

Visual Design for Distance Education Content

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Online:

< <http://cnx.org/content/col10556/1.1/> >

C O N N E X I O N S

Rice University, Houston, Texas

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Collection structure revised: July 29, 2008

PDF generated: February 4, 2011

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Chapter 1

About this course¹

1.1 This Course...

This course is one in a series of distance education faculty development mini-courses. This course, Visual Design for Distance Education Content, covers many tips to help you successfully create the navigation, layout, colors and design of your course content.

Overview: General discussion on the modules and the content.

Module 1: How good design helps learning.

Module 2: Applying the concept of user-centered design to the navigation of your content.

Module 3: Using color to enhance readability of content.

Module 4: Using text and layout to enhance the readability of your content.

Module 5: Graphics and when not to use images.

Module 6: Working within Blackboard.

Conclusion: Supporting resources for your use.

How to Proceed

You can proceed through this mini-course at your own pace! Modules can be viewed in any order you wish. We have provided you with examples, reading material, external links, and examples that will help you to apply what you have learned.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17291/1.3/>>.

Chapter 2

Overview¹

2.1 Overview

This mini-course was created to place information about the visual design of online content in distance education courses. Included here are suggestions and instructions about page layout, text style, color, graphics, and Blackboard tools for implementing the suggestions.

We encourage you to mix and match these suggestions in ways that are logical for your course and your instructional style. We hope that you will take away a basic understand how good visual design can enhance course content from this course.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17300/1.1/>>.

Chapter 3

How Good Visual Design Helps Learning¹

3.1 There are some elements of design that can be incorporated into any course that will help ensure learning success.

Simplicity

Distance Education course creators sometimes become victims of the "more is better" concept. This is not the best case when developing a course site. Including everything you have or can find on a topic can overwhelm and confuse students. Improper use of fonts, colors, and graphics can also serve as a distraction and hamper the effectiveness of your course. Another common problem in Blackboard courses is the use of too many buttons or links on the course menu. Keeping the content, menu, color and font variations to a minimum can help keep your site design simple.

Consistency

Consistency can greatly reduce the time initially required to navigate your course site. Consistency across pages can reduce the load on cognitive processing and prevent cognitive overload². If learning to use a course is a quick and painless process, learners are motivated to continue. Consistencies should include: colors, backgrounds, fonts, headings, text layout, folder management, and placement of course materials.

Some inconsistencies, if used correctly and infrequently, such as changing text formats can quickly grab a learner's attention. These might include a highlighted line of text, or an altered color scheme to indicate a change of topic. More on fonts and colors can be found in Module 3 and Module 4.

Personalizing Your Course

Personalizing your course site is also important in order to establish instructor presence, which has been shown to increase student engagement. Some ideas to accomplish this

Add a course banner³

Add a personal picture within "Staff (Faculty) Information"⁴

Add personal audio clips conveying reinforcement⁵.

Also remember to set proper "availabilities" within your Blackboard's control panel. These course options allow you to customize your course by making only the features you will use "available" to students.

Improvements can be made to enhance the "user friendliness" of your course by creating and managing folders. It's best if folders are arranged and labeled in a logical and consistent sequence. Some common "labels" used for folders - Module - Unit - Week (and number) - Topic - Lesson. Consistency in folder management, labeling and corresponding discussion forums will help students easily navigate throughout your course without aggravation.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17294/1.4/>>.

²<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/knowledge-wiki/cognitive-overload>

³<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Adding+a+Course+Banner>

⁴<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Staff+Information>

⁵<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/How+to+Create+a+Basic+Podcast>

Design Goals

Remember to keep the following goals in as you create course content.

Design your content:

to focus attention

to avoid visual fatigue and cognitive overload

for scanning (more on this in Module 4)

to educate and not to impress

for various learning styles⁶

for consistency

You might be interested in reading *Items and Folders*⁷ for information on creating and managing content and setting availability found on TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators.

⁶<http://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/>

⁷<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Items+and+Folders>

Chapter 4

Applying the concept of user-centered design to the navigation of your content¹

4.1 User Centered Design and Your Course Menu

Have you ever become frustrated while visiting a web site because you couldn't find information that you knew must be there? Such experiences often result from site author not taking into account how the end user will actually use a site. A Web site design should be "user driven." A site must be designed in a way that anticipates what you are going to look for and how you are going to look for it. This is the essence of user-centered design.

Your distance education course can also be "user driven." You do provide direction to your students, but you are not physically in the course 24 hours a day to help them find their way around. You know where to find everything because you put it there, but you must remember that it's new territory for the students. You can minimize frustration for the students and the burden of multiple emails from lost students by anticipating their needs and applying the principles of user-centered design to your course.

