Classroom Salon Training

Description: Classroom Salon is the most comprehensive commenting and discussion platform that was ever created. Using mobile and social learning features, Salon provides an exciting platform for teachers to develop, deliver and assess social learning tasks that encourages learning from others. Social Learning theory suggests that students learn best when they observe and participate in what others do (and not do). Salon is the first platform designed with social learning in mind. We think with clever design of course tasks; you can create a true “social learning environment”

Before you start
Here are some frequently asked questions and why we think Salon will help you “reinvent” your classroom.

1. What is a Salon?
   a. According to Wikipedia “A salon is a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host, held partly to amuse one another and partly to refine taste and increase their knowledge of the participants through conversation”.

2. How do I create a Salon?
   a. As the host, you create a salon for your students and invite them to join your Salon.

3. How do I introduce Salon to my Students?
   a. You tell students that Salon is about benefiting from the collective work of all. If they do their part (no matter how small), collectively, the class creates enough knowledge to have in-depth discussions about course topics. If students want to remain anonymous, they can use a screen name and an avatar instead of their real name and picture. As the Salon host, you still have access to individual student work for grading and intervention.

4. What would be a good Salon Task?
   a. It can be anything. We prefer some new ways of learning like crowd sourcing homework. It is like an online workbook where each student
is asked to solve one or two problems. It is the collective work of the group that will increase student knowledge through observation and further conversation. [see sample salon tasks in Part II]

5. **Is that the only thing you can do with Salon?**
   a. No. Since any document authored or uploaded into Salon becomes a conversation piece or work space, you can design different tasks like short readings before lecture, follow up questions after lecture etc to take advantage of social and collective nature of salon activities. [see sample salon tasks in Part II]

6. **How do I assess student participation and learning?**
   a. Salon is perhaps the most analytics rich environment for education. Not only you will be able to easily filter individual or group work, you can quickly find out which part of content generate the most discussion and which sections are the most confusing to students. [See Part III]

7. **Are Salons and Tasks recyclable?**
   a. Absolutely. You can take a salon task (with or without annotations, tags, questions) from one semester to another. You can recycle Salons by renaming, adding and removing users and tasks.

8. **How do I get started?**
   a. Contact classroom-salon@andrew.cmu.edu to receive an invitation to instructor account. With an instructor account, you can enroll students and export student data.

**Salon Encourages Task Based Design**

Course management systems help deliver content and provide support for other course management tasks. However, they do not contribute in any significant way to gathering and filtering knowledge. Knowledge is socially embedded and Salon’s unique task based design of learning activities allows you to tap into social knowledge like no other. Still, salon tasks can be embedded as URL’s in your course management system to take advantage both systems. Salon tasks are designed with titles, descriptions, time to participate, time to view social comments, time to discuss, global questions and tags for finding user analytics among many other features.

**Task Based Design** – Task is an activity that you will require students to do. You ask them to read and prepare for lecture, you ask them to do homework, you ask them to do assignments, and you encourage them to discuss things among peers. Salon is the first platform that allows you to keep track of what students are doing online with your course content. So when students tell you “I put so much effort into this course”, you will know exactly how much effort they put in. Because Salon makes it easy to present, discuss, analyze and track course activities like no other platform. You can control when task needs to be done individually and when to allow students to see each other’s responses and discuss them in detail. Salon
allows you to export student data and assess student’s effort in the task and enter a grade into your grade book.

**Task Representation** – Salon requires each task to be represented by a visual media. Salon currently supports (or soon will) media types such as text documents (that contain text, images and links), pdf’s (retain the format of the original), and videos (from youtube). [pdf and video tasks will be added very shortly]

Since students perform each task in the context [reducing cognitive overload] of the document or media, Salon can filter student work by instructor defined tags (like *discuss in class, give an example* etc), organize and present activity summaries using a task dashboard. In social mode (or view mode) students can see and analyze where most students are focusing on.

