

### What is Moodle?

- Moodle is a free and open source Course Management System (CMS) similar to Blackboard.
- Instructors will be able to upload syllabi or other course guidelines to the Moodle course, set up assignment submission electronically, organize discussion forums, send emails to the class, and much more.

### Tips to get started:

1. Before the course starts, contact your students and let them know how they can access course resources via the Moodle course management system (see page 10).
2. Don't be afraid to experiment. Feel free to play. It's hard to break anything in a Moodle course, and even if you do, it's usually easy to fix it.
3. Use the **breadcrumb style navigation bar** at the top of each page. It will help remind you where you are and prevent you from getting lost.
4. **Attention:** When you think your course is ready to open to your students, please come back to the Course Setting page and change the **Availability** to "This course is available to students".

### 7-Step Checklist to Set Up Moodle Course:

- \_\_\_ 1. User Profile is up to date (page 8)
- \_\_\_ 2. Course introduction and welcome is complete (page 2).
- \_\_\_ 3. First Weekly topics is set and available to students (page 3).
- \_\_\_ 4. Syllabus and other introductory materials have been uploaded (page 4)
- \_\_\_ 5. Added assignments (if appropriate, page 9)
- \_\_\_ 6. Made the course available to students (page 8)
- \_\_\_ 7. Sent welcome letters to students explaining how to use Moodle (page 10)

### Getting Started: Access Your Moodle Courses

Access the Moodle logon page:

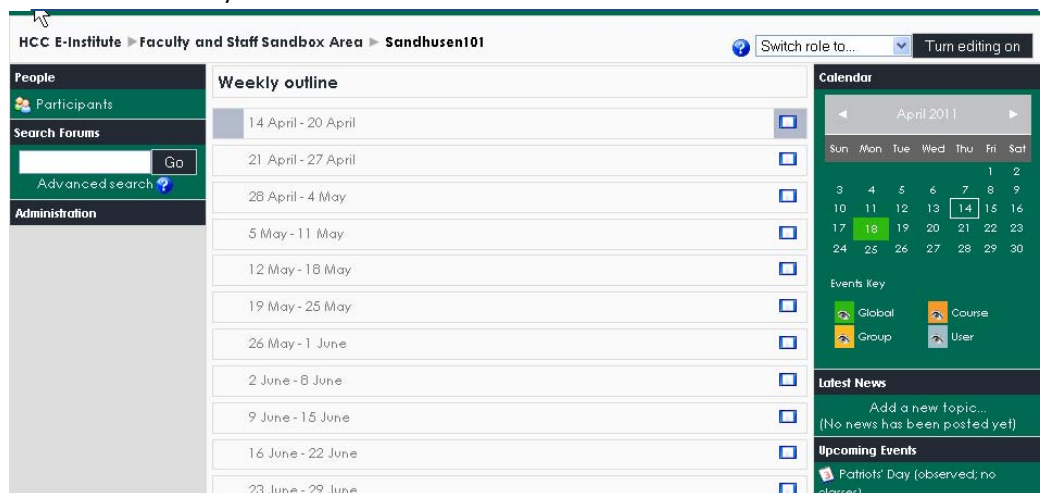
- Go to [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu), select Online Learning
- Go directly to the Development site: <http://holyokedev.mrooms3.net>
- Go directly to the Production site: <http://holyokecc.mrooms3.net>

To log into Moodle:

- Enter your HCC username and password.
- Once you log in, your courses will be listed. Click on the name of any one of your courses to begin the editing process.

### Course Homepage Layout

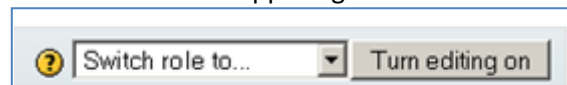
1. When entering a new Moodle course for the first time, the course homepage will be mostly blank.
2. A **Course Template** will be visible offering a breadcrumb style navigation bar at the top, individual block areas on the left and right sides (The default positions of side blocks are provided, you don't need to worry about changing them), and **Weekly Outline** sections in the center to let you add **Course resources and activities**.