Developing a User-Centered Design for Your Course Menu

Anticipating Needs and Expectations

Begin by asking yourself the following questions:

What tools, pages, sections, etc. will the students need to use for this course?

Are the most important tools linked on the course menu?

Are there tools currently on the menu that are infrequently used or never used?

When will students use which tools? Which tools will the students need to be able to access quickly from anywhere in the course?

These questions will help you to put yourself in the place of the student. Important links that are used frequently can be added to the top of the navigation menu. You can also remove tools or links on your menu that are infrequently used.

Tip - One way to organize your course menu is to insert dividers:

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17295/1.3/>>.

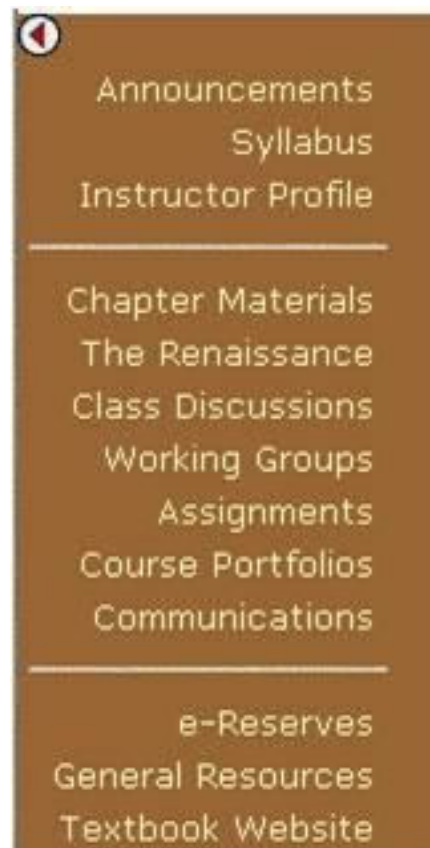


Figure 4.1

To add dividers, Click Control Panel > Manage Course Menu > Add Tool Area > (use Announcements)
> Use <hr> for Area Name

You might be interested in reading Using the Course Information Menu² and Manage Course Menu³, resources found in the Teaching Tips section of TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators. For More on the Course Menu, See Module 6.

²<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Using+the+Course+Information+Menu+Item>

³<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Manage+Course+Menu>

Chapter 5

Using Color to enhance the readability of your content¹

5.1

Even those of us who have a natural flare for color combinations in our wardrobes or interiors may have something to learn when it comes to choosing effective color combinations for online courses. Few people realize the impact a poor color combination can have on the viewer or how readability of content can be improved with a good color choice. We will address how to select colors for your course that:

- are not fatiguing to the eye
- make it easy to read content
- work together harmoniously
- set a tone that is appropriate for your course material

What does Color Communicate?

When selecting colors for your course pages, consider first what you are trying to communicate. Color can help you to set the "mood" of your site. It can communicate emotions or feelings such as energy, joy, seriousness, sorrow, etc.

Just as color can convey mood, it can also convey meaning based upon:

- an individual's culture
- a person's stage in life
- hobbies, personal interests
- current trends
- universal symbols, such as water, grass, sky, etc.

What do you think about certain colors? Keep mood in mind when selecting color.

Choosing Foreground and Background Colors

The general rules for selecting good foreground/background color combinations include the following:

- Provide adequate contrast between foreground and background colors
- Avoid color combinations or a level of contrast that hurts the eyes
- Avoid using green and red as a foreground/background color combination
- Do not rely on color alone for visual emphasis

Adequate Contrast

It's a delicate balance!

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17296/1.3/>>.

