

Create a page in Sakai 2.x



NOTE: None of this is intended as a user interface design. I am using a screen shot to give an indication of intended functionality.

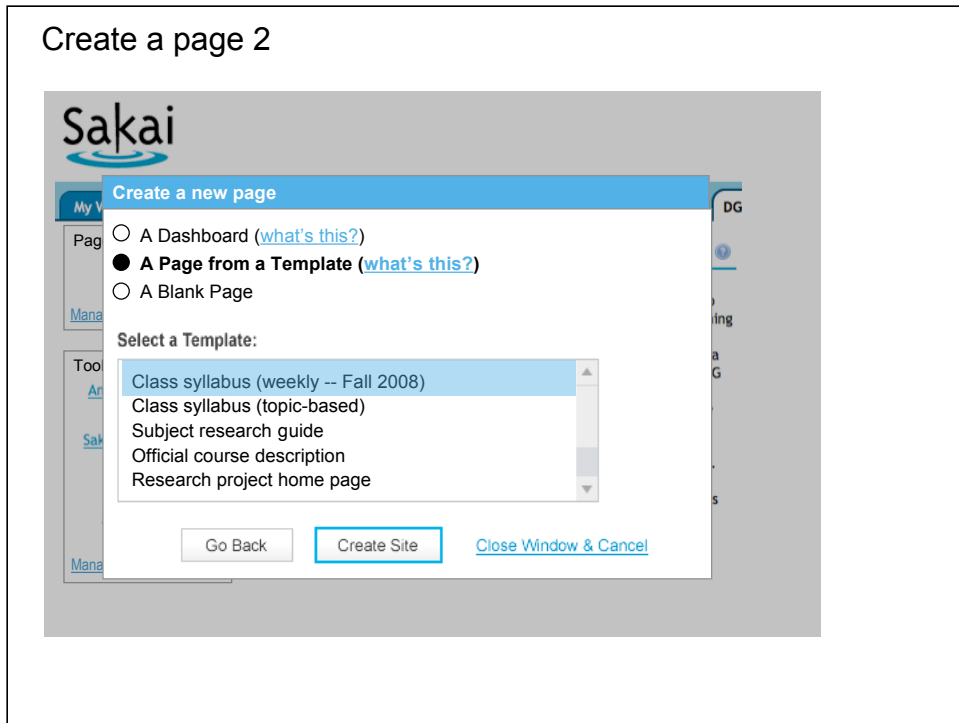
Here you see one idea for how the “Page Assembly” capability would be accessed in a traditional Sakai 2.x context with no real “reform” of how the site presents itself. The user simply clicks “Create a New Page” and they are presented with an authoring interface (or a window that lets them choose a starting template for their page). The order and visibility of pages could be controlled by the Page Order tool as it is today. This probably isn’t ideal but is the quickest path to getting 2.x to have some of the base capabilities I’m envisioning.



This is a slight reform that makes a formal distinction between tools and pages. It implies an interface for managing (creating, deleting, hiding) pages and tools. The Page Order tool does part of this already, so you can imagine something like that with an “add” and “delete” button.

This Page/Tool distinction, I think, is both an emphasis of the difference between 2.x and 3.x and a potential bridge between them. Pages are a place where you create content “from scratch” (or according to a template--the point is you have a lot of control over how things look). Tools are a place where you have a structured interaction with a series of web forms--there is a workflow that you are following to get something done.

Ultimately I see this distinction start to collapse in 3.0.



This is an imagining of what might happen when the “Create new page” button is pressed.

I’m not sure if there is really a distinction between a “*dashboard*” and a “page”, but the idea is that a dashboard page will be a (potentially) multi-column layout who’s main purpose is to place widgets. There will be very little room for content authoring per se, although one can imagine that one or more of the widgets on that page are “content authoring widgets” that would let your create simple HTML content.

A page, on the other hand, gives you a blank canvas on which to start creating (a la Google Docs or MS Word). Choosing a template provides some structure to that canvas. Of course you can place widgets on this blank canvas as well and, so, I’m not sure the distinction between the two is technical. It might be simply that a dashboard is just a template--even so, I think there may be utility in calling out this distinction, but I’ll leave that to the UX folks.

