located under the System Tools section of the Orientation.