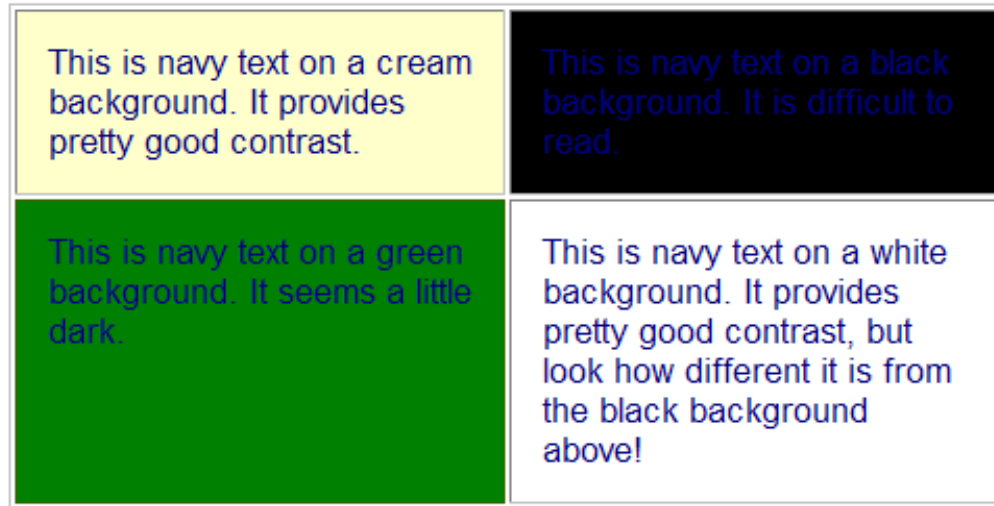


Figure 5.1

Be sure to avoid the red and green color combination for foreground/background. Colorblind² users will have difficulty with this particular combination. Also, be sure to use other means of visual cues for emphasis, such as heading styles, bold, or graphic icons. Visually impaired students may not be able to distinguish between colors of text well enough to understand the emphasis.

There has to be adequate contrast between foreground and background in order for your viewer to be able to distinguish one from the other easily. At the same time, you need to avoid so much contrast that reading is uncomfortable. Colors look different when placed next to another color. You'll need to experiment to come up with a combination that works.

²<http://colorvisiontesting.com/>

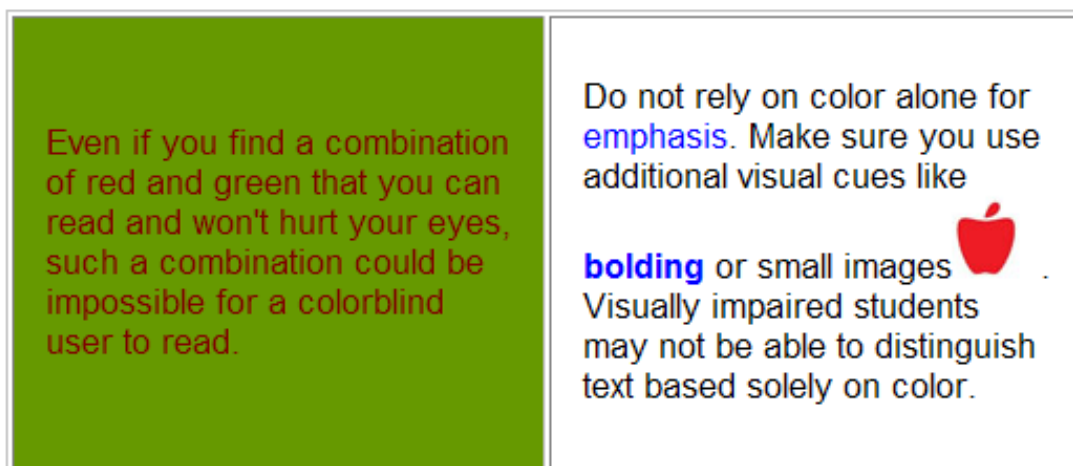


Figure 5.2

Even if you find a combination of red and green that you can read and won't hurt your eyes, such a combination could be impossible for a colorblind user to read. Do not rely on color alone for emphasis. Make sure you use additional visual cues like bolding or small images. Visually impaired students may not be able to distinguish text based solely on color.

How to Choose a Color Scheme

For some people, choosing a pleasing color scheme is simply intuitive, while others find it much more difficult. If you're having trouble, choose a single color that you like. Try it out on headings, table borders or backgrounds, etc., and see how you like it.

Be sure that it works well in combination with the foreground or background. Is there adequate contrast?

Avoid color discord. Does it hurt your eyes to look at?

Use it consistently for headings or table borders throughout your pages. This creates a unified monochromatic color scheme.

Combining Colors

If you want to use more than one color, start with a color you like and then use a color wheel to find other colors that work well with that color. Colors opposite one another on a color wheel can be used together to create a complementary color scheme. Those next to one another can be used together to create an analogous color scheme.

More Color Schemes

There are many ways to apply color schemes based on the color wheel, but for many people this is too complicated. If you feel totally befuddled by the color wheel and the myriad choices it presents, there are certainly other ways to come up with good colors for your site! Many designers recommend looking at nature for clues. Think of lush landscapes, of tropical jungles, or flower bouquets. There are so many places to look for examples. You can also peruse your favorite web pages and look for color combinations you like.

Color and Eye Fatigue

Intense Colors

It is important to know that certain colors—particularly when used for large expanses of page space—are fatiguing to the human eye and may make it more difficult for your students to read through the lessons. Bright yellow and bright red are the most fatiguing, but others available on your color palettes including lime green also fit into this category. Please avoid using them for page, table, or navigation bar backgrounds.

Avoid using intense colors for large expanses of space on your page such as page, table, or navigation bar backgrounds.

Reserve these colors for small accents on your pages.

