



Instructor's Manual

for Math Prep for Accounting

Advanced Customer Solutions

ALEKS Corporation

ALEKS Instructor's Manual for Math Prep for Accounting, Version 3.18.
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Preface [preface]

Welcome to ALEKS, one of the most powerful educational tools available for learning mathematics. ALEKS combines advanced learning technology with the flexibility of the Internet, and provides an interactive tutoring system with unmatched features and capabilities.

The innovative features of ALEKS open new horizons for educators and learners alike in any educational context. The ALEKS course management system enables instructors to efficiently monitor student progress and provide focused instruction. With its unprecedented use of Artificial Intelligence, ALEKS determines quickly and precisely what your students know and what they need to learn, guiding them down individualized learning paths to mastery. The syllabi used are customizable, letting you conveniently add or subtract topics. As ALEKS is accessed on the Internet, no complicated technical preparation is needed—and your students can work at any time, from home, from work, or from the classroom! ALEKS can be integrated with a variety of ALEKS Corporation textbooks.

The benefits of using ALEKS are dramatic. Students work in a dynamic, interactive learning environment on precisely those materials that they are individually ready to learn, building momentum toward mastery. Students are successful when using ALEKS because they can work on their own schedule on what they need to learn right now. It is the personalized, “just-in-time” learning system.

ALEKS may be used in a variety of classroom situations—whether in a traditional classroom or in a self-directed or distance-learning environment.

ALEKS is sold to the student as a subscription. The student purchases a **User’s Guide** with Student Access Code, usually through a bookstore or online. Using the Student Access Code along with the Course Code provided by the instructor, the student registers in the ALEKS system at the ALEKS website.

ALEKS can be adopted in one of two ways:

- ALEKS may be adopted as a supplement to a McGraw-Hill textbook. In this case, the student subscription cost is similar to the cost of a traditional print supplement, such as a study guide or student solutions manual. Students will need to purchase a McGraw-Hill textbook bundled with the **User’s Guide** with Student Access Code.

- ALEKS may be adopted as a stand-alone item. In this case, the instructor adopts ALEKS alone, and the students purchase the **User's Guide** with Student Access Code for about the cost of a traditional textbook.

This **Instructor's Manual** is intended to provide complete information on the functioning of ALEKS. A description of its contents can be found in Chapter 1.

Please also take time to explore the ALEKS website; it is a valuable source of information (<http://www.aleks.com>, Fig. 3.2). The website includes tours, overviews of ALEKS course products, troubleshooting and support information, training resources and user guides. It also contains information on the theory and research behind ALEKS, forums for the exchange of ideas with other educators, and brief, recorded on-line training segments. To find the resources specific to the educational field you are in, click on the appropriate link on the ALEKS home page.

Chapter 1

Introduction [intro]

1.1 What is ALEKS? [aleks]

The ALEKS system is the product of years of cutting-edge research into the mathematical modeling of human knowledge (Chap. 9). The creators of ALEKS are cognitive scientists, software engineers, and university professors. In designing ALEKS, their goal is to achieve the utmost simplicity of use without compromising the depth, rigor, or richness of instruction at its inspirational best. ALEKS is a tool to empower both instructors and learners. It opens doors into the assessment and representation of knowledge, and it breaks down barriers to success by recognizing the vast diversity of paths that lead to mastery. The ALEKS system can make a radical difference in how learning is experienced.

ALEKS is an online system for the assessment and individualized teaching of a variety of subjects. It can be accessed on the Internet from virtually any computer and is designed to allow the monitoring and management of students and courses at the instructor, college, and system levels.

The core of the system is an efficient, adaptive assessment engine that determines quickly and precisely what an individual student knows. Based on assessment data, the system is able to offer material that the student is ready to learn.

The ALEKS Learning Mode includes explanations and algorithmically generated practice problems, ongoing assessment of student knowledge, an online dictionary, and facilities for review and collaborative help. It can be used on an independent basis or as a supplement to classroom instruction.

1.2 The ALEKS Instructor's Manual [manual]

The purpose of the **ALEKS Instructor's Manual** is to provide instructors with complete information on the operation of the system. ALEKS is not complex, however,

and it can be used with no documentation whatsoever. At the same time, we wish to offer instructors a clear idea of everything ALEKS does, how it works, and where to find answers to questions.

