

Vista Student Orientation

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Ron Connor and I am the Instructional Technology Support Specialist for the School of Nursing at Georgia Southern University. In the upcoming tutorials, we are going to cover the Technology Requirements for your course, Logging on, Overview of the My WebCT page, Navigating your course, Using Email, Using Chat, Using the Discussion Tool, Submitting an Assignment, Taking an Assessment, and finally Viewing your grades.

Technology Requirements:

Before you log into your course you should check your browser to make sure that you can access all of the content and functionality of WebCT Vista.

1. Go to <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/etc/webct/students>
2. Click on the "Browser Checker" link.

The "Browser Check" will determine what browser (and browser version) you are using to access the course, and will show you whether or not you have Java installed.

If you are a Windows user you should be using Internet Explorer 6 , Netscape 7.2 (Netscape 8 does not work with Vista) or Firefox.

If you are a Macintosh user you should be using Netscape 7.2 or Firefox. Safari is not yet compatible with Vista.

Java is necessary to access features of Vista including Chat and narrated PowerPoints. If the "Browser Check" shows that you are using Microsoft's version of Java, you will need to download Java.

Other software may be required to access content in your course such as:

- QuickTime (audio/video player)
- Real Player (audio/video player)
- Flash (audio/video player)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (view documents created in .pdf format)

All the software described can be downloaded from the WebCT page. Under WebCT Students, click on WebCT Downloads. Here you will see a list of all the software that can be downloaded.

The Vista Student Orientation Video can be found at:

http://chhs.georgiasouthern.edu/nursing/vista_student_orientation/index.htm

It is recommended that students taking an online course have a broadband connection such as DSL or cable modem. Some content (such as videos) in your course will not work with a dial-up connection

Logging on

To access your WebCT course you must first login.

1. Go to the Georgia Southern University's home page at <http://www.georgiasouthern.edu>
2. Click on the WebCT link located in the upper right corner of the Georgia Southern University home page.
3. Enter your User name and Password and click "OK." You should have received your user name and password during your "Wings" orientation. If you have forgotten your password just scroll down and click on "Click here if you have forgotten your password."
4. You are now logged into My.GeorgiaSouthern.edu. Click on the link titled "Click Here to Access Your WebCT Account."

Overview of the My WebCT page:

The My WebCT page is composed of several items including: Calendar Day, To Do List, Course List, Personal Bookmarks, Campus Bookmarks, Campus Announcements, and Calendar Week. Any of the items with the pencil icon can be edited

- Calendar Day: A place where you can enter calendar information for upcoming events.
- To Do List: Create your own "to do" list.
- Course List: A list of courses that you have registered for.
- Personal Bookmarks: Add your own bookmarks such as Google, etc.
- Campus Bookmarks: These are quick links to Wings, the University Home Page, Library Resources, and the Student Handbook.
- Campus Announcements: Campus news and events
- Calendar Week: Your personal calendar in a weekly view.

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Navigating your course:

After you click the course title on your My WebCT page, you will enter your course home page. The **Course Home Page** and **Course Toolbar** provide the links to all of the content in the course. The specific tools displayed within the home page area and toolbar will vary from course to course, depending on the specific requirements of your course and the design of the course by your instructor.

The **Home Page** is where the individual components of your course are organized and presented. The home page may contain components, such as a syllabus, learning modules, individual content files, specific discussion topics, quizzes, and assignments. Click on the icon on the home page to access the content.

The **Course Toolbar** is located in the upper right corner of the page, and contains links to the main page of a tool such as "My Grades." From the main page of a tool, students can access any of the available components released in that tool.

Some tools are only available on the Course Toolbar. For example, Announcements, Mail, and Calendar are only accessible from the toolbar and not from the home page or other organizer pages. Each course may have a different set of tools displayed on the course toolbar, depending on how your instructor has set up the course.

What is a Learning Module?

A Learning Module is a collection of related content grouped together in one module. Your instructor may organize the course content by modules, topics, or chapters, and use the Learning Module tool to present the components of that unit of content to you. A learning module might consist of narrated PowerPoint's, PowerPoint handouts, case studies, assignments, quizzes, discussions, or chat sessions.

The Learning Module will open to a page with two frames of information. The left frame contains a table of contents - a list of hyperlinks to each page or tool contained in the module. The right frame will display the selected content.

Above the content frame is a toolbar that contains the **Action Menu**. The Action Menu is used for navigating forward and backward through the pages of content using the left and right arrows. Also located on the Action Menu are the Add Bookmark and Add Notes icons. When you add a bookmark or a note it will be displayed on your My WebCT page.

