

UAS Online Collaborative Technology Development

Collaborative development has been the hallmark of the “UAS Online” initiative since it was launched in 1999. UAS IT staff work closely with staff, students and faculty to develop a technological environment that is distinctive and tightly aligned with the needs of the academic programs and the diverse locations UAS serves.

Since many faculty and students are not collocated with ITS staff, the UAS Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable launched an online forum using the UAS ePortfolio system to facilitate a continuing discussion within the UAS community.

The following pages present four excerpts from the TLTR forum that illustrate how the UAS technology environment constantly evolves through this ongoing discussion.

Example 1: Minor enhancement to improve the ability to compare and evaluate student portfolios.

An adjunct faculty member located in Anchorage, used the TLTR Support Forum to seek more efficient ways to evaluate student portfolios.

The subsequent discussion between IT and faculty identified ways the system might be improved. IT provided a functional prototype and this prototype was refined based on the subsequent discussion.

Finally, a fully functional version was placed in the test instance of the course management system and then incorporated in the production system.

Example 2: Implementation of syllabi posting mandate.

In 2007, UAS adopted a standard that all courses should have their syllabus posted on the course homesite.

The question of how best to implement this policy was brought to the public TLTR online forum. Faculty and staff weighed options seeking the an approach that would display the syllabi prominently without cluttering course web sites.

Participants were split on the best approach, so the final solution incorporated elements from both sides of the discussion.

Example 3: Major portfolio enhancement to track multiple revisions of portfolio artifacts along with any reviews or assessments.

Portfolio owners have always been able to revise portfolio items (artifacts) as comments and reviews are received. However, since all reviews for an item are retained, it was difficult to determine which reviews still pertained to the current version of the item.

A discussion between faculty and IT staff resulted in a significant enhancement to the UAS portfolio system which allows for revisions to artifacts to be tracked over time and links any assessments and reviews to the specific artifact revision.

Example 4: Student request to allow custom background “wallpaper” for course portfolios.

As the university community adopted the portfolio system more broadly, there was increasing demand to allow for more personalized customization. In this example, a student requests the ability to apply a custom “wall paper” to her course portfolio.

After a brief discussion among the faculty and staff participants, the change was approved and added to the production system.


UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

Example 1: Minor enhancement to improve the ability to compare and evaluate student portfolios.

Cheryl Johnson, an adjunct faculty member located in Anchorage, used the TLTR Support Forum to seek more efficient ways to evaluate student portfolios.

The subsequent discussion between IT and faculty identified ways the system might be improved. IT provided a functional prototype and this prototype was refined based on the subsequent discussion.

Finally, a fully functional version was placed in the test instance of the course management system and then incorporated in the production system.

Portfolio Access Dream  **04/08/08 07:16 AM**
[Cheryl JP Johnson](#)

As I go back and forth between student portfolios grading specific additions to each, it dawned on me that a way to toggle between students from the portfolios themselves (instead of having to go to the student list or to my list of bookmarks on my login screen) would save me a considerable amount of clicking. I already have to click around a bit within each portfolio to reach the specific forum item or portfolio page, so cutting down on clicks to at least reach the portfolio would save my poor little fingers a bit of work.

I'm not exactly sure where it would be good to add this feature without adding clutter. I know you have added some great popup navigation to areas, like when one hovers over a student name or the courses link. Perhaps this could be one way to provide access to a list of portfolios for all students within one class. Or, if we could opt to open a side screen, like the page navigation screen for pages within a portfolio.

Just thought I'd throw it out there in case you all are horribly bored and looking for something new to create :)

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 **04/08/08 11:26 AM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream**

Hi Cheryl....

I've been trying to figure out a coor way this might work. So far, I don't have too many great deia, but a thought came to me while reading your message.


I'm aware that both you and Marsha use the sidebar as part of your Portfolio template. One thought would be to leverage the sidebars. What if you could switch between students on the sidebar, or perhaps show multiple sidebars at once. This way, you could pick the different portfolio items by using the sidebars.

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 **04/08/08 11:32 AM** **Marsha Gladhart** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream**

It would be wonderful if we could come up with a nice, clean way to do this. I've come to accept this as one of life's little irritations and would be so happy to have one less irritation. I'm concerned about diminishing the content part of the window with two many sidebars. I'd have to see what that would look like. If there could be a pop up option much like there is in the gradebook when I want to switch to a different assignment then it wouldn't take up much room on the page. Not sure there this would be set up though. Hmmm.

