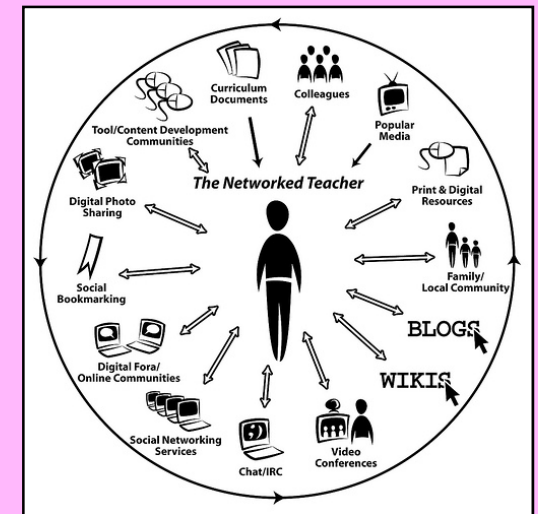
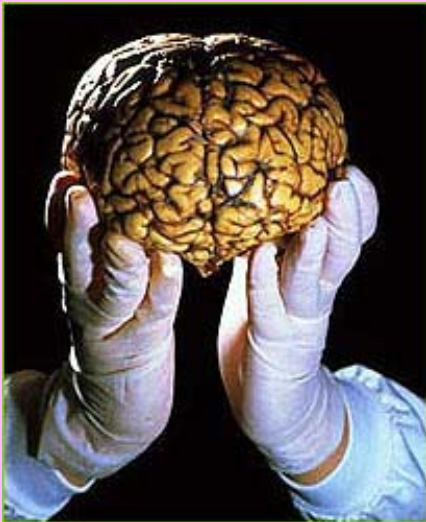


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- Michael Maser

SelfDesign Learning Community

www.selfdesign.org



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Overview

i. Latest on Learning

- Psychology: Multiple Intelligences / Cognitive Science-Therapy
- Neurobiology: 'Brain-Based-Learning'
- Exotics / Hybrids: Holistic Learning [Somatic Learning; Special Needs breakthroughs] // Accelerated Learning //

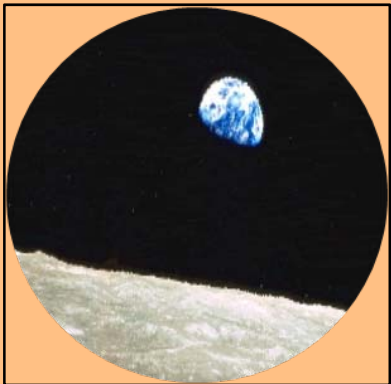
ii. Virtual Learning Environments

- Choices [Web 2.0, Second Life, Web CT, Moodle, Sakai, FirstClass]
- My Criteria

iii. FirstClass Conferencing Software

- Characteristics

iv. Specific Use of FirstClass



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Latest on Learning ...

