

# **GETTING STARTED WITH OWL COURSE MANAGEMENT**



**Online Web Learning**

Cengage Learning  
and  
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

**A Series of Hands-on Activities to Teach You How  
to Manage Your Course Using the OWL Instructor  
Tools**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## What is OWL?

OWL stands for Online Web-based Learning. Basically it is a content presentation and assessment tool. Students log into the system, choose an assignment, read any given information, and then answer questions. The questions are graded automatically by the system, and the scores are reported to the student.

## The History

OWL was developed in the Center for Computer Based Instructional Technology (CCBIT) at the University of Massachusetts. It was created in 1996 in collaboration with the Chemistry department as a web-based replacement for the electronic homework system currently in use. Next, the department of Physics began to use OWL and furthered its development. Since then it has been revised and expanded and now is used by over 20 departments and thousands of students at the University. An additional training component is also used by the University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety for their training and certification programs. In 2001 Harcourt College Publishers (which became Thomson Learning and is now Cengage Learning) began licensing the system for use with their Chemistry textbooks.

## How It Works

OWL can be accessed from any type of computer running a web browser. The information that you author in OWL is saved in a database. There may be one or many databases set-up at your site, and you may have colleagues from your department working in the same database as you. (Each unique combination of institution, department, and textbook has its own database.) As OWL runs, information is obtained from the appropriate database, and then web pages are generated based on that information. Thus, OWL's web pages are dynamic and change as the information in the database changes.

## Organization and Use of This Manual

This is a training manual. It is designed for instructors who will use already created OWL assignments in their courses. Its intent is to help you use the tools that exist for managing a course, but not those for actually creating questions, assignments, and courses. It is not a user manual (the Authoring Manual is available on-line in OWL by pressing the HELP link from an authoring page), but rather a series of hands-on activities to introduce you to various tools in the OWL authoring system. It does not explain everything in the system, but rather gives you an overview to get you started with the tools you'll need. First you'll get onto the system as a student to see what OWL looks like from a student's perspective. Next, you'll learn to get onto the system as an author and use the management tools that will help you to run your course in OWL efficiently.

**Getting Started With OWL - Course Management** is intended to be done sequentially. The exercises are ordered and later ones depend on earlier work. You do not need to go through the whole training in one sitting, but can log out and then log back in later and continue where you were. (All your information is saved in the database in which you are working.)

Each page in the system has a *title bar* and title. There will be a *navigation bar* on the left side of the page. In addition for instructors, there will often be a light gray *command bar* at the top of the page underneath the title.

This training will refer to OWL pages by their title in bold. For example, while managing your course, you'll often be on the **Course Home** page. Below are some examples of the authoring buttons you'll be using consistently throughout the manual.

Buttons look like this:

**Questions**

Command bar items and links look like this: **Edit**

When you are told to type something into the system, the words you are to type will appear like this: `type this now`. Any quote marks should be typed in as they appear. You may also be told to press **Enter**; since keyboards are different, this may be the **Return** key on your system instead.

Often, you will be told to enter a title with your initials when you are creating something. These titles need to be unique across the system. Since other authors may be working in the same database and completing these same tutorial exercises as you, your initials will make the title *unique*, or different from theirs. (You'll also then be able to tell yours from theirs!)

## Before You Get Started

You should have received an email notifying you that you have been added as an instructor to the system and supplying you with some general information. You will need this information before you start working through these exercises. Use the email that you received to make sure that you have the following items.

1. The base URL (web address) for accessing the OWL system.

OWL URL: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Your login and password for getting into the system.

Login: \_\_\_\_\_

Password: \_\_\_\_\_

Now turn this page to continue **Getting Started With OWL**.

# 2 Getting Into OWL

## Previous Training

If you have already done the **Getting Started with OWL – Authoring Training**, you can skip ahead to **Chapter 4 Assignment Setup**. When this training refers to “your course/section,” use the course and section that you used in the Authoring training.

## Instructor Window

All users start from an OWL User login page. When you log in, OWL checks to see if you are a student or an instructor. Students are simply presented with a student window from which they can access their assignments. Instructors are presented with an Instructor View window.

### Logging In

- 1) Start your browser.
- 2) Go to the OWL URL.
- 3) Select your textbook, institution, and department.
- 4) You should see the **OWL User Login** page.
- 5) Enter your *Login*.
- 6) Enter your *Password*.
- 7) Press **LOG IN**

If you have never logged into OWL before, continue below with **First Time Information**. Otherwise, skip ahead to **Course Creation Wizard**.

### First Time Information (only for initial log in)

The first time that you log in, you will be asked to supply your contact information and change your default password to a new one. You can change all of it again later if needed.

- 1) After successfully logging in the first time, you should be on the **Instructor's Contact Information and Password** page.
- 2) Enter your *Current Password*.
- 3) Enter a *New Password*. (Remember this new password because you'll need it the next time you log in to OWL.)
- 4) Enter it again to *Confirm New Password*.
- 5) Edit your *First Name*, *Last Name*, *Email address*, *Telephone Number*, and *Office* as needed.
- 6) Click the **Save Changes** button.
- 7) You are now on the **Welcome to the OWL System** page.

