

Image from <http://chrispearce.wordpress.com>

CREATE, ADAPT, & INNOVATE

# Teaching, Learning, and Technology ...In Print

Distance Ed Department Blog:  
<http://teachlearnandtech.wordpress.com>

TOP 10 TECH TRENDS FOR 2014

## 2013 Year in Review

### Happy New Year!

Welcome back! The year of 2013 left us with trends that will make 2014 exciting for learners, educators, and institutions. Let's take a quick look at some of the trends that impacted education over the past year.

### Device Ecology

Laptops. Desktops. Phones. Tablets. The cloud. Personal devices used as a part of learning are getting smaller, smarter, and changing how learners and educators interact with each other and information. As we move forward to 2014, we will need to consider how to use these devices in tandem to create an environment that supports effective, collaborative, and authentic learning opportunities.

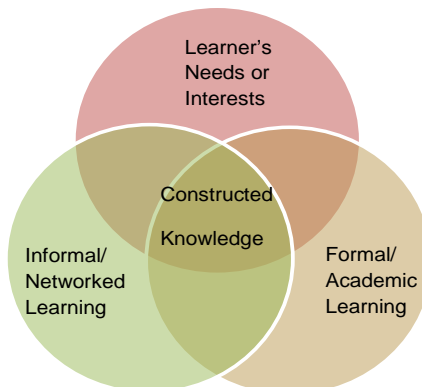
### Personal Learning Environments

Computing practices and social acceptance of technology in learning environments has created a shift, where the learner is the innovator, creator, and sharer and can gain knowledge through self-controlled learning platforms, such as social media tools, MOOCs, and other self-paced online modules. Students are finding ways to remix and reuse content from their formal and informal learning environment to construct their own knowledge based on their current

needs and interests. How can technology be leveraged to exploit the opportunities for social and peer constructed knowledge and support students in becoming life long learners?

### Learning Analytics

Institutions and educators are looking for ways to manage and analyze the enormous amount of data we can collect from all the systems we are using. The data can help us to identify trends and patterns that can support and personalize the learning experience for students. [Here is an Educause report that provides information about how leading institutions in higher education and vendors are building capacity in analytics to improve student success.](#)



So what can we expect to see for 2014? Well, according to venturebeat.com:

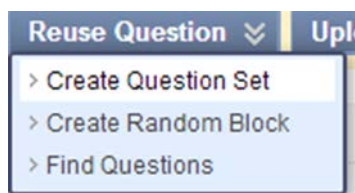
- Cities Get Smarter**  
 "Sensors and cloud-enabled apps will connect transportation, metering, health care, lighting, and environment data, and make it actionable."
- Mobile Payments Grow**  
 "Mobile money is enabling banking and financing systems to continue to grow here and in the developing world."
- Wearable Devices are fashionable**  
 "Google has Glass, and Samsung has a smartwatch, but Apple's iWatch and many other smart wearable technologies are coming out soon."
- iPads & Tablets Flourish in Educational Settings**  
 "Tablet computing is increasingly attractive and affordable in education and will continue to go mainstream in place of full desktop PCs or even laptops."
- Mobile Fitness Devices grow**  
 "Mobile fitness devices will start to focus on the whole range of health and start to enter the tougher and more challenging health care industry."

For the complete list:

<http://venturebeat.com/2013/12/06/top-10-tech-trends-for-2014-wearables-3d-printers-mobile-money-and-more/>

# Using Random Blocks and Questions Sets for Bb Tests

by Brock Scudder



Blackboard provides several ways to randomize test questions that students will receive when taking a test. Random blocks and question sets allow you (or the Blackboard system) to choose questions to be given to students from an existing question pool or test. A pool with the questions you intend to use must be created before using a random block, but question sets can draw from both existing tests and pools.

## Create a Random Block

Use this option if you want Blackboard to select questions for you from a question pool.

1. Edit a test, Click the Reuse Question Button then select Create a Random Block
2. A pop-up window will appear that allows you to select pools to take questions from. Select the pools you want to use by clicking the corresponding checkboxes. Under Question Types select the appropriate Question Type to be included in the block, or All Pool Questions to include every question from the pools selected.
3. Questions in the pools will appear under Selected Criteria. Click submit to finish. Blackboard will randomly choose from ALL the questions.
4. Enter a point value for each question.
5. Set the number of questions to display from the random block
  - a. If you set Number of Questions to Display to be the same as the Total Questions (number contained in the random block) then all students will receive the same questions but in a different order.
  - b. If you choose a number less than Total Questions then students will be given a random set from the block of questions.

## Creating a Question Set

Use this option if you want to select the questions that will be randomly given to students from a question pool or test.

1. Edit a test, Click the Reuse Question Button then select Create a Question Set.
2. A pop-up window will appear that allows you to select existing tests or pools to take questions from. Expand the Pools and Tests drop-down boxes and select the pools or tests you want to use by clicking the corresponding checkboxes.
3. Questions that meet the criteria will appear under Selected Criteria. Select the questions you want to use by clicking on the box to the left of each question and click submit to finish. Blackboard will randomly choose questions from YOUR selected list.
4. Enter a point value for each question.
5. Set the number of questions to display from the question set
  - a. If you set Number of Questions to Display to be the same as the Total Questions (number contained in the question set) then all students will receive the same questions but in a different order.
  - b. If you choose a number less than Total Questions then students will be given a random questions from the set.