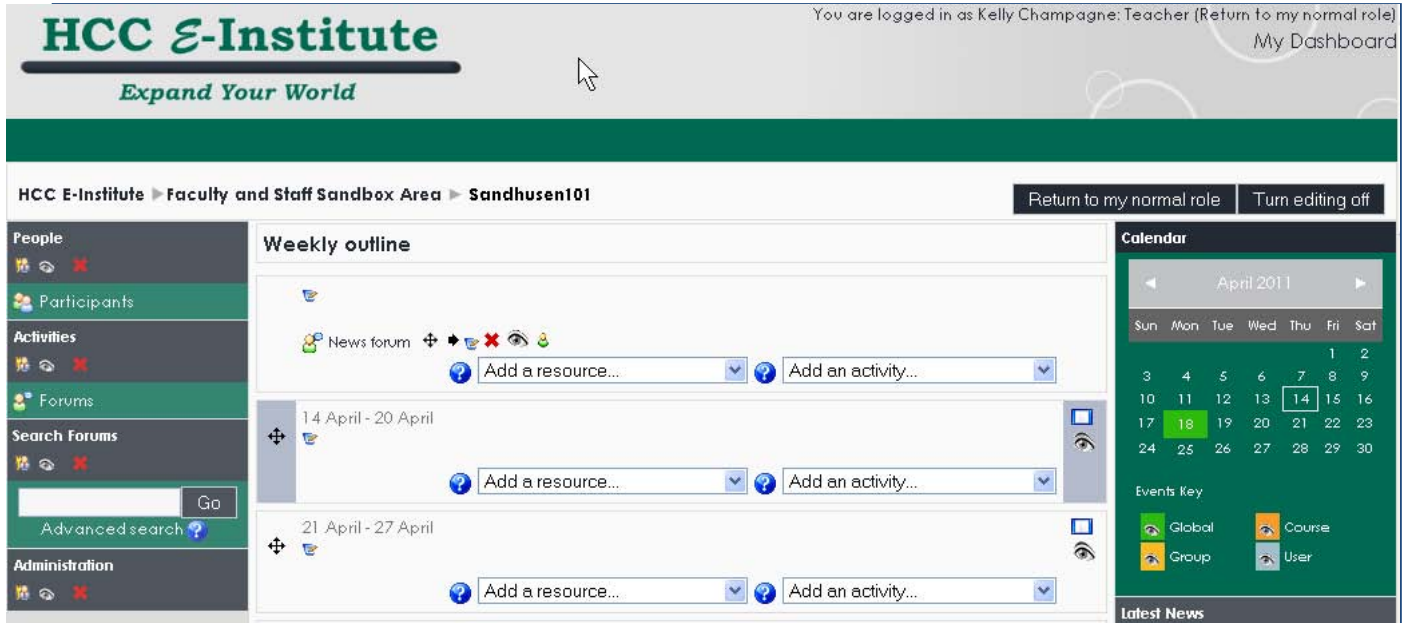
3. You will notice that the top section in the center has a stand-out grey background. This grey section is reserved to put your course introductions and guidelines. We will start here to work on your Moodle course.

### Editing Your Moodle Course Page

To add contents or edit the contents to the course, make the course to the editing mode by clicking on the **Turn edit on** button in the upper right corner of the course homepage.




Your course homepage will enter the editing mode and look differently with some extra icons and dropdown menus. You will use those icons and dropdowns to add, edit, organize, or delete contents.