## Course Creation Wizard

You need to have a course to work in to learn the Course Management tools. You'll use the course wizard to create a course for yourself.

- 1) Click on **Course Creation** from the navigation bar at the left.
- 2) Press the **Next** button.
- 3) For the Course Name enter: OWL Training - *your initials*
- 4) Leave sections equal to 1.
- 5) Press the **Next** button.
- 6) Enter the following values for the section information.  
Section = test  
Instructor = *your name*  
Location = n.a.  
Time = n.a.
- 7) Press the **Next** button.
- 8) Change the **Course End Date** to six months from now.
- 9) Press the **Next** button.
- 10) Press the **CONFIRM AND BUILD COURSE** button.
- 11) Click OK to warning that it may take up to a minute.
- 12) You should be on the **Course Home** page.

## Using OWL as a Student

OWL provides an initial course based on the textbook that is associated with the database. You created a copy of this course when you used the course wizard to make your own course.

The course contains one or more introductory or tutorial assignments to ensure that students understand the system before completing any coursework. These assignments are fairly quick and simple, providing students with an overall understanding of how OWL works and a chance to try it out before doing a real assignment.

Before learning any of the course management tools, it is important to log into OWL as a student and, at least, try the introductory assignments.

### Completing the Introductory or Tutorial Assignments

To see things as a student, select the **Student Window** link from the view pull-down underneath the OWL logo. This opens a browser window containing the student view of OWL.

The introductory or tutorial assignments will have different names depending on which textbook you are using. Scroll through the list of assignments to find the introductory or tutorial assignments.

- You may need to click the **Unstarted Assignments** or **Past Due Assignments** tab on the Assignment List page, if you do not see the assignments listed.
- Assignments may be ordered alphabetically. You'll be able to change this to whatever order you want for your class.

- 1) Click on the link for an introductory or a tutorial assignment.
- 2) You are now on the **Unit Menu** page for that assignment.



- Note: At the top of the unit menu page, the student is given specific information such as the name of the assignment, the assignments mode (**Type**), the **Due Date** of the assignment, an overview of their scoring (**Grade**), and the **Status** of work completed.
- 3) In the Unit Menu table, choose the first link.
  - 4) Follow the directions to work through all of the content pages, questions and units in the assignment.
    - Note the **Feedback** offered at the bottom of the page after you submit the answer to a question. The feedback in the tutorial supplies directions for navigating through the tutorial.
  - 5) When you are done with the assignment, click the **Assignment List** link.
  - 6) A course assignment page will appear showing your updated performance on the assignment.
  - 7) Do other introductory or tutorial assignments, if there are any.

### **Returning to the Instructor Tools**

Before you opened the student window, you were in a browser window containing the OWL instructor tools. That window should still be available. Just select that window to return to the instructor tools. (You can close the student window. You can always open it again if you need it.)

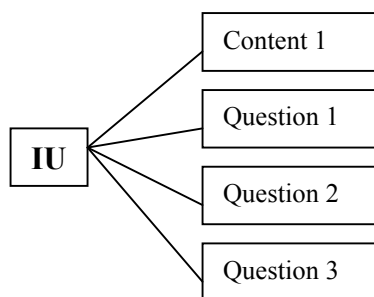
# 3 Assignment Structure

This training will not teach you how to create course material, but it is still important that you understand how that material is organized. To learn how to write questions and create assignments, do the **Getting Started with OWL – Authoring** training. (Those who have already done that training can skip ahead to Chapter 4.)

One of the unique features of OWL is that content and assessment materials are independent entities and are not locked to a particular course as they are in other systems. They are part of a pool of materials that can be used in any course in the database.

## Instructional Units

An **Instructional Unit (IU)** is a group of content material and questions related to the same concept. For example, the possible Instructional Units for an American History course might be divided into such topics as “Heroes of the Revolutionary War” or “The Haymarket Riot”. IUs may contain one or more content pages and one or more questions. When an IU is included in an assignment, either all of the questions or a randomly chosen subset of the questions is presented to the student.



## Instructional Unit Content

**Instructional Unit Content** is presented to a student before any questions in an IU. Content in an IU may appear in the regular OWL window or in a new, separate window. The content may also be *internal* (defined and managed inside of OWL) or *external* (an existing URL).

## Static and Parameterized Questions

**Questions** are the basic assessment entities in OWL. They may be *multiple* or *multiple choice*, *matching*, *true/false* or *short answer/fill in the blank(s)*. Questions are also either static or parameterized. **Static** questions appear exactly the same each time they are presented to the student, while **parameterized** questions vary on each presentation.