ALEKS is designed to be used without help from the Instructor’s Manual. Feel free to use the system now. If questions arise, or if you want to learn more about ALEKS, this Instructor’s Manual is intended as a convenient and comprehensive reference.

NOTE. For a brief, comprehensive overview of ALEKS, please turn directly to the “Frequently Asked Questions” in Chapter 10.

- The first chapters are those most likely to be used by instructors new to ALEKS. Chapter 2, “Quick Start,” contains a concise checklist for those new to ALEKS. Chapter 3, “Setup Guide for Instructors,” provides all of the information necessary for preparing to use ALEKS with one or more courses. This ranges from technical and installation requirements through the students’ first ALEKS session (which typically involves registration, tutorial, the Initial Assessment, and entry into the Learning Mode). Much of the information here is the same as that in Appendix A.
- Chapters 4 through 7 contain descriptions of the principal parts of the ALEKS system: Assessment Mode, Learning Mode, and the Instructor Module.
- The Instructor Module is discussed in two chapters: Chapter 6 presents the Instructor Module generally; Chapter 7 covers the Advanced Instructor Module.
- Chapter 8 is a brief guide to teaching with ALEKS, describing a range of scenarios and the ALEKS features that support them.
- Chapters 9 through 11 provide additional information that may be necessary or of interest to instructors using ALEKS. Chapter 9, “Knowledge Spaces and the Theory Behind ALEKS,” explains the history of Knowledge Space theory and its fundamental concepts, along with the evolution of ALEKS itself. Also included is a Bibliography for those seeking to understand the theory behind ALEKS in greater depth. Chapter 10 provides answers to frequently asked questions about ALEKS. Chapter 11 gives the information necessary for obtaining technical and other support.
- The **ALEKS User’s Guide** is available to all students from the ALEKS website. The **User’s Guide** is reproduced here in Appendix A. Unlike the other chapters of the **ALEKS Instructor’s Manual**, Appendix A is addressed to student users of the system. It covers technical requirements, installation, registration, the Tutorial, and ordinary use of the system, as well as guidelines for effective use and troubleshooting tips. Appendix A can be used by instructors to obtain a brief but complete picture of how the system is used. Appendix B contains content summaries for ALEKS course products.

Chapter 2

Quick Start [quick]

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the steps involved in starting a course with ALEKS.

2.1 Obtaining a Course Code [obtainingcoursecode]

In order to use ALEKS with your course, you will need to have at least one Course Code. This code should be given to students to use in registration, together with their Student Access Code (below). When they register, they will receive a Login Name and Password. Students should not use the Student Access Code and Course Code to register a second time, as they will not be able to create a new account this way.

You can have as many courses and sections as you need or want in ALEKS. For each course or section, there is one unique Course Code. Students who register using this code will be enrolled in the corresponding course. Students who accidentally enroll in the wrong course can easily be moved to the right one at any time. (Please note that moving a student from one course to another in ALEKS may trigger a new assessment.) **To obtain the Course Code for any course, log on to your instructor account, click on “Administrator Center” (upper right), and click on “View all your courses and course codes” (Sec. 6.6.11).** In the Advanced Instructor Module, simply select the name of the course and click “Edit Course,” under the Home tab (Fig. 7.5). The Course Code will appear in the upper right-hand part of the screen.

You will normally be provided with an instructor Login Name and Password by ALEKS Corporation; otherwise, a colleague at your college with Administrator privileges in ALEKS can also create an instructor account for you. Once you are logged on to ALEKS as an instructor, you can create one or more courses through “Add a Course” (upper right).

2.2 Registering Students [registeringstudents]

Students should use the following steps to register.

1. Go to the ALEKS website.

<http://www.aleks.com>

2. Click on the link for “SIGN UP NOW!” to the left of the page, under the space for Registered Users. (This is the only time they will click on that button.)
3. On the page that follows, enter the Course Code in the spaces provided for “Using ALEKS with a Class?” (to the left of the window). **Do not use the button on the right-hand side.**
4. Confirm enrollment information.
5. Indicate whether you are a new or an existing ALEKS user.
6. Enter the Student Access Code.
7. Enter other information as prompted and choose a password.
8. Record the Login Name provided by the system.
9. Begin using ALEKS by taking the student tutorial and an initial assessment.

Students will subsequently use their Login Name and Password to enter their accounts.