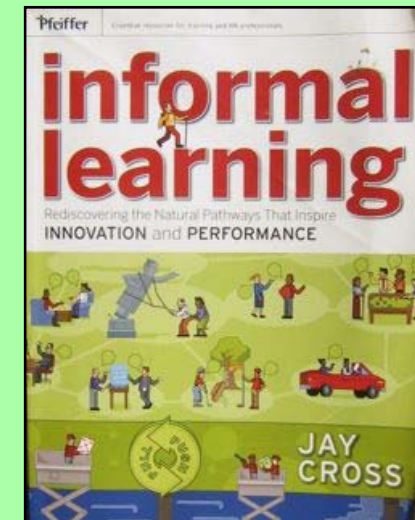
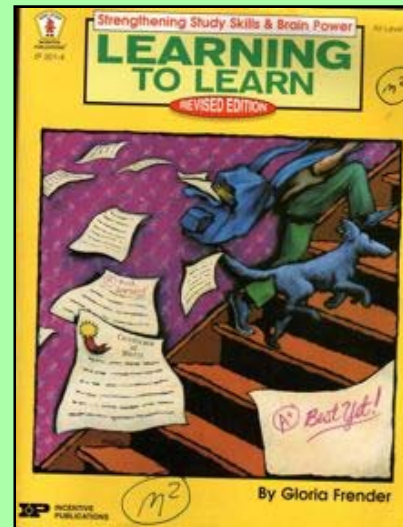
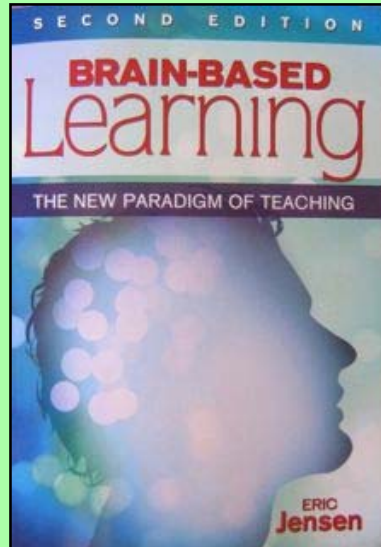
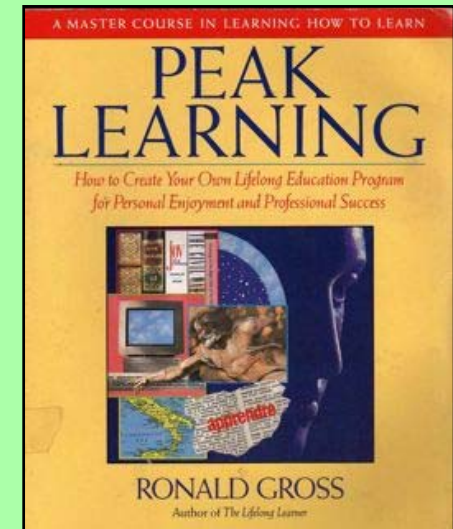
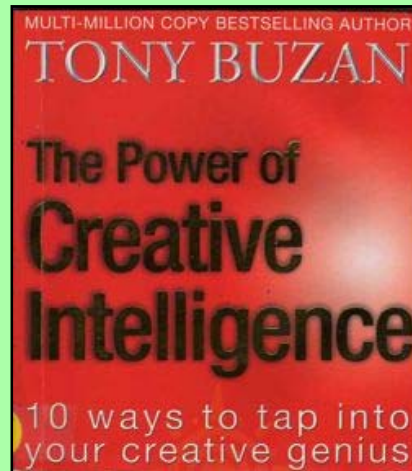
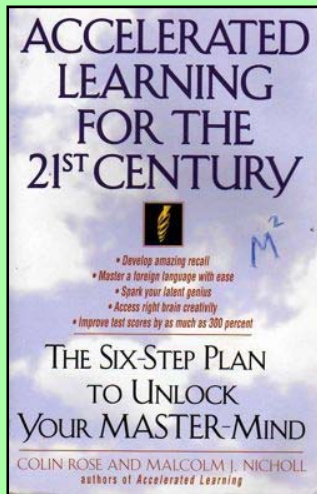
- the last 15 years have seen an explosion of research and new insights, aided by new technologies (imaging techniques especially) into how the human brain actually functions.
- many previous conceptions about human learning require serious overhaul or outright rejection

ps - the implications for educators and policy-makers are profound yet the response to these developments has been largely ignored or muted as bureaucracies, institutions & developers continue to serve vested interests.



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resources & insights ...



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Multiple Intelligences

• 25+ years since Dr. Howard Gardner's pioneering work on the original concept of Multiple Intelligences, Psychologists and Brain Researchers agree that each of us possesses MI:

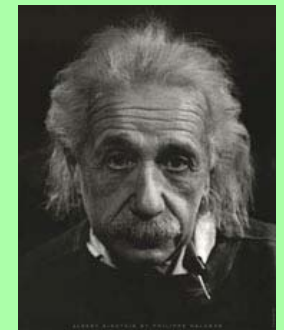
- Logical- Mathematical
- Verbal-Linguistic
- Musical
- Kinesthetic
- Spatial
- Visual
- Creative
- Relational/Empathic
- Interpersonal
- Naturalistic
- Holistic-Synthesizing

And that one or more of these intelligences may dominate our thinking, leading to expertise and giftedness in a particular endeavour. In other words, a gifted engineer is likely skilled in Mathematical & Spatial Int., a sculptor in Kinesthetic-Spatial-Creative Int., a film-maker in Visual-Creative Int., a nurse in Relational-Verbal Int., etc.

