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Course Web Sites - Getting Ready for Fall 2009

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Course Websites at Chicago-Kent

Faculty can take advantage of three kinds of websites:

Basic websites
http://www.kentlaw.edu/faculty/classes.html/

Basic websites are static web pages. These sites are created by Vince and maintained by the faculty assistants.

Features:
- Post course information, syllabus, reading assignments, student work
- Available to the public
- Part of the Chicago-Kent website

Disadvantages
- Not interactive
- Requires technical knowledge for faculty to maintain themselves

Blackboard
IIT: http://blackboard.iit.edu or http://my.iit.edu. Use your myIIT login information to sign in
Lexis: www.lexisnexis.com/lawschool/

The Blackboard course management system is offered by IIT and Lexis. IIT Blackboard sites are created automatically; faculty do not need to request the sites. Lexis sites can be created by our Lexis representative.

Blackboard sites can be maintained by Vince and the faculty administrative assistants. To request that Vince or another assistant be given access to an IIT site, contact Emily Barney (ebarney@kentlaw.edu). To request assistant access to a Lexis site, contact Jonnell Simpson (jonnell.simpson@lexisnexis.com).

Features
- Easily post documents in folders - no technical knowledge required
- Students rosters for the site are automatically created and updated (IIT only)
- Online course calendar
- Online assignment drop box
- Interactive discussion board

Disadvantages
- Must load student information manually (Lexis - send roster to Jonnell)
- No electronic sign-up sheet
- Does not include any features specifically designed for law schools
- Not visible to the public

Getting Started for the Fall: Building Faculty Course Websites
June 22, 2009
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TWEN

TWEN is Westlaw’s course management system for law schools. Sites can be created by our Westlaw representative.

Vince and the faculty administrative assistants can help faculty maintain TWEN sites. To request that Vince or another assistant be granted access to a TWEN site, contact Stacey Acquavella (stacey.acquavella@thomsonreuters.com).

Features
- Easily post documents in folders – no technical knowledge required
- Online course calendar
- Automatically link to CALI lessons
- Online class polling
- Interactive discussion forums
- Online assignment drop box
- Electronic sign-up sheet
- Easy to include other faculty

Disadvantages
- Must load student information manually (send roster to Stacey)
- West branding
- Not visible to the public

Expanding Website Content

Most course websites include:
- Basic class information (location, time, office location, and office hours)
- Syllabus
- Reading assignments

These provide great core content, but the more information featured in course websites, the more students get out of them. Consider adding:

- Current awareness information
  All three kinds of websites can include links to blogs, news stories, and other current information.

- Library resources
  Add links to library guides, tutorials, electronic resources, CALI lessons, past exams, and even articles in library databases. The Library’s website includes a section describing available services: http://library.kentlaw.edu/Using/Services/facultycourses.htm

- Interactive content
  The Blackboard and TWEN sites provide tools for students to work with faculty and each other outside of class. Use online discussion forums to post questions about course topics or address student concerns about exams. Online calendars are useful tools for tracking reading assignments and due dates for papers. TWEN’s polls can be used to gauge student understanding of new concepts.