Intense Color Combinations

Some colors are not fatiguing on their own, but become difficult to look at when combined with other colors. These unharmonious color combinations create color discord and should also be avoided in your course design.

You will often know color discord as soon as you see it simply because it may be disturbing to your eyes. This disturbing effect is heightened when the colors are not only used together, but combined as text and background.

For an interesting article about colors that cause eye fatigue, see [Color and Vision](http://www.colormatters.com)³ from [Colormatters.com](http://www.colormatters.com)

³<http://www.colormatters.com/optics.html>

Chapter 6

Using text and layout to enhance the readability of your content¹

6.1

Type that Suits Text

The typefaces you choose for your course pages can enhance or detract from your objectives in communicating with your readers. The meaning or feeling of the text can be affected by the type selected.

To read more on how to change fonts in Blackboard, go to Visual Text Box Editor (VTBE) How to and FAQ². This resource will discuss some tips for using tools within the Text Box Editor when adding items and folders to Blackboard. Note: this resource will open in a new window to make it easier for you to return to this mini-course. For more on the Visual Text Box Editor see Module 6.

Can you see what I see?

What if the person reading material in your course does not have the font you chose on his or her computer? What do you think would happen?

A) The student's computer would automatically download the font.

B) Your page would display blank.

C) Your page would display in a font that is available on that student's machine set to be the default font.

Answer: The answer is C! Your page will still display, but the student's browser will display it in a font that is set to be the default font. If you are concerned about what type your pages display in, it's a good idea to use standard fonts, which are usually included with most computer font packages. Standard fonts include Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, and others. Most computer systems include Times New Roman and Arial, those these two fonts will show close to how you type them on student computers.

The image below shows a few font examples. Note that some of these fonts are easier to read on the computer screen than others.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17297/1.5/>>.

²<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Visual+Text+Box+Editor+How+To+and+FAQ>

Some font samples

Windows 12 point type	Macintosh 12 point type
Arial	Chicago
Arial Black	Courier
Arial Narrow	Geneva
Arial Rounded MT Bold	Helvetica
Book Antiqua	Monaco
Bookman Old Style	New York
Century Gothic	Palatino
Century Schoolbook	Times
Courier	
Courier New	
Garamond	
MS Dialog	
MS Dialog Light	
MS LineDraw	
MS Serif	
MS Sans Serif	
MS SystemX	
Times New Roman	
Verdana	

Figure 6.1

The image below shows the Blackboard Visual Text Box Editor. Included are the following fonts: Arial, Arial Black, Book Antiqua, Century Gothic, Comic Sans, Courier New, Garamond, Georgia, Symbol, Tahoma, Times New Roman, and Verdana.

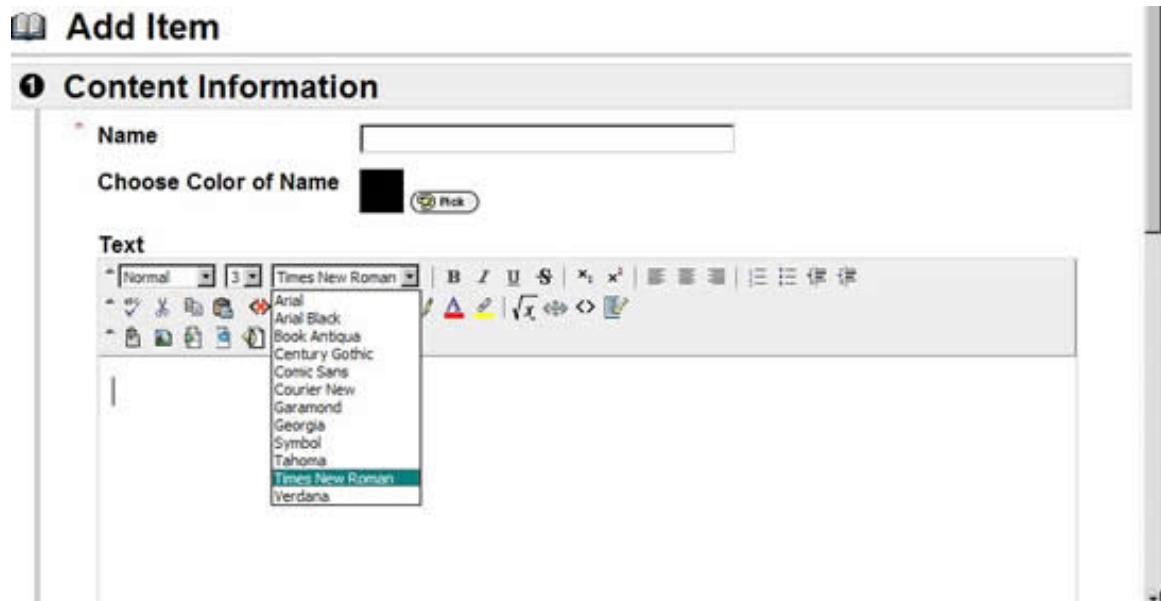


Figure 6.2

Chunking, Scanning and Layout

As a Web-based course designer you use Web pages to layout your lesson content. How you present the content directly affects the user's ability to read and remember information. Two important concepts in writing for the Web are: chunking information and writing for scannability.

