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General Notes

- HuskyCT NG (also called BB9 or Blackboard version 9) is not Java dependent. Java dependence caused many problems with the Legacy site. Now we can use any version of any browser.
- Restoration of content from an earlier course is still a two-step process (request the new site first, and then request the restoration). This may be done for Organizational or Course sites.
- To restore ECR (Electronic Course reserve) material to a new class site from a former course site, you need to add the tool manually. Contact the library for assistance.
- To change personal information (such as your preferred email address), visit My Places: click on the little white head icon between your name and the help question mark (top right corner). Email address is under “Edit Personal information”. You may use only one email address for all your HuskyCT sites. Students should be informed that they can change their email address in HuskyCT from the default UConn email as well.
- You can choose where your users first “land” in the site (start point). To do this, go to Customization... Teaching style and select the entry point. This may be changed frequently. For example, you could have a Content area for each week or each class, and weekly change so that students always land first where the current content is located.
- You can add a photo to any Content Area (insert photo in the text editor). You can also add a “Banner” to your course (Customization ... Teaching Style...) which will appear in your entry point content area.
- List View is the only view in which you may add content. The “plus” sign is not visible in other views. The view sometimes changes on its own. If this happens, hover the mouse near the place where the plus sign normally appears to restore it.
- Course colors are controlled by a small fan near the Edit mode button on some page. This is not an option in Organizational sites.
- HTML files are the only file types that can be edited directly in NG.
- Teaching Assistant (status) is virtually the same as Instructor in NG. Do not use “Guest”.
- If you have an Organizational (non-course related) site, “Assistant” is the equivalent of “Teaching Assistant” and is virtually the same as “Leader”. “Facilitator” is the equivalent of “Grader” in a course site and is used by records-keepers for an Organization.
- To enroll additional students or participants in your site manually, go to Users and Groups:
  - Click “Find users to enroll”
  - Enter the user’s Username (NetID) if you know it; if you don’t, click browse and then search by either Last name or email address. Select the user and Submit. Choose the new users’ status and submit.
  - If you have a large number of users to add to a site, ITS can do it in a bulk action. Provide NetIDs to them and request their addition.
Comparing Legacy to Next Generation

- There is no Assignment Tool in NG. Assignments are now a type of Assessment. See Assignments for more information.
- Imported or migrated Assignments become individual items. WARNING: BECAUSE THERE IS NO LONGER AN ASSIGNMENT TOOL IN WHICH ASSIGNMENTS RESIDE, IF YOU DELETE AN ASSIGNMENT ITEM, IT IS FOREVER GONE! Take care to hide or otherwise save Assignment items that you don’t wish to be made available but that you want to retain for future use.
- Quizzes/Assessments/Surveys DO exist inside of a Tool framework in NG, just as they did in Legacy. See Assessments for more information. They are “deployed” on your site where you wish students to take them. The deployment creates a column in your gradebook. You may delete a deployment, but the Assessment remains in the Tests, Surveys, and Pools tool.
- All grading is now done in the Grade Center.
- Content Collection = the old File Manager in Build. There is not a direct equivalent to My Files in NG at the present time, though there may be one in the future.
- For a 90% accurate Student View, click the Edit Off button in the top right of the screen. This will show you what students will see ONCE THE SITE IS AVAILABLE TO THEM. Another way of seeing what your students see is by using the “Student view” tool in your Course tools.
- Content Folders are roughly equivalent to Folders. Add a Content Area and under Build Content, choose Content Folder.
- The menu bar you create on the left is roughly equivalent to the old homepage in Legacy. There is no default homepage in NG. If you wish to create one, create a new Content Area and go to work adding whatever you would like to have your users see, then designate that as the start point for your course.
- In Legacy, everything you saw on pages were links to content that resided in your File Manager, so you could delete links without removing content permanently. This is not always the case in NG, so be careful about deletions, especially of Learning Modules or Assignments in particular. When in doubt, hide rather than delete.
- Email in Legacy was an email tool internal to HuskyCT. Email in Next Gen links to external UConn email by default (unless the user has changed the email preference in settings).
- Pools (in Tests, Surveys, and Pools) is the equivalent of the Question Database in Legacy. See Assessments for more information.

Migration of sites to NG

- If you want a site migrated from Legacy to NG, request this early (June/July for fall—NOT IN AUGUST!; Sept./Oct. for spring—NOT IN DECEMBER!) This is because migration is not an automated process. It requires examination of the site and determination of the success of migration by Janet or Kim before the migration can actually be performed by UITS.
If you have invested a lot of time in creating quizzes, these can be moved into NG by requesting a selective migration where everything is de-selected except assessments. For more information, see Assessments.