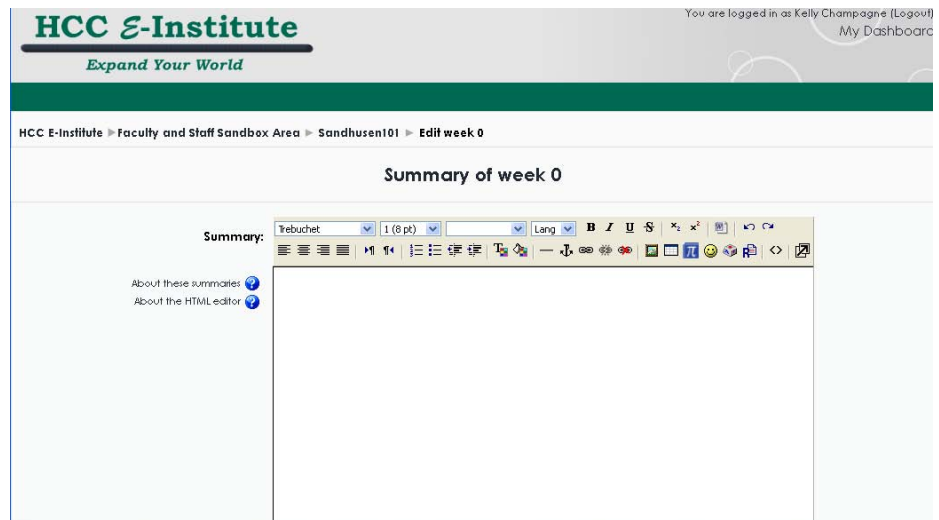


**1. Adding Your Course Introduction**

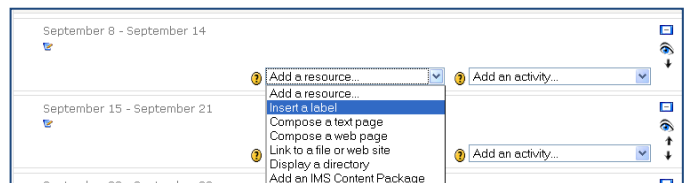
To help your students access general course resources, it is recommended to post your course introductions (descriptions) or other general course resources at the top section of your course. The top section (we call it Week 0) in the center has a stand-out grey background reserved for this purpose.

- At the editing mode, click this  icon (we call it Edit icon) at the top Week 0 section to add your course introduction information from your structuring page on the paper.

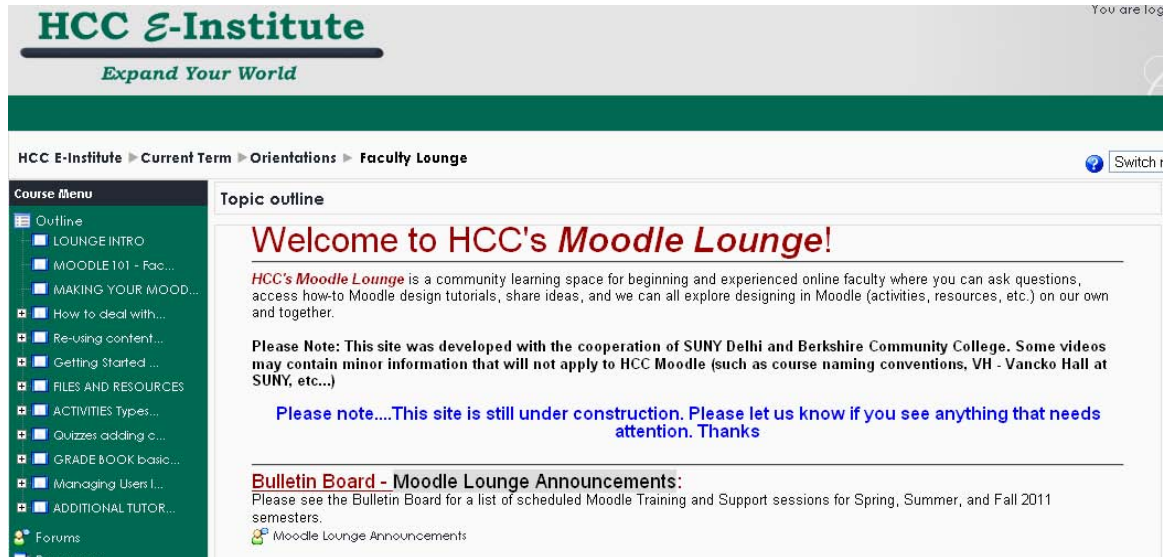
- You will get the "Summary of week 0" page. You can start typing in your course introduction at the summary box, using the html editors to change the font color, size, or do other formatting, and then click on the "Save Changes" button to go back to the course homepage.



- In addition, you can format your week 0 section by inserting a label
  - a. Turn editing on, if you haven't already done so.
  - b. Choose "Insert a label" in the "Add a Resource" drop-down menu on the week 0 section.
  - c. At the "adding a new label" page, use the HTML editor to format your label (different font size, font color, or horizontal line etc.) to break up the text or list of resources.