Chunking Information



An unedited block of text is more difficult to read

Figure 6.3

While the concept of the "chunking limit"³ with regard to a human's ability to process and remember information is not new, it has found new and practical application in writing for the Web. We know that by presenting information in small chunks, we can improve a reader's ability to read and understand it. Chunking information involves:

- writing short chunks of information (5-7 minutes)
- providing transitions between the short chunks
- organizing and labeling them into a hierarchy
- linking all the chunks together in a meaningful unit
- reinforcing the with learning activities (quizzes, video clips, discussions, self-tests)

³<http://www.musanim.com/miller1956/>

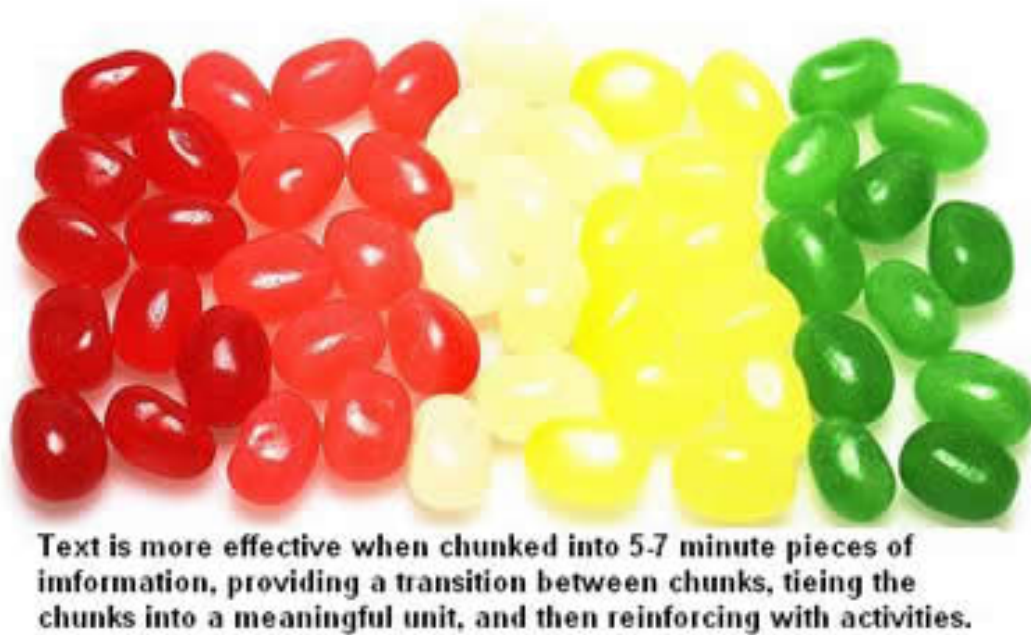


Figure 6.4

Scannability

Countless usability studies also confirm that Web users tend not to read every word on a page, preferring instead to scan or skim short passages of text and graphics. Further, they tend to read 25% more slowly from a screen than they do from print (Nielsen, 2000⁴). When writing for onscreen reading:

- Keep text short.
- Present one main theme per paragraph.
- Use the "inverted pyramid"⁵ style of writing, putting the main points at the top of the page.
- Structure pages with headlines and subheadings.
- Use bulleted lists and bold text to highlight main points.
- Make use of white space to layout the text more clearly.

For more information on writing for the web, see the article *Monkey Instruction*⁶ from elearningpost.com.⁷

Once you have organized your content into chunks, you are ready to plan the page layout. The goal in page composition is to place content (text, headings, and graphics) in a way that is balanced, consistent, and unified, but also provides the right amount of emphasis to lead the viewer's eye effectively through the page and draw one's attention to important details. The human eye sorts information by looking for visual groupings and hierarchies. The following illustrations show how positioning information on the page in different ways affects how the reader's eye is lead through the information. By chunking information

⁴<http://www.useit.com/jakob/webusability/>

⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inverted_pyramid

⁶http://www.elearningpost.com/articles/archives/monkey_instruction/

⁷<http://www.elearningpost.com/>

into logical categories, using headings, graphics, color, and white space, we can help readers to sort and comprehend the information we are presenting.