When pages or folders are migrated into NG, Headers land in the site as items. To get rid of these extraneous items you may either
  - Delete them, moving any needed text elsewhere
  - Rename them, if appropriate
  - Change the text color to white to mask it.

Sometimes, for technical reasons, you might end up with two Announcement tools after a migration. Delete one. If duplication is rampant, contact the IRC Help desk. This is an anomaly that sometimes happens.

My Dashboard
  - Customize this area using “Add module”.
  - There are 2 pages of modules you may add, so look to the bottom to click to page 2 (this might not be readily visible).
  - This customization is for your view alone and does not affect your course sites.
  - “Personalize page” (at right) allows color scheme changes. This changes only this page. (Course colors may be changed in course sites only.)

My Courses page
  - “What’s new” reflects only what’s new in NG sites; there is no link between this service and any sites still in Legacy.
  - “Dismiss all” of unread content has bugs (i.e. often doesn’t work) and has been reported as problematic.
  - Going into items and marking them as “Read” or opening them in the “What’s new” box and dismissing them individually does clear the new content notification, but it’s time intensive.
  - In NG you have a visible reminder on your “My Courses” page as to what courses are not yet visible (available) to students. Typically, visibility begins at midnight the night before classes begin.
  - Making your course available to students earlier is now done within HuskyCT. Go to “My Courses” … Control Panel … Customization … Properties, and change the “Set course duration start date”. This is reversible, if you want to make your course available temporarily.
  - DO NOT CHANGE THE END DATE or there could be dire consequences for the routine backing up of your course by UITS. Never try to keep a course site open to be reused in a subsequent semester. Roster information would be inaccurate, and deletion of students from the old site would remove their historical data permanently. If you wish to reuse content, always request a new course site and then request restoration of your course material as a second step.
HuskyCT Next Generation (Next Gen or NG)  
Author: Mary Heckman  
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- My Announcements – this box may be moved (with drag-drop), but it can’t be removed completely from the page.
- My Messages – shows activity in the Message tool (internal tool that does not shout out to regular email).
- Packages and Utilities – this is one area where publisher course cartridges might appear. If you are interested in using these cartridges, UITS will need to assist you by installing them on your site. They are not particularly recommended at this point because they are not considered stable.

Building your content

- You can create a Tools Area for your students and on that display whichever of the Tools you plan to use and would like them to have access to. Tools Area is a Link type.
- The toolbar with the plus sign on the left at top of the menu is essential. If you don’t see it, the issue is most likely related to your browser. Try a different browser (IE, Firefox, Safari, Chrome) and see if that toolbar shows up. Remember that List View is the only view in which you may add content. (The “plus” sign is not visible in other views.)
- When Building Content, ignore SCORM (Content packages)
- The Information Tool (formerly the Syllabus tool) is NOT recommended. Instead of using that, simply upload your syllabus as a file. PDF still strongly recommended as the best format. The Syllabus tool is intended for use in actually creating a syllabus from scratch. Another reason to create your syllabus in Word or text is that it makes it easier to send a copy to Academic Services.
- To add pages, use Blank page or Content Area. Content Area is recommended as it is more powerful. Use of Module page is not recommended.
- When adding a Tool Link, under Tool type “(u) – Tool is off” means that any Tool in the list whose Type is followed by “u” is unavailable for use.
- “Course Links” are not recommended for use. They link to something else already present in the course; deletion of Course Links does not delete content, however if you have a mix of Course Links and Content Links, you might not be easily able to distinguish the difference, so content can sometimes be inadvertently deleted. A course link (which indicates it is duplication or an icon path to something else already in your site) is indicated in the icon by an infinity symbol to the left of the icon. This means you can delete safely. If there is no infinity symbol, beware that you may be deleting actual content.
- To make a page look like the old style homepage with a header (since NG doesn’t have Headers/Footers), add a Content Area then use Build Content to add an “Item” which can be your “header” text.
- Clickable links are not underlined or marked in high color, so they do not look any different than regular text. If you want them to look like hypertext, consider changing the color to the typical blue of a default hyperlink. Consider also adding “Click here” to the title of the item, since
clicking on the title is the only way into the content. Clicking the icon does not take you to content.

- If you create content items and then decide you want them elsewhere, you can move them instead of having to delete and recreate. Click the grey arrow to the right of the item’s name to view the pull-down menu of actions. Move is towards the bottom of this list:

- Adaptive release may be applied to items to show them only to individuals or groups. You cannot make an entire Content Area appear for just one group, so adaptive release items work best as part of larger content areas.
- Where Names are required but you prefer not to have the text of that content item show, you can choose to make the color of the text white to hide the name from view.
- The sidebar is the new organizational overview of the site. Use Subheaders and Dividers (bottom options to add when clicking the plus icon) to organize sidebar entries together in sections. This left handed navigation bar stays fixed and allows for easy movement within the site. Organize it however you wish, either by tool, by lecture, or by any other organizational model that works for your course.