"There is ... an enormous desire to make education uniform, to treat all students in the same way, and to apply the same kinds of one-dimensional metrics to all. This trend is inappropriate on scientific grounds and distasteful on ethical grounds.

"... It is of the utmost importance that we recognize and nurture all of the varied human intelligences and all of the combinations of intelligences."

- Dr. Howard Gardner
'Multiple Intelligences:
New Horizons'
2006



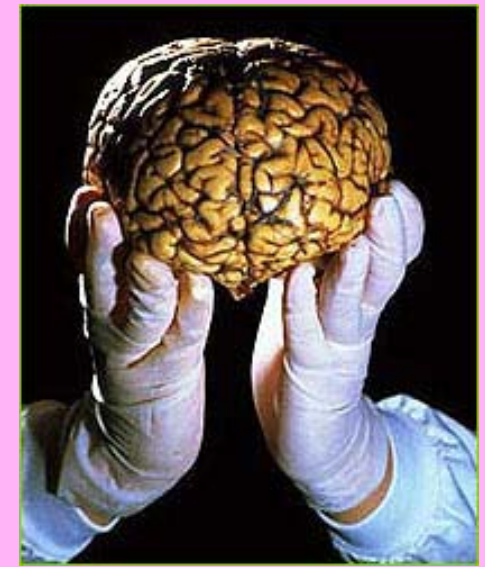
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Neurobiology & Brain-Based Learning

The latest ...

- brain activity, including learning, can be precisely mapped and tracked using new imaging techniques
- imaging and research confirms that brain activity, including growth and learning is extremely sensitive to many environmental and experiential factors
- optimal brain growth requires good nutrition, ample water, movement, and a loving, supportive environment; a stressful environment harms brain development.
- different structures in the brain develop at different times; the development of the **Neocortex**, responsible for the most advanced reasoning, spans the teen years and continues into the 20s.
- teens generally process information different than adults! and that's OK!

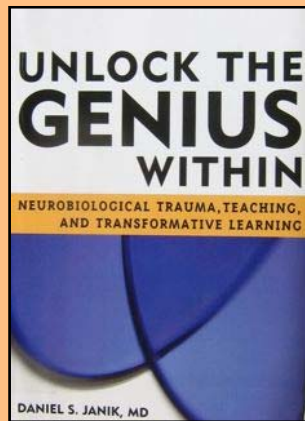
Hi, I'm your brain! We should probably get to know each other a little, eh?



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You can say that again

...



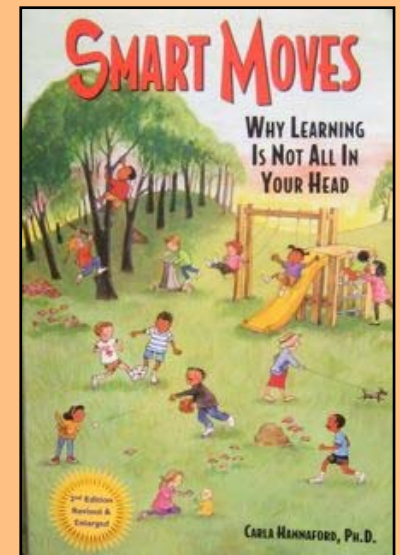
“(Brain) Imaging, the Rosetta stone of neurobiology continues to develop and needs to become standard intellectual fare within educational institutions. ... this new knowledge boils down to a better understanding of our physical selves and how our brains actually learn. Neurobiological understanding is ... a necessary part of being a parent, student, or professional educator, and a requirement for humanity to eventually step outside violence and into a state of true, volitional learning.”

- Dr. Daniel Janik; 'Unlock the Genius Within', 2006

“The health of our educational system depends on our nurturing and promoting the learning of all our citizens. We must relinquish judgments that lead to stress-provoking labels and competition. An appropriate thinking curriculum must be established that synthesizes whole body/mind processing through regular art, music and movement in conjunction with cognitive skills. We must give learners body/mind integrative tools that allow them to stop the stress cycle and activate full sensory hemisphere access.”