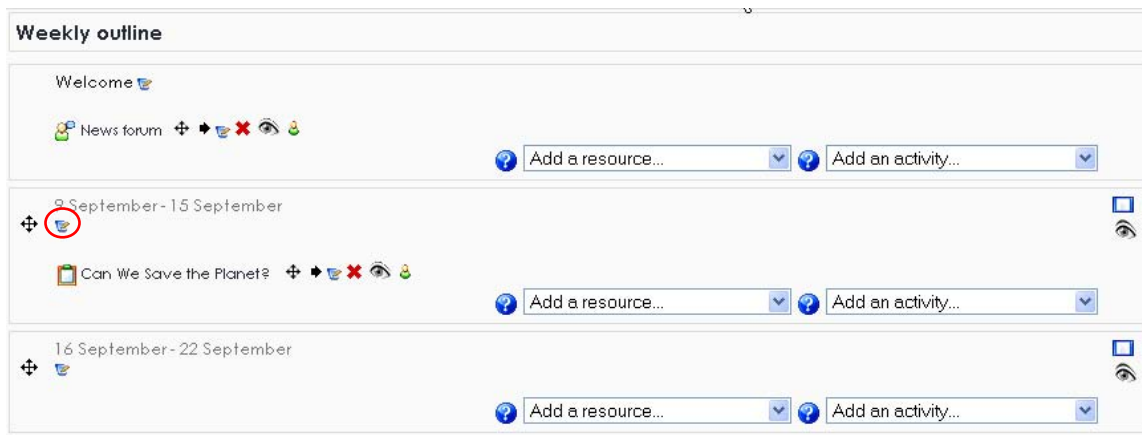



- The next is an example of the Course Introduction section after formatting (we will talk about how to upload your syllabus or course guidelines to the course introduction section soon.)



**2. Adding Your Weekly Topics**

- Use your course outline as a guide to your weekly topics.
- On the course homepage, find the first week section under the grey week 0 section. It will be labeled with starting date and ending date of that week, for example September 8 – September 14, depending on what the first day of your class is.
- If you are still at the editing mode, you will see a similar page like next screen; If you didn't see those extra icons and dropdown menus in each week section, please click on the "Turn editing on" button at the top-right corner again.



- Click the edit icon  again in this week 1 section and start working on your week one topic.
- Same as week 0, you can insert the label and use the html editor to format your topics and make each different part stand out. For example, use different color and font to label different parts.

**Notes:** Please take time to play with the formatting of the week 1 section until you feel satisfied with its look and feel. After you complete the week 1 section, you can use this section as a template for the following weeks so that your students are presented with a consistent format.

- The next screenshot is an example of the week 1 section:

The screenshot shows two sections of a Moodle course. The first section, 'LOUNGE INTRO', contains text about the Moodle Lounge and a resource block for Moodle 101. The second section, 'MOODLE 101 - Faculty Moodle Training Course - ALL Welcome!', contains a link to additional Moodle tutorials. Both sections have a toolbar with icons for adding resources and activities.

### 3. Uploading Course Resources to Moodle

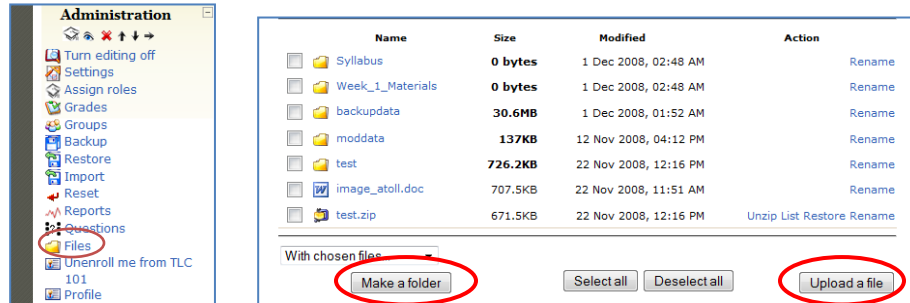
#### A. Resources type:

- You can upload almost any file type to your course, such as web pages, graphics files, audio files, video files, word processing documents, presentations, PDF files, links, or flash animations.
- Recommended file type:
  - PDF – free software that can be downloaded, if necessary
  - Microsoft Word document - if you want to provide a template for students such as a worksheet or assignment.