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Using Email:

The Mail tool in Vista is an email program limited to use within a specific online course and cannot be used to exchange messages with external mail accounts over the Internet. You cannot send an email from an external email account to your Vista mail account, nor can you send mail from one course to another. It is designed for course communication. The Mail tool is located on the Course Toolbar and includes features common to most standard email programs, including

- Compose messages with carbon copy or blind carbon copy
- Add a priority indicator to messages
- Add attachments to messages
- Search, compile, and organize messages into folders

Managing Mail Folders

The Mail tool provides a single page on which you can view and manage folders and all of your messages. Folders are listed in the left frame of the Mail view. The number in parentheses is the total number of messages in that folder. The number outside the parentheses is the number of unread messages in that folder.

Viewing Message List

Messages are viewed by clicking on the message title in the Subject column. Unread messages appear in bold and are indicated with a closed envelope icon to the left of the message title. Messages that have been read appear in a lighter typeface and are indicated with an open envelope icon to the left of the message title

When replying to or forwarding a message, the Compose Message window opens and you can edit any of the fields (see the "Compose Message" section below for details).

Composing a New Message

As with most email programs, you can send messages to one or more recipients. Click the Compose Message button above or below your list of mail messages and enter the desired information in the boxes provided.

You can add text attributes, such as bold, italics, and underline, as well as images, hyperlinks, and tables. And, before you send, you can spell-check your text.

You can also add attachments, preview your message before sending, or save your message as a draft to edit later.

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Using the Discussion Board:

The Discussions tool provides asynchronous communication between instructors and students. Users do not need to be online at the same time to communicate.

The Discussion Tool may appear as an icon on the Home Page, Course Toolbar, or within a Learning Module, and provides access to the full discussion board and a view of all categories and topics at once.

Discussions may be divided into topics that help to organize the communication. Topics can be related to a module, topic, chapter or a specific question.

Discussion messages can be threaded—threads are a series of replies to the same subject, allowing users to more easily follow a discussion from start to finish. The plus (+) sign next to the topic indicates that replies have been posted for that topic. To view the replies just click on the plus (+) sign.

With Discussions you can:

- Read the discussion by clicking on the topic.
- Reply to a topic by clicking on the “Reply” button, entering a message, and clicking on the “Post” button. Note: You can also add attachments.
- Post a new message/topic by clicking on the “Create message” button, enter a subject title, and follow the same steps as replying to a message.
- Sort messages by Subject, Author, or Date
- Mark messages as unread to view them later

Please note that some courses grade students on class participation.

Using Chat:

The Chat tool allows you to communicate in real-time with other users in the course. You can use Chat to engage in real-time conversations with all users or selected users.

The Chat tool can be accessed in your course in different locations depending on how your instructor has the course setup. It may be on the Home Page, Course Toolbar, or within a Module.

Starting a Chat session

The Vista Student Orientation Video can be found at:
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- Click on the “Chat” icon in your course. This will bring you to the chat room. Here you can see how many participants are inside and the type of chat room.
- Click on the “Chat” icon on the left to enter the chat room (you may see “Chat room loading... Please wait”).

If you have a popup blocker enabled you will have to disable the popup blocker to enter the chat room.

Disabling Internet Explorer’s popup blocker:

- On the Internet Explorer’s tool bar click on Tools, Popup Blocker, and then “Turn off Popup Blocker.”

Send messages to all users in the room

1. From the Chat room, in the text box at the bottom of the screen, type your message. Important: Pressing the Enter key on your keyboard sends the message.
2. Click Send. Your message appears in the Chat window where all users in the room can see it.

Sending URLs

You can send URLs to all users in the room.

1. From the Chat room, click Send URL. The Send URL pop-up window appears.
2. In the text box, enter the URL, including http://. To enter more than one URL, separate each URL with a semicolon and a space. Example:
http://www.webct.com
3. Click Send. The URL appears in your Chat window where all users in the room can see it.

Submitting an Assignment:

The Assignments tool in Vista allows you to manage, submit, and publish your assignment files online.

Your assignment submissions can be text, text with attachments, or web pages, depending on how the assignment has been designed by your instructor. The Assignments tools allows you to

- Create and edit web page submissions
- Create and edit text with attachments submissions
- Publish submissions for your class to view

You may access your Assignments as a link on the Course Toolbar. This link will provide access to a list of all assignments that are released or available to you in the course.

Specific assignments may be available as an icon on the Course Home Page or other Organizer page in your course or as a link directly from within a Learning Module, where the assignment instructions will appear within the framework of the module.

Viewing your Assignments

The Assignments tool is divided into four tabs:

- Inbox
- Submitted
- Graded
- Published

The **Inbox** tab contains assignments that you have been assigned and submissions that have been returned to you for editing. Note that Missed assignments are automatically moved to the Submitted tab when the final cutoff date has passed.