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 **04/08/08 04:14 PM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream**


Marsha...

Here is a very quick-and-dirty prototype...
<https://uascentral.uas.alaska.edu/testonlinesrc/sidebartest.cgi>

Your idea of simply switching the student would actually be very easy... we would just need to decide where to put the link.

I am curious, however, if the prototype would get you closer to Cheryl's "dream"...

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 **04/10/08 06:23 AM** **Cheryl JP Johnson** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream**

Oh WOW! I LOVE YOU!

- I like the way one can make that whole portion of the screen (is it a frame?) smaller if they don't want it by dragging - makes it easy to see the whole portfolio page if you need a bigger view.
- I did try using the hide buttons, which worked, and they will be a good option for people who don't want to see the pages, but they wouldn't unhide.
- I do like the option of seeing each page - for my use that will save me many more clicks
- I also really like having side scrolling to see all of my students instead of having to click to see more.
- Also, having the individual scroll bars for seeing the portfolios with more pages than display in the frame is great.

Thanks so much 😊

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04/10/08 12:06 PM
 [Marsha Gladhart](#)

RE: Portfolio Access Dream

Whoa! Awesome! That is gorgeous! (Enough exclamation points?) I really like the look of that.

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+ All

04/10/08 01:51 PM
 [Michael Ciri](#) RE: Portfolio Access Dream

Cool! So we are on to something....

So what else would this need in order to be a real solution for Faculty?

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04/11/08 06:32 AM
 [Cheryl JP Johnson](#) RE: Portfolio Access Dream

Boy, I can't think of anything else it would need as it does everything I need already. I like how it opens now with only the names showing and how the hide/unhide is a single button now instead of being student-specific.

If you have a means for telling which instructors tend to use the portfolios more frequently than others, you may want to email them to see if they have other ideas, but I'm a happy camper with it the way it is.

Thanks again!

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04/11/08 09:13 AM
 [Michael Ciri](#) Portfolio Access Dream -- what do we call it?

Ok then... Now for the most difficult part of all....

What the heck do we call this feature?

This is actually one of the biggest challenges we have... no joke! We know that this feature should be accessible by clicking on "Instructor Tools" under the "Manage Page Settings". However, **we need a descriptive name for this feature that would provide a new faculty some clue about what it is.**

In other words, if there is going to be a link or button that opens this view for you, what should the link or button say?

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04/11/08 10:59 PM
 [Cheryl JP Johnson](#) RE: Portfolio Access Dream -- what do we call it?

OK, well, jumping right to the assumption that "Cheryl's Dream Tool" is off the table for consider and looking at how other features are named, how about something along the lines of:

- *Class Portfolios*
- *Class Roster: Portfolios*
- *Class Portfolio Pages*
- *Student Portfolios*

I'm not sure if using the term "class" will make people think of the "course" as opposed to the "students".

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 **04/14/08 03:27 PM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream -- Now in TESTONLINE!**

Hi folks...

Well, we've made our first attempt at making this new feature "real".

If you access a course portfolio from [testonline](#), you will find a slight difference in the portfolio masthead:

[UAS Online](#) [JSMAC5](#) > [COURSES](#) > [Fall-2004](#) > [PADM612-J01](#) - [View Classlist](#) Michael Ciri signed in: [Sign Out](#)
[Add to Bookmarks](#)

What has changed.... The "Add Bookmark" link has moved below the line on the left. In its place, there is a "View Classlist" link. This link provides several new functions:

1. If you hover over it, then it will load a list of students from the class roster and allow you to link directly to another student's portfolio. (This behavior mimics the "Courses" link in the upper right that we added earlier this year.)
2. If you click the link and you are NOT the instructor, then a new window will open displaying the "classlist" page from the course web site. Of course, you will only be able to view the list if the course security settings allow this.
3. If you click the link and you ARE the instructor, then a new window will open and you will be taken to the new "Class Portfolios" browser.

(Of course, you will only see the classlist link if you are viewing a "Course" portfolio.)

Does this do the job?

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 **04/15/08 09:01 PM** **Cheryl JP Johnson** **RE: Portfolio Access Dream -- Now in TESTONLINE!**

Oh wow, the best of all worlds! I love it and if you don't want to lose real estate you just don't click on the link or you opt for the hover mode. Great solution and the title is explanatory. Thanks so much 😊

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Example 2: Implementation of syllabi posting mandate.