#### B. File naming: (you may want to share the rules with your students and ask them to follow the same rules to upload their files to Moodle):

- Rule 1: Avoid using special characters in a file name. `\/: * ? " < > | [ ] & $ , .` It shouldn't have any punctuation in the file name, such as commas, apostrophes, etc. If you find your file does not appear in Moodle after it was uploaded, try to remove all punctuation by renaming the file and then try to upload again.
- Rule 2: Use underscores instead of periods or spaces. Periods already have a specific function in a file name, which is to tell the computer program where the file-name extension begins. Spaces are frequently translated in a Web environment to be read as "%20". For example, Naming tutorial.doc would appear as Naming%20tutorial.doc. Because the file will be uploaded and displayed online; this alteration can cause confusion in identifying the actual file name.
- Rule 3: The file name should include all necessary descriptive information, for example:
  - syllabus\_itec305\_fall\_2009.pdf
  - firstname\_lastname\_week1\_assignment\_060209.doc

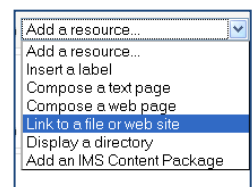
- C. Organize your resource files in an appropriately named folder:** The course materials you prepared can be added to your course by uploading files to the server.
- While your files are on the server, you can move, rename, replace, or delete them. All of these actions can be performed using the **Files** link in your **Administration** block. The Files Repository looks like the following screenshot. The “Files” link is only available to teachers - it is not accessible by students.



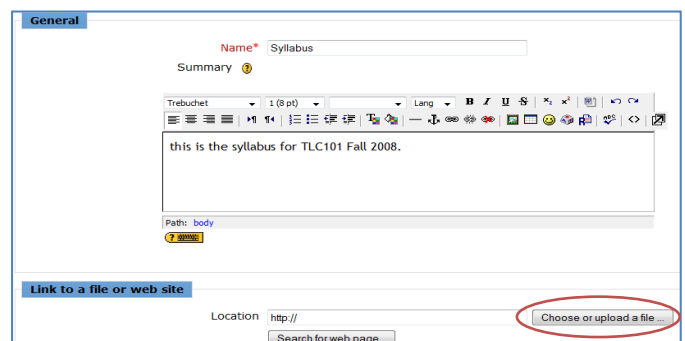
- You can click on “Make a folder” to create a new folder for each week section, and then upload course resources in each week you planned on the paper to each appropriate week folder in the file repository. Remember: if you move resources to a different week, you will need to re-link or move the files accordingly.
- After one folder is created, click the folder name and enter the folder, then click the "Upload a file" button. Hit Browse, locate the file on your computer, and click "Upload this file." You will be returned to the "Files" window. You will find your uploaded file is listing in the folder.
- The files that you upload are still at the backend file repository and not available to your students now. They are made available to students later on as "Resources" when you “Add a resource” at each week section or topic section, either by “link to a file or web site” or “Display a directory”.

**D. Adding your organized resources to Course Introduction section or weekly section**

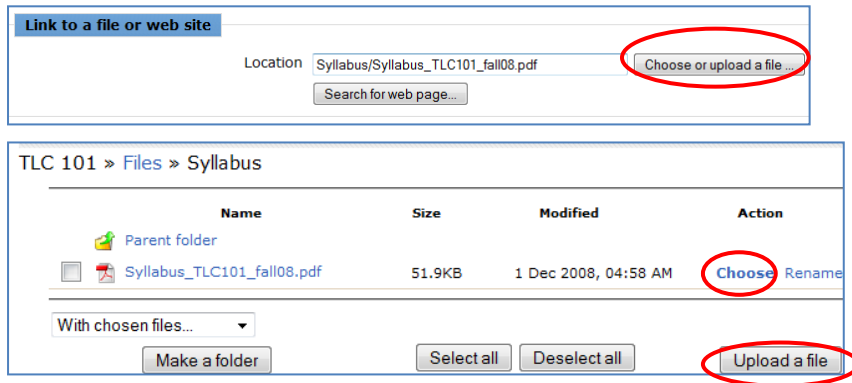
- To add your organized resources in the file repository to your course homepage, turn edit on, go to the Course Introduction week 0 section or desired week section, and select "Link to a file or website" from the "Add a resource" drop-down menu.



