



Antioch University
**Academic
Technology
Newsletter**
April 2009



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Academic Technology News

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McGregor's Conflict Analysis & Engagement Program's Uses Sakai Project Sites

It should feel familiar to many of you. Those of you on the **New England Campus**, in the **PhD in Leadership and Change** program, and others across the University who have managed full academic programs within FirstClass over the past 10 years, know the clear value of developing a coherent and cohesive virtual community infrastructure to merge communications and interactions.

We have learned many vital lessons over time:

- A sense of place, belonging, and community can be extended and enhanced — even created — through technology.
- Leadership is essential to the success of such virtual worlds — through philosophic, fiscal, and participatory support.
- Commitment to the community network is essential. The communications and processes must flow accessibly through pipelines we all share and can navigate.

As we move toward a new set of technologies — we have fresh opportunities to extend the reach and impact of these lessons. We will have new tools, such as Sakai, the Portal, and Gmail. These give us additional ways to weave our “knowledge nodes” into enriched virtual networks.

At McGregor, Richard Mcguigan and the Conflict Analysis and Engagement (CAE) program — is demonstrating how to use **Sakai** to create a virtual community foundation, and how to support and evolve its critical program knowledge nodes.

CAE is a distance program that is fully resident in Sakai. The culture includes clear expectations for the use and adaptation of the Sakai environment. Students, faculty, and administrative personnel communicate exclusively through its Discussion Forums, Announcements, or Messages. Information does not go out on paper. No email is generated.

An ongoing goal of the CAE program in Sakai is to make the sites more personal, more interesting, and more dynamic to better engage the users and encourage frequent and active participation.

This approach:

- Saves money.
- Maximizes resources. There is no need for students or instructors to manage multiple technologies or systems.
- Increases touch points with students and faculty. New information can be distributed and accessed every time a member logs in.
- Enhances the sense of community for a distance program. The cohorts each have a personalized space where they “belong.”

Each Student Cohort has a Community Commons:

- Filing Cabinet (Drop box tool) for all paperwork for or from students.
- All forms.
- All communications.
- Frequent updates along with pictures of cohort members.

Core and Adjunct Faculty share a Lounge:

- Department/faculty forms and documentation.
- Syllabus and assessment rubric templates.
- Discussion groups for teaching, areas of concern, areas of interest.

Administrators use a Department site:

- Documentation.
- Discussion board.
- Alerts on current topics.
- Requests for student or faculty support.

And of course,course sites!

For screen-shots of some of the CAE Sakai sites, go to:
<http://www.antioch.edu/at/>



Across the University



Laurie Nalepa

Laurie Nalepa Adjunct – Los Angeles

When I wrote about theory x and theory y, I linked to a great YouTube video that someone in cyberspace created on the topic. Students said it brought my written words and the information from the textbook to life. When I wrote about moral leadership and courage, I was able to find a CNN video clip of Paul Rusesabagina, the real life hero of Hotel Rwanda. I embedded it into the Sakai class website and provided a link to his foundation for students to explore. Other links included leadership book reviews, Wikipedia articles about different people I considered leaders and links to other websites including Oprah's Leadership Academy for Girls. I was even able to use the editor to post some electronic cartoons I bought. All of these appealed to different aspects of a student's learning style and got the students involved.

What are the lessons learned? Teaching a hybrid class is fun and enjoyable. You still get the great interaction that Antioch students are famous for. Sometimes it's in person, sometimes it's in cyberspace. What can be improved? If only there was a 24 hour help desk for instructors. As a night owl, I would often work on my site during the wee hours of the morning. It could be frustrating not being able to call someone immediately for help. But if that's the biggest downside, I can live with it. In fact, I am getting ready for my next hybrid class. This time I think I will use the Sakai system to include an electronic class survey... upload a video I shoot myself... make a clip from TeacherTube available..."

"I recently taught my leadership course as a hybrid class. Five class sessions were in person and five were online. For students and myself, it was the best of both worlds.

Students of course loved the flexibility of not having to be at a certain place at a certain time during a 10-week period. Many of them have jobs and family demands that prevent them from attending every session. Knowing that some class sessions were going to be conducted online was a big relief for them. In fact, it motivated students to make sure they were on time, prepared and ready to discuss the material when we did meet in person.

I too liked the convenience of not having to be in the classroom every session. And I loved having a paperless classroom. I posted my syllabus, lecture notes, my PowerPoint slides, the final project rubric, and other handouts to my Sakai class website. But more importantly, I liked how I could use the features of the Sakai system to capitalize on the technology that is available to make an electronic class dynamic and interactive.

Bill Ratcliffe

Academic Computer Support - Seattle

At the Seattle Campus, Bill Ratcliffe, Tina Dawson, and the library staff are busy exploring a variety of ways to support adjunct faculty and students.

