

Maricopa Blackboard Content System: *Structuring you folders and files*

Due to the manner in which we move our courses from one semester to the next it becomes very important to create a permanent folder structure and file naming convention that is maintained with consistency throughout the duration of your Content System (CS) use. The importance revolves around need to prevent broken links to course content as courses are copied from one semester to the next. That is to say, if you don't keep your folders and files in the same location with the same names then the links to those items will be broken. This will cause you the huge amount of added work by having to re-link to all your course content every semester.

So, a file structure has been devised that will allow you maximum flexibility within the system with the most minimum of efforts. The devised file structure is simple and enlists only five differing structural concepts: three types of files and two types of file owners. The three types of files (referred to hereafter as *items*) are: *shared*, *unshared* and *common*. The two types of owners are: *individual* and *group*. These few conceptual entities encompass the overall file/folder structure the Blackboard Content System.

In all likelihood, in your initial usage of the system you will not be utilizing all aspects of the file structure. At the first stage of you will most likely only be using the concepts of *unshared files* and *individual ownership*. However this document provides full explanation of the entire file structure. It contains definitions of Items, graphic representation, and different scenarios in proper usage.

File Structure Concepts Defined

Item Owners

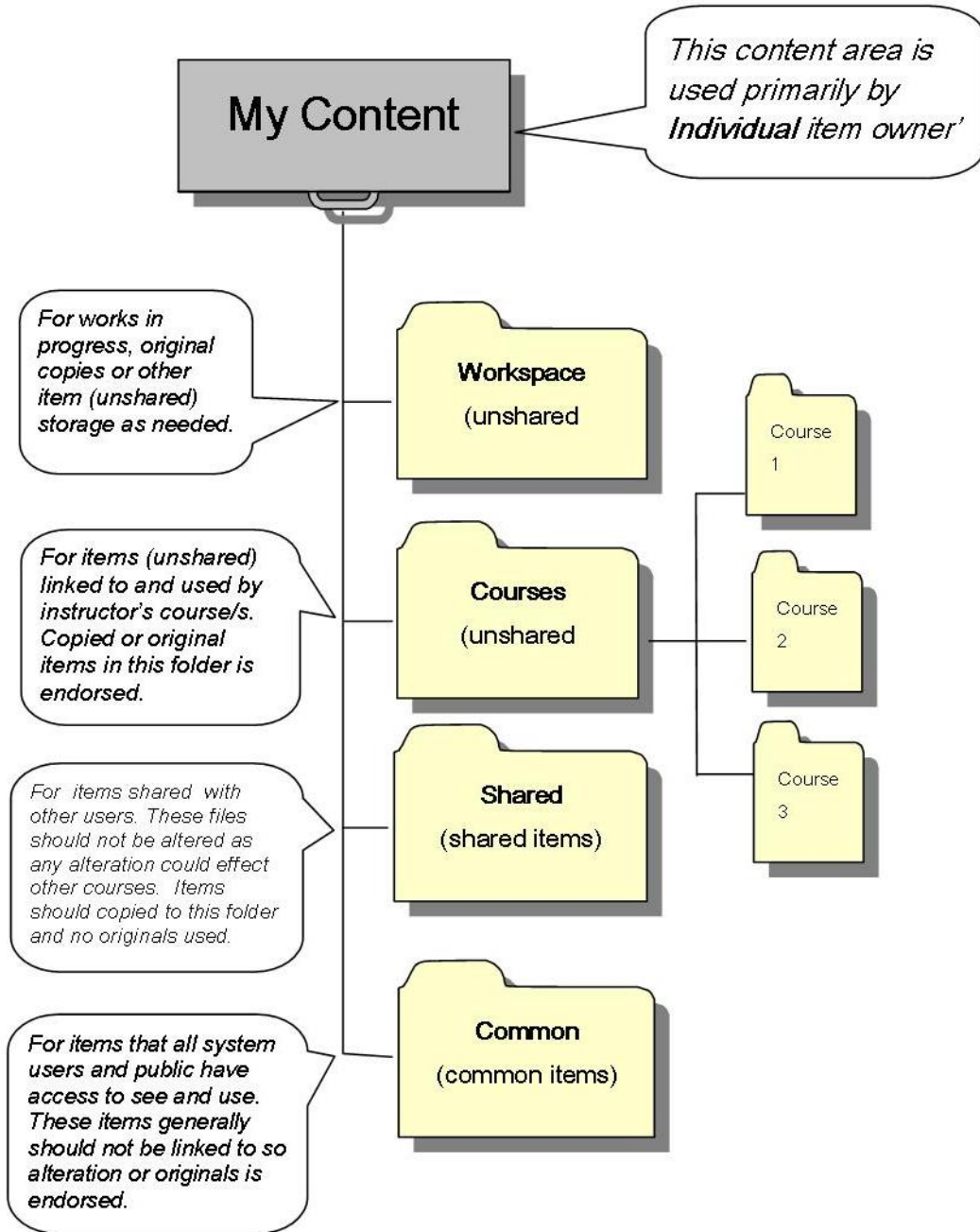
The two different types of content owners are *individual* and *group*. Individual owners will use the 'My Content' area for the storage/deployment of items. While Group owned items are kept in the 'Institution Content' area.

