

Softchalk Overview

SoftChalk is an easy-to-use software tool for creating interactive web content that can be published directly into Blackboard. With SoftChalk you can easily add engaging features to your course web pages, including: pop-up notes and annotations, in-line comprehension testing, interactive games and tools, without having to understand HTML. The content you create can be easily imported into Blackboard, or published to any Web server. SoftChalk is free for any VCU instructor.

By the end of this session you should be able to:

- Download & install SoftChalk on your own computer
- Understand the basic functions and tools within Softchalk
- Create a simple lesson in the SoftChalk editor
- Select a style sheet to customize your lesson
- Create multiple pages and incorporate a Table of Contents
- Import images
- Use TextPoppers and QuizPoppers
- Create Sidebars
- Provide students with links and resources
- Create assessment opportunities
- Describe SoftChalk Activities
- Package a lesson for delivery on the web
- Incorporate a SoftChalk lesson into a Blackboard class

Key Questions

- What is SoftChalk?
- How can I use SoftChalk be to meet my teaching and learning objectives?
- How can I build on and enhance existing lesson content?
- How can I create interactive learning opportunities?
- How can I enhance a Blackboard course with lessons built in SoftChalk?
- How may VCU faculty acquire SoftChalk?

Introduction

- Introduction of participants
- Introduction to SoftChalk
- Instructor will demonstrate one or two example SoftChalk lessons and highlight some of the features
- VCU faculty participants will learn how to acquire SoftChalk

Activities (Hands-on)

- Create a new lesson and save the file
- Explore settings
- Select a layout style and incorporate a title bar on the lesson
- Learn to work in the WYSIWIG editor by copying & pasting existing content
- Identify key areas of your course material for access by links in a “Sidebar”
- Add an image
- Add a “TextPopper”
- Add a “QuizPopper”
- Create a hyperlink from a word such as “Monticello” to a website which provides related information
- Add a second “Sidebar” labeled “More Resources”. Enter a title such as Biographies of U.S. Presidents and link to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents>
- Add a Self Check Quiz
- Divide the lesson into multiple pages
- Add activities
 - Labeling
 - Hot Spot
 - Crossword Puzzle
- Instructor will demonstrate how to package a lesson in html format and upload that into Blackboard

Q and A

- Opportunity to review what we have covered and address any specific concerns.

Resources

- SoftChalk Home, <http://softchalk.com/>
- Sample Lessons created with SoftChalk, http://softchalk.com/lb_examples.html
- Quick Tour Videos, http://softchalk.com/lb_demo3.html
- Planning Effective Lesson Content <http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/lessons>
- Designing Dynamic Online Lessons with Multimedia Representations <http://tinyurl.com/33pvn26>

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