Parameterization allows the student to redo the question and get a different version of it with a different answer. (So, they can't do the question, then just redo it and cheat by putting in the correct answer that they just viewed!) Parameterized questions can vary both numbers and text values and answers. Parameterized questions are one of the highlights of the OWL system and enable authors to write one question that contains an infinite number of variations.

## Courses and Sections

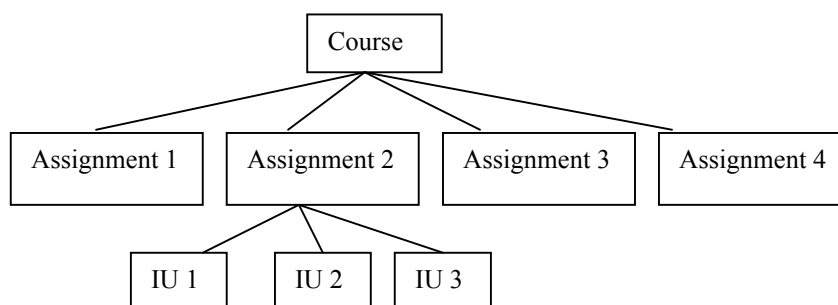
A course has a name, one or more sections, and a curriculum. The set of assignments is the course curriculum.

Sections are the active entities of a course. Students are enrolled in a section of a course, and thus to use a course, it must have *at least* one section.

Course & Section Attributes	
Course Name	must be unique
Section Number	identifies the section
Instructor	name of instructor
Location	building and classroom number
Time	time of day class meets
Announcements	New or edited announcements are shown to students of that section upon login and can optionally be sent to those students with an email address. Announcements are always available to students under <i>Announcements</i> in the student navigation bar.
Message Recipients	enabled instructor(s) who receive the email messages for that section. There must be at least 1 message recipient per section. On section creation the current instructor is set as the message recipient.

## Assignments

An existing course will have a number of assignments defined for it. These are the student assignments that makeup the course curriculum. A group of IUs is associated with an assignment, which inherits all the content and questions in the IUs. IUs are said to be linked to an assignment since they are independent entities and can be used in other courses and assignments in the system. The **Assignment Type** (see below) determines how the questions in the IU will be presented to the student.



Assignment Types – IU Based Assignments	
QuestionPool	subset of questions from IUs are presented and mastery criteria set for each IU
Question	all questions from IUs are presented
Exam	like question mode but with only 1 attempt and no scores, answers, or feedback given to students
Training	QuestionPool mode question presentation with additional training constraints

Assignment Types – Non IU Based Assignments	
External	for 2 <sup>nd</sup> party modules
Survey	an assignment containing only non-graded questions

Tutor	a hand-crafted assignment designed to tutor a specific concept
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## Assignment Settings

The assignment type, along with some other assignment settings, are fixed across all the *sections* of a course. Some section specific assignment settings (see below), on the other hand, may vary from section to section. All settings have default values that are used when *new* sections are created. For example, World Geography 100, Section 1 may vary from World Geography 100, Section 2. Even though they have the same assignments, the sections can have different due dates for assignments, and/or one instructor may wish to limit students to only three attempts at a question, while another instructor may decide not to set a limit at all.

General Assignment Settings	
Name	must be unique within the course
Description	description of the assignment for instructors only
Assignment Type	see list of IU and Non-IU based types
Time Permitted	the amount of time a student has to work on an assignment (can be unlimited)
Allow Question Resubmission	for Question type assignments only, determines if a student can answer the same question again (no new parameters)
Partial Credit	for Question and Exam modes only, determines if partial credit is given for short answer questions with multiple input boxes and for multiple, multiple choice questions
Scoring Type	determines how the score for the assignment will be calculated
Assignment Notes	instructor and student notes for the assignment

Section Specific Assignment Settings	
Start Date	date at which a student can first view the assignment. Authors and instructors may view at any time
Due Date	date at which scores from subsequent attempts of the assignment are not recorded
Number of Attempts Allowed	number of times the question or IU (depending on assignment type) may be attempted (can be unlimited)
Display Feedback	determines if and when the feedback is shown when student checks an answer
Display Answer	determines if and when the correct answer is shown when student checks an answer
Display Hints	determines if and when the hints (if any are defined) are available to students
Requirement Status	indicates if the assignment is required, optional, or extra credit

## IU Settings for QuestionPool Mode

In Question type assignments, all of the questions in the IU are presented to the student, and grades are based on each question individually. In QuestionPool type assignments, a subset of the questions in the IU can be presented to the student, and the idea of mastery is introduced. Thus in this mode, you need to set two IU presentations attributes: Questions to Present and IU Mastery.

IU Presentation Attributes for QuestionPool Mode	
Questions to Present	The <i>Number of Questions to Present</i> value determines how many questions from the IU are shown to the student. Questions are picked randomly from the IU. If the number of questions to present is less than or equal to the number of questions in the IU, no question is repeated. Each time the IU is selected a new set of random questions is chosen.
IU Mastery	The <i>Number Needed for Mastery</i> value determines the number of questions that must be completed correctly <i>in one attempt at the IU</i> to master the IU

# 4 Assignment Setup

## Assignment Setup

The **Assignment Setup** page enables you to get the course assignments ready for your students to use. From there you can do things such as include and exclude assignments and set start and due dates.

