Screen Reader Tips

The following describes how CougarView is laid out, and how different functionality, settings, and preferences benefit individuals navigating the system using a screen reader (or other assistive technologies that interpret the contents of a page).

This topic does not document how to use specific assistive technologies. Please refer to help material for the software or device you are using if you want to learn about its specific functionality, shortcuts, and commands.

Logging In

The Login page for CougarView has three form elements: **Username**, **Password**, and **Login**. The **Username** field has focus when you enter the page. The **Password** field and **Login** button are the next Tab options.

There are two additional options displayed as links: **Forgot Password?** and **Please click here for a System Check before you log in**. The **Forgot Password?** link opens a new window where you can request a password reset link be sent to the email address associated with your username. The **Please click here for a system check before you log in** link opens a new page that lets you know if your computer meets the minimum criteria for using CougarView. If you do not meet the criteria, a message displays explaining what components need updating.

Welcome to the CougarVIEW Login Page

The CougarVIEW (Desire2Learn) login requires you to use your CougarNET (email) username and password to access your online, blended, and face-to-face electronic course materials.

For CougarVIEW technical problems, visit the GeorgiaVIEW D2L Help Center or call the CSU Help Desk at 706-507-8199

Run the System Check before you login!

Login

Username:

Password:

Please note your password is case sensitive.

Login

Forgot Password?

Logging Out

The **Logout** link is one of the navigation links available in the Navbar at the top of all pages. You can access it using a links list, or by tabbing through the navigation links starting at the top of the page.
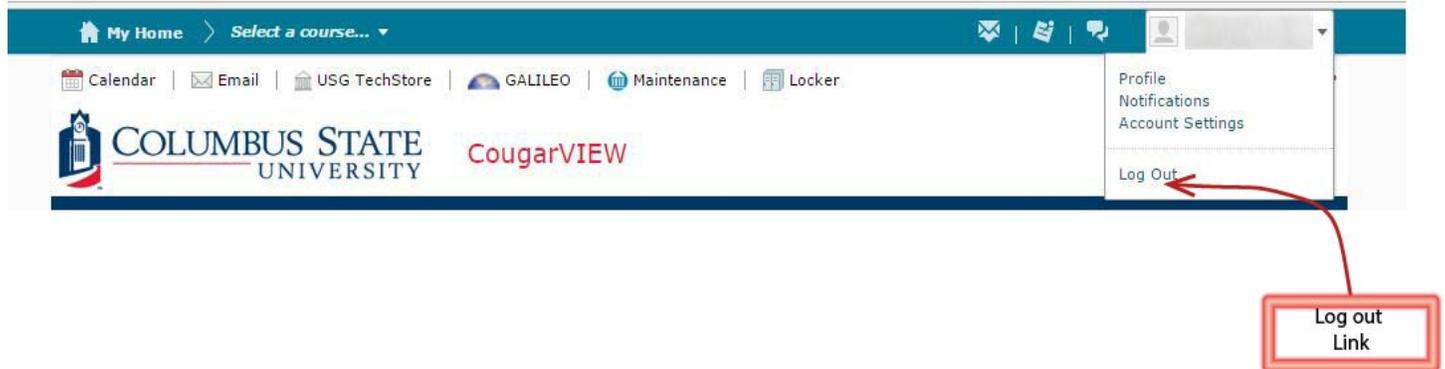
System Time-outs

The system may log you out if you are inactive for an extended period of time. The length of time is determined by your institution. A JavaScript warning will provide an option to remain logged in before your time expires.

Site Organization

CougarView is typically organized into two levels of information: organization related information and course related information. Organization related information typically appears on My Home, while course related information typically appears on Course Home and different course tools.

My Home

My Home is generally the first page you access when you log into CougarView. It is a central area for accessing courses, checking for institution-wide news and events, and updating your site preferences and personal information.

Like all pages in CougarView, My Home has a navigation area across the top of the page. This navigation area, typically called the navbar, contains links to different tools. Since My Home is an organization level page, the links in the navigation area for My Home usually go to organization level or course-independent tools, such as Calendar and Email.

Other My Home content is organized in widgets. Typical widgets include: **Announcements**, **My Courses**, **My Settings** and **Updates**. You can navigate and search for widgets by Heading 2s, and navigate sections within a widget by Heading 3s.

One of the main purposes of My Home is to provide access to your courses and other tools. We recommend you use your screen reader to view a link list and heading list for your **My Home** to get a feel for what options are available to you.

To access a Course Home, you must select it from the **My Courses** widget. If you have more than one role in CougarView you need to select the Tab for the role you want to view courses for. Depending on your screen reader, widget tabs may be read as tabs or links. They should always be the first content after the widget's heading.