From Bill Ratcliff:

1. **"Support in the Library:** Through the library, I helped students and adjuncts to log into Sakai for the first time. The circulation desk has been helpful to steer people to me.
2. **Saturday Sakai Clinics:** Every Saturday, I make myself available for 2 hours in the computer lab for a Sakai clinic. Current hours are 12-2. This has been one-on-one working with adjuncts to set up classes, get an overview of the basic tools, and learn how to upload a syllabus. No students have attended the clinic yet, but I am optimistic that as we get closer to the start of new courses we will have more participation.
3. **Sakai Booth:** On 4/17 and 4/18, I set up a booth in the lobby with Sakai printouts and laptops. My key goals were to be available to show people Sakai, to help them log in, and to let people know how to manage data in preparation the upcoming switch from First Class.
4. **Posters:** In each restroom, I posted a notice of the imminent switch from First Class with information about the resources available to support the transition to Sakai and other new tools.
5. **Campus-Wide Announcements:** There has been at least one campus-wide announcement so far. It is about time for another one. Our plan is to increase the frequency of these announcements."



Bill Ratcliffe

Tina Dawson, Faculty at Large, offers on-call support, attendance at program and campus-wide orientations. She also schedules regular "Open Sakai" times (2 – 4 hours each) in the computer lab. These are available to students, faculty, and staff.

To see other stories of faculty, staff, and student experiences, go to:
<http://www.antioch.edu/at/>



Wikis – Ideas and Best Practices

Some of you are just getting started with online environments for course enhancement or support. Others are hungry to start adding functionality and opportunity to your course designs. So for the peckish among you, a few ideas about **wikis** upon which to chew:

Best Practices

- **Have a clear goal in mind and create a meaningful focus.** Wikis need to be *about* something to draw attention and interaction. Avoid diffusing the focus. Have one good idea and follow it through.
- **Be clear regarding your intended use.** Is this your notepad? Or is it a truly collaborative space?
- **Put expectations and instructions on your home page.** If students feel comfortable and informed, they are more likely to participate. You might put your expectations in an HTML document that you create using the Editor in Sakai Resources and then link to Site Information. Or, you might make create a 'Wiki Instructions' Announcement. If your students are wiki novices, consider setting up a synchronous walk-through session.
- **Set your wiki in a clear time context.** Are you using it throughout the course? For a specific time-bounded activity? Through multiple courses?
- **Create a solid initial organizational scaffold:** Know what your main pages will be and create them as scaffolding for your students. More can be added over time, but a foundation will keep it coherent, cohesive, and useful. Put in headings and place-holders to model what you are looking for.
- **Get the wiki started for your students.** Put real content in the container to get the ball rolling. Model your expectations.
- **Make it a conscious expectation that your students set up wiki activity notification to their email** as they set themselves up to participate in your course. Add this to your instructions!
- **Assure that you have enough students to justify using a wiki for student interaction.** For a very small class, just like in discussions, wikis end up looking skeletal without a critical mass of participants.
- **Publicly recognize big contributors.** They care. Others are motivated.
- **Review your wiki regularly for activity, currency, and accuracy.** Perhaps use student moderators to take responsibility for this as well.
- **It is all about content.** Encourage information to be added to the wiki regardless of its level of completeness or polish. Content spawns content.

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Wikis – Ideas and Best Practices (continued)

- **Add a Table of Contents** or **Summary pages** if the content grows large.
- **Insist on references.** Monitor for copyright violation.
- **Be patient and encouraging. Consciously create a culture of trust.** Wikis introduce a new element of trust especially given that what is posted can (and will!) be modified by others. Students may feel reluctant to "give away" their best ideas or to open themselves to what they may view as 'criticism.'
- **However - place the focus on content – rather than on social interaction.** Even if there are back-end discussion pages in the wiki, the focus is best kept on the content.
- **Assign clear roles** that support your goals. Ideas: Barnraiser/Greeter/Maintainer/Wiki Master/Annotator/Researcher/Resource Wrangler.
- **Be certain you have a good assessment strategy** (and that students know what it is!).

Ideas

- 1) Collaborative writing: co-creation of a topical materials set
- 2) Sharing personal experiences related to an essential question for the course
- 3) Creating a collection of student-originated resources to support the exploration of a topic
- 4) Posting summaries of the key points from class discussions
- 5) Capturing and sharing individual student insights — linking to recent forum posts — producing a "newsletter" at the end that contains essential ideas explored and developed in the course
- 6) Creating an example set to illustrate a concept
- 7) Posting sign up sheets for synchronous sessions, group membership, project focus...
- 8) Gathering ideas for agendas for synchronous sessions
- 9) Publishing materials with intentional errors and inviting students to review and "fix"
- 10) Posting drafts of student work for peer review
- 11) Brainstorming/problem solving
- 12) Tracking progress for projects or idea development
- 13) Staging individual project presentations in preparation for synchronous or f2f sessions
- 14) Establishing homepages for student groups
- 15) Collaborating on Case studies
- 16) Working on Problem or Project-Based learning experiences

Instructors – if you have additional ideas – be certain to add them in the Discussions Forum within the Instructing With Sakai site. What has worked for you? What do you want to try?

