

## Instructional Activities and Tools in the rSmart Sakai CLE

The rSmart Sakai CLE allows you, the instructor, to create a customized web site for each course you teach. You may use your course site as a repository for your lesson plan and course content, and you may include tools that enable students to interact with the course content, with each other, and with you. If desired, you may also incorporate tools that communicate your expectations and allow students to electronically receive assignments, submit work, take assessments, receive grades, and so forth.

When using the CLE to facilitate teaching and learning, you design your course as usual based on student needs, the learning environment, and your preferred pedagogical approach. You also select the online tools that meet your needs and add appropriate content to your course site.

The tools in the CLE are very flexible and can be used for many different purposes. To help you get started, we have mapped several common instructional/learning activities to some of the CLE tools you may want to consider using. These activities include:

[Planning lessons](#)

[Disseminating information about the course](#)

[Making course content available to students](#)

[Structuring student engagement with course content](#)

[Providing opportunities for students to apply concepts and techniques](#)

[Encouraging dialogue for academic and social support](#)

[Reducing instances of plagiarism, cheating, and grading bias](#)

[Providing opportunities for students to reflect on their learning](#)

[Grading student work](#)

[Providing formative assessment and feedback](#)

[Providing summative assessment and feedback](#)

The tables that follow are not meant to be definitive. In fact, they are just a beginning. As you find innovative new ways to use CLE tools, we hope you will add them here so others can pick up on your ideas and adapt them for their own situations.



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Planning lessons</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Lessons</b> tool to create an online, modular lesson plan in your course site. Using this tool, you may specify content, instructional techniques, activities, etc., in as much detail as you like.</p>
	<p>Use either the <b>Lessons</b> tool or the <b>Wiki</b> tool in a project site to collaboratively develop an online lesson plan for a new course or develop a new approach to an existing course.</p> <p>Note: The Wiki tool has two advantages for collaborative work. It maintains an historical record of all changes, and it allows you to quickly revert to an earlier version of the plan if you need to.</p>

