

This guide provides tips for users new to using the Learning Environment. It discusses how to navigate the main areas and how to change your personal preferences and settings.

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Logging in

- 1 Use the URL provided by your institution or follow the link on your institution's homepage.
- 2 Type your username and case-sensitive password into the appropriate fields, and click **Login**.

Note Your institution will provide you with a password when you register or when it is needed for a course.

Forgot Password?

If you have forgotten your password, click the **Forgot Password?** link. This opens a new window where you can arrange to have a copy of your password sent to your email address.

System check

If it is your first time logging in to the Learning Environment, run a system check to ensure that your computer meets the minimum system requirements.

A system check ensures that you have the appropriate:

- Course required plug-ins, including JavaScript.
- Web browser version.
- Web browser settings.
- Display settings.

To run a system check, click **Please click here for a System Check before you login** on the Login page.

Note If you fail a component of the system check, you receive a pop-up error message explaining why you failed and what actions to take to meet the requirements.

System time-outs

If you are inactive for an extended period of time, the system may log you out of the Learning Environment. The time-out period is determined by your site's configuration. Make sure you save your data regularly.

Logging out

The **Logout** link is located on the top right corner of the page. Selecting **Logout** takes you to the Login page and ends your current Learning Environment session.

My Home

My Home is your starting point inside the Learning Environment. From here, you can set up your profile, edit your preferences and access your courses. You can also read news items posted by your organization and access course content, links, discussions and other tools.

My Courses

Your courses are listed in the **My Courses** widget in My Home. Simply click the name of the course you wish to enter to access it.

Note For 8.3.0 MR5 (and later), 8.3.1 MR2 (and later) and 8.4.0, if you have different roles in different courses, your courses are in separate tabs. For example, courses you TA for are listed separate

from courses in which you are only a participant. Check with your institution's support personnel if you have version questions.

Each course has its own unique navigation bar which provides links to the tools and resources available inside the course.

Course Home

Course Home is the first page you visit when you enter a course. Like My Home, it contains your personal tools and different widgets for displaying information, including course specific content.

My Course homepage

Searching for courses

For 8.3.0 MR5 (and later), 8.3.1 MR2 (and later) and 8.4.0, if you have more than a certain number of courses, your My Courses widget might display a search field, and a list of the 10 most recently accessed courses.

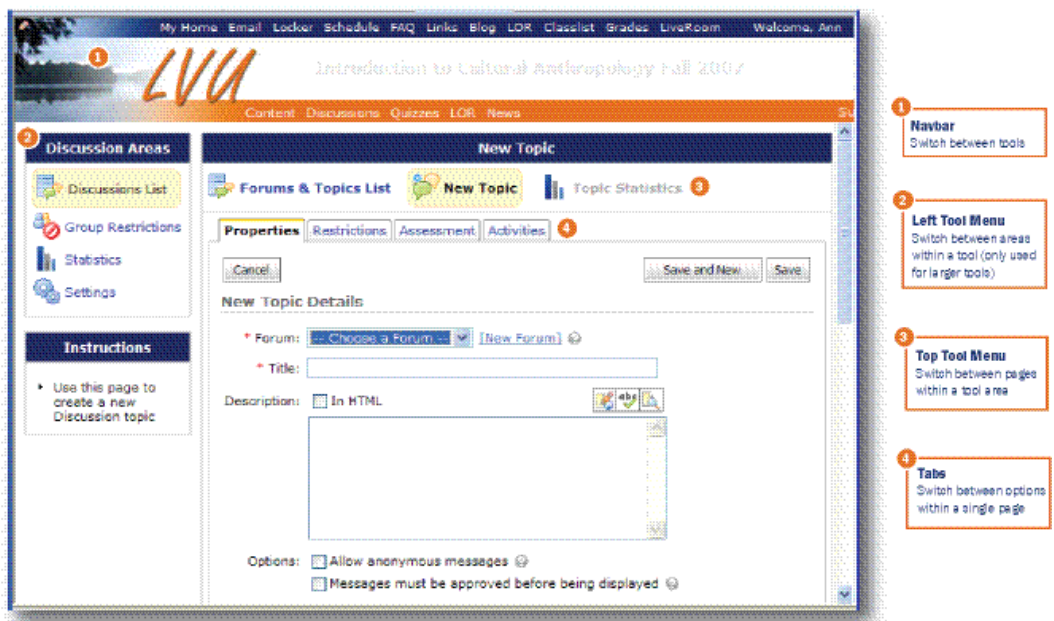
If you also have multiple roles, the search is accompanied by the **Enrolled As** drop-down menu. Use this to select search results for specific roles.