**Search current results:**

Search current results:

**Browse Criteria**

View

**Pools**

- All Pools
- a
- article demo
- example
- example 2
- sample 2

**Tests**

- All Tests
- article test
- c
- mixed question types
- quick example

**Criteria Summary**

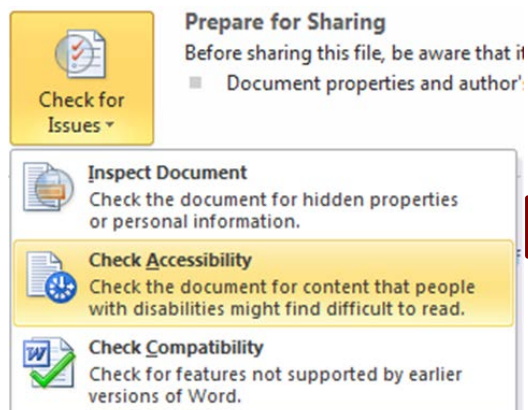
Tests All Tests Displaying 1 to 10 of 10 items

Question Display

<input type="checkbox"/>	Question Text	Question Type	Source Name	Source Type
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dogs usually have four legs.	True/False	mixed question types	Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	Film analysis: Blade Runner's influence on pop culture: Write a 50 words maximum reflection about Blade Runner's influence on pop cul...	Essay	Ridley Scott's early career	Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ridley Scott directed this 1979 thriller which set a spaceship crew against a...	Multiple Choice	Ridley Scott's early career	Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	TV married couples: Match the married couples	Matching	Ridley Scott's early career	Test
<input type="checkbox"/>	Test file upload: Upload a file to test functionality	File Response	Ridley Scott's early career	Test

# Checking for Accessibility Issues in MS Word and PPT

by Brock Scudder



Did you know that Microsoft Word and PowerPoint have features that help you create accessible documents and allow assistive technology, such as screen readers, to interpret documents for the blind or visually impaired? The **Accessibility Checker** feature will mark images, headers, and other visual elements in your work and suggest changes to improve accessibility.

## Running Accessibility Checker:

1. Click the File Tab, then Info.
2. Click the Check for Issues icon.
3. Click Check Accessibility.
4. The Accessibility Checker returns a list of issues it detects in your document that may cause problems for visually impaired readers or readers using assistive technology.

## Microsoft's knowledgebase article suggests various ways to improve accessibility in documents

- Add alternative text to images and objects
  - Specify column header rows in tables
  - Use styles in long documents
  - Use short titles in headings
  - Ensure all heading styles are in correct order
  - Use hyperlink text that is meaningful
  - Use simple table structure
  - Avoid using blank cells for formatting
  - Structure layout tables for easy navigation
  - Avoid using repeated blank characters
  - Avoid using floating objects
  - Avoid image watermarks
  - Include closed captions for any audio or video
- For PowerPoint**
- Ensure that all slides have unique titles
  - Ensure the reading order of each slide is logical
  - Increase visibility for colorblind viewers

These checklists for following Section 508 standards, created by the US Department of Health and Human Services, are also helpful for creating accessible media: <http://www.hhs.gov/web/508/accessiblefiles/checklists.html>



Checklist: [PDF File](#)



Checklist: [Word Document](#)



Checklist: [Excel Document](#)



Checklist: [PowerPoint Document](#)



Checklist: [HTML File](#)



Checklist: [Multimedia File](#)

## Take a Closer Look!



### @One Project

*From the @One Website:* The @ONE Project makes it easy for California Community College faculty and staff to learn about technology that will enhance student learning and success. @ONE's programs provide training and online resources for free - or at a very low cost.

#### Desktop Webinars

These one-hour webinars present emerging issues and best practices in

using technology on your campus. Sessions are conducted with CCC Confer meeting software, which allows you to view a live PowerPoint presentation and talk with instructors and participants over a phone or computer voice bridge.

#### Instructor-Led Online Courses

@ONE's online courses last several weeks and give you an in-depth understanding of how to use specific technologies in an instructional context. Courses include posted materials, links to resources, assignments, and the opportunity to share experiences with CCC faculty and staff throughout the state via discussion boards. Registration is \$65 for CCC faculty and staff.

#### Self-Paced Training

Self-paced online courses feature many of the same content areas as @ONE's instructor-led sessions, but allow you to learn on your own schedule. Streaming videos demonstrate how technology is being used to enhance learning at California Community Colleges.

To find a current list of training and resources for the Spring 2014 go to the @One Website:  
<http://onefortraining.org>

## January DE Workshops

Date	Location	Time	Topic
1/9/2014	SBVC – BUS125	10-12pm	Open Lab
1/9/2014	CHC – LRC110	4pm - 5pm	Blackboard 101
1/15/2014	SBVC-LA208	2pm - 4pm	Open Lab
1/21/2014	CHC – LRC 110	2pm - 4pm	Open Lab
1/23/2014	Online/Webinar	2pm – 3pm	Using Blackboard Rubrics
1/29/2014	SBVC-LA208	2pm-3pm	Transitioning to Technology-Enhanced Teaching
1/31/2014	Online/Webinar	11am – 12pm	Blackboard Reporting Tools