Course Home

Course Home is the first page you visit when you enter a course. It is a central area for accessing course specific information. Like My Home, Course Home pages have a navigation area across the top of the page and a number of widgets that contain information and links. Information and links on Course Home are specific to that course (unless they are for course-independent tools). For example, the navigation area for a Course Home might contain links to **Grades**, **Discussions** and **Quizzes** for that specific course. Use Heading 2s to navigate to the main Navigation area and the different course widgets.

General Page Layout

Navigation Area and Skip to Main Content Links

At the top of each page is a navigation area called the navbar that contains an unordered list with the main tool links for the course you are viewing (or for My Home or a department if you are not in a course). You can skip the navbar on any page by selecting the **Skip to main content** link.

Headings and ARIA landmarks

Headings and ARIA (Accessible Rich Internet Applications) landmarks are used throughout the system to help you navigate pages. Heading 1s and Main landmarks are used for page titles. Heading 2s are used for widgets and major page sections. Heading 3s are used to organize information within widgets and major sections. Navigation, Search and Complementary ARIA landmarks are used to provide context.

Note: If you do not set the accessibility preference "Show secondary windows as pop-ups," your screen reader's Heading and landmark lists will read two heading 1s and two Main ARIA landmarks when you open dialog boxes.

Tool Menus and Action Bars

Tool menus and action bars are used to navigate areas within a specific tool. Typically, the left tool menu is used for complicated tools that need to be divided into different types of tasks.

Action Icons and Context Menus

While tool menus and action bars are used to navigate between tool areas and major tasks, action icons and context menus are used to select an action for a specific item on a list page. Every action icon and context menu has unique text that references the item the action applies to. Action icons are typically used when items are displayed in a table list (grid), while context menus are used when items are displayed outside of a table. For example:

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- Items you add to your locker are displayed in a grid with action icons to Move [item] icon **Move [item]**, Edit [item] icon **Edit [item]** and Delete [item] icon **Delete [item]** next to each item. You can select an action icon using a links list, or by tabbing to the icon from the applicable item in the grid.

Tables

Tables (grids) are often used to organize content within a tool.

All tables use proper table summaries and headings. However, the easiest way to navigate items in a table is by a check box, since most table items have a **Select [item]** check box before their name.

Most items also have a list of actions after their name. These actions are organized in the **Actions** column and displayed as icons. Each action icon has a unique alt text so you can use a links list to select an action for an item. For example, you could use a links list to "Edit Topic 1."

You can also select multiple items from a table using the **Select [item]** check boxes and then selecting an action that can apply to multiple items. Actions that can apply to multiple items appear at the top and bottom of a table and use the **alt text** format **[action] Selected Items**. For example, you could use a links list to "Select Topic 1" and "Select Topic 2" and then "Edit Selected Items."

Complex tables often have drop-down menus for filtering information in the table. For example, some tables have a **View** drop-down menu that allows you to change how information is sorted. Most drop-downs have an accompanying **Apply** or **Go** button that initiates the action.

A few drop-downs, such as **per page** drop-downs, update on selection so you must use **Alt + Down Arrow** (Windows/Linux) or **Option + Down Arrow** (Mac) to open the drop-down and then use the **Up Arrow** or **Down Arrow** and **Enter** key to select and option.

If there are more items in a table than will display on a single page, use the **Page** drop-down menu, ![Next Page icon] **Next Page** icon, or ![Previous Page icon] **Previous Page** icon to navigate to other pages.

Forms

Pages that use form fields for entering data or changing settings have a logical Tab order. If a page is divided into multiple tabs, your screen reader may read the tabs as Tab stops or as links. You normally cannot open a secondary Tab until you have filled in all the mandatory fields on the first Tab. Mandatory fields are indicated with an asterisk (*). The last options on a form are usually **Cancel** and **Save**. Sometimes the **Save** button is called something else related to completing the action, such as **Select** or **Upload**.

Many forms allow you to create content using our HTML Editor (WYSIWYG - What You See Is What You Get). The HTML Editor is fully accessible by keyboard, but lacks non-visual feedback when options or formatting are selected in the editor view. You can make changes in the source view so you can read your changes in the code as you work, or turn off the HTML Editor in your Preferences area. If you turn off the HTML Editor it is replaced by text fields that accept HTML.

Some form pages contain links to additional actions, which may not be recognized as form elements by your screen reader. For example, there is a link to create a **New Folder** on the Add Contact form in Email. Always check for links when filling out a form in CougarView.

Most form pages provide either a confirmation or error message when you submit the form using an ARIA alert. The message appears at the top of the page and should take focus. If there were errors in your submission the message explains each error and provides links to the appropriate fields so you can resolve the issues.

Treeviews and Frames

We have tried to keep page layouts as simple as possible. However, some tools, such as Manage Files and Email, use treeviews and frames to layout complicated lists of items and options. Most of these pages have options to **Hide Tree** (Manage Files) or **Show (or hide) the folder list pane** (Email). Check the tool's settings and tool bars for ways to simplify the page layout.

