CUNY Academic Commons - Documentation #11906

Commons "Help" and Teaching Site Overhaul

2019-09-25 04:16 PM - Laurie Hurson

Status:	Resolved	**Due date:**	
Priority name:	Normal	**% Done:**	0%
Assignee:	Laurie Hurson		
Category name:			
Target version:	1.16.8		

Description

Somewhat related to ticket 8666: https://redmine.gc.cuny.edu/issues/8666 (i didn't know how to or if i should connect the tickets)

Hi all,

I have taken a look at the Commons HELP pages and the Teaching on the Commons site (https://teach.commons.gc.cuny.edu/) and have some suggestions for streamlining the documentation on these sites.

In it's current format the Teaching site replicated documentation that could already be found in the HELP Pages. It might be most useful if the teaching site serves as a space to introduce folks to the possibilities teaching on the Commons with links out to the generic help pages for technical documentation. The Teaching site could host pedagogical strategies and models, explanations of the teaching templates and plugins, guidelines for professors to share with thier students, etc. and then ultimately guide/link users back to the appropriate technical documentation on the HELP pages. Creating linkages between the Teaching on the Commons site back to the HELP pages will connect users to important documentation while also showcasing what is available in the HELP area. Thoughts?

In terms of the HELP Pages, I have a few suggestions/questions:

- At the top of HELP there are 4 boxes. We might want to consider replacing "Get Creative" with "Teach a Course" and linking to the teaching page to create a prominent link between these spaces. The "Get Creative" info presents "ways to use the commons" which might be best used as an answer to a "Common Commons question" like: "What can I do on the Commons?"

- Speaking of the Common Commons Questions on the HELP home page, we might want to consider updating the questions to reflect the most recent and popular questions that come in through ZenDesk. I think Marilyn and Scott probably can provide helpful insight about the most common questions coming into the Zendesk in the last year. Some suggested additions:
*What is the difference between a group and a site?
*How do I create a post?
*How can I control Privacy settings on the Commons?

- Finally, we might want to consider eliminating the search bar. This seems counter intuitive but the results are often overwhelming and dont seem granular or targeted enough to be helpful. This is just a theory but I can imagine that new user who searches, "how to make a site", or "how to post" or, "how to create a page" and the results are so detailed that they are unhelpful. Boone, is there any way to know what people have searched for in the HELP site? Or, could we monitor upcoming searches to know what people are looking for? If so, that might inform how we approach this.

History

#1 - 2019-09-25 05:43 PM - Boone Gorges

. Boone, is there any way to know what people have searched for in the HELP site?

Here's a snapshot for the past 12 months. During that period, there've been a total of 12,880 pageviews on help.commons. Of those, 1,141 were searches. So, I'd say that the search feature is pretty commonly used. I've compiled a list of top search terms, though this only begins to tell the story - even the most popular search term, 'blog', was only entered 15 times. So there's a very long tail.

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/?s=blog
/?s=privacy
/?s=
/?s=how+to+post
/?s=delete+site
/?s=post
/?s=register
/?s=wiki
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```
/?s=comments
/?s=private
/?s=visibility
/?s=comment
/?s=domain+mapping
/?s=email
/?s=how+to+change+title+of+site
/?s=PDF
/?s=privacy+setting
/?s=privacy+settings
/?s=add+a+page
/?s=background+of+a+page
/?s=can+I+delete+a+forum+post
/?s=Catalog
/?s=embed
/?s=English+department
/?s=How+do+I+find+social+explorer
/?s=how+to+post+a+blog
/?s=my+setting
/?s=Post
/?s=Privacy
/?s=URL
/?s=Where+do+I+find+my+hunter+email+address?
/?s=wordpress
/?s=add+a+post
/?s=author
/?s=Blogs
/?s=change+font
/?s=change+template
/?s=course
/?s=create+a+site
/?s=delete
/?s=delete+account
/?s=delete+group
/?s=discussion+board
/?s=duplicate
/?s=embed+google+forms
/?s=files
/?s=folder
/?s=how+can+i+publish
/?s=how+to+add+a+page
/?s=how+to+build+a+portfolio
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#2 - 2019-12-10 11:33 AM - Laurie Hurson

Hi All,

I wanted to circle back about the HELP page updates to provide additional support and documentation for instructors and students.

I am wondering what we think of replacing the "Get Creative" block with something teaching related in order to lead instructors and students to important documentation.

I have created an outline of possible pages that would be visible when you click into the teaching-oriented block. I have linked to existing help documentation and other quick guide documentation I have created. I would also need to write up new content to fill out the teaching block but I wanted to share this idea to get team feedback before making any changes or creating anything new on the help site:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DFWdEz-VWmKYxzRAfZFt_GLZ2txzW0CJFafNaPgQ5m8/edit

#3 - 2020-01-13 01:19 PM - scott voth

I think it is a good idea to move the "Get Creative" Content over to the "Personalize" menu. I can begin doing this now without really messing things up. I also think it is a great idea to replace it with "Teaching and Learning On The Commons." As Laurie mentions, there could be two menu sections - one for Students and one for Teachers. I think we should not have links to Google Docs, but instead create Help Pages. I can certainly migrate the Docs to WP Pages if everyone agrees.

Maybe we should agree about what the menu(a) should look like - it seems there is some content that needs to be developed, and much that is already available.

Also, when we are ready, we would need Boone's help to change the icon and the Title of the Box.

#4 - 2020-01-14 04:32 PM - Laurie Hurson

Thanks for this feedback Scott! I agree that we should transfer google doc info into help pages on the commons. I would be happy to help migrating the google content and creating new content as needed.