Starting to Edit

The screenshot shows a web editor interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "My Workspace", "Announcements", "Conference Bridge Schedule", "Conference Committee", and "DG". Below these, there are two sidebars. The left sidebar has a "Pages" section with "Home" and "New Syllabus (Weekly)" (with a "Manage Pages" link) and a "Tools" section with links for "Announcements", "Resources", "Sakai Bookmarks", "Discussion", "Chat Room", "Email Archive", "Site info", and "Manage Tools". The main content area is titled "New Syllabus (Weekly)" and shows it was edited on September 8, 2008. It features a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Table, Tools, Help) and a toolbar with options for font (Sans Serif), size (18pt), bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, and link. The main content is titled "Syllabus for [Enter your course], [Enter Term]". It contains a collapsed section for "Week 1: September 1, 2008 -- September 5, 2008" which includes a table with three columns: "Description", "Activities", and "Assignments". The table cells contain placeholder text: "[Enter what is happening this week]", "[List or create links to readings or other activities here]", and "[Create links to assignments here]". Below the table is a text box with the placeholder "[Enter anything you want to here. Or leave it blank]". Below the table are three expandable sections for "Week 2: September 8, 2008 -- September 12, 2008", "Week 3: September 15, 2008 -- September 19, 2008", and "Week 4: September 22, 2008 -- September 26, 2008".

Here is an example of a template before editing. This consists of several “sections” that can be collapsed or expanded. These features are up for debate, of course. The main point is you get a canvas for creating your page. I’ve simply stolen the UI from Google docs.

Editing some text

The screenshot shows a web-based editor for a course syllabus. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "My Workspace", "Announcements", "Conference Bridge Schedule", "Conference Committee", and "DG". Below these, the page title is "Course Syllabus" with a sub-header "Syllabus for Econ 101, Fall 2008" and a timestamp "edited on September 8, 2008 12:18 PM by Mkorcuska". A menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Insert", "Format", "Table", "Tools", and "Help". The main content area displays a table for "Week 1: September 1, 2008 -- September 5, 2008". The table has three columns: "Description", "Activities", and "Assignments". The "Description" cell contains a paragraph of text. The "Activities" cell contains a list of tasks. The "Assignments" cell contains a placeholder text "[Create links to assignments here]". Below the table, there are three expandable sections for "Week 2", "Week 3", and "Week 4", each with a date range.

Pages: Home, Course Syllabus, Manage Pages

Tools: Announcements, Resources, Sakai Bookmarks, Discussion, Chat Room, Email Archive, Site info, Manage Tools

Course Syllabus edited on September 8, 2008 12:18 PM by Mkorcuska

File Edit View Insert Format Table Tools Help

Sans Serif 18pt B I U Link

Syllabus for Econ 101, Fall 2008

Week 1: September 1, 2008 -- September 5, 2008

Description	Activities	Assignments
A brief introduction about what we'll be doing in this class and why you should care.	Read the first 2 chapters of the textbook. Introduce yourself to your classmates in the online discussion tool. Subscribe to the Wall Street Journal Online Edition.	[Create links to assignments here]