- Dr. Carla Hannaford

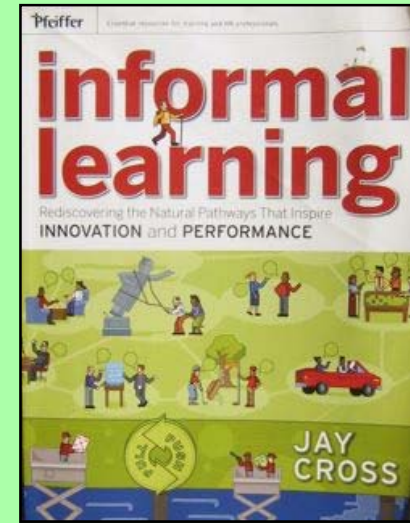
'Smart Moves; Why learning is not all in your head'; 2005



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“Conversation is the most powerful learning technology ever invented. Conversations carry news, create meaning, foster cooperation, and spark innovation.”

- Jay Cross, 'Informal Learning

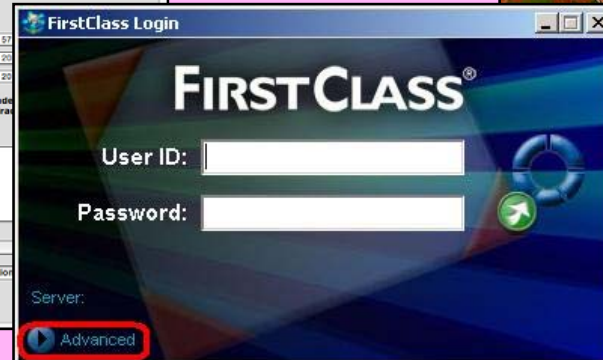
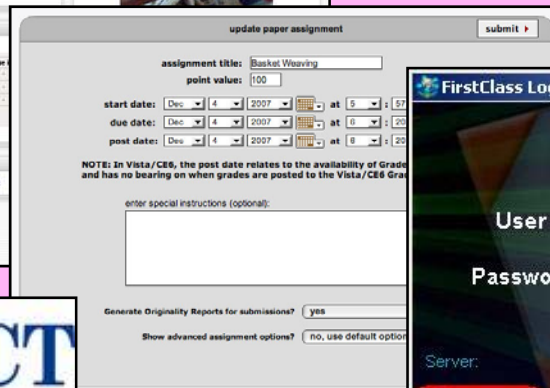
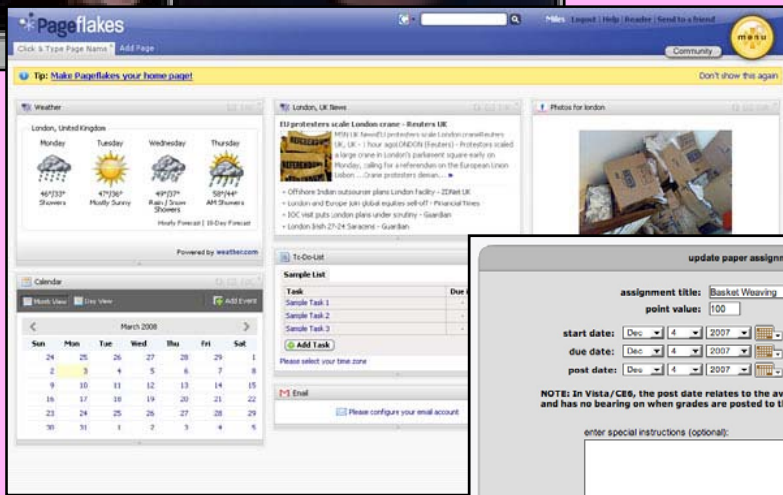
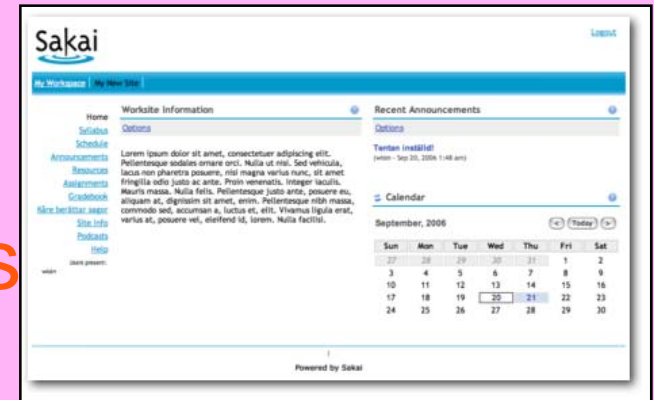


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ii. Virtual Learning Environments

Choices, choices and more choices

and how to choose?!