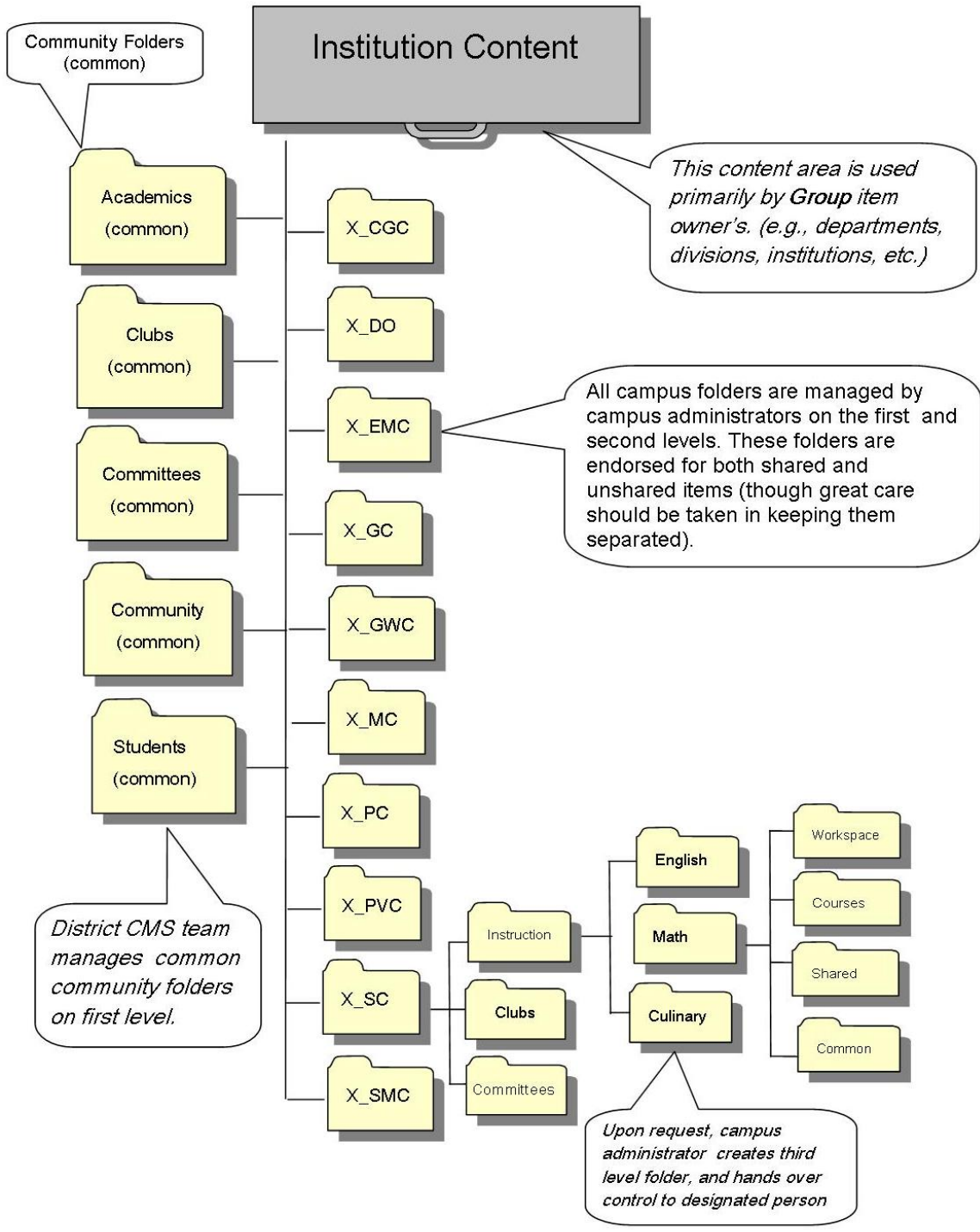
Item Types

The three different item (file) types referred to as *shared*, *unshared*, and *common* are to be separated at all times. This means they should be stored in different physical locations, either in different folders or content areas. The separation of these item types is vital in this model to ensure links & pathways will remain intact and documents vital as courses are copied and items are updated far into the future.

An *unshared* item is one that is only used by a single individual or single group owner. A *shared* item is one that is used by multiple individuals or multiple group owners. A *common* item is one that is used and seen by all system users and the public at large.

Graphic Examples





Defining Examples

Individual Owner - My Content Area: *It is recommended that users create a minimum of four folders in their My Content area: Workspace, Courses, Shared and Common.*

Scenario One

Instructor_1 is working on a Power Point for his course, GIS 101. Since this item is not yet ready for deployment Instructor_1 would store it in his My Content area in a folder named Workspace.

This is an example of an unshared item being properly located by an individual owner.

Scenario Two

Once Instructor_1 has completed work on his Power Point he would move it or copy it into his folder named Courses or into the respective underlying folder structure. For example, a subfolder named GIS_101. Only after Instructor_1 has relocated his Power Point will he link to it from a course or courses. The original Power Point may also continue to reside in the Workspace folder for the purpose of updating or repurposing.

*This is an example of an unshared item being properly located by an individual owner. Make note here the term unshared item is specific to this model. If you refer to Blackboards documentation it would say the item is being shared by the course and/or the students. This model says the item is in **use** or being **used** by the course and/or students but remains unshared as it is only being used by an individual owner...the instructor.*

Scenario Three

