

WebCT is Here— Maximize the Benefits

By Ellen Holstein



Welcome to WebCT! BLSers are going to notice new and more robust options available to them the next time they enroll in a Guided Independent Study (GIS) course from The University of Iowa. Beginning February, 1, 2005, GIS Web courses will be delivered using the WebCT platform. Benefits include simplified authentication procedures and improved dynamic capabilities—the individualized access to each course allows each student’s course Web site to be uniquely customized.

Simplified authentication procedures:

- Students logging in to WebCT-based courses all log on from a single page: <http://courses.uiowa.edu/>
- Authentication is by Hawk ID and password.
(See <http://continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/ccp/gis/links.htm#services> for details on how to change or reset your password.)
- A single login gives you access to all of your courses; there is no longer a need to remember different passwords for different courses.

Improved dynamic capabilities:

- Instructors may choose to include discussion boards, chat rooms, whiteboards, student homepages, and/or the mail tool in the course Web site.
- Courses that have practice quizzes now have the capability to save student scores and provide enhanced visuals and feedback.

Unique customization:

Since you will use a personal password to access course materials, no one else can access your personal information stored on the site. For instance,

- if you use the mail tool, you can store all of your course-related e-mails and files in your course WebCT site;
- practice quiz scores can be saved;
- personal information can be saved on the calendar,
- if your instructor is giving you access to the gradebook, you can look up your own grades, while being prevented from seeing those of other students.

In This Issue:

WebCT is Here.....	1
Early Registration.....	2
Summer '05 Courses at ISU.....	2
Beginnings: Sue Ann Schuldt.....	2
WebCT tips/Re-Entry/Student Parents.....	3
Significant Dates & Deadlines.....	4

See page 3 for tips on how to make the most of some of WebCT’s features. More tips will be included in future editions of The Beacon.

Early Registration Reminder

Early registration for summer and fall semester-based courses begins the week of April 18. Contact your adviser at least two weeks prior to that date for your registration number. Course listings for Saturday & Evening and daytime classes are tentatively scheduled to be available for student viewing on:

February 17 Summer 2005 session
March 8 Fall 2005 session

Students may view the courses on ISIS at:

<https://login.uiowa.edu/uip/login.page?service=https://isis5.uiowa.edu/isis/>

You do not need to enter a registration number to view the course schedules; just click on *Courses* located on the top bar of the link. Once you reach the course listing site, be sure to select the correct session to view.

Students wishing to enroll in Distance Education courses for summer 2005 may view listings at the Distance Education website: <http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/ccp/de/deoppor.htm> In early April, course listings for fall 2005 will be posted at this same location.

Summer Online Options at Iowa State University

Students interested in completing online semester-based courses may want to check out the following summer offerings at Iowa State University:

Criminal Justice Studies--Introduction to the U.S. Criminal Justice System

Entomology 201--Introduction to Insects

Genetics 308/508--Biotechnology in Agriculture, Food, and Human Health

Horticulture 493B--Workshop in Horticulture: Annual Garden Flowers

Political Science 442X/542X--The Policy and Politics of Coastal Areas

Sociology 241/Criminal Justice Studies 241--Youth and Crime

Sociology 340/Criminal Justice Studies 340--Deviant and Criminal Behavior

For information on enrollment, cost and start date, link to: <http://www.lifelearner.iastate.edu/>

A Story of Beginning

By Sue Ann Schuldt

After more than two decades outside of a classroom I was afraid to finish my college degree. Do I remember how to study? Assignments! And what about tests? Tests were nerve wracking when I was 20 years old. Can I do this? I spent even more time going back and forth in my head thinking about entering the BLS program to get my degree. Beyond fear however was a personal need to complete an unfinished part of my life and, for practical reasons, I was tired of being unqualified for good-paying jobs.

My coursework in the BLS program is just beginning. I have completed my first Guided Independent Study course and am attending an on-campus course. Downloading the GIS course on my home computer was incredibly easy; getting past my fear of learning again was much harder. When I opened the online guide composed by my instructor I literally could not put her words together in a meaningful sentence. I froze. After a few attempts my brain and the words finally connected. I struggled with the lengthy readings in the text too, but with time and patience I got through it. I was so nervous for the first exam, thinking my memory brain cells were dead, I studied for days. The result? I got an A!

