


Experiences using WebCT: Empower the Students and Burden your TA



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http://webct.cc.utexas.edu/SCRIPT/EE313/scripts/serve_home
(username "guest" and password "guest")



Introduction

- EE313 Linear Systems and Signals, Fall 99
- Required sophomore course, 70 students
- Using WebCT, students used a browser to
 - Download assignments
 - Browse lectures
 - Check grades and relative performance
 - Participate in virtual office hours



Virtual Office Hours

- Advantages
 - Accessible from anywhere
 - All discussions are on public record
- Disadvantages
 - Computer chat less natural than face-to-face conversation
 - Difficult to read how well students understand with no facial expressions

Example Chat Session

TA>>For the plotting questions, you can use Mathematica or Matlab. Both will give you correct answers if you use them correctly.

Melody Queen Klingler>>Does the error in the code of Computer Ex. C2.1 (discussed on the hmwk pg) produce an incorrect plot, or will it just not run?

TA>>Is that the one Brian describes on the web page?

Melody Queen Klingler>>yes

->->-> Jacy S. Little connected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:32:09

TA>>The matlab code won't run at all.

->->-> David Paul Higley connected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:32:33

Melody Queen Klingler>>Thanks.

TA>>It includes syntax errors.

TA>>Also, it calls function don't exist.

<-<-<-<- Jacy S. Little disconnected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:33:00

TA>>Furthermore, the matlab code is really hard to understand.

->->-> Jacy S. Little connected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:33:28 ...

Jonathan Francis Wong>>In mathematica, how can you run the program to get the solution for the problems?

TA>>You'll have to be more specific. What program? What problems?

->->-> David Paul Higley_#2 connected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:35:54

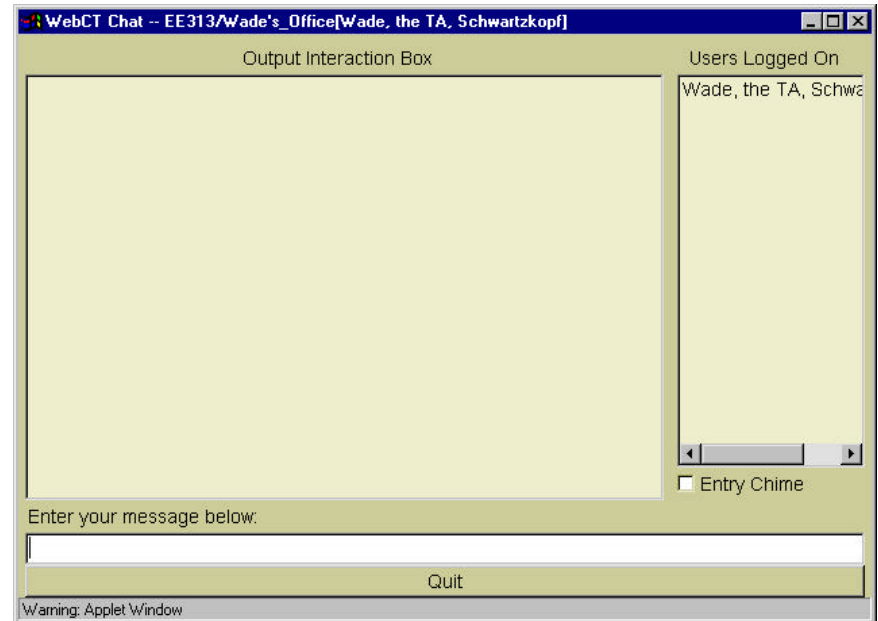
<-<-<-<- David Paul Higley disconnected at: Tue Sep 7 1999 20:35:54

TA>>Jonathan?

Jonathan Francis Wong>>sorry, what's the code to produce an output for the function

Jonathan Francis Wong>>prob 2.3

Jacy S. Little>>Does anyone want to come to another room and help with the proof problem (2.4)?




WebCT Chat Rooms

WebCT Chat - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites History Mail Print Edit Discuss

Address http://webct.cc.utexas.edu:8900/SCRIPT/EE313/scripts/student/serve_chat?START+_homepage Go



Welcome to WebCT Chat.
Click on a room to enter it.

Wade's Office	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
General Chat for EE313			
General Chat for All Courses			

Note: Conversations in the following rooms will be recorded: Wade's Office, Room 2, Room 3, Room 4.
Room logs: [Wade's Office](#), [Room 2](#), [Room 3](#), [Room 4](#)

Done Internet

WebCT Whiteboard

The screenshot displays a web browser window titled "WebCT WhiteBoard -- EE313/EE313[wade]". The interface includes a menu bar with "File" and "Help", a toolbar with drawing tools (eraser, text, line, circle, rectangle, fill, copy, paste, zoom, and delete), and a central whiteboard area. The whiteboard contains a handwritten equation: $y = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i$. The summation symbol and the index $i=1$ are crossed out with red lines. Above the summation, there are three red boxes, and to the right, there is a red scribble. On the right side, there is a "Current Users:" panel listing "wade" and an "Information:" panel. At the bottom, there is a status bar with a text input field containing "285 140", a font size selector set to "Aa", and a color palette.

WebCT WhiteBoard -- EE313/EE313[wade]

File Help

Current Users:
wade

Information:

285 140

Aa

Warning: Applet Window



Advantages of Using WebCT

- Handles administrative overhead created by student inquiries into grades and performance
- Students verify recorded grades
- Students discuss homework solutions with each other at any time.
- Instructors can hold virtual office hours
- Accessible from anywhere in the world: UT news groups and professors are on campus



Disadvantages of Using WebCT

- 40 hours per week for setup
 - Set up student usernames and passwords
 - Give instructions to students, e.g. enable style sheets on Netscape
- 5 hours per week on site maintenance