- Give your file link a descriptive name. It's best to have a brief summary of the link file for your own reminder. Your students will not see the summary part.



- Click "Choose or upload a file", and locate the file. If the file is in the folder, double click to the folder name to display the names of included files. The screenshot example is showing the file is in the Syllabus folder. Click the "Choose" link next to the file. Then the file's path will show up in the "Location" box.
  - If the file hasn't been uploaded, click the "Upload a file" button to upload the file first and then click the "Choose" link next to the file.



- Then click on "Save and return to course" button to go back to the course homepage.

**Editing/Building Icons and Dropdown Menus**

Moodle has flat and linear navigation, therefore all links to your activities or materials will be posted right on the course homepage, one under another, in the appropriate section for topic or week. To post your activities or materials on your Moodle course, you need to be in the editing mode. In the editing mode, you will be able to see drop-down menus and additional control icons.

1. **Turn editing on** button: To add contents or edit the contents to the course, you have to make the course to the editing mode by clicking on the **Turn edit on** button in the upper right corner of the course homepage.














You can always choose "Student" from "Switch role to" drop-down box to view your course as a student.

2. **Drop-down menus:** Drop-down menus will allow you to add **three** different types of items to the course site: Resources, Activities, and Blocks.
  - **Resources – static course materials** that students read but don't interact with, such as web pages, graphics, Word documents, PowerPoint's, links, short labels , video files, and Adobe Acrobat documents.
  - **Activities – interactive course modules** that you use to interact with your students, such as forums, glossaries, quizzes, assignments, wikis, etc.
  - **Blocks - additional tools** which provide some additional functionality to the site, e.g. calendar, online users, section links, quickmails, etc.



3. **Control icons:** Once you add an item to the course homepage, you will be able to move it to the desired location or modify its appearance, by using the control icons explained below.

-  Edit: click this icon to edit whatever it is next to.
-  Delete: This icon deletes resources and activities (with a warning), whereas it only removes blocks, which can be added at any time later (except HTML block).
-  Help: click this icon to view a popup content sensitive help file about the item.
-  Hide (Opened eye): An open eye indicates that an item is visible to students. Clicking on the icon will hide the items from students when you feel the item is not ready for students to view. Visibility can be also controlled on the Settings page for the individual resource or activity (Common module settings: Visible).
-  Show (Closed eye): If any of your items are hidden, you may unhide them and make them available to students by clicking on this icon.
-  Move up/down: click this icon to move the item up and down in the course.
-  Move left/right (Indent/Outdent): for each resource or activity, click this icon to add or cancel the item's indentation; for each side block, click this icon to move the block to the right or left side.
-  Placeholder: This icon will appear only once you click Move up/down icon. Clicking on Placeholder will move your item to the new location.
-  Highlight: This icon will allow you to highlight the current topic, if your course uses Topic layout (the current week is highlighted automatically).
-  Group mode: Some activities can be done in groups. This icon represents what kind of group mode is currently set for the activity: No groups/ Visible groups/ Separate groups. Group mode can be also controlled on the Settings page for the individual resource or activity (under Common module settings: Group mode)
-  Collapse/Show all sections: This icon will allow you to view only one section (topic or week) at a time. If you choose to collapse, the "Jump to" dropdown menu will appear on the bottom of the course homepage.



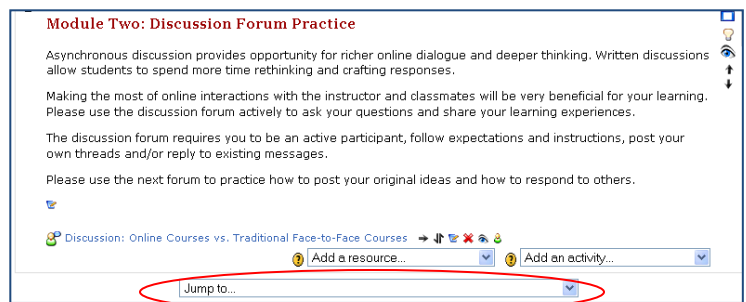
Note that this is an individual setting, and each user has to set it on his/her own.