Chapter 3

Setup Guide for Instructors [setup]

3.1 Instructor Preparation [preparation]

ALEKS has been designed to be user-friendly, with no previous experience required. Taking the time to study all materials provided to you, however, including the Instructor's Manual, and trying out the system on your own, can provide valuable insight into the system's functioning and underlying ideas. The administrator for ALEKS can contact ALEKS Customer Support for assistance at any time, preferably in advance of the first session (Chap. 11).

3.2 System Requirements [technical]

The following table presents the system requirements for ALEKS in summary form.

	PC	Macintosh
Operating System	Windows	MacOS 10.4+
Processor	Any	Any
RAM Memory	64+ MB	64+ MB
Browser	Explorer 7.0+, Firefox 3+, Chrome 4+	Safari 4+, Firefox 3+
Screen Resolution	1024x768	1024x768

Figure 3.1: System Requirements [setuptechnical]

NOTE. Any kind of Internet connection (cable, ISDN, DSL, or wireless) usually available in a computer lab is adequate for use with ALEKS. If your computer lab has security safeguards in place, you will need the cooperation of your LAN administrator, system administrator, or lab technician to install the ALEKS plug-in.

3.3 Installation [installation]



Figure 3.2: The ALEKS Website [website]

Installation of the ALEKS plug-in takes place from the ALEKS website (Fig. 3.2):

<http://www.aleks.com>

NOTE. You must use this URL to access ALEKS. You may wish to mark this website in your browser with a “Bookmark” or “Favorite” or by creating a shortcut of some kind.

Close all applications other than your web browser before beginning installation.

Installation of the ALEKS plug-in is automatic. If you attempt to use the system directly by clicking on “Free Trial” or on “SIGN UP NOW!,” the system will automatically check to see whether your computer has a recent plug-in installed. If no plug-in is detected, the system will ask for your permission to install one.

When you grant permission, the plug-in will be installed. Following installation you must close and reopen your browser application. Installation is also automatic for registered users.

If you need to download and install the plug-in and this does not occur automatically, click on “DOWNLOADS” (upper right), then on the green “>>Download” button.

NOTE. This is not a high-risk operation for your computer. The ALEKS plug-in is a small library of Java classes which are used by your browser when you are logged on to ALEKS. They are inactive at other times and do not do anything except provide functionality for ALEKS. They can easily be removed from the computer with no other

effect except that ALEKS ceases to be usable on that computer. ALEKS Corporation Customer Support will be happy to answer any questions about the plug-in.

There is also a “streaming” plug-in which can be used in situations where it is not possible to download or install a plug-in on the local computer. To utilize the streaming plug-in, go to the following website:

<http://www.aleks.com/plugin>

The ALEKS home page will appear. Log on to ALEKS as you normally would. On the screen you will see text that reads “Downloading ALEKS Streaming Plug-in.” After a few moments, depending on your internet connection, the plug-in will finish loading into memory and you will be able to use ALEKS.

NOTE. If the browser window being used to navigate ALEKS is closed, the streaming plug-in will need to be downloaded again by returning to www.aleks.com/plugin before signing into ALEKS again.

Important: The “streaming” plug-in should **NOT** be used in a school or college computer lab, or any other location where more than one person is using ALEKS at the same time. In any educational lab setting, the regular ALEKS plug-in **MUST** be installed. If the “streaming” plug-in is used in a lab setting, it may disrupt the functioning of the network.

3.4 Instructor Module [instructormoduleintro]

To enter the ALEKS Instructor Module, log on to ALEKS with your Instructor Login Name and Password. The Instructor Module lets you monitor and manage your ALEKS courses. The Instructor Module is designed for ease of use; it guides users through the steps needed to accomplish tasks in such a way that no separate training is needed and mistakes or confusion are unlikely. See Chapter 6 for a complete description of the Instructor Module.

After you are familiar with the features of the Basic Instructor Module, you may wish to try the Advanced Instructor Module, which is somewhat more complex than the standard interface but offers greater efficiency and convenience for some operations (Chap. 7).

3.5 Lab Check [labcheck]

To ensure the best possible experience of ALEKS for your students, we recommend that you check the computer lab in which ALEKS will be used before the first session. This means installing and testing the plug-in on some or (preferably) all of the computers in the lab. If security measures are in effect, you will need the cooperation of the lab

administrator to install the plug-in. For instructions on how to install and test ALEKS, see Sec. 3.3.