- 1) Click on the **Assignment Setup** link in the navigation bar, or click on the **Assignment Tools** link, then choose **Assignment Setup**, then click the **Assignment Setup** tab.
- 2) You should be on the **Assignment Setup** page for your section.
  - If you are not on the correct course and section, click on **Course List** in the navigation bar, click on your section, and then click on **Assignment Setup** again.

## Listing the Assignments in a Course

For an existing course, you can see at a glance all of the assignments in the course's curriculum. For each assignment you can also see its Group (subset of assignment type), the IUs that have been linked to it, and all of the questions in those IUs.

- 1) Click **Assignment List** in the navigation bar or select the Assignment List tab.
- 2) From here you can open any existing folders or select any of the check boxes to change the list's presentation.

## Including and Excluding Assignments

For your section, you can decide which assignments you want to include and which you want to exclude.

- 1) Return to the **Assignment Setup** page using the navigation bar link or page tab.
- 2) Click on folder names to navigate into them, if needed, to see assignments.
- 3) Change the settings for one of the included assignments from Include to Exclude, and then press **Save**.
- 4) Reverse the process to re-include the assignment. You may need to select the check box next to **Show excluded assignments** (above the table of assignments) to see the assignment you just excluded.

## Changing the Start and Due Dates of Assignments

Remember that for some settings a section can have different values from other sections. Let's first change the start and due dates of some of the assignments in your section.

- 1) Find the input boxes for the *Start Date / Start Time* and the *Due Date / Due Time* for each assignment.
- 2) For the first assignment, change the start date to sometime in the past and the due date to one day from now.
- 3) For the second assignment, change the start date to sometime in the future.
- 4) Press the **Save** button.

## Verifying the Changes to Start and Due Dates as a Student

- 1) Choose **Student Window** from the pull-down list. If you are not in your OWL Training course, click **My Courses**, then select your OWL Training course from the list of courses.
- 2) Click **Assignment List**. The student assignment lists should reflect the changes that you made to the start and due dates. The first assignment should be listed on the **Current Course Assignments** page. The third assignment should be listed on the **Unstarted Course Assignments** page.
  - Unstarted assignments are only displayed for authors in the student view. Regular students would not even get a link to access this list.

## Sending a Message as a Student

For later use, report a message from one of the question pages.

- 1) In the **Student Window**, go to one of the questions in any assignment.
- 2) Choose **Send Message** from the navigation bar.
- 3) A new window opens with the **Send a Message to Instructor/TA** page.
- 4) Type a message.
- 5) Press **Submit Message** (You may have to scroll down the window to find this.)
  - The message is logged to the database, and email is sent to the message recipient(s).
- 6) You'll see the **Message Submitted** page confirming that your message has been sent.
- 7) Press **Close Window**
- 8) You should be back in the main student window.

## Using the Assignment Viewer

**Assignment Setup** is useful when you already know which assignments you want your students to use. But, you may need to view the contents of assignments before making include/exclude, requirement, and date decisions. The **Assignment Viewer** lets you see the contents of an assignment and set values for its most important settings all in one place.

- 1) Close the student window and return to the instructor window, **Assignment Setup** or **Assignment List** page.
- 2) Click on the assignment name of any assignment.
- 3) You should be on the **Assignment Viewer** page with the selected assignment highlighted on the left and its contents shown on the right.
- 4) On the left side of the page, click on another assignment. The page should refresh, with the new selected assignment highlighted and its contents shown on the right.
  - You may need to click the triangle symbol to open a folder or click the **Show excluded items** check box to get to the assignment that you want to view.
- 5) On the right side of the page, you can include/exclude the assignment, change its requirement (Required, Optional, Extra Credit), and modify its start and due dates. Depending on the assignment's type, you'll also be able to include exclude questions, change question point values, and modify IU settings.

- 6) When you are ready to save any changes and before selecting another assignment, press one of the **Save** **Assignment Settings** buttons.

➤ Note that include/exclude question applies to **all** sections of a course as do question points values, which are only available for Question and Exam mode assignments.

## The Assignment Management Page

There are some assignment settings which you cannot modify using the **Assignment Viewer**. The **Assignment Management** page provides you with all kinds of assignment tools including the ability to edit all of the assignment settings. You can also change the content of an assignment by linking, unlinking, and ordering IUs. We will only look at a few of these options. You can explore the rest on your own.

### Changing the General Assignment Settings

Remember that some assignment settings apply to all sections of a course. Let's change the time permitted on an assignment.