General page layout

Navigation areas



The navbar is one of the primary tools used to navigate the Learning Environment. It is located on the top of the page and links users to their course tools, as well as to the Logout function.

Some tools contain a left tool menu which lists the different areas within the tool that you can choose to explore. Once inside a tool area, use the top tool menu to select specific pages. Tabs are used to explore the options within a single page.



Navigation areas inside the Learning Environment

Help icons and instruction widgets

Many fields have  **Help** icons next to them that explain what the fields are used for. If you have difficulty understanding the purpose of a field, check to see if there is a  **Help** icon next to it.



To get general help on the purpose of a page or tool, read the contents of the **Instructions** widget found on the left side of the page.

Search

Most pages that contain lists of items have a **Search For** field near the top of the page. To perform a search, enter a word or partial word in the **Search For** field and select the **Search** button. If you


click **Show Search Options**, you can select advanced search options to further restrict your search.

Show/Hide

Some pages contain sections that are collapsed by default. Collapsed sections contain advanced or supplemental information that is not required to complete standard tasks. You can display advanced options by clicking the  **Show Options** icon next to what you wish to expand. You can hide options by clicking the  **Hide Options** icon.

Viewing your progress

Use this feature to view your progress in your current courses, including which activities, competencies and modules you have completed in each course.

- 1 From My Home, click the **View my Progress** link in the **Welcome** widget.
- 2 The View User Progress page displays your progress.
- 3 Click the  **Details** icon next to a section for additional progress information.

Changing your password

It is recommended that you change your password the first time that you log in to the Learning Environment.

- 1 From My Home, click the **Password** link in the **Welcome** widget.
- 2 Type your current Learning Environment password in the **Old Password** field.
- 3 Type your new password in the **New Password** field.
- 4 Confirm your new password in the **Confirm New Password** field.
- 5 Click the **Change Password** button.

Changing your email address

You may occasionally receive important login and enrollment information via email, so it is essential that you update your external email address if it has changed since registration.

- 1 From My Home, click the **Email Address** link in the **Welcome** widget.
- 2 Type your Learning Environment password in the **System Password** field.
- 3 Type your new email address in the **New Email** field.
- 4 Click the **Update Email** button.

Updating your email settings


After updating your email address, adjust your email settings to reflect the change. This ensures that all replies to emails you send from your Learning Environment account go directly to your updated email address.

- 1 Select **Email** from the navigation bar and click the **Settings** tab.
Or
Select **Preferences** from the **Welcome** widget and click the **Email** tab.
- 2 Enter your updated email address into the **'Reply to' Email Address** field.

Changing your profile

Build a personal profile through the My Profile tool. Filling out your profile is optional, but this feature is a great way to get to know other users in your course.

- 1 From My Home, click the **Profile** link in the **Welcome** widget.
- 2 Fill in the text fields.
- 3 To upload a picture, click the **Browse** button next to the **Picture** field and locate the image. Click **Open**.
- 4 Click **Save Changes**.

You can also edit your profile from the **Classlist** tool. To do so, click the  **Edit my Profile** icon beside your name on the list.

Changing your preferences

The Preferences tool allows you to customize the layout and presentation options for your view of the Learning Environment.

- 1 From My Home, click the **Preferences** link in the **Welcome** widget.
- 2 Use the tabs across the top of the page to view and edit different options.

Note Some preferences may not be available depending on how your institution has set up the Learning Environment.

General

Adjust general preference options, including:

- **Fonts** Choose how text appears in the interface using the **Font Settings** drop-downs. The **Preview** box displays a sample of your new font setting.
- **Navigation bar auto-refresh** Turn **navigation bar auto-refresh** off if you don't want the Learning Environment to periodically check for incoming pager and email messages. This setting is normally left on, unless you are using assistive technology that is interrupted by the refresh.