**Navigation**

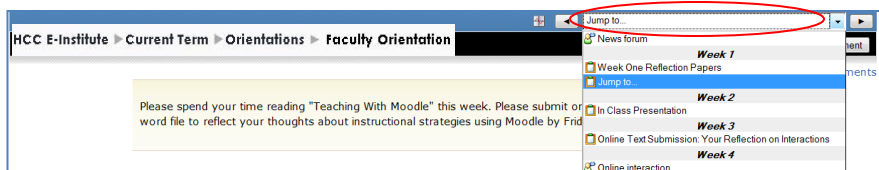
1. **The breadcrumb style navigation bar** at the top of each page will help you know where you are and allow you to go back to the homepage by clicking the course name as you explore different parts of Moodle.



2. **Moving between sections:** If you are under collapse mode and only see one section a time, you can use the "Jump" bar at the bottom of the screen, or the numbers in the "Section Links" block you added on the side to move from section to section.



3. **Moving between course activities:** If you are in the course activity page, use the "Jump" bar at the top right of the screen to move from one exercise to another and bypass the main menu. The small arrows to either side of the jump bar will take you forward or back one exercise.



## User Profiles

Your profile is your identity on HCC's E-Institute. All HCC users can see it, including your students, if they have opportunity to click your name. To access your profile, click on "Participants" link in the People block and then click on your own name, or click on "Profile" link in the Administration block, or anywhere else that your name appears as a link. Your profile will open, showing the information others can see about you. Click the **Edit profile** tab to add introduction about yourself, upload an image, or add/change other pieces of information.

## Course Settings

To adjust your course settings, find the Administration block on your course homepage and click Settings. On the Settings page, you can change a number of settings about your course, from its name to what day it starts. For details about a setting, click the Help icon next to it.

**Format:** The course format you choose will determine the basic layout of your course.

- **WEEKLY** format: organizes the content blocks in seven day increments from the start date to the finish date of the course. Activities and Resources can be arranged according to the week. Most of the courses will use this weekly format.
- **TOPICS** format: is not automatically labeled, and is not restricted to any time limit. Topics can be used to organize material more thematically.

**Number of weeks/topics:** This setting is used by the Weekly and Topics course formats, and determines the number of "boxes" down the middle of the course page. In the Topics format it specifies the number of topics in the course. In the Weekly format it specifies the number of weeks that the course will run, starting from the course starting date and displaying one block for every seven days.

**Availability:** All courses are created with Availability set to "This course is not available to students" so that the course will not appear on any course listings, except to teachers of the course and administrators. When you think your course is ready to open to your students, please come back to the Course Setting page and change the Availability to "**This course is available to students**".

## Advanced Moodle Features

Building a course involves adding course activity modules to the main page in a logical order. You can change the order any time you like.

To turn editing on: click on the button at the top right corner of the page. To add a new activity: go to the desired topic or week section where you want to add the activity, and select the type of activity from the **“Add an activity”** drop down list. Summary of standard Moodle activities:

### Assignment

An assignment is where you set a task with a due date and a maximum grade. Depending on the type of assignment, students will be able to upload one file to satisfy the requirements. After students submit their assignments through Moodle, the instructor can view each uploaded file and then record a grade and a comment.

There are four assignment types in Moodle:

- **Advanced uploading of files:** If you would like to let students submit multiple files or provide their notes along with assignment submission, or you would like to comment on a student's file and also upload the version of the file with your comments, choose “Advanced uploading of files” under Assignment type. This will allow the student to upload a file, which the instructor can then open and grade. In addition the instructor can add comments to the submitted file, save it with a new name, and upload the commented version. Students will then see both their original and your commented version of their file.
- **Online text:** This assignment type asks students to enter text using the normal Moodle editing tools directly. These assignments are graded online with the ability to add inline comments or changes.
- **Upload a single file:** This assignment type is similar to the advanced uploading of files, however, this assignment type only allows students to upload one file without notes. This assignment type also lacks the ability to upload commented files back to the student.
- **Offline activity:** This assignment type can be used to remind students of real-world assignments they need to complete.

### Forum

This activity module is for course discussions. It’s a powerful communication tool.

- The **forum type** is defaulted to “Standard forum for general use” - an open forum where anyone can start a new topic at any time; this is the best general-purpose forum.
- **Subscriptions:** If you decide to force subscription then all course users will be subscribed automatically. It means that all users will be sent email copies of every post in that forum (posts are sent about 30 minutes after the post was first written). Please be careful to choose this option because it may flood everyone’s email box quickly.
- Forums may also be used as graded assignments.