- 1) From the **Assignment Viewer**, select an IU-based assignment (Mastery or MasteryPool groups.)
- 2) Click on the pencil icon next to the assignment's name link near the top right of the page. This should take you to the **Assignment Management** page.
- 3) Under the **Edit Assignment Values** heading, click on the **Assignment Settings** link.
- 4) You are now on the **Edit Assignment Settings** page.
- 5) Under the **Edit General Assignment Settings** heading, change the **Time Permitted** to 5 (all times shown are in minutes).
- 6) Press the **Save General Assignment Settings** button to save your changes.
- 7) Test the assignment in the student window to see the effects of your changes.

### Changing the Assignment Settings for the Section

Some settings can be applied to just a particular section. Let's change the requirement status on the assignment.

- 1) From the **Assignment Management** page, under the **Edit Assignment Values** heading, click on the **Assignment Settings** link.
- 2) You are now on the **Edit Assignment Settings** page.
- 3) Under the heading, **Edit Section Specific Assignment Settings**, change the **Requirement Status** to *Extra Credit*.
- 4) Under the heading, **Current Section Specific Settings**, select to the appropriate **Apply to** checkbox to apply the change to your section.
- 5) Press **Save Section Specific Assignment Settings**
- 6) You are again on the **Assignment Management** page.
- 7) Test the assignment in the student window to see the effects of your changes.

## Assignment Groups

Assignments may be organized into groups. A group must have assignments all of the same type, but there may be more than one group for any assignment type. Groups enable you to quickly and easily view and edit the assignment settings for all the assignments in the group.

- 1) From **Assignment Setup**, click the **Edit by assignment group** link or use **Assignment tools | Assignment Groups**.
- 2) You are now on the **Assignment Groups: Group Settings** page.
- 3) Click on one of the groups listed that is of assignment type QuestionPool.
- 4) Notice the list of assignments in the group.
- 5) Click on **Edit Assignment Settings** in the gray command bar at the top of the page.
- 6) Set the Value for Display Feedback to “Never”.
- 7) Press **Update** in the Display Feedback row.
- 8) Look at the table of assignments at the bottom of the page to see the change that you just made.

# 5 Course Home

## Course Home

The **Course Home** page provides you with all the tools that you need to run your course in OWL.

- 1) Click on the **Course Home** link in the navigation bar.
- 2) You should be on the **Course Home** page for your section.
  - If you are not on your section of the course, you can choose another section from the drop-down list near the top of the page. If you are not on the correct course, click on **Course List** in the navigation bar, and then click on your section.

## Announcements

Section announcements are shown to students the first time that they log on and then only on subsequent logins if the announcements have been updated. Students may always access the announcements by clicking on the **Announcements** link from their navigation bar.

- 1) Click on the **edit** link next to **Announcements**.
- 2) The **Announcements** page includes a text box containing the current announcements, with a preview below it.
- 3) Edit the text of the announcements.
- 4) Press **Update Announcements**.
  - If you click on the box labeled *Send email to students on update* before you update the announcements, then all students with a valid email address will be sent the announcements in addition to viewing them when logging in.
- 5) Check the **Preview of Announcements** at the bottom of the page.



## Rostering

Once your course has been set-up, students will be able to roster themselves into it using an access code. You cannot add students to your course unless they've already rostered themselves into another course in the database.

## Enrollment

- 1) Go to the **Course Home** page for your section.
- 2) Click on the **view roster** link.
- 3) You should be on the **Section Enrollment** page.
  - You should just see yourself. Once your students roster themselves, you will be able to see all the students enrolled in your section.

## Student Information

The **Student Information** page is the central location for accessing all tools related to an individual student: viewing and updating the student's information, viewing and modifying the student's enrolment, giving due date extensions, and checking the student's progress and grades.

You can change a student's Email or Phone. If a student has forgotten his/her password, tell the student to use the button on the login page to have the login and password sent in email.

- 1) On the **Section Enrollment** page for your section, under the **Instructors Rostered as Students** heading, find your name.
- 2) Click on the link for your name.
- 3) You are now on the **Student Information** page.

## Student Search

Above you got to the **Student Information** page from the enrollment list of a section. There are times when you want to access a student's information and aren't on the **Section Enrollment** page for a section the student is in or you don't know what section a student is in. You can use the **Student Search** tool instead to find the student.

## Progress Information

*If you have not already done so, you may want to complete some of the exercises in your training course assignments so that you have assignment data available to examine in the following exercises. You may want to try multiple attempts for a question and intentionally answering some questions incorrectly so that you can see how this affects the progress information. Choose **Student Window** from the drop-down menu under the OWL logo to see and complete assignments as a student.*

Progress information contains *all* the raw data about a student's activity in OWL assignments. It can be used to verify grades and students' claims about wrong or missing scores. The information is presented in 4 categories, as it is stored in the database.

Progress Information Categories	
Session Progress	A session begins when a student selects an assignment on which to work and ends when he/she returns to the assignment menu.

IU Mastery Progress (QuestionPool Mode only)	An IU mastery entry is made when the student exits an IU by returning to the unit or assignment menu.
IU Attempts (QuestionPool Mode only)	An IU attempt is made when the student selects an IU from the unit menu.
Question Progress	Each time a question is attempted the score and time are recorded.