In 2007, UAS adopted a standard that all courses should have their syllabus posted on the course homesite.

The question of how best to implement this policy was brought to the public TLTR online forum. Faculty and staff weighed options seeking the an approach that would display the syllabi prominently without cluttering course web sites.

Participants were split on the best approach, so the final solution incorporated elements from both sides of the discussion.

04/13/07 04:38 PM
Michael Ciri

Special Place for Syllabi


Hi all,

As some may know, there has been a lot of discussion about creating an institutional policy for posting syllabi on course web pages. This was a topic at the last TLTR meeting. Recently, the Provost's Council established this as a new mandate for Fall.

Currently, the syllabus simply appears as just one of many links under the "Resources" section of the web site.

In support of this, I think it would be good if there was standard place that the syllabus appeared on each site. We can arrange to do this automatically once the syllabus is uploaded.

I'm looking for suggestion on how we might do this. At a minimum, we might have the syllabus always appear as the first item on the resources list. It could also appear at the top of the homesite, on the nav bar, under assignments, etc. (see picture).



What do folks think?

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+ All

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 **04/14/07 11:20 AM** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Cheryl JP Johnson](#)

My first preference would be the top link in the resources section, since it is a resource. If it consistently appeared as the first link, it would be easy for students to find.


My second preference would be under the title of the class.

I do not think it should be in the navigation bar at the top or listed in the assignments section.

So much for my two cents!

Cheryl

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 **04/15/07 09:24 AM** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Marsha Gladhart](#)

My top two choices would be under the title of the course or the first item in the Resource section. I don't want any more items in the nav bar...it's getting crowded with options already. Thanks for asking!

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 **05/15/07 11:56 AM** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Karen Cummins](#)

As a person who deals almost exclusively with distance students, along with local students accessing UASOnline, my suggestion would be a link directly under the title of the course - or clicking on the title of the course would bring up the syllabus. I would guesstimate that 75% of the inquiries I get from current or potential students, especially at the beginning of a semester or during registration for the next semester, are basically regarding syllabi. UASOnline is a web page and as we know, people don't necessarily read webpages - they scan. If the syllabus is in the Resources section, that area gets loaded with just about everything and the syllabus information gets virutally lost or pushed down as other items are added. I would vote for under the title or the title as a link to the syllabus. Thanks for asking! --karen

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05/16/07 10:00 AM **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Cara Wicks-Ortega](#)

I would also vote for right under the course title.

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05/16/07 11:12 AM **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Virqil Fredenberg](#)

I like the idea of having it linked under the title as well. It makes it seem like it is connected directly to the course.

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05/15/07 12:26 PM **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Michael Boyer](#)

I like the idea of having the syllabus up anytime, all the time, 24-7 through the whole semester. So I just stick it in the assignments section.....After all, a syllabus should list assignments and expectations...And students need that every week.

This works for me because I don't make my syllabus into a novel. I have seen some 7-10 page tomes that would make the home page unwieldy. If a syllabus just shows how the course works, assignments, readings, grades, etc, it seems important enough for me to leave up.. Otherwise, you get tons of questions that can be answered: please see the syllabus.

This constant posting of the syllabus clears up many questions. Even with the syllabus always up I still get occasional questions about the assignments or grading... But they are few and far between.

As Jeff Bezos taught us, every additional click loses a percentage of customers/ viewers....

So I will probably just use whatever system we have to have to keep that syllabus up all the time, anytime, everytime....not even a click away..

Yes, we are getting to lazy to even click....

Also, this applies to attachments...I tell my students--not as a zen master but as someone who cannot open the thousands of bizarre attachments I get from word processing program of the last 10 years--that they must free themselves of attachments in discussions and essays. They just gum up the discussions and grading. They hide...and few people bother to open them and click to see them....

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05/15/07 01:12 PM **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Ivan Show](#)

My top choice is to have the syllabus as a link directly under the course title at the top of the page. I would also like to see an option for additional items in the same place. In addition to the syllabus, I currently post a homework and assignment schedule in resources and would like also to post this with the syllabus.

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05/18/07 11:03 PM **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**
[Robert Starbard](#)

I cast my vote for a direct link under course name.

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05/27/07 10:52 AM **Susie Feero** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

How about a section called "course documents"? It could contain the course syllabus and course outline (calendar).

