

Sakai 2.7 at URI

Performance Enhancements:

The speed and performance of the system overall was improved. You should notice faster processing times, especially in the following tools: Forums, Gradebook, Messages, Resources and Tests & Quizzes.

WYSIWYG enhancement:

A new movie plug-in for Sakai's text editor (the FCK Editor) lets users insert movies (.swf files)

Permissions:

Fuller descriptions of permissions have been added (making permissions easier to understand for end users).

New Sakai Tool: Profile 2

Profile2 replaces the Profile tool. It offers Facebook-style social networking functionality and integration with Twitter. With this tool, users may:

- Search for and request “connections”, similar to Facebook’s “friends”, with other users in Sakai, in order to share profile information. They may also choose to accept or decline connection requests from other users.
- Add a variety of personal information — such as favorite books, movies, TV shows, and quotes — in addition to basic and academic information. Users may also search for other profiles with similar personal information, to find users with common interests.
- Post Twitter-style status updates for their profiles; if they have Twitter accounts, they may also opt to have status updates in Profile2 posted on their Twitter home pages.
- Select a variety of privacy settings to specify what parts of their profile may be seen, and by which users.
- Access other profiles in the “My Connections” section, by clicking on the connection image
- Upload pictures from the user’s local computer to display in the Roster tool.

New Features/Enhancements by Tool

Announcements

- Email notification of an announcement includes the name of the group for which access has been selected.
- Preview of an announcement includes the name of the group for which access has been selected.

Assignments

- Instructors have enhanced “download all” options similar to the options listed in “upload all”.
- Sakai displays “upload all” choices according to the submission type selected for the assignment.
- Instructors can now send a notification email to students when grades are released.

Calendar

Site owners may select “Set as Default View” any of the selections in the “View” menu

Sakai now displays the associated site for each event in the Calendar Summary section of the Home page or My Workspace page.

Discussions and Private Messages (JForums 2.8.1)

- Instructors may grade by Category, in addition to grading by Forum and Topic. Instructors can send the category grades to the Gradebook or the Gradebook2 tool. (Note – Gradebook2 works in tandem with the original Gradebook tool; both must be installed. You can HIDE the Gradebook tool to students from Site Info → Page Order link).
- Instructors may select the “Send to Gradebook” option when creating or editing a forum or topic.
- Email notifications for new topics or private messages will now include the user who sent/posted in the “From:” field.
- The “Delete” button has been added to the top of the Private Messages page.
- A “grading home” button has been added, so instructors may quickly return to the main grading page when grading topics.
- Users may preview private messages, new posts and replies before sending/posting.
- 'Special access' in JForums. Allows instructors to change the access dates of a forum for one or more students.
- Added Synoptic tool for JForums in Home Page. Recent activity (new posts or private messages) is listed and takes you directly to recent topics and your in-box.
- Implemented open and due dates (with lock on due date option) in Categories.
- Added "high priority" notification option to Private Messaging. Overrides user's notification preference.
- Added ability to release scores and comments to students selectively or
- Release all evaluated posts at once.
- Added support for Facebook and Twitter under "My Profile" and on users' posts.
- Revised the user interface under “Manage” to allow instructors to set the dates of forums from one view.
- Swapped behavior from "Mark Topic As Read" to "Mark Topic As Unread." If opened, topics are marked as read automatically.

Drop Box

Instructors may now specify whether students have the option to send email notifications when they make submissions.

The icon indicating recent changes to a drop box is now included in the label description next to the navigator button (dropdown menu).

Forums (Original Forums tool)

- Forums may be pre-populated with a default forum and topic.
- Users may link directly to specific messages.
- Detailed summary view incorporated.
- Option added to automatically mark all messages in a thread or topic as “Read: after the user has displayed them.
- Users have option to receive email notification when new posts are added to forums.
- Threads can be sorted by the most recent activity first and by unread threads.
- Instructors may view all postings for a given student.

Gradebook

- Sakai will now look in Resources as well as a user's computer when importing grades.
- Class average can be displayed with decimals (up to two decimal places) instead of whole numbers.
- Tools can now return the lowest possible grade for a given gradebook item.
- **Sorting of Gradebook items is now available.**

Gradebook/ Gradebook 2 and OMR Grading

- An additional .csv file will be provided for the faculty who use the “OMR Grading” service. With minor modification of the .csv file (such as changing the test title from ‘Scores’ to faculty’s choice); faculty can import the .csv file to Gradebook or Gradebook 2.

Messages

- Added a “To” column in the SENT messages box.

Polls

- The Results page “Votes” column is sortable, if you click on the column header.

Resources

- More fine-grained control of the permissions. Instructors can set permissions by site or by groups.

Site Info

- Can view groups, with their members, within the main page of the Site Editor.
- Instructors can now edit the site alias (the specific URL Sakai gives to your course) to make it easier to remember.
- Printable version of the participant list in PDF format.
- Link to Parent Site

Tests & Quizzes (Samigo 2.8)

- Integration with Respondus allows instructors to import Respondus assessments directly into the tool.
- A new feedback option lets instructors opt to release assessment scores but not questions for the assessment.
- An instructor may enter a zero score for an unsubmitted assessment.
- Students have the option to use the rich text editor when answering short essay questions. The character limit for answers has been increased to 60,000 characters.
- For shared pools with multiple levels of sub-pools, instructors now have access to all sub-pool levels.
- Improved "linear access" navigation for assessments, so that a student who returns to an incomplete assessment will get taken to the last question that was being answered.

Features list compiled by Charlene Yang.