In this workshop we will discuss how to set up a salon class, design in and out of class activities that will encourage social learning. Most of the workshop will be customized to attendee needs.

**PART 1 – LEARNING HOW TO SET UP CLASSROOM SALON**

**ACTIVITY 1- SETTING YOUR SELF ON SALON**

- We have created some generic instructor accounts for you to modify and use. Your workshop trainer will provide special instructions for login into salon as an instructor. After you login to salon, you can check if you have an instructor account by going to menu (top right) item ME. If ME has “enroll users” and “Dashboard” this means you have an instructor account. If not, send email to classroom-salon@andrew.cmu.edu

- Login using the sample instructor accounts provided by your trainer. Go to My Profile. Upload a picture to represent yourself (any jpeg would do). Change profile information such as name, email and passwd to reflect your information. Save the new profile settings. Be sure to use a proper email where you can get passwd reminders if needed.

**ACTIVITY 2- GETTING STUDENTS TO REGISTER FOR A SALON ACCOUNT**

- There are two ways to get students to register in Salon. The easiest way is to share the registration code “popcity” (no quotes) with the students and ask them to self-register at [http://classroomsalon.org](http://classroomsalon.org).
- The other way is for you to add students. If you have a teacher account, you can go to ME->ENROLL USERS
AND either import a csv file with student information (bulk add) or enter one student at a time. If you bulk add students, create a txt file with each line the following format: 

John Doe\tab doe@classroomsalon.org\tab John

Note that name, email and passwd (usually set to first name to start with) are separated by tab character. Then import this text file using bulk add students to create them salon accounts.

Your IT administrator can assist you with this task.

ACTIVITY 3- CREATING A SALON AND INVITING STUDENTS TO JOIN

Wikipedia defines a Salon as "A salon is a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host, held partly to amuse one another and partly to refine taste and increase their knowledge of the participants through conversation."

Our Salons have the same goals. Salon owner is the host. As a teacher you must inspire your students to acquire knowledge from each other. You want them to converse. A Salon is a great place where students meet other students and teacher meet students. Salon is a place to enable social learning by allowing students to benefit from each other’s contributions. You can have several models of salon implementations in class, like one salon for the entire class or individual salons for specific tasks (like a reading salon, writing salon, homework salon etc).

Here is an example of creating one salon for the entire class. You name it appropriately (for example, course_number_semester_purpose) so you or students can easily find it by searching:

- Suppose you create a Salon for the entire Class. Give it a name so that students can find it. Keep it a public salon or make it approval only salon (any task placed in this salon can only be accessed by members of the salon).
• Share the Salon link with students. As shown below, click on My Salons from home page, choose the Salon you want to share, find the Salon link and send it as an email attachment to students. [As of now there is no direct way to enter students into a salon. Students must join salon using the link provided]

My Salons ➔ Click on the Salon ➔ right click and copy the link to share

• When students open the salon link you provided, they will be able to join as shown below. They can also see who is in the salon already.

• If the salon is private, you (salon owner) will get a notification email and you will have to approve by clicking on the message
• If the salon is public the student is placed in salon with no verification.

KEEPING STUDENT WORK ANONYMOUS
It is possible in some cases you may want to create an environment where students communicate freely under a screen name. In order to facilitate this, as you create accounts for students, use the “screen name” instead of the real name. Also ask students to upload an avatar instead of their pictures. All comments will now show up under the anonymous
screen name, allowing you to inspect comments from individual students. You can also encourage students to share their screen names with others they trust so they can keep focus on comments from a small subgroup. Screen names can be changed back to real names and avatar can be replaced with a real picture whenever necessary (from Edit Profile)

**ACTIVITY 4- MANAGING USERS IN SALONS**

You can allow/authorize/remove members of Salon at any time. This is like managing a class. To manage users in a Salon, click on my Salons, find the Salon you want to manage and then authorize or remove members anytime.