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... all VLE's I've tested say they that they serve a bazillion educational and corporate clients & that their product offers superior 'learning functionality', but is that really true? IMO they vary widely, so I developed my own criteria, seeking a solution that supports Optimal Learning:



i. it must be 'brain-friendly', that is, designed with Visual Intelligence in mind in addition to Logical Intelligence (i.e. it must support high-functioning Rich-Text editing)

ii. it must easily facilitate conversation (i.e. message threads must display well & be easy-to-follow)

iii. it must easily support audio and video capture

iv. it must provide easy-to-follow guidance for novices.

v. it must be stable and easy to troubleshoot

vi. it must provide easy-to-use organizing capabilities

and the winner is ...

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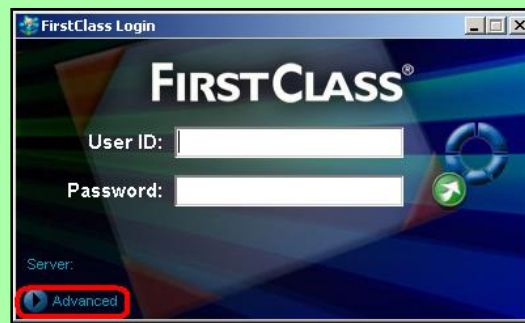
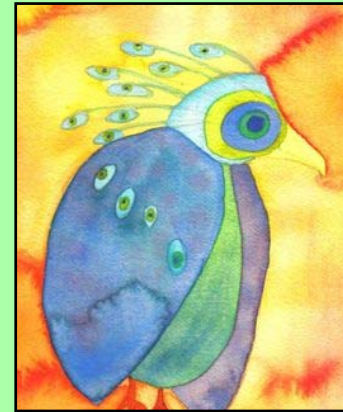
FirstClass!

Okay, I confess. I have been using FirstClass since 1992 (it was first sold in 1990) and I am very familiar with using it, particularly in a conferencing environment.

But this is 2008, an era of advanced Online Learning tools.

So, in developing a course for teens last year, I reviewed all the choices and sweat over developing a few, too, especially PageFlakes and Sakai. Both were close but in the end I found the FC Workspace environment met my criteria.

I don't regret choosing it and I'm planning on using it again.



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And here's why ...

- Easy connectivity
 - Easy administration of learners
- = increased participation & reduced stress

From: Michael Maser
Subject: IN THE NEWS: Discovery of MOST Primitive Bat
To: Nature, Science & Technology

February 15, 2008

Subject: Science of Autumn: Mushrooms rising!
To: Nature, Science & Technology

Here's another cool story reflecting a recent discovery by paleontologists in W... most primitive bat ever discovered! I didn't know that bats are the second most of mammal living today - apparently, only rodents are more plentiful! - cheers

Scientists unearth most primitive bat ever found

WILL DUNHAM (Reuters news)

February 13, 2008 — The most primitive bat ever found fluttered around about 52 ago, but lacked a key feature seen in most bats — the ability to **echo-locate**, hunt-navigating using a kind of sonar.

A team of scientists announced the discovery on Wednesday of a medium-sized an... *Dryobrychtera finneyi* that possessed fully developed wings and was completely ca... Based on the evidence from its skeleton, however, it lacked the ability to echo-locat...

Making Mushroom Spore Prints

1) Collect a few different types of mushrooms. Collect mature but not over-mature mushrooms as young mushrooms do not yet have spores and old mushrooms have already dropped their spores and will probably have maggots in them. Store-bought mushrooms also make nice prints.

2) Cut off the stem carefully.


3) Gently set the mushroom down on a piece of paper. It is a good idea to collect 2 mushrooms of each type, and put one down on dark paper, and one down on light paper. That way, you can be sure to see the spore colour as some are brown and some are white.

4) Place a container like an old yogurt container over the mushroom so that the air currents do not disturb the spore print.

5) Leave for 24 hours.

6) Look at the spore print.

