What's New in Bb9
By Dick Evans

RIC is making the move to Bb9 over the next year and it will be worthwhile to do so. Although BB9 is designed to work a bit differently than WebCT, the benefits of this new online learning system definitely outweigh the effort one may need to put in to cross over.

Bb9 has a migration tool which will take a WebCT course and get the material over to Bb9 with minimal effort. However, as the course setup in Bb9 is different than WebCT, the screens will look different once the course has migrated.

For example here is a screen print of my WebCT homepage and on the next page one created from the migration tool for Bb9:
The Migrated Page

Same material, one long column of times, lost images from WebCT
As you can see, the look and feel of Bb9 is very different from WebCT. It is not designed to look like or work the same. And the way the students interact is much different.

Because the old courses may not work quite as well in Bb9 when migrated over, a better approach is to build the course from scratch using the materials from WebCT. By doing so, we remove a layer of learning for both the student and the instructor.

**Building a Course in Bb9 vs. WebCT**

In WebCT the course was built as individual modules such as:

- Assignments
- Quizzes
- Content

The student would go to the assignment page to locate the work to be done for week 1. Then they would head over to quizzes to find the quiz for week 1. Next they might go to a content page to read supporting material for week 1. Perhaps there was another place to find the lecture notes or a slide deck for week 1. In short, organization was by type of content.

In Bb9, a content module allows the course to be organized around the chapter or week. All material having to do with week 1 would be located in the same place. When the class is on week 1, they will see the lecture notes, supporting materials, assignments, quizzes, etc.

The above screen shot shows the Course Work page. It is like the Homepage in WebCT and has links to other areas within the course.
Clicking on Week 1 in Course Work opens the Week 1 page giving the student access to all material needed for week 1. In this sample they have access to a pdf of the introduction lecture, an assignment called About Me, and a Quiz for week 1.

Scott Badger has created a RIC Basic Template for Bb9. It is similar to the starting template for WebCT with pre-done items in the Course Menu. This book outlines building a new course using that template and then explains how to build your course by modifying the course created using the template.

The above Bb9 screen shots were taken from a sample course using that template.