![Managing Salon Users](image)

**ACTIVITY 5- CREATING A SALON TASK**

Salon is about creating tasks that can be done individually or as a group. Each task is represented by a visual media (text, pdf, video) that is uploaded into the system. Students perform task activities by selecting text, commenting/responding, using tags and answering questions. For example, a task activity may be a reading assignment where students select text, comment with tags and questions. Another task activity may be a crowd-sourced homework assignment where each student completes a portion of the homework.

To create a Task (as shown below)

- Go to quickstart ➔ choose an activity ➔ create a task/doc
- Then type, cut and paste or import a word document that represents the task. [we will be adding pdf imports and video imports soon]
Change font, create web links to external content (select text and in the http:// box below, type the URL). Add images to documents and create a well formatted task document. Your IT support can help here.

IMPORTANT: Salon currently does not allow editing TASK documents once committed [we are changing this to allow editing before committing and soliciting activities]. Salon treats task documents as "Static" (cannot change). However, if you want to modify a task document (before any participation), simply create a new task document, cut and paste content from the old task document, edit and save the new document. Then delete the old document. This process is quite easy once you get used to it. You may go through few iterations of the document content before committing it to a Salon.

ACTIVITY 6 – MANAGING TASK DOCUMENTS FROM YOUR REPOSITORY
Once a task document is added, it will be under “My Tasks/Documents”. If you have not committed this task document to a Salon yet it will show as “add to a salon”. In the following screen shot, you see that only one document was committed to a Salon. Others are in your repository. You can add or move a document from one salon to another at anytime.
ACTIVITY 7 – ADDING QUESTIONS AND TAGS TO A TASK DOCUMENT
Tags are important part of Salon interactions. You may want readers to tag content as they complete activities, so you can filter and see who has selected a particular tag. To add tags and questions, go to Document Manager:

You will be directed to Tasks/Doc manager as shown below.
From task/doc manager, you can
1. Provide a task title and a description
2. Add tags and questions
3. Set up access dates and times, so users and can participate (by annotating) and/or view others responses at specific time periods
4. Add the task document to a salon you are part of (your own salon or a salon you are a member of)
5. Share participate link or view link with students, so they can quickly go to the document (these links can be embedded in any course management system or your course web page)
6. Create duplicate copies of the task document (no annotations, but questions, tags and access will be the same as the original document. This is great, when you want to reuse the same content in another semester with no annotations or you have multiple sections of the same class)
7. Delete the task document

**ACTIVITY 8 – ADDING A TASK DOCUMENT TO A SALON**
When you are ready to commit the task document to a Salon, simply Click “Put this task/document in a Salon” and select the salon as shown below. You can also move task documents from one salon to another salon anytime.

**ACTIVITY 9 – NOTIFICATION OF CURRENT TASKS**

When a task is uploaded into a salon, a student who is a member of the salon will receive an email message with a link to the task. Furthermore, students can always see current tasks from the wall. **You must set the task access dates from task/doc manager** when there is a task if the tasks to be appeared on the wall. If no task/doc access dates are specified, then tasks will **not be displayed** on the wall. But task/doc is still accessible from task salon page. If a task has access times, students will see current tasks on the wall when they login. You simply click on task participation icon (lower right) and students are directed to the task.

**ACTIVITY 10 – MOVING A TASK DOCUMENT FROM ONE SALON TO ANOTHER**

Sometimes, you decide to move a task document (with annotations) to another Salon. This may be because, you decided to create a new salon and decided that document fits into the new salon theme better. Or you decided that, you will carry the document (with all its annotations) to a new semester, so new students can benefit from old students collective knowledge. We are working on options, so you can just export: annotations only, annotations and users, or hot spots (with n or more users) only. This will allow you to build an annotation timeline on the document and make the document more “smarter” over time.

To **move document from one Salon to another**, it is the same process as placing the document in a Salon.

Go to Salon -> Task Doc -> Task/Doc manager (left most icon)
ACTIVITY 11 – HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN A SALON TASK/DOC

Students can participate in salon tasks in two modes. From salon task/doc manager, students can be given participate or view link.