Announcements

- Think of Announcements as one-way communication to your students.
- Announcements by default are posted on your site under Announcements but are also emailed to your users. (This is not an option, it’s mandatory.) Clicking on “Email immediately” doesn’t significantly change the result. Emailed announcements are only sent out to your users once your site is available to them. If you wish to email your roster an announcement before your site is available, temporarily make it available, post the announcement, and then make it unavailable again once the announcement has gone out.

Email Tool

- The email tool doesn’t become visible/available to you until the course(s) are available to students.
- The email address you (or a student) choose to use may be changed by the user from the default UConn address to another personal email.
• If you still wish to keep messaging inside HuskyCT and not link to your external email, use the Messages Tool instead of the Email Tool. Message Tool in NG is equivalent to the Email Tool in Legacy. Using both can also work well.

• Email sent from within HuskyCT does not generate a notification in the What’s new area of your recipients’ HuskyCT site.

• Keep in mind that no record of sent Email is kept in the Email Tool. This tool reaches outside of HuskyCT totally. You will receive a copy of your sent email in your email inbox from HuskyCT. (If you often search Sent items for things you know you emailed, move these incoming copies of those items to your Sent messages. This way you won’t have to try to remember whether you used regular email or HuskyCT email when you search for them.)

• You can quickly email all or only select users on your site. This is easier to use than emailing your roster in PeopleSoft.

• You can access sending email to your sites’ users without adding the tool internally to your site. “Send Email” is a Tool on your My Courses page.

Message Tool

• Similar to the Email tool in Legacy, this tool keeps messages within HuskyCT and does not link out to regular email.

• Messages sent in this tool do generate a notification in the What’s new box.

Learning Modules

• Learning Modules in NG are not a tool, but content area items. If you delete them (whether imported or created from scratch), they are gone! Remember to hide but not delete Learning Modules that you will want to use again.

• When you add a file to a Learning Module, the file name in the Table of Contents takes the actual name of the file. This may be changed after adding the file by opening the Learning module and clicking to Edit the file whose name you wish to change. Enter a file Name that best describes the content.

Assessments (now called Tests, Surveys, and Pools)

• There is an additional step (deployment) that must be done for an Assessment for it to become visible to students. Deploy an Assessment or Quiz by adding a link to it to a Content Area or Blank Page. An Assessment may only be deployed to one location in your site at any given time.

• Availability settings are set when an Assessment is deployed.

• There are several more question types available in NG than there were in Legacy.

• DO NOT CLICK ON “Force completion” as this has unexpected and dire consequences. Instead use “Set timer”
  o Auto-submit on/off – ON will enforce the time limit; OFF there will be no time limit enforced
Auto save ensures that students’ work will be saved on closure.

- Setting a Due date for an Assessment triggers a notification. Display dates are the equivalent of Available dates in Legacy. The quiz/test will only be visible during the display dates, so students should be made aware of that.
- If you have Assessments that you created in Legacy and you would like to have them migrated, this is possible. It is even possible to migrate only your Assessments. To do this, request your new site, then as a separate step, request a restore and in the notes indicate the Legacy site and the fact that you want only the Assessments migrated to your new site. This is a manual process and may take some time, so be sure to request this early!
- If you have Assessments migrated into NG, all of the questions from Legacy will be migrated over to a single Pool in NG. You may reorganize the Pool once it is in NG if you wish.
- New questions may be organized in various Pools.
- For clarity, it is recommended to add a Content Area item providing text as to when quizzes will be available, since they will disappear entirely rather than remain visible but inaccessible.
- A make-up exam may be handled in one of two ways
  - Change the availability date on the test for that one (or selected) student(s); or,
  - Create a new quiz based on the original and release it to that one (or selected) student(s).
- Safe-Assign is still available as an option for an Assessment/Assignment. Look for it in Course Organizational tools or as an option when creating an Assessment (within a Content Area).
- Safe-Assign now has an option of “urgent checking” for use when it is a peak time (midterms or finals) and you need a submission checked quickly. In theory, this shortens your wait (which can vary from minutes during slow times to days during peak times). If you have submitted a request to check work and are waiting, please resist the urge to submit again because this just further slows the work on the server and actually increases the delay you and others will experience.