### Quiz

This activity module allows you to design and present quizzes consisting of multiple choices, true-false and short answer questions. Your questions are kept in a categorized database, and can be reused within courses and between courses. This module includes grading facilities.

## Sample Letter to Students

Welcome to (Course) and Welcome to Moodle, a course management tool which will allow us to extend our time together beyond our face to face class meetings. We can use Moodle to post documents, access timelines, and communicate with one another. You may even want to use this tool to collaborate on projects with your classmates. So to begin, you need to follow a few basic steps:

Access to the Moodle logon page can be accomplished by the following:

- Go to [www.hcc.edu](http://www.hcc.edu), select Online Learning
- Go directly to <http://holyokecc.mrooms3.net>

In the center of the HCC E-Institute home page, you will find Moodle Student Guide (offered in text and video) that will give you an understanding of how you can access some really cool features in Moodle.

Remember these two easy steps:

1. Log into Moodle using your HCC username and password.
2. Select our course name which is listed under "My Courses."

To be sure that you have been successful with your logon, here is your first assignment:

Send an message to me using the in-course messaging system and explain to me:

- what you hope to learn from this course (course objectives are located in the syllabus and the course outline discusses assignments and projects);
- what grade you plan to earn;
- what you need to do in order to earn that grade; and
- complete and attach the course survey, which you will find under Course Introduction Assignments (I usually ask students to answer questions that will help me understand how their previous knowledge will inform their experience in this course).

Now even though we have this wonderful online tool, I fully recognize that some of you would prefer additional face time; therefore, don't forget to look for my office hours on the syllabus. I do get lonely and do enjoy a face to face chat whenever possible. :<)

Best wishes for a successful semester at HCC,

Professor \_\_\_\_\_


(SAMPLE)

## Trouble Shooting: Setting up Courses

- **When I try to access HCC E-Institute at <http://holyokecc.mrooms3.net>, the page couldn't be loaded.**



It seemed like there may have been some network related issues going on occasionally. We've had good, dependable performance out of the Moodle server, but we do realize any downtime is an inconvenience. Moodle support team will be notified automatically about the problem at the minute, and will reset the web service to bring Moodle service back to normal. Please try again in a couple of minutes later.
- **My course on Moodle is ready to go, why my students cannot see it?**



Please make sure that you made your course available in Moodle. Go to "Settings" in Administration box and change the Availability field to "This course is available to students".
- **I do not have options to edit my course page, what can I do?**

Be sure to click on "Turn editing on" button either from the upper right corner of your course or the Administration box. Then you will see a small blue icon  (edit icon) besides each week/topic module and each activity (e.g., forum, assignment, resources etc.) that you added into your course. Then you can start editing.
- **Why couldn't I upload the file to my Moodle course?**

Please double check with the file name. When naming your file, avoid using special characters ( / \ \* ? < > & \$ ), space and punctuations ( , ; ; . ). After removing all special characters, space and punctuations, please upload you file again.
- **I uploaded all my resources files in Moodle, how can my students see and download them from my course homepage?**

Although you already uploaded all your resources files in Moodle, it is still at the back-end file repository and not available for your students yet. You need to click on "Add a resource" drop-down box to add either a "link to a file or web site" or "Display a directory" to add your resource file at the week section that you want it to be. After that, your students will be able to locate the file and download it.
- **I added resources and materials for week one, why couldn't students see it?**

In the editing mode, did you notice the opened eye  and closed eye  for your week one? If the eye icon for your week one is a closed eye, that means you hide the week one and your students are not able to see it. Just click the closed eye to make it open.
- **I completed all SIX weeks of my course on Moodle, why can I only see one week's materials and activities from the course home page?**

You might click on the "Collapse sections" icon  in one week/topic section by accident. This icon only allows you to view one section at a time. Just click the "Show all sections" icon  again to show all sections.
- **How can I add or delete extra weeks/topics in my Moodle course?**

You can add or delete extra sections by clicking the "Settings" in Administration box of your course. Change "Number of weeks/topics" to whatever you want it to be.