A participate link will open the document in participate (only student annotations are shown) mode. Students can annotate or respond to questions. Here is how annotation interface looks like.

Users can also click on “Turn off lights” and get a non-distracting view of the content as follows. This is an ideal reading and annotation mode. Clicking on the dark area will open the general annotation or participation mode.
Students also respond to global questions only in the participate mode. Click on the respond tab and respond to the question. Choose breadcrumbs as shown to corroborate your answer.

Above we described how to use participate mode to perform individual tasks.
ACTIVITY 12 – PARTICIPATING IN VIEW MODE

In some cases, you may allow students to participate in view mode. That is, you want students to see what others have done and provide their responses. One can switch between participate and view modes using the menu bar.

When a task document is opened in view mode, all comments are shown in the context as shown below. Note that view mode may take a few seconds to open based on your network speed and number of commenters. Be patient and it will open.

You can also access activity timeline using activity tab to find most recent comments. Clicking on the comment will point you to the location of the comment.
Clicking on "My Hotspots" tab will allow you to see how your annotations compare with others. This is a great way to see who overlaps with your commented sections and what they say compared to yours.

Clicking on tabs will allow you to filter comments by tags (if you used any). For example, following figure shows comments that were tagged using "pathos". This is a great way to find what students think of any course material. For example, you can ask students to tag content as "Difficult", "Discuss in class", "Give another Example" [you choose these tags] so you can filter and know where students want you to focus on. This is a great way to manage your class as you find out early on where students are having trouble or interested in more discussion.
Participating in view mode

There are number of ways to participate in view mode. As you filter discussions by users, tags or density, you can simply click on “Join this discussion” and join the thread.

Or you can reply to a specific comment by clicking on reply button (next to tags). When you reply to a specific comment, user who owns the comment will receive an email from the system with a link to the document.
The third option is to start a whole new discussion thread. You must refresh, select “allow annotation” and write your comment as usual.

Deleting a comment

A user can delete a comment by simply clicking on the comment and clicking on edit comment button. Unlike comments in discussion blogs, users have the right to edit or delete a comment at any time. This is also a good learning experience as students can learn from others and update their comment so they have a correct response that can be used from “My Notebook”.

Another instance of our creative powers, is our talent for slander, how ingenious are we at inventive scandal? what a formidable story can we in a moment fabricate merely from the force of a prolifick imagination? how many reputations, in the fertile brain of a female, have been utterly despoiled? how industrious are we at improving a hint? suspicion how easily do we convert into conviction, and conviction, embellished by the power of eloquence, stalks abroad to the surprise and confusion of unsuspecting inquisitors.

excellency in our sex, of our sex, hath been ever so enormous, so extremely ready are we, that the very first thought presents us with an apology, so plausible, as to produce our actions even in an amiable light.

Are we not sometimes, when the opportunity properly directed, sufficiently to employ the memory, it is a truth that is known, and if an inferiority of our sex, how industrious are we at improving a hint? suspicion how easily do we convert into conviction, and conviction, embellished by the power of eloquence, stalks abroad to the surprise and confusion of unsuspecting inquisitors.

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PART II – HOW TO USE CLASSROOM SALON (CLS) IN YOUR COURSE

ACTIVITY 1- SAMPLE SALON TASKS

SHORT READINGS BEFORE LECTURE – Upload a document that contains short readings as a way to prepare for the lecture. Provide students with Tags (discuss in class, give more examples...) that can be used to mark up content that they read. Keep the activity short (10-15 mins) and provide clear directions (like ask 3 good questions or make 3 good comments) so students know your expectations. Before or during lecture, you can filter by density of comments, users or tags to deliver a great lecture in class. As you use their annotations as the basis for your class discussion, student relate to your lecture more.

CROWD SOURCING HOMEWORK – Knowledge is socially embedded. Rather than asking each student to solve n problems, you present a document that contains some questions. You ask each student to do one or two problems that they are most comfortable with. Since Salon document is like a workbook, you can present questions like the following format.