Assignments

- There is no Assignment tool in NG. Assignments are instead a type of Assessment. See Assessments for more information.
- If you want an area where all Assignments are together in one place, visible to your students (mimicking the Assignment tool in Legacy), simply create a Content Area and add those Assessments you wish them to see.
- If you create an Item and call it an Assignment, it is still just an item. (It doesn’t create a Grade Book column or appear in your Assessments). You can do this if you wish to give instructions to your students, but be aware that the Item provides none of the benefits (due date, availability window, grade, etc.) that a true Assignment (Assessment) will provide. That said, the Assessment tool requires a grade, so if you do not intend to grade or use the grade for a particular Assignment, keeping it out of the tool is probably best.
• You may require your students to attach their work as files to the Assignment, or you may instead require them to copy and paste their work into a text-box in the Assignment. If you do the latter, the advantage is that the students will not be able to attach bogus files (one method of cheating to gain more time).

Discussion Board
• In Legacy, Topics equate to Forums in NG. These are also referred to as Lists.
• Threads are conversations within Forums. Be aware that if you want to grade discussions, there are grading implications (involving mainly logistics and ease of use) of pooling questions within Forums. It is best to create a separate Forum for each question if you want to grade the responses.
• To view all responses to a thread or topic, expand the threads you wish to view, select all (or only some, if that’s what you want to see), and click “Collect.” The results may be Sorted (at the top) by Author’s last name, Author’s first name, Subject, Date posted, or Thread order. If you mix questions within Forums, some of these views might seem disjointed as posts are shown out of context.
• You may hide the Discussion tool itself from the sidebar menu to prevent confusion. If you hide the tool, you may still access your list of forums by clicking on the tool on the sidebar, but students will only access the discussions from links you place in other pages or content areas. Most faculty will create targeted forums and place links to them in organizationally logical places within the site so that the Tool need not be visible to students.
• Forum settings provide many options, most of which were available in Legacy when creating Topics.
• Copying a Forum creates a copy of the framework (with options) but does not create copies of posts in the Forum you copied.
• You may make a Forum visible to only select users by “Managing” the Forum from the Discussion Tool page. Click on the grey arrow to the right of the name of the Forum to reveal the menu options box.

• Other Forum management options include defining the role of each participant in the Forum. Options include Manager, Builder, Moderator, Grader, Participant, Reader, or Blocked. These roles pertain only to the use of this particular Forum, and do not affect the Users’ roles within the site.
Chat tool

- Although HuskyCT NG is not as dependent upon Java as Legacy, the Chat tool is one tool that does still have some Java dependency issues. Before you use this tool with your class, make sure that all your students are able to access Chat on their computers. If they run into error messages, first suggest that they try different browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari). Depending upon their particular setup it is likely that one or the other will work. If not, they may need to install a different version of Java on their computers in order to use the tool.
- One potential use of Chat is to offer after hours “Office hours” in the Chat tool at pre-announced times.
- The Tool promotes communication that is more informal and that more closely resembles texting over emailing. Chat discussions will disappear when the Chat session is closed, unless you do something (such as copy/paste) to preserve the conversation.
- There are two types of Chat: Chat and Virtual Classroom. The Virtual Classroom provides an additional whiteboard feature.
- Chat is quick, real-time conversation. It may also be used to hold an online class.

Grade Center

- All grading is now done in the Grade Center.
- If you want students to be able to view their grades you’ll need to add the MyGrades tool to the sidebar of your course and make it available to them.
- Graded items will appear in your Grade Book automatically.
- You may also create a column in the Grade Book for offline assignments (paper), just as before in Legacy.
- You may only delete a column in Grade Book that you have manually created, or you may delete a column if you have already deleted the deployment of the assessment that generated the column. You will have the option of deleting the Grade book column or not (instead preserving the grades) when you delete a deployment.
- You may hide columns, and you may also bring back to display columns you have hidden.
- The “Quick Comment” button allows
  - Feedback to user – this comment is displayed to the student
  - Grading notes – for you to make a note to yourself. The student will not see this.
- If you upload/attach a file with comments when you grade, the student to whom you direct the comments will only be able to see that attachment by going back to the Assignment itself. They will not see this in MyGrades. (It would be a good idea, then, to let them know this in a Feedback to user comment.)
- Calculated columns can do more complicated formulas in NG than were possible in Legacy. For example, you can easily have the Grade Book make the grade the average of the two higher scores.
- You may grade while hiding usernames so as to be intentionally unaware of the student’s name.
- Scroll bars sometimes make it appear as though information has disappeared, so keep them in mind. In order to minimize this effect, you can increase the number of rows being displayed. This reduces the scroll bar.
- You can set early warning notifications to be alerted to students who are falling behind.
- Grade Center allows generation of reports.
- You may upload or download your Grade Book to or from Excel by using the “Work offline” button. Use the Grade Book or Excel, whichever environment is most comfortable for you. It is recommended that you download your final Grade Book from HuskyCT as it will help in your submission of grades in PeopleSoft. In NG, the Grade Book contains student admin numbers, which assists in this process.