To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Disseminating information about the course</b></p>	<p>Prominently post key information about the course (your name, contact information, office hours and locations, etc.) online by entering it in the <b>Site Info section</b> of the course site home page. Users will see this information each time they access the course site.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Syllabus</b> tool to post your course syllabus online.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Calendar</b> tool to display course schedule information (for example, class meeting dates and times, notes about readings appropriate to lecture and discussion sections, details on upcoming trips, deadlines for assignments, exams, seminars, and information on other events of interest to students) online.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Announcements</b> tool to post announcements about your course (information on schedule changes, upcoming events and deadlines, class activities, web postings of interest, etc.) online. You may also use this tool to send your announcements to all participants via email.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Site Roster</b> tool to share the names of all students in the course and enable each student to share an image and other personal information.</p>
	<p>Use a distribution list to send copies of any email to every student in the course via the <b>Email Archive</b> tool. This tool archives all emails sent to the distribution list.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Lessons</b> tool to make lesson plans available to students so they can prepare for class or review content after class.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Making course content available to students</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Resources</b> tool to create a rich online library for the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Load online materials you have created in Macromedia Breeze, Camtasia Studio, Dreamweaver, Nvu and other software packages so you can easily link to those materials in your lesson plans, assignments, and assessments.</li> <li>• Add other resources (papers, articles, diagrams, spreadsheets, image files, audio files, citations, etc.) electronically so they will be available to you and your students.</li> <li>• Link to existing external web pages that contain appropriate content.</li> <li>• Require students to research materials and add them to your online course library.</li> </ul> <p>Note: All material stored in Resources is available 24/7 and can easily be reused for other courses.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>News</b> tool to link to articles about the latest developments of interest as they are posted to external web sites.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Web Content</b> tool to display the content of an important web site right in your course site.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Blogger</b> tool to link to and comment on external web pages of interest. Encourage students to contribute additional content and comments.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Podcasts</b> tool to make audio lectures, video presentations, slideshow presentations, and other material available to students outside of class.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool or the <b>Blogger</b> tool to post outstanding examples of student work.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Lessons</b> tool to make lesson plans available to students who want to prepare for class or review content after a class.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Structuring student engagement with course content</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b> tool to post detailed information about assignments (instructions, examples, info on due dates and other expectations, etc.) online and enable students to submit work electronically.</p>
	<p>Require students to use the <b>Resources</b> tool to contribute content they have found or created themselves to the course library.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool to provide a framework for role play that encourages student understanding of historical figures and/or different points of view. This tool facilitates asynchronous communication, which allows time for students to consider how best to represent their assigned character or point of view and how to craft their presentations.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Forums</b> tool. This tool allows you to review and approve messages before they are posted for the group or class to see.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool or the <b>Forums</b> tool (see above) to set up structured online discussions among the entire class, group(s) within the class, and/or experts or other guests.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b>, <b>Forums</b>, or <b>Wiki</b> tool to enable round-robin problem solving and link each student’s name to his or her contributions.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to enable collaborative work online (brainstorming, planning, research, analysis, reporting, creating study guides or glossaries, etc.). Students can work on different elements individually or collectively and refine the content as needed as they work towards their final output. This tool links each student’s name to his or her contributions and archives each successive version of the content, so you can easily track the development of the material.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to enable freeform discussion in which students explore a topic, express their own ideas, and learn from and build on the ideas of others.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Blogger</b> tool to encourage students to create a class journal to be used for review before major exams.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to allow students to create a set of web pages that summarize course content.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Polls</b> tool to check for understanding and encourage students to express opinions anonymously and make group decisions.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Chat Room</b> tool to set up freeform real-time debates online. Propose a theory or present a controversial topic and set up two side-by-side chat rooms in which students present, discuss, and support two opposing points of view.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Providing opportunities for students to apply concepts and techniques</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b> tool to post problem solving or skills practice assignments online, including assignments for extra credit, enrichment, and tutoring.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b> tool to link to problem sets or skill practice sets on external web sites.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to present a Wiki page with the appropriate links.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool to set up structured, asynchronous, online discussions in which students test theories or exchange ideas about possible ways to approach a problem or apply a skill or method, etc. Each discussion may involve an entire class or a subgroup. Each participant's name is associated with his or her messages.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Forums</b> tool. This tool allows you to review and approve messages before they are posted to for the group or class to see.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to enable collaborative work on complex problems and encourage peer evaluation. Using this tool, you can provide a space in which students can contribute ideas for different approaches or can take on different parts of a problem and post results. The tool links each student's name to his or her contributions and archives each successive version of the content so you can easily track the development and authoring of the material.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to provide practice in writing for an audience by creating a space in which students write material that is read and critiqued by the entire class or by their group.</p> <p>Alternatively, encourage students to use the <b>Blogger</b> tool to post works in progress and solicit feedback.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Blogger</b> tool to enable students to create a private or public journal for writing practice.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to make practice quizzes and tests available to students online. Enable students to display feedback, model answers for essay questions, and/or correct answers for objective questions such as multiple choice and true/false.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Polls</b> tool to see whether students can appropriately apply facts and concepts they have learned to new situations.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to conduct tutoring sessions that are open to all students in the class.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool or the <b>Forums</b> tool to create an online space in which students can ask questions of each other, provide advice and help, etc.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Encouraging dialogue for academic and social support</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Mailtool</b>, the <b>Messages</b> tool, or the Private Messages function in the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool to facilitate email among course participants.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool to grade participation in discussions.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Forums</b> tool. This tool allows you to send grades to the Gradebook tool.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b>, <b>Forums</b>, or <b>Wiki</b> tool to publicly respond to student postings in these tools and to encourage students to do the same.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Feedback</b> tool to privately transmit each student's grades and other feedback from a spreadsheet on your computer system.</p>
	<p>Use a distribution list to send copies of any email to every student in the course via the <b>Email Archive</b> tool. This tool archives all emails sent to the distribution list.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Chat Room</b> tool to provide a public forum for real-time, online conversations between participants.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool or the <b>Forums</b> tool to create an online space in which students can ask questions of each other, provide advice and help, etc.</p>