**Question 1**: What is the Capital of USA? __<highlight here and write the answer>三

Students can then easily choose answer area and write the response as a comment. Once view mode is enabled, students will be able to see and discuss responses to all questions. Advantages of this technique are you get each student to do some work (and track), you find out which problems they chose the most or chose the least etc.

WRITING AND PEER REVIEW – Salon is an ideal place for students to upload their work (writings, cool problems they find etc) and get colleagues to respond. They can get other students to review their work or respond to their questions. It is way better than sending and receiving attachments.

GETTING STUDENTS TO READ TEXTBOOK – If you are interested in finding a way to include your text book in salon, send email to classroom-salon@andrew.cmu.edu. In one example of Salon and textbook use, 400+ students from University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee created over 33,000+ annotations and questions in a biology class. For the first time, instructor had more questions than he can handle, a good problem to have.

This is just a small sample of salon tasks you can try. Start with something simple. One you can manage easily. Get students to participate in discussion through their computers, tablets and mobile devices. Learn how to use Salon analytics to make the experience better for you and the students.

ACTIVITY 1- PRESENTING SALON ACTIVITIES IN COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS) or COURSE WEB PAGE

All Salon tasks are represented by URL’s. You can go to “Task/Doc Manager” copy the link (participate or view) and post it to a course management system or course web.

One of the best ways to get student participation is for you to annotate the document first (from participate mode) and ask some questions or start a discussion as shown below. Now
the students know exactly where you want them to focus on. Share the view link with them and students can click on highlighted sections and join the discussion.

You can embed participate or view link in any course management web site and allow direct access to the task.

If you have your own website, you can embed course document links for students to read as shown below.

When students click on one of the links (say how to set up c0 on a mac), what they see is below. It opens the following salon page for example.

**Why is this important?** Now a question, that would have generated number of discussion threads (some redundant), has only a few, with some student providing the answers. This conversation about how to setup c0 on a mac “cannot” happen anywhere else. If we see this question again in a discussion forum, we simply, post a link to the document.
The same technique can be used with any type of document. You can link your lecture documents, assignment documents, question documents, homework documents etc.. as Salon links (in the example above we are showing how FAQ's are Salon documents). Now your students with access to your Salon (assuming documents were added to salon, and can only be accessed by authorized users of Salon) can always annotate and comment on your course documents. You can keep track of student interactions and see which documents need to be clarified.

**ACTIVITY 2- USING SALON AS A STUDENT NOTE TAKING TOOL**

One way to encourage social learning activities in Salon is to show students how they create their own notebooks as they perform salon tasks. For example, any student can access all their salon work from My Notebook.

Students will see ALL of their selections and notes as follows. From this interface, students can filter notes by dates, salon or by task/doc. They can also print out notes as pdf or hard copy.
IMPORTANT: Encourage your students to use Salon often to read and comment, as all of their work is recorded and accessible with context and comments.

ACTIVITY 3 – FORMING WORK GROUPS IN SALON
Salon does not have a sub salon concept. That is because; we want students to benefit from work by ALL students in the class. However, in a large class, annotations can be messy. For example, here is a salon task/doc that has annotations from 61 students. Practically, every place of the document is annotated by some student.

However a student may not be interested in all the annotations from all the students. A student just may be interested in focusing on a sub group of students. As shown by the following screen, a student can select few particular students from the class. In the following image, a student is only looking at 4 students (first 4 with check marks). Student
now ONLY see the comments from these users. A student can click on a hotspot (highlighted area) and join the discussion. Until student changes the view settings again, this task doc will ONLY open with the selected subset. However, students still have access to all (or some) student work if they choose to.

ACTIVITY 4 – FILTERING IN SALON
Salon annotations can be messy as we saw in activity 3. However, salon annotations can be filtered for better understanding. For example see below.