After Instructor_1 has used the Power Point he may decide that it is particularly effective and make mention of it to a colleague. If the colleague wanted to use the Power Point Instructor would then make a copy of the Power Point and place it in the Shared folder or a respective underlying subfolder. Then Instructor_1 would grant his colleague permissions to that Power Point and the colleague would link to it from his courses.

In this example Instructor_1, who is intellectual property minded, remains the owner of the item. However it is clearly located in a shared folder thus reminding Instructor_1 not to make any changes, relocate or delete the item.

This is an example of a shared item being properly located by an individual owner who wishes to remain owner of the item.

Scenario Four

After Instructor_1 has used the Power Point he may decide that it is particularly effective and make mention of it to a colleague. If the colleague wanted to use the Power Point Instructor_1 would then grant his colleague permission to the item. Then Instructor_1 notifies the colleague that permission has been granted. The colleague, using the search tool, finds and makes a copy of the Power Point for him/herself. At this point the colleague would own the copied item.

This is an example of an item being given however the original item remains unshared by individual owner.

Group Owner – My Institution Area: *The folder structure for this area has already been partially created. There is a common area created that can be viewed by all system users and the public at large. And a campus area that is only visible to owners with permissions. Further, it is recommended that each group owner create a minimum of four folders in their group folder: Workspace, Courses (or Unshared), Shared and Common.*

Scenario One

Director_1 is the head of the Culinary Department at the Scottsdale campus. The Culinary Department has a rigid curriculum dictated by state regulations. These dictates stipulate standardized learning objectives and outcomes. In order for the department to meet these stipulations Director_1 has purchased a complete culinary package containing a vast array of copyrighted multimedia materials that can be used by his culinary group.