Sources:

- wikipatterns.com
- [Technology Teacher](#)
- [Wikis for Teaching and Learning](#)



May-August 09 Faculty Webinar Schedule

(All times in EST — 1.5 hrs in duration)

Building Your First Course in Antioch Sakai

Tue	5/5/09	4 - 5:30pm
Fri	5/29/09	1 - 2:30pm
Thu	6/11/09	1 - 2:30pm
Wed	6/24/09	4 - 5:30pm
Thu	7/30/09	4 - 5:30pm
Tue	8/4/09	1 - 2:30pm
Mon	8/24/09	1 - 2:30pm
Thu	8/27/09	4 - 5:30pm

The Resources Tool

Tue	5/26/09	1 - 2:30pm
Thu	7/16/09	4 - 5:30pm

The Discussion Forum

Tue	7/14/09	1 - 2:30pm
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The Assignments Tool

Wed	5/13/09	1 - 2:30pm
Wed	7/22/09	1 - 2:30pm

The Editor and Image Management

Fri	8/21/09	1 - 2:30pm
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Sakaitric Help – Your Questions!

Thu	5/21/09	4 - 5:30pm
Tues	6/16/09	4 - 5:30pm
Mon	7/20/09	1 - 2:30pm
Wed	8/19/09	4 - 5:30pm

Teaching and Learning in Sakai Setting Your Goals for Sakai

Thu	5/21/09	1 - 2:30pm
Tues	8/25/09	2 - 3:30pm

Teaching and Learning in Sakai Scaffolding via Course Organization

Fri	5/1/09	1 - 2:30pm
Mon	8/17/09	1 - 3:30pm

Teaching and Learning in Sakai Facilitating Discussions

Wed	6/10/09	3:30 - 5pm
Tues	7/28/09	2 - 3:30pm
Thu	8/27/09	1 - 2:30pm

Teaching and Learning in Sakai Approaches to Collaborative Experiences

Tues	6/30/09	10 - 11:30am
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For descriptions, recordings, or to register:
<http://www.antioch.edu/at/>

We will be using Adobe Connect rather than Elluminate for these Webinars. There are similarities and differences between these tools. Even if you have already attended a Webinar, pay close attention to the login information in your registration confirmation. It will be different! Be certain to log in 30 minutes prior to your session to get set up and ready to go. There may be a few new skills to master.



Creating New Folders in Resources

Whether in **My Workspace**, or in a course or project where you have the right permissions, you can create new Folders to organize your materials.

- (1) Use the **Resources** tool link at the left of the home page.
- (2) Click on the **Add** menu next to any existing folder.



- (3) Select **Create Folders** from the dropdown menu.
- (4) Enter a **Folder Name**.
- (5) Use the **Add Details for this Item** link to set desired special properties for your folder.

Location: My Workspace /

Folder Name [Add details for this item](#) X

[Add Another Folder](#)

- (6) Use the **Add Another Folder** link to add more than one folder at a time.
- (7) Select the **Create Folders Now** button to complete the process.



Student Support at McGregor

Harold Hale, a member of the Academic Technology team providing direct support to the McGregor campus, conducted Sakai training for students in the graduate and undergraduate programs at McGregor in a series of morning and evening sessions that took place from March 28th to the 31st. The training sessions were conducted as part of the preparation for the Spring term at McGregor which begins in April. The training sessions provided the students with a broad overview of Sakai as well as more in-depth training on Discussion Forums and the management of My Workspace. Additional training sessions covering other topics are being contemplated for later in the term.

Bookmark These and Explore!

(note: AU Academic Technology does support or assume responsibility for the following)

<http://www.docx-converter.com/>

(free converter of Word .docx files to .doc format)

<https://www.getdropbox.com/home>

or

<https://www.sugarsync.com/>

(share, store, synch files online)

<https://acrobat.com/>

(Adobe continues to demonstrate quality with an impressive suite of tools. Acrobat 9 is worth the look)

<http://twitter.com/>

(Yes – everyone is jumping on board. Big shrug? Another colossal waste of time? Or...possibilities for quick communication within academic communities?)

http://news.cnet.com/8301-17939_109-10221086-2.html

(Just for fun – National Geographic's infinite photo)

Student training sessions for McGregor look to be a regular feature of Sakai support at the Yellow Springs campus as more and more faculty include blended learning as part of their courses and online course offerings become more numerous.

Need a Sakai Project Site?

Request project sites through our form at <http://www.antioch.edu/at/sakai/siterequestform.html>



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Share your ideas!