- 1) From the **View Student Information** page, under the heading **Student's Current Enrollment**, press the '?' in the row for your section.
- 2) You are now on the **Student Course Progress** page.
  - This page includes a combination of the assignment pages just as the student sees them.
- 3) Choose an assignment from the Mastery group. (Choose **Geographic Sites – Question** if you did the Authoring training.)
- 4) You are now on the **Student's Assignment Progress** page.
  - Examine your sessions and question progress information.
- 5) Press the **Student's Assignment Sessions** link in the command bar. This page shows the sessions for all assignments.
- 6) Press the **Students's Course Progress** link in the command bar.
- 7) Next choose an assignment from the MasteryPool group. (Choose **Geographic Sites – QuestionPool** if you did the Authoring training.) If no MasteryPool assignments are shown, you may need to change assignment dates to include additional assignments in the list.
- 8) You are on the **Student Assignment Progress** page.
  - Examine your information again, especially the Attempt Score and Attempt Number which are only available for this type of assignment.

## Managing Extensions

The due date that is set for an assignment applies to all students. You have the option of granting an individual student a due date extension on an assignment.

### Granting a Due Date Extension

- 1) Press your name link under **Student Name** near the top of the page.
- 2) You are now back on your **Student Information** page.
- 3) Extensions apply to an *individual* student for a *particular* assignment. To give an extension to all of the students in a section, just change the due date for the assignment.
  - **Warning:** Granting a lot of extensions to individual students will significantly slow down the grading tool.
- 4) Press '...' in the row for your section.
- 5) You are now on the **Edit Student's Extensions** page.
- 6) For one of the assignments, enter an **Extension** date 2 days past the current due date.
- 7) Press the **Update Extensions** button at the bottom of the page.

You can view all of the extensions that you've given to students in a section and then navigate to edit or delete them.

## Viewing the Current Extensions for a Section

- 1) Click on the **Current Extensions** link in the command bar near the top of the page.
- 2) You are now on the **All Existing Section Extensions** page for your section.
  - The extension that you just gave yourself should appear.

Note that you can also access your section's extensions from the **Course Home** page.

## Assignment Reports

Assignment reports enable you to see at a glance how your students are doing on assignments.

- 1) Click the **Assignment List** link in the navigation bar at the left side of the window.
- 2) In the **Report** column next to one of the assignments that is in the Homework Pool group, click on the Report icon.
  - If available, click on icon in the row of the Geographical Sites – QuestionPool Assignment, or choose another assignment of type QuestionPool.
- 3) You should now be on the **Assignment Details Report** page.
- 4) Look at the report to see what information is available.

## Grades

There are a number of components to grading in OWL. You can generate a grade report showing students' scores on OWL assignments. You can display grades for work done outside of OWL using the Gradebook. And if there are manually graded questions in your OWL assignments, you can assign scores to them.

### Getting Student Grades for OWL Assignments

The student grade report will generate grades for each student for all selected assignments.

- 1) Press the **Student Score Report** link on the navigation bar at the left of the instructor window.
- 2) You should be on the **Student Score Report** page for your section.
- 3) Use the **Filter report by due date and by requirement status** section to pick a set of assignments.
- 4) Press the **Generate Report** button.
  - Note: There are two *Generate Report* buttons. Pressing either one produces the same results. Multiple buttons prevent the user from having to scroll up and down when there are long assignment lists.
- 5) You should now see the grades for each student. A Grand Total as well as grades for each assignment are shown. In addition, the last header row shows the highest value possible for the grade in each column. Color shading helps to highlight students with low grades.

### Controlling the Grade Data Output

You can customize the data supplied in the report. You can control how the grades are calculated, and what grades are shown in the report.

Grade Options	
Ignore Assignment Due Date	Calculate the grades as if all selected assignments were not yet due. All work done up to the present is counted.

Ignore Assignment Attempt Limits	If any selected assignments have attempt limits, calculate the grades as if all assignments were set to unlimited attempts.
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Content Options	
Order by Due Date	Use due date or assignment ordering.
Show folder totals.	For all selected assignments that are in a common folder, include a column for each folder's assignment grade total.
Show assignment scores.	Include a column showing the score for each assignment.
Show Number of Assignments Mastered	Include an extra column in the report that displays the total number of selected assignments that reached the grade mastery level.

Once the report is generated, you have a variety of output options.

Output Options	
Print report	A printer-friendly version of the current browser display.
Download Text	Generate the output as a tab delimited text file. The file extension will be .tsv, and it may need to be changed to .txt to for use in other programs.
Download Excel	Generate the output as a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet file.

- 1) From the grades results page, click on the **Change report options and update report** link.
- 2) That section of the page expands to reveal the grade and content options.
- 3) Make any desired changes and press the **Generate Report** button.
- 4) The grade results page refreshes to include the options you have selected.

You can also specifically select what assignments you want included in the report.