Director_1 contacted the campus Blackboard Content System administrator, requesting a folder be created for the Culinary Department to store the copyrighted multimedia items that will be used by all culinary instructors. The administrator created a culinary sub-folder, inside an Instruction folder, that resides within the campus root folder. The administrator then gave permissions, as well as responsibility of managing the folder to Director_1. Director_1 imported all the culinary multimedia items into the folder and gave permissions to each instructor in the culinary group so that they could link to the items it contains from their course/s.

This is an example of unshared items being properly located by a group owner. Note here that while these items are being used by multiple courses and instructors they are still unshared items as they belong to a group and are only being used by members of that group.

Scenario Two

Director_1 has formed a committee of instructors to create a series of learning materials. Inside the My Institution content area and inside the campus root folder resides the culinary group folder. Director_1, who owns the culinary group folder, has created a sub-folder called Workspace in which the committee will store materials in the planning and development stage. The committee will use the workflow tools to facilitate the development of those materials.

This is an example of unshared items being properly located by a group owner.

Scenario Three

At a Culinary conference Director_1 is speaking to the Director of Culinary Arts on a different campus, Director_2, about the fabulous materials that came in the Culinary learning package that was just purchased by his department. Director_2 was intrigued about one or two of the items and upon learning that materials were copyrighted but could be shared asked that read permissions be granted. Where upon, Director_1 made copies of the items, placed them in his groups Shared folder and gave Director_2 permissions to link to the items. As well Director_1 granted Director_2 privileges to give permissions to his faculty.

This is an example of shared item/s being properly located by a group owner who wishes the group to remain owner of item/s.

Scenario Four

At a Culinary conference Director_1 is speaking to the Director of Culinary Arts on a different campus, Director_2, about the fabulous materials that came in the Culinary learning package that was just purchased by his department. Director_2 was intrigued about one or two of the items and upon learning that materials were *not* copyrighted asked for copies. Where upon, Director_1 added a pass with a five day lifetime on the requested items and send Director_2 the pass. At that point Director_2 accessed items, made copies and placed them in a proper location.

This is an example of items being given and the original items remaining unshared.

Common Folders – Common Items: *Common folders and items are visible to all system users (and possibly the public) and could reside in both My Content and My Institution areas. These would be items that an individual owner or group wanted to share with all system users or the public.*

Scenario One

Director_2 has applications, promotional, and introductory materials for his Culinary Arts program. He wants to have this material available to all systems users as well as the public. He has contacted the District CMS team support requesting a *common* PVC culinary folder be created and that his group be granted ownership. The Blackboard support person happily fulfilled the request but also asking Director_2 to please add *sufficient metadata*** so the materials could be located via the search tool. With that Director_2 uploaded items, added *sufficient metadata*, and gave read permission to all system users and the public.

This is an example of common items being placed in a common folder by a group owner. In a case like this, the intent, at least in part, is to place the common items in a location so that people who are just browsing may come across it.

Scenario Two

Director_2 has applications, promotional, and introductory materials for his Culinary Arts Program. He wants to make the material available to all system users and the public but is not particularly concerned if he people browsing stumble across the items. So Director_2 creates a *common* folder within his groups existing Culinary folder and then having added *sufficient metadata* gives permissions to all systems users and the public.

This is an example of common items in a common folder which is located in the My Institution area where the complete folder structure is not visible to all users or the public.

Scenario Three

Director_2 has items that are not related to his group but that he wants to share with all system users and the public. In his My Content area, in his Common folder, he uploads the items, adds *sufficient metadata*, and gives permission to all system users and the public

This is an example of individually owned common folders and items.

Conclusion

Obviously there are countless different combinations of items, folders, and user scenarios and rightfully so. The Blackboard Content System is a very versatile tool and we want it to remain that way to accommodate as many different types of users as possible. We don't want to restrict or deny anyone's needs. Lastly we leave up to you to develop your own file naming convention. It really doesn't matter how you do it, just remember as you update your documents semester to semester don't change their names.

*** Definitions:**

Items – files and in some cases folders

Used - items be utilized by a individual or group but not being shared

Shared – items with at least read permissions set for multiple users but are owned by a individual or group

Unshared – any item or folder that at least read permissions have not been given to

Permissions - the types of privileges that can be given

Owned – items and folders that belong to individual/s or group/s

Given – items that are copied and ownership is given up

Common – items or folders that are given read privileges to all users