For more information and examples of writing for the web and chunking, please see the following resources:

Writing for the Web <http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/>⁸

Writing for the Web http://www.webdesignfromscratch.com/writing_for_the_web.cfm⁹

Writing for the Web: Guidelines for MIT Libraries <http://libstaff.mit.edu/webgroup/writing/chunking.html>¹⁰

You might be interested in reading *Using Tone to Increase Interaction*¹¹ found on TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators.

⁸<http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/>

⁹http://www.webdesignfromscratch.com/writing_for_the_web.cfm

¹⁰<http://libstaff.mit.edu/webgroup/writing/chunking.html>

¹¹<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Using+Tone+to+Increase+Interaction>

Chapter 7

Graphics and when not to use images¹

7.1 Graphics for Blackboard

There are two main types of graphics you may want to use in your course:

- 1) a banner and
- 2) those that help to illustrate points in the content of your lessons.

Banner

A banner is an image that can appear on your course opening page. A banner can:

- establish identity
- achieve a unified look
- aid the user's ability to recognize and navigate through your site

For example, here is a sample banner created by Distance Education.



Figure 7.1

You may not think a visual cue such as a banner is valuable, but think what it would be like if all of our road signs looked exactly alike. From a distance you recognize immediately from both the shape and color of a sign what's coming up in the roadway. If stops, yields, and other signals were placed on signs of exactly

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17298/1.3/>>.

the same shape and colors, you would not be able to determine what was required of you as quickly! Think of your course banner as a road sign for your course.

Illustrative Graphics

The second type of graphics you will probably use in your course are illustrative. Occasionally you will find it necessary to demonstrate points both visually as well as verbally. Illustrations, graphs, maps, diagrams, and photographs are among the kinds of illustrative matter you can use to help students understand important points in your lessons.

When Not to Use Illustrative Graphics

Do not use graphics for the sole purpose of putting an image on the page. Some pages of your lesson don't need them, and your students will be confused to see an image that doesn't bear any relationship with the content (unless it's part of the design template). So, use common sense and be purposeful with your image choices. If an image is the best way to get a point across, then it's a good idea to put it in the lesson.

Rules of Thumb

When looking for illustrative graphics, be sure that you:

- Select graphics that will illustrate your points well.
- Select images that are saved in file formats specifically for the Web (.gif or .jpg).
- Use small versions or "thumbnails" on a lesson page and link to larger or more detailed versions on a separate page.
- Obtain necessary permission to use copyrighted materials.

Dr. Ruth Clark² uses empirical evidence to discuss the impact of visuals on learning in her book *e-Learning and the Science of Instruction*³. While relevant visuals can improve learning up to 90%, ineffective visuals often serve no useful instructional purpose and can actually impair learning. So, extraneous, decorative graphics should be avoided, even if the graphic is interesting to look at.

Two research based scenarios regarding graphics that Dr. Clark recommends do improve learning are:

Multimedia Principle - use words and graphics rather than words alone. Based on cognitive theory and research, including relevant, related written or spoken text and explanative graphics will promote learning. (Clark, p. 51)

Contiguity Principle - Place corresponding words and graphics near each other. When applying the Multimedia Principle, have as little physical separation between the text and the graphic as possible. (Clark, p. 67)

Where to Get Graphics

There are several ways to get graphics for your course. We are going to discuss:

- Making your own.
- Find them in a copyright free digital collection on the Web
- Creative Commons
- Copyrighted images

Making Your Own Graphics

We all have different talents, skills, and interests. Some of you may already have experience creating graphics using design software or have used digital cameras and photo editing software to create and manipulate photographs. If so, you may be comfortable preparing graphics for your lessons. Your #1 goal should be to create a graphic of the highest quality and lowest file size possible. Use the following guidelines when creating your own graphics to accomplish this:

1. Use JPEG file format for saving photographs or images with a wide range of colors. This will allow you to get the highest quality and smallest file size.

²<http://www.clarktraining.com/>

³http://www.amazon.com/e-Learning-Science-Instruction-Guidelines-Multimedia/dp/0787986836/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1215

2. Use GIF file format for images that use just a few colors or have large areas of flat colors. For these kinds of images, GIF will be much smaller and just as high quality.
3. Crop unnecessary white space or borders around an image. These areas just take up space.
4. Save the image at the size you will use within the page. Do not specify image size in the Web page editor or HTML. Allowing the browser to resize the image will result in poor quality and longer download time.
5. Save images using a resolution no higher than 72 ppi. Monitors will not display resolutions any greater, so if you save at a higher resolution, you're wasting space.

Not everyone has the time or inclination to make their own graphics, please continue to find out how to use digital collections on the Web.

Find images in a copyright free digital collection on the Web

Digital image collections on the Web are becoming more commonplace and covering a wide range of subjects. Images in these collections fall into two categories:

- images in the public domain
- images that are copyright protected

Images in the Public Domain

Images in the public domain are the easiest to work with because you don't have to worry about crediting a source or violating copyright. However, such images can be difficult to find. Please go to the Conclusion, and then Public Domain Images to access a few digital libraries that contain images in the public domain.