If the ALEKS plug-in is not preinstalled and tested in this way, it will be installed when your students first access the system. This will take away a certain amount of time from their use of the system. Also, if there is some problem in the lab that makes installation difficult, it is better to resolve it before the students arrive.

3.6 Student Orientation [orientation]

It is strongly recommended that the first ALEKS session be conducted under supervision, perhaps with another instructor on hand to help your students get started. It is not generally necessary to schedule a separate orientation meeting before the students begin using the system. Students can access the **ALEKS User's Guide** from the ALEKS website. Encourage students to familiarize themselves with this brief guide. You should remind your students to bring their Student Access Code to the first session of class. It is also advisable for students to have pencil and paper for assessments in ALEKS. A calculator is included in ALEKS when needed. Remind your students that help is not permitted during the assessment, because this will impair the accuracy of the results, and consequently hinder that student's progress in the Learning Mode.

If possible, the students' first session with ALEKS should allow them to complete their assessments and begin work in the Learning Mode. If the students are unable to finish their assessments during this time, ALEKS will automatically keep their place. The next time the students log on to ALEKS they may continue without any loss of work.

3.7 Registration [registration]

Students register with ALEKS by going to the ALEKS website and clicking on "SIGN UP NOW!" This will be expedited if the browsers used by the students have "Bookmarks" or "Favorites" pointing to the website (Sec. 3.3).

NOTE. In order to register, all students must have both their Student Access Code and the Course Code for the course that you are teaching. The Course Code will either be sent to you by ALEKS Corporation or be obtained when you create the course (Sec. 6.3). You are responsible for giving this code to the students at the time of the first session (Sec. 2.1).

The student registration process is described in detail in the User's Guide (Appendix A). There are complete online instructions for every step of this simple procedure. Among other information, students can supply their Student ID number (if you wish to have this in the system). Special care should be taken in entering the latter, as the system cannot detect mistyping. Student ID is optional information.

Near the conclusion of Registration students receive a Login Name and choose a Password. These should be noted carefully, as they will be essential for all further work with ALEKS. Students should choose a password they will remember easily but that will be hard for others to guess. Login Name and Password can be typed with upper or lower-case letters. Neither may contain spaces or punctuation. The Password must contain at least 6 characters.

3.8 Tutorial [tutorial]

Following Registration, the students enter a brief tutorial on the use of ALEKS input tools, also called the **Answer Editor Tutorial** (Sec. 4.5). There are separate tutorials for different subjects, since the specific tools for them differ somewhat. The ALEKS Tutorial provides ample feedback to ensure that students complete it successfully.

NOTE. The Tutorial is not intended to teach mathematical knowledge, but rather to train students in using the system tools. If students need a “refresher” on the use of the system tools, it is always possible to click on the “Help” button, which gives access to the sections of the Tutorial (Sec. 5.2.12).

3.9 First Assessment [firstassessment]

Immediately after the Tutorial, students proceed to their Initial Assessment (Chap. 4). To reiterate, no help of any kind should be given to students being assessed, not even rephrasing a problem. It is also advisable for students to have pencil and paper for assessments in ALEKS. A calculator is included in ALEKS when needed.

The ALEKS assessment is adaptive and variable in length. Some students will have shorter assessments, whereas others will have longer ones. Consistency of effort and concentration may influence the length of an assessment.

NOTE. All students will be assessed on their first use of the system. This will provide you with a baseline picture of your class and of each individual student.

3.10 Report Tutorial [reporttutorial]

At the conclusion of the Initial Assessment, the student is given a brief Tutorial on how to interpret the Assessment Report. This will be in the form of a color-coded pie chart, with accompanying textual information (Sec. 4.11).

Explain to students that subsequent assessments will produce only the pie chart. The pie chart also appears in the Learning Mode each time a new concept is mastered and “added to the pie.” If the student wishes to choose a new topic, the pie can always be accessed by clicking the “MyPie” button.

3.11 Beginning the Learning Mode [beginninglearningmode]

Students enter the Learning Mode by clicking on one of the topics contained in their pie chart (topics they are “ready to learn”). If at all possible, the students should be given sufficient time in their first ALEKS session to use the Learning Mode and begin to “add concepts to their pie.” If they have this experience, their interest in using ALEKS will be more favorable. You should also be present to answer questions regarding the Learning Mode and to help your students familiarize themselves with its varied features. This is particularly important for when they will have to use ALEKS unsupervised.