Using the filter bar on the right, this is now showing places annotated by 10 or more users. In a large class this can be used to understand where most people are paying attention. You can use this information to tailor your instructions.

ACTIVITY 5 – ENCOURAGING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
Salon experience can be optimized if you encourage students to participate in follow up discussions. There are many easy ways students can participate in follow up discussions.

**Comments on the Wall**
When students login to Salon they immediately see the most recent comments as follows. It shows most recent comments and provides an opportunity for students to reply to the comment (w/o going to the actual document). Student sees the context and comment, so replying to the comment can be done (in most cases) w/o going to the document. However, student is also given a link to task doc or salon if they desire. Students can also **filter** comments from a specific salon or specific task doc (by clicking on lower blue areas of the comment box).

A new and useful addition to salon is the **mobile access** to the comment. Using your mobile phone, ipad or tablet browser, students can point to [http://classroomsalon.org/mobile](http://classroomsalon.org/mobile) and access comments, Q&A and messages.

Students can click on a comment expand and respond from the convenience of a mobile phone or tablet. All student responses, regardless of the device used are integrated back into the discussion threads.
ACTIVITY 6 – EXPORTING STUDENT DATA
If you have an instructor account, you can export all student data from each salon task doc.
To export data
  a. Open the document in view mode or participate mode
  b. Click on “menu” and then “site menu”
  c. Click on Export comments or Responses
  d. This will export an excel file that contains student name, email, selection text, comment text, etc.. for each comment made. Similar file can be exported for responses.
  e. Processing the Data File: Depending on your needs, these data files can be processed using any excel macro or some external script. If you are interested in some scripts that you can use to process data files, send email to classroom-salon@andrew.cmu.edu.
  f. These scripts can create sample data files in various formats for grading and analysis. For example, if you are interested in only capturing student questions, there is a script to do this. To see a sample see: http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~ab/Salon/UWM/questions.pdf
  g. Since data file is in excel format, you can do many things to process and summarize activity data. Also if you use salon email as the student ID, you can easily integrate salon data with your grade book.

Summary: How you use Classroom Salon in your course is up to you. It is a generic platform; you can do pretty much anything around documents by treating them as tasks.
You can merge all conversations into one place and find students who are most active in your course. Everyone see Classroom Salon in their own way. That is a good thing! We cannot tell you how to use it. But we give you the most flexible and easy to use tool set, that pretty much allows you to accomplish any task with just a few clicks. Classroom Salon is designed and developed by faculty like you. We wanted to change the way we do teaching and learning. Find ways to engage students more and find out more about our students. Students also benefit tremendously by using Salon, as they get to see, discuss and discover knowledge from the community like no other. One other benefit to the student is they now have a place to record all their learning activities and access them anytime anywhere.
PART III – LEARNING ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS (ANALYTICS)

Providing student analytics is a major goal of the Classroom Salon project. As teachers, we need to “get to know” our students. Even the most quietist students in your class may have something important to say. Typically, teachers have not been able to understand students especially those who don’t come to office hours or don’t speak in class. Classroom Salon provides multiple levels of analytics on individual students and groups. Some of these features are already integrated into Salon and some are on the way and will be available shortly.

TASK 1 - Understanding What a student (or a group doing in a document)
First we find the task document we are interested in and isolate the student activity by hiding all annotations except the student we are interested in (shown below). This only shows the annotations of that particular student.

If you’d like to see how a student is compared to your thinking, you can isolate yourself and the student and see annotations. In the figure below, you can compare two users. This can also be extended to any number of students.

There are a number of other filtering options available from view mode that you can use. Students also have access this filtering mechanism to just focus only on the students they are interested in. As stated before, view mode state will be saved, so when student open the view next time, student will only see the selected student from previous session. This can be changed anytime by selecting a new set of users.
TASK 2- LOOKING AT STUDENT RESPONSES TO GLOBAL QUESTIONS

One unique feature of classroom salon is you can ask questions (entered from task/doc manager) where student must use the entire document to answer. For example, if there are global questions, students will be able to access them from the participate mode as shown below.