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05/29/07 01:57 PM **Michael Ciri** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

Would you also see handouts or powerpoint presentations going there?

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05/29/07 04:21 PM **Barney Norwick** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

How would the items in a section called "course documents" differ from Resources?

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05/30/07 08:47 AM **Cheryl JP Johnson** **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

I do understand the reason the syllabi might need to go elsewhere - if, it all needs to be pulled throughout the system for reporting, as Marsha discussed.

However, I like the current resources section. I have my resources broken down into subgroups - one of which is the syllabus and course info and another is call Task worksheets and Resources.

In the latter folder, I break all of my resources down into subfolders by the week the students will need it I set them to open at the start of each week so the students don't work too far ahead (participation with one another in the discussion board on the weeks' topics is a requirement). I include all assignment materials: templates, PowerPoints, readings, etc. in the appropriate week's folder. It makes more sense for consistency for me to do it that way than to be steering students to different folders depending upon what the format of the material may be. If I didn't explain this clearly, feel free to visit my class site....<https://uascentral.uas.alaska.edu/online/ED628-JD1?term=Summer-2007&behavior=UAS&session=2409104>.

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05/30/07 10:49 AM **Michael Ciri** **Custom Layouts**

Nice layout! I like how you are using the subfolders.

By the way, have you played with the custom layout options at all? I ask because it strikes me that you would enjoy playing with the different options.

You can find the controls under Instructor Tools under the same area as the custom colors.

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05/31/07 05:34 PM **Cheryl JP Johnson** **RE: Custom Layouts**

Thanks Michael, I have not checked out the custom layouts yet. I'll take a look.

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05/29/07 09:50 AM

[Kathy DiLorenzo](#) RE: Special Place for Syllabi

As someone who uses UAS Online extensively for all of my classes, whether face to face or distance, I thought I would give my two cents. I would say that posting the syllabus as a permanent link on the nav bar would make it quite cluttered for those of us who are utilizing many different methods of communication. My nav bar right now consists of

1. Instructor Tools
2. Homesite
3. Instructor
4. Class List
5. Discussion Board
6. Webmeet
7. Live Messenger
8. Portfolio
9. Help!

Adding something else to the nav bar may create confusion. I am not against having a permanent link below the course name.

My preferred place for the syllabus is in the Resources Section as that is what I feel the syllabus is. While it lists assignments it is more than that in that it is in a sense the contract with the students that describes the instructors expectations of the students and also what the students may expect from the instructor.

I respectfully disagree with my colleague about the purpose of the syllabus. I am one of those instructors with a 10+ page syllabus. My syllabus is where I set my expectations for the course. It provides the student with all contact information (including ADA and counseling services), as well as outlining the important information concerning Incompletes and Plagiarism. I also list the UAS Competencies and articulate how my assignments are linked to the competencies in measuring students learning and success. These are things that I feel it is imperative for the student to understand in order for them to assess the quality of their learning experience. Given this I have consistently put the syllabus in the Resources Section and when posting other resources I keep the syllabus as the first link.

I explain where to find the syllabus the first day of class, I keep consistent with keeping the post at the top of the Resources and I find that students soon acclimate themselves to this orientation


Again just my two cents

Great discussion everyone, I enjoy reading the posts

Kathy

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 **05/30/07 07:56 AM**
Marsha Gladhart **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

Kathy, Education faculty are required to have syllabi much like you described for our accreditation. One of my concerns is that UAS will need a way to pull off syllabi from all UASOnline courses when compiling documents for accreditation. I'm not sure but I think it would be easier to pull off if a separate place were set aside. I still like the idea of right under the course title. Can IT pull it off there easily in one fell swoop for all courses? I put my syllabi in the resources too along with other course information (Orientation to the course, style guides, etc). but wouldn't mind it being elsewhere. I can still create a category on course information in the Resource section. Blackboard uses the Course documents wording (at least they did several years ago when I was using it). I believe they also had Course Links for links to online resources. Since Kathy brought up the issue of too many things in the navigation bar, I'd like to bring up the possibility of a side navigation bar to cut down on the scrolling...much like content manager does now.


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05/30/07 10:25 AM
Kathy DiLorenzo **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

I agree with Marsha on several points. I believe that it will be beneficial for us to have the syllabi in a uniformed place for when we need to access them for accreditation. It will be important for those compiling documents for UAS to have relatively easy access to these types of documents when they are needed for the accreditation process. I also agree that even if we do have a place that all faculty post their syllabus, we will still be able to post them in the Resources Section for those students who are used to finding it there. I also like the idea of a side navigation bar.