- 1) From the grades results page, click on the **Change report options and update report** link.
- 2) When that section of the page expands, click on the **Select Folders/Assignments for Report** link.
- 3) Navigate the assignment list (using the triangle to open any folders) and click the Include check box to select the folders and/or assignments to be included in the report.
- 4) Press either **Generate Report** button to display the grade report with the current settings.

## OWL Gradebook

The OWL Gradebook enables you to save scores for work done outside of OWL. This gives you a secure way to supply students with their grades on non-OWL course work. Each student only sees his/her own scores on each outside assignment. The Gradebook allows you to create assignments for which each student is given a grade. The assignments are grouped into Categories (exams, essays, labs, etc.) to help organize them, and if you are giving numerical grades, OWL can display category sub-totals along with an all category total score.

The Gradebook also allows you to show grade totals of selected OWL assignments. Since the students' assignment lists only show the grade for each individual assignment, using the Gradebook is a good way to show students how they are doing overall on the OWL work.

## Adding Grades for Work Done Outside of OWL

- 1) Press the **Gradebook** link on the navigation bar at the left of the instructor window.

- 2) On the Command Bar at the top of the page, click on **Add New Category**. (If you are starting a new Gradebook, click **Set Up Gradebook**.)
- 3) For *Category Name*, enter Exams.
- 4) Leave the other settings as they are.
- 5) Press the **Save New Category** button to create the category.
- 6) OWL displays the **Course Gradebook: Add Gradebook Item to Category** page..
- 7) For *Gradebook Item Name*, enter Midterm.
- 8) For *Maximum Score*, enter A.
- 9) For *Value to be Used in Reports for Missing Grade*, enter F.
- 10) Press the **Save Gradebook Item** button to create the assignment.
- 11) You should be on the **Edit Gradebook: Edit Gradebook Item Scores** page for the Midterm assignment.
- 12) From here you can add the grades and optional student and instructor comments for each enrolled student by either filling in the form on the page or by using the **Upload / Download Scores** link and using grades saved in a text file.
- 13) Click on the **Exams** link and then the **Add New Item** link and then repeat steps 7-10 to add an assignment named Final to the Exams category.

## Manually Graded Questions

If you've added manually graded questions to your assignments, you need to view your students' answers and assign scores to them. The OWL Manual Grade tool enables you to conveniently choose whether you want to grade a single question across all students before moving on to the next question or whether you want to grade all of a single student's answers before moving on to the next student.

- 1) Press the **Reports List** link on the navigation bar at the left of the instructor window.
- 2) You should be on the **Reports List** page for your section.
- 3) Click **Advanced Grade and Report Tools**.
- 4) Click **Manually grade assignments**.
- 5) The **Select Assignments for Manual Grading** page will list assignments that contain one or more manually graded questions, and for each, it will indicate if there are questions that still need grades entered for them. You simply select an assignment, then a student, and finally a question. You'll enter the score and any comments, and then you'll be able to choose where you want to navigate to next.

## Student Messages

### Message Recipients

Message recipients are those instructors who receive the email notices that a student has submitted a message. You automatically become the message recipient when you create a section. You can add another person as a recipient (like your TA), or change recipients so that you don't have to view the email messages! Changes to recipients can be accessed on the **Course Home** page from the Manage Sections pull-down list.

## Responding to Messages

When a student submits a message, email is sent to the section's message recipient(s) alerting them that a new message is in the database. The message tool allows you to respond to the student's message. The response is shown to the student the next time the student logs into OWL or anytime the student clicks on **View Messages** from the student navigation bar.

## Responding to a Reported Message

- 1) Press the **Course Home** link on the navigation bar at the left side of the authoring window.
- 2) Click on the **current messages** link next to Inbox on the right side of the page.
- 3) You are now on the **Student Messages: Current Message List** page.
- 4) Click the message number link in the # column for the message that you reported.
- 5) You are now on the **Student Messages: View/Respond to Message** page.
- 6) Under **Response, Notes, and Status**, choose (●)Archived for **Set status**.
  - This will indicate that you have responded to the message and expect to be done dealing with it.
- 7) In the **Response for User (displayed on login and in contents of user's email):** text box, enter: It was covered in class. (or some such message)
- 8) In the **Notes (Included in email to Message Recipients, Tech Support, and Additional Recipients)** text box, enter: Maybe this question is too obscure.
- 9) Press the **Send Email and/or Update Record** button.
- 10) You are now on the **Student Messages: Current Message List** page.
  - Note that the message is no longer listed because you archived it.

## Sending Email about Reported Messages

You can update a current or archived message as often as you like. In addition to the student viewing the message response through OWL, you can also choose to send the response in email.