Perhaps we can discuss next steps on the call this friday, such as deciding on a menu structure and section name, dividing content that needs to be created, etc.

It would be exciting to get this new help area up and running for the spring semester!

#5 - 2020-01-23 06:32 PM - scott voth

Hi - I created a new category, a new menu, and a new FAQ collection for teaching and learning.
https://help.commons.gc.cuny.edu/teaching-and-learning-box/

Feel free to add and edit - the FAQ need some work, but it is a start. Also created a stub for Overview and added Luke's "Why Open Pedagogy."

#6 - 2020-01-24 11:30 AM - Laurie Hurson

Thanks for getting this going Scott! I will have time next week to begin building out the teaching and learning help pages.

Can we add pages that already exist to this new menu. For example, "teaching template" page is in the Manage a site menu. Can it also be a part of the teaching and learning menu?

#7 - 2020-01-30 04:16 PM - scott voth

Hi Laurie - I added the teaching template to the menu. I also added "WordPress Basics" - https://help.commons.gc.cuny.edu/wp-basics/ that we have on the Sites Menu. Do we want to have a similar page more directly related to teaching and learning?

#8 - 2020-01-30 04:55 PM - Laurie Hurson

Yeah, I think so.

Can we take 5 minutes tomorrow to clarify the process for building out the help site? I added a bunch of language to the open pedagogy page and linked to it from the google doc to keep track of pages that are done.

I have been looking at adding content other pages and see there is short code in the other pages and I dont want to mess anything up. Maybe I just need to add new pages and add to the menu using parent page designation? I'll catch up with you (Scott) tomorrow about this.

#9 - 2020-01-30 08:20 PM - Matt Gold

please add this to the agenda as well. thank you!

#10 - 2020-02-11 10:51 AM - Boone Gorges

- Assignee set to Laurie Hurson

- Target version set to Not tracked

#11 - 2020-03-02 01:09 PM - Laurie Hurson

Hi Boone, All

The new Teaching and Learning help block is ready to go live, with more pages to be added soon. The plan is to replace the "Get Creative" blue block with the Teaching and Learning Help block here: https://help.commons.gc.cuny.edu/teaching-and-learning-box/

I think the lightbulb icon would be fine for this new block but we could also change if another icon would be better. Some title suggestions for the new block text:
1. "Teaching and Learning on the Commons"
2. "Courses on the Commons"

I think I prefer "Courses on the Commons" because this might make students more likely to click into the menu but I am interested to hear what other think too.

Thanks!

#12 - 2020-03-02 02:25 PM - Boone Gorges

Sounds good. I'm ready to change the link and the text when it's been finalized.

#13 - 2020-03-02 06:07 PM - scott voth

I like "Courses on the Commons" too - more likely to reach students.

#14 - 2020-03-03 11:55 AM - Marilyn Weber

I also prefer "Courses on the Commons"

Thanks for your diligence, Laurie!

#15 - 2020-03-03 12:00 PM - Laurie Hurson

Awesome, thanks everyone for your feedback!

Let's go with "Courses on the Commons" as the final.

#16 - 2020-03-03 02:15 PM - Boone Gorges

Thanks. What should be used for the tagline (text below the image)?

#17 - 2020-03-03 02:15 PM - Boone Gorges

- Target version changed from Not tracked to 1.16.7

#18 - 2020-03-04 11:05 AM - Laurie Hurson

Let's make the tagline: "Teaching and learning on an open platform."

#19 - 2020-03-05 01:25 PM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from New to Staged for Production Release

Thanks! I've made the change in https://github.com/cuny-academic-commons/cac/commit/eac33a0bc83ddc1c2ec2a4aa154b936532070527. It will be part of Tuesday's release.

#20 - 2020-03-10 11:40 AM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from Staged for Production Release to Resolved

#21 - 2020-03-10 12:07 PM - Laurie Hurson

When I click the new "courses on the Commons" block it re-loads like its going to a new page but it stays on the help homesite- new menu is not accessible.

#22 - 2020-03-10 12:26 PM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from Resolved to Reporter Feedback

- Target version changed from 1.16.7 to 1.16.8

When I made the theme mods a few days ago, I believe the name of the category was 'Courses on the Commons'. Now it's 'Teaching and Learning'. As such, the link broke. Did you make the change or am I imagining this?

I've made a hotfix to 'Teaching and Learning' and it's now working, but it's broken the icon (not sure why this happened) and it's changed the title on the homepage (as this is necessarily the name of the category, the way things are currently built).

Could you please clarify exactly what you want everything to be named and how you want everything to read so that I can figure out the necessary technical steps to take?

#23 - 2020-03-10 12:36 PM - Laurie Hurson

Hi Boone,

Sorry for the confusion. The category has always been teaching and learning. I thought the block title could be different from the category title, I didn't know they were connected.

2 options for naming below - whatever is easier and more straightforward work.

Ideal:
Category Name: teaching and learning
Block title: Courses on the Commons
Blurb: Teaching and Learning on an open platform

Working with what is there now:
Category Name: teaching and learning
Block title: Teaching and Learning
Blurb: Courses on the Commons

#24 - 2020-03-10 01:51 PM - Boone Gorges

Thanks for your patience, Laurie. I've worked the way that these category boxes are built so that we can specify titles that are different from the category names. https://github.com/cuny-academic-commons/cac/commit/cfa903e4c9e0720a7cb6fc406afe33657bfb71d1 Could you have a look at the Help page and ensure it's working as expected?

#25 - 2020-03-10 02:03 PM - Laurie Hurson

This is working and looks awesome, thanks so much!!

#26 - 2020-03-10 02:16 PM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from Reporter Feedback to Resolved

Thanks for confirming!