Someone brought up last week that if an instructor has a lot of assignment sand resources it takes the student too much time to scroll through them to find what they are looking for. While I think that it is not too much to expect for students to take the extra 10 - 15 seconds to scroll, there seems to be concern that this may cause problems. I would maybe suggest a side navigation bar, or a drop down box, where the user could jump directly to assignemnts or resources to get whichever section they are looking for more quickly.

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 **05/30/07 10:55 AM**
Michael Ciri **RE: Special Place for Syllabi**

Well, there has been a lot of ideas kicked around, but the end result is that folks seem pretty evenly split between wanting a link to the syllabus under the course title and wanting it to appear as the first link under course resources.

Perhaps the best way to make everyone happy would be to have the link appear in both places. I don't think this would create too much clutter.

By the way, the link was only one way of getting to the syllabus. The intent is that a redirection URL would automatically be created. In other words, the special URL:
<http://uas.alaska.edu/online/ACCT100-JD1/syllabus> would automatically redirect the browser to the syllabus. This will make it much easier for departments to create links to syllabi from other web pages.


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Example 3: Major portfolio enhancement to track multiple revisions of portfolio artifacts along with any reviews or assessments.

Portfolio owners have always been able to revise portfolio items (artifacts) as comments and reviews are received. However, since all reviews for an item are retained, it was difficult to determine which reviews still pertained to the current version of the item.

A discussion between faculty and IT staff resulted in a significant enhancement to the UAS portfolio system which allows for revisions to artifacts to be tracked over time and links any assessments and reviews to the specific artifact revision.

06/30/07 09:17 AM**Michael Ciri****Link reviews to a specific version of the item?**

(I just renamed this thread and moved it to a new topic)

On the list of changes for the fall, we have a request to make it more obvious when a portfolio item has been changed. This is intended to make it easier for visitors to know when there is something new to look at. I was thinking about this in the context of this discussion and some ideas came to me.

When the portfolio system was created, it was assumed that the items would be primarily summative. That is, they would be fully developed artifacts which would then be reviewed and assessed. In practice, we are seeing portfolios used for formative work. A draft version is posted and revised somewhat organically as reviews are posted. The final product may look quite different from what was originally posted and the initial reviews may appear somewhat out of context.

My thought was to introduce support for multiple versions of an item. This would "bind" the reviews to a specific version of the item. When the item changes at all (or maybe just significantly), the old version (with its reviews) is preserved. However, when the reviewers revisit, they would only see reviews that pertain to the latest version. They would still have the option, however, of viewing (but not commenting on) "previous versions" of the item.

It seems to me that this would better illustrate the educational process by preserving the development of the item over time. It might also be a better way to address the concern of "scrolling though old reviews."

What do y'all think?

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 **07/02/07 07:03 AM**
Cheryl JP Johnson RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?

Assuming a student has made 15 revisions based upon at least that many comments, what do you envision the history of these to look like? It would certainly make sense from the student's side and that of the reviewer. However, I want to be sure that it will also be easy for me to follow the progress of my students and their partners as they progress through the revisions without having to click on 15 different views per student. Were you thinking the history would be one click to a scrolling page or separate archived pages functioning as the assignment section of the course homesite pages? A scrolling page may be too long, but separate views may be too unwieldy. On the other-hand, I REALLY like the overall concept of where you are heading.

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 **07/06/07 05:23 PM**
Michael Ciri RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?

I suspect that it will take a bit of work to find the best interface.

In general, I think that the student and the reviewers will want to only see the current version its comments. If they wanted to look backward, I suspect that they would be interested in newest to oldest changes.

On the other hand, I suspect that faculty will want to be able to monitor the development over time and review comments and changes chronologically.

My current guess is that the system should track both revisions and comments and know if you have seen them or not. The "normal" view would show the current version but allow you to step backwards. However, there should be another link which would take you to the "first unseen revision or review", even if this is not the "current" version. This would allow you to "catch up" without digging through "old reviews."

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 **07/07/07 06:46 AM**
Marsha Gladhart RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?