The **Submitted** tab contains assignments that you have submitted, resubmitted, or missed the cutoff date, but have not yet been graded

The **Graded** tab contains all of the submissions that have been reviewed by your instructor. The assignments have been graded or marked as completed (but without a grade).

The **Published** tab contains all submissions that you or your instructor decide to make viewable to all members of the course. If you have been given the option to publish, you can publish, republish, or unpublish your submission from the Inbox, Submitted, and Graded tabs.

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Submitting your Assignment

1. Click the link to your assignment (either from the Assignments Inbox or its link on an organizer page or within a learning module). The Edit Submission screen appears (figure 9). You may type plain text in the Submission box or attach your file to the submission.
2. To upload your assignment as an attachment, first click the Browse button.
3. Click the My Computer icon. This will allow you to locate a file on your computer to upload. Please note that the first time during a Vista session that you want to choose a file, it may take several seconds for the My Computer icon to appear (loading the java applet).
4. The Open files window will appear and you should locate the assignment file that you want to attach. Click the filename once to select it and then click the Open button to start loading your file. If your file is large, this may take a few seconds, depending on your connection speed. You will notice a Java window open up temporarily, indicating that the file is loading. This window will close automatically. Do not click Close unless you want to abort the upload process.
5. Next, your file will now appear in the Choose Files window. Mark the checkbox next to the filename and click the Add Selected button to attach your file. Your file is now listed in the Attachments section in your Submission window.
6. Click the Submit button to complete the assignment submission.
 - You can add/remove files as you need before submitting. Once you click the Submit button, you cannot redo your assignment unless your instructor has specifically allowed for resubmissions.
 - The Save as Draft option allows you to save your work before the final submission. By saving as a draft, you can come back to the assignment and make changes as needed.

Taking a Quiz/Exam:

The Assessments tool in Vista is used to deliver tests, quizzes, exams, and surveys to online students.

There are three types of assessments:

- Quizzes - online tests for which grades are assigned

The Vista Student Orientation Video can be found at:

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- Surveys - anonymous online tests for which no grades are assigned
- Self tests/Practice tests - assessments for which you receive a grade but the grade is not recorded in the grade book. They are basically practice exercises that allow you to test your knowledge and understanding of the content.

Assessments can be presented in different ways by your instructor, so exam formats may vary from course to course or even within the same course.

- Some assessments are only available on certain dates, while other tests may have unlimited availability. You may also be able to submit more than one attempt for an assessment, depending on the conditions setup by your instructor.
- Some assessments have a time limit, while others may allow for an unlimited amount of time. Most instructors will set time limits for quizzes or exams that are graded. Self-tests or survey will usually have no time limits imposed.
- Questions within the assessment may be set to appear all at once, or one at a time depending on how your instructor set it up. You may or may not have the option to revisit a question after you have saved an answer. Your instructor will typically provide this information in advance so that you know what format to expect.
- Grade information can also be presented in various formats. You may be able to receive your grade immediately upon completing your exam, or you may have to wait until your instructor has released the grade.

You may access your Assessments as a link on the Course Toolbar. This link will provide access to a list of all assessments that are released or available to you in the course.

Specific assessments may be available as an icon on the Course Home Page or other Organizer page in your course, or as a link directly from within a Learning Module.

Taking the Quiz/Exam

Locate your assessment on the Assessments page. Review the posted date and time for your exam.

1. Click the link to your assessment. The quiz information page appears.

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2. Review the Instructions and Troubleshooting information before starting the quiz. It will provide general information about the quiz and some troubleshooting tips with regard to your browser and java.
3. Click the Begin Assessment button when you are ready to start the quiz. The quiz window will appear. Note the time you started, the time allotted, and the time remaining will be visible in the upper right of your quiz window. Remember that you must save your answers. Note: The status for all questions will be displayed on the right.
4. When you have finished answering all of the questions, click the Finish button at either the top or bottom of the page.
5. After clicking the Finish button, you will receive a confirmation message asking if "you are sure you want to submit your assessment?" If you are sure, click OK.
6. A page will display confirming your quiz/exam has been submitted. Click the View Results button to auto-grade the quiz/exam and view your results.
7. Your quiz/exam results page will be displayed. Specific details (e.g., questions, correct answers, etc.) may or may not be displayed for your quiz/exam depending on the settings your instructor has applied. At the minimum, you will see your score, provided your instructor has finished grading (i.e., paragraph-style questions) and has released the grades.

Your quiz/exam is complete. You can review your attempt and scores from the main assessments page any time after completing the quiz/exam.

Viewing your grades:

The My Grades screen displays all grades that have been released by your instructor. The My Grades icon and link will be accessible from your Course Toolbar.

Click the My Grades icon. The My Grades screen appears displaying your course and section number, as well as a listing of grades. Only grades that have been released by your instructor will appear on this page.