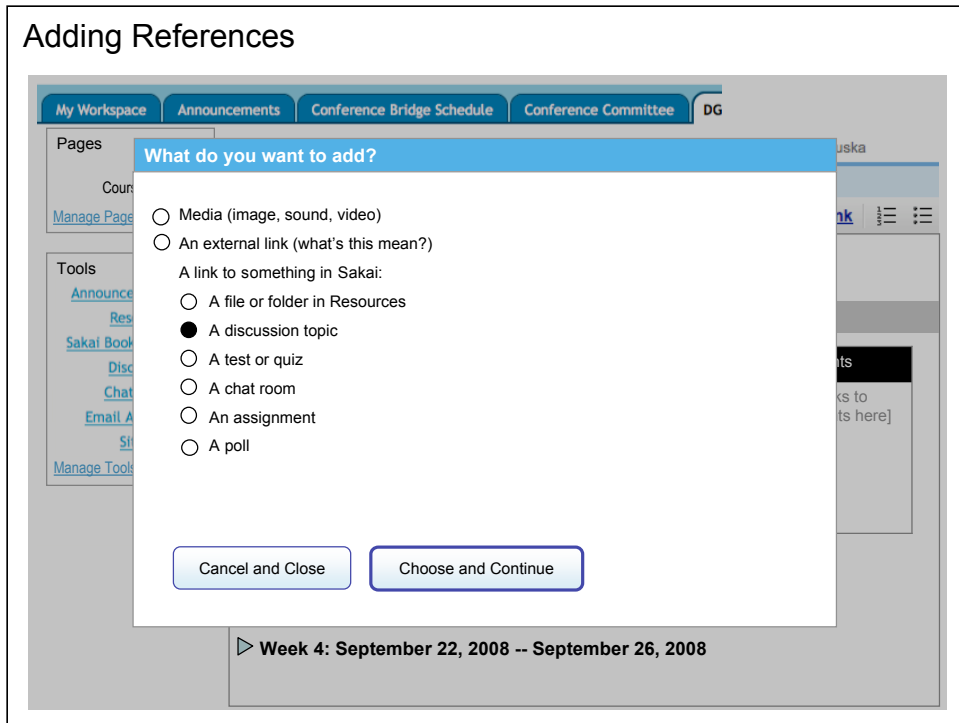
Week 2: September 8, 2008 -- September 12, 2008

Week 3: September 15, 2008 -- September 19, 2008

Week 4: September 22, 2008 -- September 26, 2008

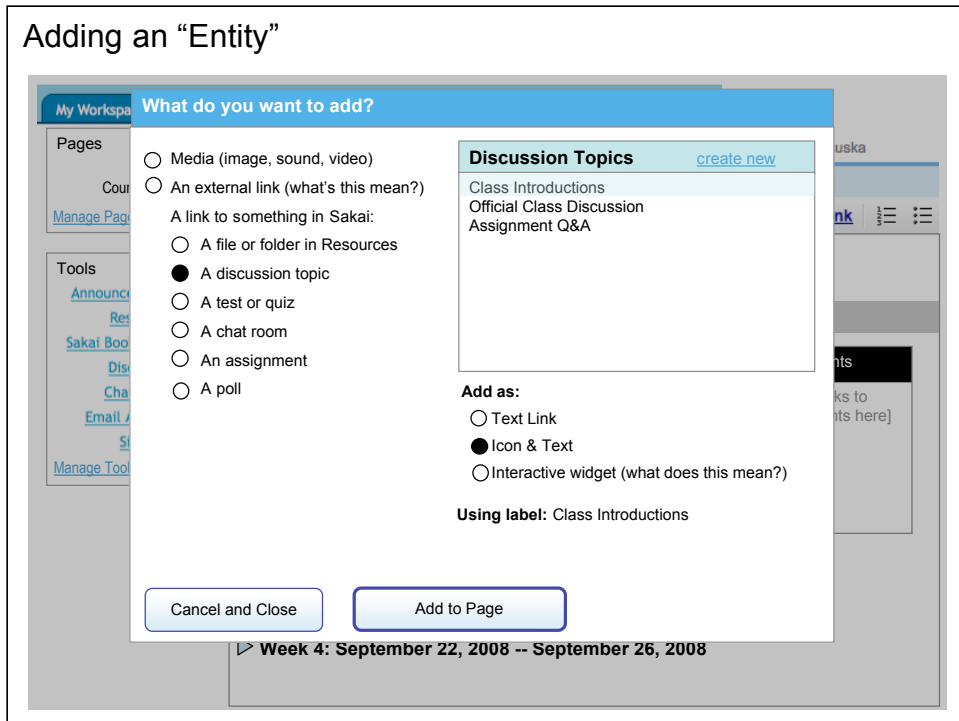
Some of the text has been edited and some formatting applied. Now I'm going to add some references to other objects.

Adding References



Now we're ready to start adding references by clicking the "Link" button (we need to do better than this from a UX perspective, but hopefully it will be illustrative).

You can add media, external links or objects inside Sakai (I have reasons for this split although I'm not sure its perfect by any means). I'd like this who interaction to happen in a single panel, but it is spread over several screens because of my lack of talent and time.