Michael, I think you have a good handle on this. I agree it should show newest to oldest changes. And it is very helpful to be able to go over the reviews. We ask our students to post a comment telling us what they had changed after they read a review and make changes. That helps a lot! We can see what the reviewers said and then we can read how the writer made changes. I'm always happy to be shown what I have not read. Anything to avoid unnecessary scrolling!

I just had an adjunct tell me that he didn't want the old reviews to go away but we do have outside reviewers who should not view the "in progress" reviews and be influenced by them so we will want to maintain the option to hide the reviews too.

Thanks for all your good thinking on this.

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UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

 **07/11/07 09:15 AM**
Michael Ciri **RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?**

Actually, I was thinking that this feature might make the "hide reviews" options obsolete.

If we gave the author the ability to restrict access to old versions, then they would be able to "hide reviews" simply by creating a "final revision" of the item and then restricting access to old versions. This would also address the need you identified --- the "final reviewers" would be able to post without seeing the reviews that pertained to the formative process.

Would this work?

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 **07/07/07 07:28 PM**
Cheryl JP Johnson **RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?**

I do like that you are considering having "the system" display whether we have seen the various versions or not. My poor old memory is taxed enough without having to track which versions I have seen on which students. I really appreciate that.

Another feature that may be useful is the one that is already incorporated in other parts of the site; that of being able to opt to have copies of new postings emailed to you. I am then able to easily see which ones I need to go review and even add comments directly from the email. I hope you plan to incorporate that feature as well.

Thanks much for all your work on this.

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 **07/11/07 09:11 AM**
Michael Ciri **RE: Link reviews to a specific version of the item?**

Well, the system currently does email reviews to the author. However, I'm gathering that you would like (as the instructor) to get some form of email notification as well?

Are you sure that you really want this as email? It seems to me that this would result in an avalanche of email messages.

That said, we have had a lot of discussions about different ways that instructors might be notified of new content. We have not come up with the "silver-bullet" yet, however.

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UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

Wednesday, January 02, 2008

UASOnline Enhancements - January 2nd

[Edit Item](#) | [Move to archive](#) | [Remove](#)

The latest changes are now available for review and testing in [TESTONLINE](#).

Portfolio Revisions:

The newest major feature is the ability to have multiple revisions for a portfolio item. The three key elements are here, but for a more extensive description, read the "long version" provided courtesy of Michael Ciri:

- ◆ Each revision is stored with all pertinent data.
- ◆ Reviews and comments are stored with each revision (not cumulative).
- ◆ Assessments are tied to the specific version.

Other Portfolio Enhancements

- ◆ Various interface and navigation changes.
- ◆ "Draft" capability with autosave feature.
- ◆ New page for portfolio item history.

Long Version of Revision Feature:

Each revision is stored along with all data pertaining to it, thus, visitors see how the item changes over time. Multiple assessments self-reflections, etc. can be used. Visitors may view revisions either by clicking navigation links at the upper left corner of the item page, or by reviewing the item history by either clicking the history button (location with the navigation links) or by clicking the revisions link on the main page.

As a consequence to this approach, reviews and comments are stored with the specific revision and not accumulate across all versions of the work. This should make reviews more meaningful as they will no longer appear if the corresponding item content changes. Visitors wishing to read all reviews (such as some instructors) can use the item history to see if there are unseen reviews for an older revision.

Authors may still edit an item without creating a new version ("reposting"); this may only be done while there are no reviews or assessments posted. Once comments (reviews or assessments) have been posted, the author must post a new version in order to change the item content.

Like reviews, assessments are tied to the specific version. Previously, a student could modify the item after an assessment was posted, thus complicating the assessment process. With this change, the assessment will only appear with the specific version.

This includes gradebook links. If an instructor links an item to the gradebook (and posts a grade), this grade will not appear in subsequent versions unless the instructor chooses for it to do so. If multiple versions are tied to the same gradebook item, then they will all share the same score (a change in one place will appear everywhere). However, an instructor can also make different version link to different gradebook entries. For example, an early version might be links to a "First draft" gradebook item and a later version to a "final project" gradebook item.

Finally, once a new version has been posted, the previous version is "frozen" -- no new comments, reflections, etc. may be posted. The one exception would be a gradebook score. Since this is controlled by the gradebook, a change to the gradebook entry will appear on a old portfolio version that linked to it.



Posted by [Mona Yarnall](#) at 04:21:51 PM

[Comments: 0](#)

UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

Example 4: Student request to allow custom background “wallpaper” for course portfolios.