Help Text

Many forms contain inline help, ![Help icon] **Help** icons and links to additional help material either immediately after the page heading or section heading, or after individual fields. It is a good idea to read the entire contents of a form before filling it out, and to look for help text or a help link immediately after a field if you have difficulty understanding its purpose.

Show/Hide

Some pages contain sections that are collapsed by default. Collapsed sections contain advanced or supplemental information that is not required to complete standard tasks. To expand a collapsed section using a keyboard or screen reader, select the appropriate ![Expand or Show icon] **Expand** or **Show** icon.

Pop-ups

Some links open secondary pop-up windows for completing page-specific tasks. These links should indicate that they open in a new window through a title attribute. Use the **Down Arrow** and **Tab** keys to read the contents of the pop-up. The last options should be buttons to cancel or complete the task. Occasionally, these buttons are in a

separate frame.

Warning: Some secondary pages use modal dialogs instead of separate windows to display information. If you primarily navigate the web using a screen reader we recommend that you select **Show secondary windows as pop-ups** on the Appearance and Accessibility Tab in the Preferences tool.

Search

Most pages that contain lists of items or users have a **Search For** field near the top of the page. To perform a search, enter a word or partial word in the **Search For** field and select the **Search** button.

Use the **Show Search Options** link to select advanced search options.

Use the **Clear Search** link to clear the **Search For** field.

WAI-ARIA support

Desire2Learn uses WAI-ARIA markup in a number or areas to help support navigation by keyboard and assistive technologies. For example, WAI-ARIA markup is used for tabs, context menus, error and confirmation messages, and for page navigation landmarks.

Personal Tools

Your My Home contains a **My Settings** widget with links to tools that store your personal information and preferences. Depending on your permissions, the following links may be available:

- **Preferences:** Change display settings for CougarView.
- **Email Address:** Change your default email address.
- **Change Password:** Change your password.
- **Profile:** Edit your shared personal information.
- **View my progress:** View your progress in a course.

Preferences

We recommend that you adjust the settings available in the Preferences tool to meet your personal needs. Here are some recommendations:

Appearance & Accessibility Tab

- Use the **Font Face** and **Font Size** options to adjust the appearance of text in CougarView. If you want to adjust the size of icons as well, you should use your browser's zooming or scaling options.
- If you rely on a screen reader to navigate CougarView we recommend you select **Show secondary windows as pop-ups**; otherwise, some secondary pages may not be distinguishable from the main page.
- Many screen reader and keyboard-only users select the **Turn off rich text editor and view source** option. This option simplifies form pages, while still allowing users to upload HTML content authored in an external editor.
- If you rely on a screen reader to read content on a page we recommend you display math using **MathML**. MathML is supported by some screen readers and browsers (for example, recent versions of JAWS with Internet Explorer and the MathPlayer plug-in or Firefox with the Fire Vox plug-in.)

Discussions Tab

- Clear the **Show the discussion topics list** and **Show the preview pane** options to simplify the layout of discussion lists.
- Select the **Grid Style** message list if you want to see only a list of messages in discussion lists and open messages to read their contents. This results in less text on discussion lists.

- Some users also select **Include original message text in replies** so they don't have to move between discussion messages as frequently.

Email Tab

- Some users select **Include original message in email replies** so they don't have to move between messages as frequently.
- Clear the **Show the Message Preview pane** and **Show the Folder List pane** options to simplify the layout of your Inbox.

Pager Tab

Select an **Incoming Page Sound** to receive an auditory prompt when you are paged.

Note: If you do not have Flash installed on your computer CougarView uses your default media player to preview sounds. Many popular media players trap keyboard navigation and you may not be able to exit the media player after previewing a sound.

Getting Additional Support

If you are having difficulty using CougarView to complete your course work, consider seeking help from your instructor or your Center for Accommodation and Access. Most institutions have support centers to help users learn new technology, seek special accommodations, and organize tutoring and other support.

There are numerous assistive technology products available to help people use computers and the Internet. A few examples include special keyboards and mice, speech recognition software, screen magnifiers, screen readers, and Braille displays. Investing the time to find the hardware and software that is right for you, and then learning how to use it effectively, is worthwhile. Take advantage of help documentation and tutorials to learn commands, shortcuts, frequent tasks, and special tips.

Columbus State University is committed to providing accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. To request a reasonable accommodation, students must be registered with the Center for Accommodation and Access. Fill out an online request here. Accommodations will be made based on eligibility determined by the Center for Accommodation and Access. Services can be requested at any time during the semester. Requesting services well in advance will help to ensure that resources are available when needed. Please contact Joy Norman at **706-507-8755** or norman_joy @columbusstate.edu