Creative Commons

In addition to these collections, you may find collections that other instructors or researchers in your own field have assembled and will allow you to use for teaching purposes. A common copyright license applied to such images is called Creative Commons⁴ (CC). The Creative Commons is a non-profit organization devoted to expanding the range of creative work available for others legally to build upon and share. It enables copyright holders to grant some of their rights to the public while retaining others through a variety of licensing and contract schemes including dedication to the public domain or open content licensing terms. The intention is to avoid the problems current copyright laws create for the sharing of information. For more information on Creative Commons and finding materials in various collections, see Creative Commons in Education from Infinite Thinking⁵.

Copyrighted Images

If you want to use an image that is protected by copyright, your options are to obtain permission from the copyright holder or justify use under the TEACH Act⁶ or Fair Use Guidelines. If you want to use an image that is copyrighted, you must investigate whether or not it may be used by applying the guidelines set forth in the TEACH Act. It is important to become familiar with these guidelines.

Some images can be licensed for a fee. Most commonly you will find such images in stock photo collections, such as Fotosearch⁷. Additionally, newspaper or periodical publishing houses will allow you to use their images for a fee. Often you must contact their rights and reproductions departments for a price quote.

⁴<http://creativecommons.org/>

⁵<http://www.infinitehinking.org/2007/02/creative-commons-in-education.html>

⁶<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/scc/legislative/teachkit/overview.html>

⁷<http://www.fotosearch.com/>

Chapter 8

Working within Blackboard¹

8.1

Course Menu

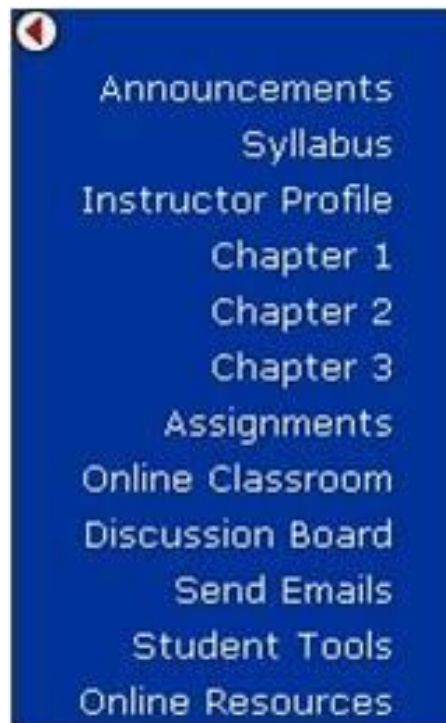


Figure 8.1

When you enter your Blackboard course you are presented with a list of links in the navigation menu on the left side of the page. Instructors can modify these links by changing the link names or eliminating

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17299/1.3/>>.

unused links. The Course Menu may contain any of the following types of links:

- Folders that hold course information such as Course Documents
- Specific items such as a course syllabus
- External Links which link to URL's outside of the course
- Course Links which link to other areas within the course
- Links to course tools, such as the Discussion Tool
- You might be interested in reading Using the Course Information Menu² and Manage Course Menu³, resources found in TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators.
- Content Areas via the Visual Text Box Editor

The Visual Text Box editor appears with a menu that looks similar to that of a Microsoft Word document when adding items, folders and discussion. You can type your text into it and format it. You can copy text and paste from plain text word processors, such as Notepad or Wordpad, and format it. You can insert tables, images, and multimedia.

Tip: White space is sometimes just as important as the elements that make up a web page. White space is the empty space in between the components on the page - in the margins, between columns, etc. If information is dense on a page, it can be made more readable by adding more white space. To add white space between lines in the Blackboard Visual Text Box Editor, simply hit the <enter> key one or two times at the end of a line.

Tip: You can make different sections of your text stand out by using varied background colors. You must use a table (with invisible borders) to do this. Just copy the following code, filling in the color code of your choice. An example of what the results will look like is shown directly below the code. See browser safe color chart at Cookwood.com⁴. You can replace the #DDDDDD with any suitable color code from the chart.

```
<table COLS=1 WIDTH="100%" bgcolor="#DDDDDD"><tr><td>Enter text here</td></tr></table>
```

You may want to see the Visual Text Box Editor How to and FAQ⁵ and If you Want to Paste Text from Another Application⁶ resources found in TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators.

Course Banner

A Course Banner can be used to personalize the design of your Blackboard course. There are many ways to create course banners including: Using software such as Photoshop to combine text and graphics to create an interesting course banner; Using simple banner creation sites such as <http://www.3dtextmaker.com>⁷, <http://cooltext.com>⁸ and <http://www.flamingtext.com/start.html>⁹.