7) Cover with Mactac if you want to keep your spore print.



is a spore print from a common mushroom

Easy-to-use Rich-Text capabilities;
easy to insert graphics

Name	Size	Subject	Last Modified
Nancy Goldfarb	17K	Re(4): o4L: Inspiration: from a learner	18/10/07 8:59 PM
Eva Zidulak	2K	Re(3): o4L: Inspiration: from a learner	18/10/07 5:59 PM
Nancy Goldfarb	7K	Re(2): o4L: Inspiration: from a learner	18/10/07 4:37 PM
Eva Zidulak	2K	Re: o4L: Inspiration: from a learner	18/10/07 4:37 PM
Nancy Goldfarb	492K	s4L: Inspiration: from a learner	17/10/07 2:48 PM
Nancy Goldfarb	2K	Re(3): microscope to recommend?	18/10/07 4:20 AM
Eva Zidulak	2K	Re(2): microscope to recommend?	17/10/07 8:24 AM
Michael Maser	42K	Re: microscope to recommend?	18/10/07 7:03 PM
Angelika Offenwanger	9K	Re: microscope to recommend?	18/10/07 9:55 AM
Nancy Goldfarb	9K	microscope to recommend?	26/09/07 12:54 PM
Michael Maser	2K	"Intuition Network" interview transcripts - FYI	15/10/07 4:20 PM
Brett Sifers	38K	FWD: missing teen (Danoime)	13/10/07 7:03 PM
Michelle Wille	2K	Re(8): Life of Fred	13/10/07 4:54 PM
Sheila Jones	2K	Re(8): Life of Fred	11/10/07 3:12 PM
Heather Miller	3K	Re(7): Life of Fred	11/10/07 12:35 PM
Michelle Wille	2K	Re(6): Life of Fred	11/10/07 9:58 AM
Heather Miller	2K	Re(5): Life of Fred	11/10/07 9:30 AM
Michelle Wille	2K	Re(4): Life of Fred	11/10/07 9:11 AM
Donna Boyce	2K	Re(3): Life of Fred	09/10/07 1:33 PM

... how you
... site I saw
... course by
... oners?

... will I be
... ready for???) um, THE NEXT THING, in September.

The reading list is exciting. Right now I am looking for these:

Horses and the Mystical Path: The Celtic Way of Expanding the Human Soul (Hardcover)

Horse Sense and the Human Heart: What Horses Can Teach Us About Trust, Bonding, Creativity and Spirituality (Paperback)

thank you for sharing these ^ titles -!

(Also I am looking for time to read them.) <smile>

Mary

thank you for sharing all this info. here!!!


Easy-to-follow messaging threads;
easy to converse

To: Zeno

This morning when my daughter woke me up early & I was still tired (so a bit grumpy ...) she suggested: why don't we walk down to the ocean for a morning walk and prayer, that will cheer you up! smart girl -

It was wonderful ... walking down a country lane, collecting wild & scented fallen rose petals, keeping company with four herons, taking off our boots 'n socks to walk along the shoreline - we saw the wind sway wild yellow buttercups, tall grasses, green leaves & I prayed: thank you for the strength to turn our lives like these leaves & please may it always be as sweet as rose petals! -happier mama, nancy.

what is your precious petal or prayer?



People-friendly
messaging capability
very easy to use

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And further ...

FirstClass now provides an easy-to-use 'Workspace' environment, that 'packages' various functions, as in the generic Workspace to the right.



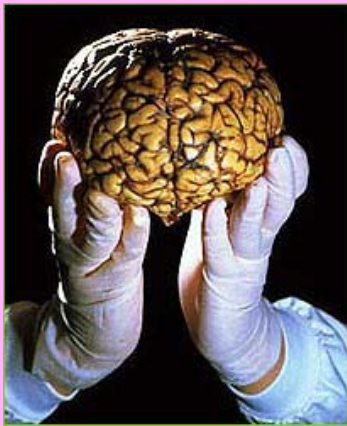
To the left: a Customized Workspace, organized into course conference-units and other organizing functions (e.g. files, calendar, bookmarks, contact d-base). All users see this and have full access.

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In conclusion ...

Online learning opportunities and technologies continue to be developed and made available for the educational marketplace.

- Let's remember our goal as educators is to support and nurture human learning about which we now have a richer, more precise understanding than existed prior to the digital revolution.
- Let's encourage software and technology developers to design their products with human learning in mind.
- And let's continue to encourage bureaucrats, elected politicians and administrators to make their decisions with human learning in mind, too!



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