To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Providing opportunities for students to reflect on their learning</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool to set up structured, asynchronous, online discussions that allow time for students to reflect on and learn from their own and others' postings. Each discussion may involve an entire class or a subgroup.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the <b>Forums</b> tool. This tool allows you to review and approve messages before they are posted to for the group or class to see.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Portfolios</b> tool to enable students to collect and publish examples of their best work online and reflect on its significance in their personal development.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Reducing instances of plagiarism, cheating, and grading bias</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Syllabus</b> tool to prominently post your institution’s policies on cheating and plagiarism.</p>
	<p>Alternatively, post this information in the <b>Site Info</b> window on your course home page so students will see it each time they access your site.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Lessons</b> tool to present a lesson on cheating and plagiarism.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums, Forums, Wiki,</b> and/or <b>Blogger</b> tools to encourage discussions about cheating and plagiarism.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Resources</b> tool to associate appropriate copyright information with files as needed and require students to acknowledge copyright statements before downloading files.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b> tool to require students to affirm an honor pledge before submitting work on assignments.</p>
	<p>When giving assessments, use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to create a question pool that contains more questions than the assessment requires and then draw randomly from the pool to present different questions to different students.</p>
	<p>When giving assessments, use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to present questions to each student in a different order and/or scramble the order of answers to multiple choice questions for each student.</p>
<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to enable anonymous grading for subjective questions on assessments. This prevents graders from being influenced by knowing the identity of the students whose work they are grading.</p>	

To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p><b>Grading student work</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool with the grading scale of your choice to automatically grade student answers to objective questions in electronically administered assessments.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to provide model answers to subjective questions on assessments to help TAs grade student answers.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Gradebook</b> tool and the grading scale(s) of your choice to track all student grades for the course and calculate course grades to date. This tool allows you to automatically track grades from the <b>Assignments</b> and <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tools and manually record grades for other student activities.</p>



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Providing formative assessment and feedback</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b> tool to enable students to submit work on assignments electronically and enable you to return the work with feedback. You may return the work with grades or allow students to resubmit it after addressing your comments.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool, the <b>Forums</b> tool, or the <b>Wiki</b> tool to review student contributions to discussions. Post responses to the group to affirm or redirect discussion.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool to monitor collaborative work and provide feedback to the participants.</p>
	<p>Use the Private Messages function in the <b>Discussion Forums</b> tool or use the <b>Messages</b> tool or <b>Mailtool</b> to send private emails to students containing feedback about their participation in discussions, collaborations, and work in the field or in any other offline environment.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to administer online surveys, quizzes, and tests to assess student knowledge and skill and provide feedback and grades.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Wiki</b> tool or the <b>Blogger</b> tool to post outstanding examples of student work.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Feedback</b> tool to privately transmit each student's grades and other feedback from a spreadsheet on your computer system.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Gradebook</b> tool to electronically maintain grades for all student work done to date. The tool allows you to automatically transmit grades from the <b>Assignments</b> and <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tools and manually enter student grades on other activities.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Gradebook</b> tool to enable students to view their grades on any or all work done in the course to date.</p>
<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b>, <b>Data Points</b>, and <b>Goal Management</b> tools together to link assignments to district or state goals and track student progress towards those goals.</p>	



To perform this activity:	Consider these approaches:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Providing summative assessment and feedback</b></p>	<p>Use the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool to administer online exams and provide feedback and grades.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Feedback</b> tool to privately transmit each student's grades and other feedback from a spreadsheet on your computer system.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Gradebook</b> tool to automatically calculate grades to date and final grades. The tool allows you to automatically transmit grades from the <b>Tests &amp; Quizzes</b> tool.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Gradebook</b> tool to enable students to view their grades on any or all work done in the course to date.</p>
	<p>Use the <b>Assignments</b>, <b>Data Points</b>, and <b>Goal Management</b> tools together to link assignments to district or state goals and track student progress towards those goals.</p>

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