

POLIS: Project for Online Instructional Support

<https://polis.arizona.edu/index.jsp>

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What is POLIS?

- ❑ POLIS (Project for Online Instructional Support) is an online support tool for instructors that provides an instructional resource for students on a course-by-course basis
 - ❑ POLIS, created at the University of Arizona, differs from standard course management systems by featuring sound pedagogical practices (argumentation tools) embedding within its technological structure via the tools and support it provides
 - ❑ 24 hour access, web based (design and access homesite remotely) with password-protected areas for copyrighted materials
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POLIS: *Course Homesite*

- ❑ Basic course information
 - ❑ Links to all resources installed for course
 - ❑ Flexible (TAs, team, individual)
 - ❑ Announcements, Assignments, Important Links, POLIS resources
 - ❑ Links to instructor's homepage (if any)
 - ❑ Open access
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POLIS: *Course Tools*

- Assignments
 - Announcements
 - Important Links
 - File Storage
 - Lessons and Units
 - Quizzes and Self-Assessment
 - POLIS Private Reserves and Library eReserves
 - Bibliography and Webliography
 - Discussions
 - ClickMail
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POLIS: *Lessons*

Essay Lesson (NEW!):

- Short essays used to help students learn course content
 - May be an important source of information for students in how they are progressing and for instructors on how concepts are being understood
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POLIS: *Lessons*

Adversary

- POLIS offers an interactive online debate protocol in which students are invited to take and defend positions against counterarguments written by the instructor or selected from other students' writings.
 - The Adversary protocol's elements are as follows:
 - description of a controversy;
 - student selection of a standpoint and preliminary defense of that standpoint;
 - presentation of an opposing argument; student reaction to opposing argument;
 - student reconsideration of standpoint and explanation for changing standpoints or standing pat.
 - Any number of opposing arguments may be presented for the student's reaction. The next revision of this protocol will also allow for review of other students' arguments on either side of the issue.
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POLIS: *Lessons*

Virtual Peer

- An alternative format for incorporation of argumentation into courses of any subject
 - presents the problem with a set of candidate answers;
 - asks for the reasoning leading to the selected answer;
 - presents contradictory reasoning favoring each unchosen alternative and asks how the student would respond to a classmate reasoning in this way;
 - presents the candidate answers for reconsideration and asks for reasoning supporting the student's new answer;
 - presents the correct solution
- The online version sacrifices live interaction with peers, but improves on the live version by assuring that every student will have to respond to reasoning that differs from his or her own and by assuring that this reasoning will present significant intellectual challenges.

POLIS: The Road Ahead

- Integration with University of Arizona campus resources
 - Transition to OpenSource development
 - Separation of tools:
 - CMS
 - Lesson tool
 - University-focused authorization
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POLIS: The Road Ahead

- Lesson Modules – extensibility
 - Support and improve current lesson tools
 - Supply a methodology for extending POLIS with the creation of new/custom lesson tools
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POLIS Demonstration Site

- Check out this site for examples of how to use each of the POLIS tools

https://polis.arizona.edu/fall03/Course-Homesite.cgi?H_ED_999-99

POLIS Development & Support

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