PLATO Online Learning
@ Westfield State University
The Center for Instructional Technology, Wilson 114
Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
www.westfield.ma.edu/plato

Faculty: What you need to know for Fall 2014

Haven’t Used PLATO?
Would you like to use PLATO to supplement your face to face courses? Learn how to post your syllabus and readings in a virtual environment, have students submit their work online, and so much more. Contact Lisa Clark at lclark@westfield.ma.edu to schedule a PLATO Quick Start session.

Your Access to PLATO:
Go to: westfield.ma.edu/plato and log in with your PLATO username and password.

Faculty usernames are generally first initial, last name and wsu (ex. jdoewsu). Your password will be whatever you set it to during the PLATO training. Once you reset your password, it will remain the same from semester to semester, unless you change it.

Request Your Course Shells:
Before each semester begins, you must request a new course shell for each course you are teaching. This will ensure that students have access to the current content when the semester begins.

For instructions and tutorials on how to fill out the form go to westfield.ma.edu/PLATO hover over “Faculty Resources,” and then click “Request Your PLATO courses here.”

Early Access to PLATO
Each semester, students will be loaded into PLATO and have access to the “Student Overview” course on their course list on the Friday before classes begin.

Early Access to PLATO (cont)
- Students will have access to their courses by 8AM on the first day of classes.
- Add/Drop and Late Registrants will not show up in your grade book immediately. Information will be updated within 24 hrs. of the time the student’s information is added to the banner system.
- Students registering through Add/Drop will have access to their online classes within 24 hours of the time of their registration.

PLATO - Course Tune-up
Faculty should schedule time to meet with CIT Staff for a course tune-up.
- Consider adding a podcast, a Jing, NBC Videos, or a VoiceThread to your course.
- Use BB Collaborate to hold virtual meetings or have a guest speaker meet your class from a distance in real time.
- Don’t forget to update your Course Preview Page.
  - If you teach an online or brick and click course you may need to update your Preview Page.
  - If you don’t have a Preview Page for your online course please call Valerie DePina at 572-8130 to find out how to create one.

What’s NEW in PLATO?
Atomic Learning is now built right into PLATO. This great new addition offers hundreds of tutorials for almost any software application you can think of, and many other helpful tools. To use this great tool, log into your PLATO account and click the Atomic Learning link on your PLATO dashboard. You can then search for online tutorials on Microsoft Office®, Blackboard Learn™, APA™ & MLA® Style, Effective Listening Skills, and 65,000 more tech topics. Instructors can also add selected tutorials directly into courses using the “Tools” link in any content area.

NBC Learn Videos can be easily added to your course content! Find this tool in your PLATO Course under Build Content and Mashups.

Getting Help on PLATO
For Plato Support via phone call the CIT at 413-572-8130 Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30.

For Plato help on evenings or weekends, please go to www.westfield.ma.edu/plato and click on the Plato Help Desk to submit a help ticket. Please give details of your Plato issue. PLATO is supported by CIT in Wilson 114.

Free Online Tutoring
Be sure to let your students know that Free Online Tutoring is available for all WSU students. They can access the tutoring service by clicking “Launch Smarthinking” button on the Plato Dashboard.

Technical Issues
When submitting a help ticket be sure you have:
- Tried another browser such as Firefox or Chrome.
- Installed the latest version of Java on your computer www.java.com.
- Have your course name, number and section available when submitting your help ticket.
- CIT will have students contact you with questions about your content or assignments.