In the figure above, a student is responding to a global question (in participate mode using respond tab) and also student select places in the task doc that are relevant. We call these highlighted places breadcrumbs. A good use of breadcrumbs is to ask students to justify their answer by selecting places in the document that were relevant to their response.
Once responses to global questions are provided, then you (and anyone else in salon) can view them as follows. In the view mode, using responses button you can see responses given by students to questions. You can encourage students to mark helpful responses (total helpful votes are accessible from dashboard) or write a comment in the message board for that particular response. If the student has breadcrumbs, they can also turn on the bread crumbs to see what parts of the text were used by students to respond to the question.

The drop down menu allows teachers (and students) to look at others responses and compare them. It is also possible some student may have highlighted text from the reading (which we call breadcrumbs) to support their responses. This will allow instructor to select one (or more) student and see where they have highlighted in response to the question. If a student (or instructor) finds that response helpful, “mark this as helpful” will give students valuable votes that can be looked at from the dashboard.

**TASK 3- GETTING ALL STUDENT RESPONSES IN ONE PLACE**

By clicking on the “menu → start menu → Grid View” instructor can also see all student responses to all global questions in one place as follows.
So if a student has NOT provided an answer to a specific question, it will be clear.

**TASK 4- GETTING A PRINTABLE VIEW OF RESPONSES**
Sometimes, it is easier to see all responses to a question in one place. In order to do this click “print” and scroll to the bottom of the document to see all responses to all questions in one place (this is great for easy grading).

**Question 1**
How do you test if the code you wrote will produce the correct output in all cases? Do you have a strategy?

- **Dylan Corwin:** I think about all of the cases where the boundaries of the problem could exist. I usually try to test on both sides of the edge cases and the edge cases themselves.
- **Alex Franchuk:** I usually would create a test program to prod my program (often a bash script is the easiest way). Of course being type-safe (when needed) and always having a condition for any values returned from functions is the safe way to code for all inputs/outputs.
- **Sam Haskins:** Unit testing is the most common way of doing this. Identifying all special cases and testing them appropriately is key. If the code’s purpose is not well defined, this is impossible. To be testable, it needs to have well-defined operation, and one needs to test all potentially tricky edge cases.
- **Vishalsai Daswani:** I would first test for a number of regular cases to see if the basic program works. If that works, try to calculate the edge cases and check if that works. If only the edge cases don’t work, then perhaps tweak the program to account for it.

**Question 2**
If you were asked to write a program to solve a problem (or as part of an assignment), what is the best way to approach this?

- **Dylan Corwin:** I think the best way to approach writing a program to solve a problem would be to draw it out if possible. You can decide how your program is to handle certain test cases and edge cases. This helps to draw the code out of the diagrams rather than just trying to force it out by trying to write it first.
- **Alex Franchuk:** Well, I would certainly get right to planning the flow of the program as one

**TASK 5- LOOKING AT THE DASHBOARD**
Dashboard is one of the best analytics tools in Salon. A dashboard is defined per document in the current salon. We are working on developing dashboards per salon, per user etc. Click on the dashboard icon from any document to see the dashboard (i).
5.1 You can see the task/doc activities.

5.2 You can isolate a student and monitor his/her activity.

5.3 Measure student participation. Shows a quantitative participation.
1.4 Measure the distribution of tags.

5.5 Measure the distribution comments. Identify most interesting paragraphs (x-axis – paragraph, y-axis – comments)
5.6 Most helpful votes show the student influence on others. This is the total votes they received on their responses.

5.7 Student Dashboard (coming soon)

Monitoring Individual Students

The analytics allows teachers to see how active and/or respected students are. Since these analytics are built over the whole semester in a continuous set of activities, teachers finally
can assess students not just based on occasional tests and quizzes but based on a continuous set of participation and performance measures.