Email Destination Choices and Content	
To User	Email is sent to the user who sent the message. <i>User's email address</i> cannot be empty. Email contains the last entry in <b>Response for User</b> .
To Message Recipients	Email is sent to the section's message recipients. Email contains the message's history ( <b>Response for User</b> and <b>Notes</b> ).
To Tech Support	Email is sent to technical support. Email contains the message's history ( <b>Response for User</b> and <b>Notes</b> ).
To Additional Recipients	Email is sent to the addresses provided. Email contains the message's history ( <b>Response for User</b> and <b>Notes</b> ).

Let's respond to the message again, and send email this time.

- 1) Select the **Archived Messages** link in the command bar.
- 2) You are on the **Student Messages: Archived Message List** page.
- 3) Select the message number link in the # column for the message that you sent.
- 4) You are on the **Student Messages: View/Respond to Message** page.

- 5) Scroll to the bottom of the page and note the **History:** for the entry.
- 6) Check the box for **Email To:** User
- 7) Check the box for **Email Response/Notes To:** Message Recipients.
- 8) In the **Response for User** text box, enter: Oops, I forgot to mention that...
- 9) In the **Notes** text box, enter: Shouldn't we change the question to...
- 10) Press the **Send Email and/or Update Record** button.
  - The next time you check your email you'll get the response sent to you as a student, as well as the version you'll receive as a message recipient.

## Saved Message Responses

Sometimes you find that you are typing the same response over and over again. OWL allows you to save responses for quick reuse on common FAQ's that you receive from students. Let's create a saved response and see how it works.

- 1) Start at the **Student Messages: View/Respond to Message** page.
- 2) Click the **Manage Responses** link in the command bar.
- 3) You are on the **Message Response Editor** page.
- 4) Click the **New** link in the command bar.
- 5) For *Description* enter: snow storm – your initials .
- 6) For *Response* enter: Because of the snow storm, the due date has been extended by one day .
- 7) Press the **Save New Entry** button.
- 8) Press the arrow in the **Use This Response** column next to the **snow storm – your initials** response description entry.
- 9) You are now back on the **Student Messages: View/Respond to Message** page.
  - Notice the contents of the **Response for User** box. You can now send this response as if you had just typed it in.

## Where to Go From Here

That's it for your tour of OWL course management. If you'd like to learn how to write questions and create assignments, all of that and more is covered in **Getting Started with OWL – Authoring**.

Besides the things that are covered in these two **Getting Started** training manuals, there are loads of features and links that we haven't described to you. These include:

- using HTML in questions
- IU description fields
- use of integers
- conditional feedback for all but short answer question types
- ordering questions, content, and IUs
- manually graded questions
- using clickers (classroom response systems) in OWL

The best thing to do is to start exploring and experimenting in OWL. Best of luck and happy OWLing!

# 6 Appendices

## Appendix 1 – OWL Question and Question Pool Mode Comparison

	<u>Question</u>	<u>QuestionPool</u>
<b>Questions &amp; Content</b>		
<i>Question Presentation</i>	presents all questions in all IUs	presents subset of questions from IU (can be all)
<i>Question Ordering</i>	can set the question order	questions are presented randomly
<i>Content Only IUs</i>	can use content only IUs	cannot use content only IUs
<b>Navigation</b>		
<i>Navigation Bar</i>	shows content pages and questions in all IUs	shows only the content pages and questions in the IU
<i>Ease of Use</i>	navigation is straight-forward	navigation can be confusing - students always need to return to the Unit Menu
<i>Redo Wrong Answer</i>	redo by question	can redo an entire IU, but not a single question
<i>Limited Attempts</i>	can limit the number of attempts for each question	can limit the number of attempts at each IU
<b>Grading</b>		
<i>Partial Credit</i>	available for multiple-multiple choice, matching and multi-input box short answer questions	not available
<i>Mastery</i>	no mastery scoring available	need to set number of questions that must get right to master each IU
<i>Scores</i>	assignment score is number of correct questions or pass/fail (100%)	assignment score is either mastery of all IUs, or # of IUs mastered, or # of correct questions



## **Appendix 2 – OWL Instructor Guidelines**

### **Registration**

Students use an access code provided with their textbooks to register for OWL. Access codes can also be purchased separately. Make sure that your OWL course is set-up (Course Wizard) before students try to register. The last step in the registration process involves students selecting the specific OWL course for which they need to be rostered.

### **Grading**

OWL can be made optional or can be required as part of a student's grade in a course. We've found that when made optional, its use is quite limited. If it does count towards a student's grade, we suggest that it not be worth more than 15%. Somewhere in the 5-15% range is enough incentive for students to do their OWL work to better their grade, but makes it not so important that it promotes cheating.

### **Student Handouts**

A student handout that explains how to register using the access code and how to use OWL is available on the **Getting Started with OWL** page.

### **Assignments**

Student introductory assignments are supplied with each OWL textbook database. Make sure to assign the introductory assignments as your students' first assignments and make sure to count them for credit. Their due date should be before any of your regular OWL assignments. This helps to insure that students can log in and that they learn to use the system *before* they are required to do any real work. Leaving at least a few days between the due date of the introductory assignments and first regular assignment will also help you to work out any student registration problems.