My course from the Saturday and Evening Classes Spring schedule presents other challenges. There is a shorter time period to complete work and I'm interacting face-to-face with other students and the instructor. By chance I picked a course where all the students are very young. That first night I felt 100 years old—I'm 49. The only other person close to my age was the instructor. The students have been wonderful though. I found them ready to engage in conversation with me after I made an effort. It's still difficult to participate in class as much as I'd like. I'm shy about expressing my opinions, but each week is an improvement, and I'm fortunate to have a professor who is sensitive to my feelings.

My college education prior to entering the BLS program was three years at the State University in

New York (SUNY) in Plattsburgh where I grew up. My first choice for a major was psychology, then English, and then... I felt lost and dropped out. Maybe I burned out, I'm not sure. My grades were quite good but my ambition was gone.

After a few years of nowhere jobs I moved to Iowa City and hoped to finish my degree, but it never worked out. No longer considered a dependent of my parents, living expenses and bills piled higher and higher, and I again gave up on returning to college. The BLS program was a dream come true. I can earn my degree at a personal and financial pace that fits my life.

Without the help of the Continuing Education Office at the University of Iowa, and my adviser, I would be lost. No

question is "stupid" to office personnel and my advisor went to great lengths to sort through my ancient SUNY college transcript. Health Administration or the Human Services fields most interest me. My goal is to work in a small medical office after graduating, and my BLS degree will enable me to knock on some doors.

Whatever professional area I choose, I believe my degree will make me a valuable employee in businesses I only dreamed about before. The doors are opening.

Continued from page 1

WebCT Tips

#1

Learn how to better manage your GIS coursework in WebCT by following these tips.

Set up your mail forwarding in WebCT by going to Mail/Message Settings. By entering a full e-mail address under Mail Forwarding, all e-mail delivered to you in your WebCT course will have a copy bounced out to your regular e-mail account (uiowa.edu or hotmail.com, etc.) so that you will know about it without having to login to WebCT.

#2

Read the WebCT FAQ for GIS Students to learn more about GIS WebCT courses:

<http://continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/ccp/sos/webct/>

#3

See Getting Started: Information on Software at <http://continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/ccp/sos/webct/programs.htm> if you need help troubleshooting browser or software issues with WebCT or Course Media files.

Returning After 12 Months or More?

Be sure to file a Re-Entry Form

If you are an admitted BLS student and have not taken on-campus classes for over a year, you must file a Re-entry Form if you plan to enroll in either Saturday & Evening or daytime classes. Re-entry students are classified as those undergraduates who have been absent from the University for 12 months or more and who wish to resume study on-campus. You can link to the application site through the Office of Admissions at:

http://www.uiowa.edu/admissions/applications/download/reentry_download.html

A Re-entry Form is not required for students who enroll in only Guided Independent Study (GIS).

Read *The Beacon* Online

The Beacon is now available online. If you would prefer to receive electronic notification when the latest edition becomes available, send an e-mail to diane-debok@uiowa.edu.

For Student Parents: Notify Faculty of Your Parenting Status

Students who have parenting commitments that may interfere with class attendance or course completion should review the following suggestions offered by the Office of the Provost at The University of Iowa:

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/parents/>

Significant Dates for Spring 2005 Term

- March 4 Deadline to apply for graduation in May
- April 4 Last date for undergraduates to drop individual semester based Saturday & Evening and Distance Education courses
- April 18 Last date for undergraduates to withdraw entire semester-based registration
- Summer and Fall term early registration begins**
- May 1 Last date to file for CCP scholarship for summer course
- May 18 Final grades for GIS courses due for May graduates

The BLS Beacon is online at www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/ccp/bls/index.html Would you prefer to receive *The Beacon* electronically instead of by mail? If so, send an e-mail to diane-debok@uiowa.edu.

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If you have questions or would like more information about any of the items you see in *The Beacon*, phone the Center for Credit Programs, toll-free, at 800-272-6430 or direct at (319) 335-2575.

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