**PART IV – MAKING CLASSROOM SALON SOCIAL**

Classroom Salon can be used in many different ways. It can allow students to get to know each other and follow students of influence to keep up with their activities. It provides easy access to information via mobile devices such as phones and ipads and tablets [no need to install anything]

**Task 1:** Point the browser in your mobile phone to [http://classroomsalon.org/mobile](http://classroomsalon.org/mobile). It will show a simple screen such as below. Login into Salon.

```
email:


don't have an account?
password:

forgot your password?
Log in »
```

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[Salon License](http://classroomsalon.org/mobile)

**Task 2:** After you login, you will see all comments, responses and messages from your salons as follows.
**Task 3:** Touch on any comment and it will expand as follows. You can reply to the comment and all comments will be integrated to the “context” of the discussion automatically.

**Task 4:** You can also filter comments by salons or tasks/documents. Simply touch on the name of Salon (eg: **BMC workshop**) or task/doc (**Blended Learning**).
Follow People

Encourage students to follow their peers to keep up with comments they make. Simply go to Salon home page, touch on person’s picture and follow. When you follow a person, you can get their feed on the wall.

Task 2: Follow other students to keep up with their activities
**Task 3:** Find others who follow you so they get to know what you are up to. Great way for students to follow the teacher and know what teacher is working on.

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Top Ten Reasons Why you should use Salon

1. Unlike commenting platforms and discussion forums, classroom salon combines interpretation and content in the “same context” of the document. That is, students highlight and comment on the spot when they have a question. Studies have shown that direct communication on the context of the document reduces the extraneous cognitive overload associated with a task.
2. Salon allows you to design your course around tasks. That is, first you think of what tasks you want students to do and then you author/upload the content to salon and allow all discussions on the context.
3. Classroom Salon is mobile. That is, all comments are accessible from mobile devices such as phones and tablet computers, but all work is integrated into one web location for easy access.
4. Classroom Salon organizes student work so that students can access all their work using "My Notebook". My notebook helps students keep good notes and print them out for studying for exams.
5. Classroom Salon combines sophisticated “comment filtering” that allows users to focus only on specific user comments and/or locations of the document with most densed comments.
6. Classroom Salon is media-centric (txt, images, pdf, video) allowing teachers to design tasks around any media type. In all cases, comments can be filtered by users or density.[pdf and video will be supported shortly]
7. Importing your own media to Classroom Salon is easy. Simply import a word, pdf or youtube video or cut and paste text from any document, insert images and your document is ready for analysis by a group of users.
8. Classroom Salon provides user analytics like no other platform. Access user analytics from “Document Dashboard” to see user contributions and hot spot areas of a document.
9. It is easy to export user data from Classroom salon. Simply export student work file for each document as an excel file and analyze data using excel macros and formulas.
10. Classroom Salon helps find what students want to know (or don’t know) using smart tagging and document analytics. You can deliver the optimal lecture in your class. Your students will appreciate customized instructions for the class.

SUMMARY

Classroom Salon is a powerful learning platform
- It combines social networking and learning.
- Salon activities allow a group to benefit from “Collective Intelligence”.
- Salon can be used as a networked ebook platform to generate meaningful discussions around course content.
- Salon allows easy input into a document using selection and comments (annotations)
- Salon can be used for peer review of documents with user analytics
- Salon is a nice extension to google docs, where collaborated documents can imported into salon for “deep” discussions.
- Using Document tags, Teachers can develop activities to find concepts where students need more discussion or clarity.
Salon can be used as a social (or crowd sourced) homework site where few good contributions from each student can help create a good knowledge base, created by students and monitored by instructor.

Salon combines visual media (documents, video), collaboration, annotations, people, and analytics all under one platform. Salon is easy to learn, easy to use, and free to the academic community. Because Salon supports teacher workflows very well, and also can be integrated easily into any existing web platforms (all salon task documents can be embedded using URL’s), getting started with salon is easy. Simply design and deliver few activities that can benefit from social learning, you would want to slowly expand it to most course tasks.

Classroom Salon
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