As the university community adopted the portfolio system more broadly, there was increasing demand to allow for more personalized customization. In this example, a student requests the ability to apply a custom “wall paper” to her course portfolio.

After a brief discussion among the faculty and staff participants, the change was approved and added to the production system.

06/14/07 10:36 AM
[Holly Boyle](#)


Portfolio Wallpaper Request

I am wanting to have a wallpaper background added to my portfolio. At this time I was told it was not possible. It would be really great if this was an option!!!! Not just for me but for other students who may have this idea. I am a student in the Ed 698 e-portfolio class with Shirley Kaltenbach and Marsha Gladhadt. The help desk has been so wonderful this week assisting with all the technology demands and trouble shooting. Thank You.

Sincerely,
Holly Boyle


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+ All

 **06/14/07 10:42 AM**
[Heather Swanson](#) **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

I love that idea! I have seen that a lot of students personalize their "mySpace" pages that way and have become very creative in their ideas. And thank you too Holly, you were very pleasant to work with as well. 😊

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 **06/14/07 04:00 PM**
[Michael Ciri](#) **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Personally, I can see how some folks might just HATE this feature. Frankly, I have seen many myspace pages that cause physical pain.

I suspect that faculty may need to impose -- guidance -- about when this will be acceptable.

Having said that, it is GREAT to have a student suggestion. As such --- voila! TESTonline now has support for background images in portfolios. Just look at the bottom of the general settings page.

As always, we anxiously wait to hear if folks like or want this change made to the "live" system.

[TESTONLINE: Beta-Test version of UAS Online](#)

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UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

 **06/15/07 09:30 AM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Three questions:

1. For testonline, this feature was called "background picture". Should it be called "wallpaper" instead?
2. Is there any interest in providing this capability for course homesites?
3. A side effect of this feature is that some things become very difficult to read, unless they have a matte color behind them. Should we add a flat color behind some sections (like the portfolio description) and if so, what sections should we do?

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 **06/15/07 09:43 AM** **Marsha Gladhart** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

I think background picture is more common now than wallpaper so I'd opt for that. I see this feature as more feasible on individual portfolios rather than class portfolios. I hate to stifle anyone's creativity but I'm concerned about the potential for abuse of this feature. I've had students create Websites before who chose horrendous backgrounds that would give the calmest person a headache, made the text hard to read, and generally showed poor design skills. I guess it would be an opportunity for faculty to teach their students some design principles. Given the amount of time I spend reading text in ePortfolios, I want to be cautious about anything that would make it more difficult to read student work. I'm really interested in what others think about this issue.

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 **06/15/07 11:46 AM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

I wonder if we might be able to head of fthe impulse to "bad design" by providing some preloaded "good" walpaper images that we know work well. By providing good examples, this might give folsk something to emulate when they head off on their own.

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 **06/15/07 11:48 AM** **Marsha Gladhart** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Okay, now you are cooking! This really appeals to me.

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 **06/15/07 11:50 AM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Me and my big mouth. 😊

Now all we need are some good examples.... anyone got some?

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UAS Collaborative Technology Development Examples

 **06/17/07 04:21 PM** **Cody Bennett** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Hmm... I'm starting to play with it a bit - I found that the system constrains (and expands!?) any photos to 640px tall (which means that wide photos take up much more space than tall ones.

So, to get around blatant seams, I did a quick search for [seamless tiles](#) and found one I like. I put it up on my portfolio [here](#).

I like that items (and maybe weblog/forums?) show up with a color as identified within the general settings, but there are several details (like mouse-over color-change links) that would need to be tinkered with to make it pretty, and functional.

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 **06/18/07 09:16 AM** **Michael Ciri** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Good catch! The resizing issue has been fixed.

Regarding the other issues... we will need more info on where the "tinkering" is needed.

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 **06/18/07 09:24 AM** **Cody Bennett** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Whoops, for those who read the above post prior to Monday morning, the link was askew.

I guess the wallpaper feature is only available in test online. I've changed the above link, but for your edification, here's the URL:
<https://uascentral.uas.alaska.edu/testonline/portfolio/cjbennett>

-cb

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 **06/25/07 11:29 AM** **Marsha Gladhart** **RE: Portfolio Wallpaper Request**

Thanks for the link! I thought it was a very subtle wallpaper when I first viewed it! I kept peering at it to see the fine and delicate etching! ha!

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