Note To refresh the navigation bar when the auto-refresh option is off, either exit and re-enter the course, or use the refresh feature in your browser.

- **Preferred language** Choose your preferred language from the list provided. All pages and content in the Learning Environment appear in your chosen language.

Note Courses have the ability to override your language preferences. E.g., a French course may override your preferred language choices so that you are only able to view the course content in French.

Paging

The Paging setting allows you to limit or expand the number of items displayed on a page.

Discussions

From the **Discussions** tab, adjust the appearance of the Discussions tool to suit your reading style and screen resolution.

Settings you may want to customize include:

- **Show the discussion topics list** Use this setting to show or hide the list of topics at the left of the screen when you're reading messages.
- **Message List Style** Select either **Reading Style** or **Grid Style**.
- **Show the preview pane** If you're using the **Grid Style** message list, turn the setting on to read messages in a preview pane at the bottom of the screen or off to read messages in a pop-up.
- **Reply Settings** Select this option to automatically quote the original message when you reply to another user's message.

Email

From the **Email** tab, customize email and display options to suit your email preferences.

Settings you may want to customize include:

- **Email Signature** Add text that will appear by default at the bottom of every email you send.
- **Include original message in email replies** Automatically quote the original message when you reply to a user's email.
- **Save a copy of each outgoing message to the 'Sent Mail' folder** Copies of messages you send are automatically saved in the 'Sent Mail' folder to facilitate convenient record keeping.
- **Show the Folder List pane** Use this setting to display your folders on a left tool menu inside the Email tool. Uncheck this selection to hide the Folder List.
- **Show the Message Preview pane** This setting allows you to browse through your emails easily by displaying them in a preview pane.
- **'Reply to' Email Address** This option ensures that all replies to emails you send from your Learning Environment account go to the address entered in this field. To change the "Reply to" Email Address from the Email tool, see *Updating your email settings*.

Pager

From the **Pager** tab, select how you would like to receive visual and audio notification when someone pages you.

Note If you turn the pager icon off, you still receive incoming pages, however, you must check for them manually through the Pager tool.

Appendix A: Addendum Learning Environment 8.4

The main source of documentation for Learning Environment 8.4 is the Desire2Learn Resource Center. The Desire2Learn Resource Center is an online help tool for searching for, reading, and printing help documentation on Desire2Learn products.

You can access the Desire2Learn Resource Center through the Desire2Learn Community: <https://community.desire2learn.com/>.

Note A username and password is required to log into the Desire2Learn Community.

Preferences

The Preferences tool allows you to customize the layout and presentation options for your view of the Learning Environment. The tool was redesigned for Learning Environment 8.4 and includes a number of new tabs and preferences.

The following tabs are either new or changed.

General Preferences tab

This tab contains general preferences that are not related to a specific tool.

- **Online Status** Let's you change your online status so that you appear offline even when you're logged into the system.
- **Login Destination** Let's you set a course as the first page you see when you log into the system. This is useful if you are only enrolled in one or a few courses.
- **CD-ROM Drive** Let's you specify which computer drive to map to for your CD-ROM. This setting is not widely used.

Appearance & Accessibility tab

This tab let's you adjust the standard appearance of pages in the system. It also contains settings that simplify pages for people using screen readers and other similar assistive technologies.

- **Font Face** Let's you set which font face (such as Verdana or Times New Roman) you want to use for standard text in the system.
- **Font Size** Let's you set how large you want standard text in the interface to be.
- **Show secondary windows as** Let's you show secondary windows as pop-ups instead of dialog boxes. This setting helps screen readers and other assistive technologies separate the content of the secondary window from the main window.
- **HTML Editor** Let's you turn off the HTML Editor (WYSIWYG) and replace it with a textbox. You can enter plain text or HTML authored in a third-party tool in the text box.

Language & Region tab

This tab let's you specify your default language (limited to the choices available at your institution) and the first day of the month in your calendar.

- **Preferred Language** Let's you set which language you want to use for standard text in the system. Your options are limited to language options available at your institution. Administrative staff and course designers can override your preferences for specific pages and courses.