Course entry Point

When a user enters a Blackboard course, the first page they see is the course's "entry point". By default this is set to be the announcements page. If you wish you may change your course's entry point to be a different menu item within your course.

You might be interested in reading the Course Entry Point¹⁰ and Adding a course Banner¹¹ resources found in TWU ID, a set of resources for TWU distance educators. Note: this will open a new window to make it easier for you to return to this course.

²<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Using+the+Course+Information+Menu+Item>

³<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Manage+Course+Menu>

⁴http://www.cookwood.com/cookwood/html4_examples/4files/colorhex/colorcharthex.html

⁵<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Visual+Text+Box+Editor+How+To+and+FAQ>

⁶<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/If+you+want+to+paste+text+from+another+application>

⁷<http://www.3dtextmaker.com/>

⁸<http://cooltext.com/>

⁹<http://www.flamingtext.com/start.html>

¹⁰<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Course+Entry+Point>

¹¹<http://twuid.pbwiki.com/Adding+a+Course+Banner>

Chapter 9

Conclusion¹

9.1 Other Sources of Information about Visual Design for Online Content

Designing Courses: Instructional Design for Online Learning. Pink Flamingo's Resource List. http://www.ibritt.com/resources/dc_instructionaldesign.htm²

Reilly, A. and George, A. Narrative and graphic design of an online course: transferring skills from print publishing to the web. *International Journal of Continuing Engineering Education and Lifelong Learning* 2002 - Vol. 12, No.1/2/3/4 pp. 348-359.

Chan, P. Visual Communication Design for E-Learning: An Art Education Web-based Online Course Design. *The International Journal of Learning*, Volume 13, Issue 12, pp. 163-170.

Keeler, C. and Horney, M. Online Course Designs: Are Special Needs Being Met? *American Journal of Distance Education*, Volume 21, Issue 2 June 2007 , pages 61 - 75.

Lynch, P. and Horton, S. *Web Style Guide*. <http://webstyleguide.com/>³

Norman, D. *The Design of Everyday Things*. Doubleday, 1990.

Clark, R. and Mayer, R. *E-Learning and the Science of Instruction: Proven Guidelines for Consumers and Designers of Multimedia Learning*. Pfeiffer, 2007

Public Domain Images

Images of American Political History⁴

A collection of over 500 public domain images of American Political History.

NASA Photo Gallery⁵

"Hundreds of thousands of photos and data images from 10 NASA Centers have been linked together to create a searchable database of agency imagery covering a variety of NASA programs." – from Home page.

Digital Library System⁶ (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Collection of public domain still photographs. Includes wildlife, plants, National Wildlife Refuges, and other scenics, as well as wildlife management work.

American Memory Collection⁷

"The Library is offering broad public access to American Memory collections as a contribution to education and scholarship. Some materials in these collections may be protected by the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) and/or by the copyright or neighboring-rights laws of other nations." – from the Home page.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m17292/1.2/>>.

²http://www.ibritt.com/resources/dc_instructionaldesign.htm

³<http://webstyleguide.com/>

⁴http://teachpol.tcnj.edu/amer_pol_hist/

⁵<http://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/iotd.html>

⁶<http://images.fws.gov/>

⁷<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

Copyright-Free Photo Archive: Public Domain Photos and Images⁸

"The photo archive at Gimp-Savvy.com has more than 15,000 free photos and images."

Copyright-Friendly and Copyleft Images and Sound (Mostly!)⁹ Pathfinder to copyright friendly or generous copyright licensing images and sounds.

Image Generator Pathfinder¹⁰ Links to online image creators and generators that let you create images, edit or add effects online.

⁸<http://gimp-savvy.com/PHOTO-ARCHIVE/>

⁹<http://copyrightfriendly.wikispaces.com/>

¹⁰<http://copyrightfriendly.wikispaces.com/Image+generators+and+clipart>

Index of Keywords and Terms

Keywords are listed by the section with that keyword (page numbers are in parentheses). Keywords do not necessarily appear in the text of the page. They are merely associated with that section. *Ex.* apples, § 1.1 (1) **Terms** are referenced by the page they appear on. *Ex.* apples, 1

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| B Blackboard, § 8(23) | M menu, § 4(7) |
| C centered, § 4(7)
color, § 5(9)
consistency, § 3(5)
content, § 5(9), § 6(13)
course, § 5(9), § 6(13), § 7(19), § 8(23) | O online, § 5(9), § 7(19), § 8(23), § 9(25)
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Visual Design for Distance Education Content

This course, Visual Design for Distance Education Content, covers many tips to help you successfully create the navigation, layout, colors and design of your course content.

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