When an object is selected a mechanism for selecting an existing item (in this case a discussion topic) or even creating a new one (in which case another window would appear to collect the essential information needed for its creation).

I can insert that item into the page as a Link, as an Icon (which gives me a default graphic as well as some text) or as an Interactive Widget (if defined for this kind of entity). In all cases the item has label text associated with it which can be edited before or after being added to the page. For widgets, I'm assuming that there may be other appearance properties that could either be exposed here or modified once the widget was placed.

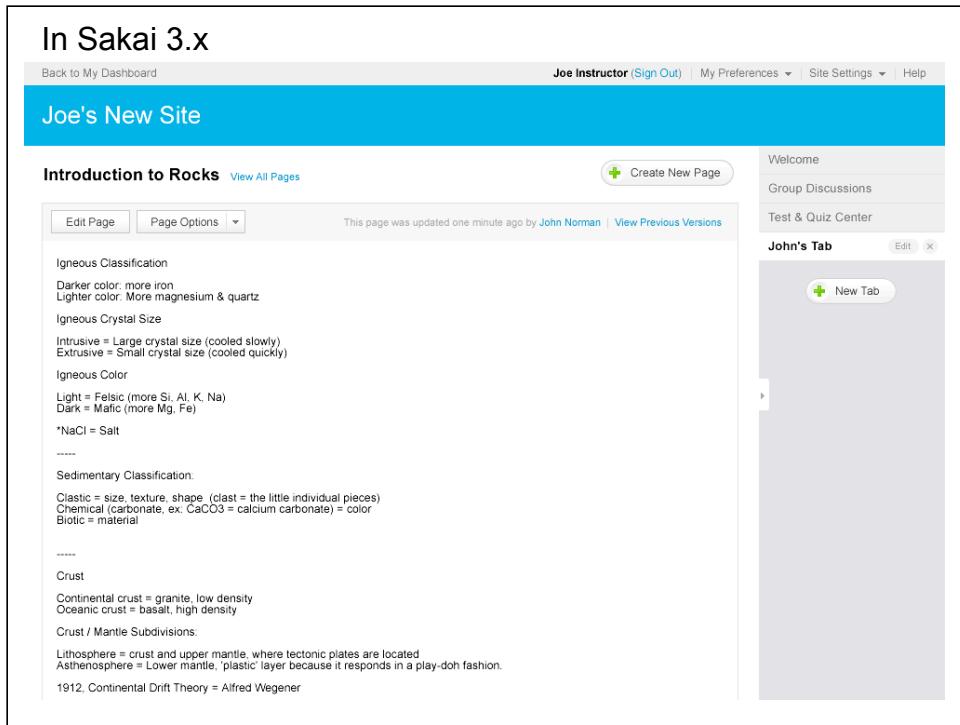
Entity Added

The screenshot displays a web interface for a course syllabus. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "My Workspace", "Announcements", "Conference Bridge Schedule", and "Conference Committee", with "DG" on the right. Below these are "Pages" (Home, Course Syllabus, Manage Pages) and "Tools" (Announcements, Resources, Sakai Bookmarks, Discussion, Chat Room, Email Archive, Site info, Manage Tools). The main content area is titled "Course Syllabus" and includes a rich text editor toolbar with options like File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Table, Tools, and Help. The syllabus content is titled "Syllabus for Econ 101, Fall 2008" and lists four weeks. Week 1 (September 1-5, 2008) is expanded to show a table with three columns: Description, Activities, and Assignments.

Description	Activities	Assignments
A brief introduction about what we'll be doing in this class and why you should care.	Read the first 2 chapters of the textbook. Introduce yourself to your classmates in the discussion forum: Class Introductions Subscribe to the Wall Street Journal Online Edition.	[Create links to assignments here]

Week 2: September 8, 2008 -- September 12, 2008
Week 3: September 15, 2008 -- September 19, 2008
Week 4: September 22, 2008 -- September 26, 2008

The Icon-based representation of the discussion forum has been added.



This is a screen Nathan made to illustrate how his designs work for Sakai 2.x or 3.x. I don't see anything about what I'm envisioning that makes it specific to one or the other.