Chapter 4

Assessment Mode [assess]

The Assessment Mode is the heart of the ALEKS system. The program quickly and accurately determines a student’s knowledge, in order to deliver individualized instruction on the exact topics the student is ready to learn. In ALEKS, learning is powered and optimized by assessment.

4.1 Assessments in ALEKS [assessments]

The ALEKS assessment uses open-ended problems (no multiple-choice questions). The assessment uses adaptive questioning, so that problem types are selected based on all the previous answers the student has given. It is impossible to predict which types of problems will appear, or in what order. Moreover, the problems themselves are generated algorithmically, with randomly-selected values (as is the case also in the Learning Mode). Consequently, students cannot “learn the assessment”, teachers are unable to “teach to the assessment,” and cheating is impossible. In the unlikely event that two students sitting next to one another were given the same problem-type at the same time, the problem parameters and values would be different, and so would the correct answer. Certain assessments should be supervised, however, such as the first, midterm, and final assessments in a course. Without supervision, students could use a textbook, receive systematic help, or have someone else take the assessment in their place. (There is no reason for a student who has begun using ALEKS to cheat on a “progress” assessment, as this will simply cause the system to suggest problems that are too difficult, and thus hinder the student’s own work.)

The student takes an Initial Assessment immediately following completion of the Tutorial (Sec. 3.9). The student is clearly informed that the assessment is beginning. Next a series of problems is posed to the student. The student provides the solution to each problem using the Answer Editor (or clicks “I don’t know”). In Assessment Mode, the system does not inform the student whether their answer is correct or incorrect. The assessment continues until the system has determined the student’s precise knowledge

of the course materials, at which time the assessment ends and a report is presented to the student. The number of questions asked cannot be known in advance, although consistent effort and attention may contribute to shorter assessments.

4.2 Guidelines for Assessments [assessmentrules]

ALEKS assessments are an important part of the ALEKS program. It is essential that assessments be conducted according to certain guidelines. If there is an atmosphere permitting disturbances or distractions, students may not do their best. If assessment results are inaccurate, the system will give the student inappropriate problems and progress will initially be impaired. The system will recover and find the right level, but the student may still experience a degree of frustration. In order to avoid this, it is strongly recommended that the first assessment be taken under the instructor's supervision (Sec. 3.9).

All students being assessed need paper and pencil. A basic calculator is part of ALEKS, and will be available when appropriate. It is important that no assistance be given to the student. Explaining or rephrasing a problem should be avoided; this is considered inappropriate help. Students should be instructed to use the "I don't know" button only when they are completely unfamiliar with the topic. It is not possible to return to previous assessment questions. **Students should not click their browser's "Back" or "Forward" buttons when using ALEKS.**

4.3 How Assessments are Triggered [assessmentscheduling]

All ALEKS assessments work in much the same way, though they are triggered for different reasons, as explained in the following.

4.3.1 Initial Assessment [initialassessment]

The Initial Assessment takes place at the outset of students' use of ALEKS, immediately after Registration and the ALEKS Tutorial (Sec. 3.9). We strongly recommend that this Initial Assessment, which has the character of an orientation to the system for student users, take place in a supervised computer lab setting to ensure that students do not receive help or collaborate. In creating or editing a class account, the instructor can stipulate that the Initial Assessment be allowed only from school

(Sec. 7.9.1). In order for this to take effect, the IP address must be entered in ALEKS by the college Administrator (Sec. 7.19.1).

4.3.2 Automatic Assessments [automaticassessments]

Additional assessments after the Initial Assessment are triggered automatically by the system based on the student's rate of progress and on the amount of time the student has spent working in ALEKS. ALEKS triggers the following automatic assessments:

- **Progress Assessment**, when the student has mastered approximately 20 topics in the Learning Mode **and** spent at least 5 hours working in ALEKS since the last assessment.
- **Login Time Assessment**, when the student has spent 10 hours working in the Learning Mode since the last assessment.
- **Periodic Assessment**, when 60 days have passed since the last assessment.
- **Objective Completion Assessment**, when the student completes the material of a textbook chapter or objective or reaches the assigned Mastery Level (Sec. 6.3.3).
- **Goal Completion Assessment**, when the student has completed the final topic of the pie chart. If the assessment does not confirm the student's mastery of the course materials, the student will return to the Learning Mode. Consequently, more than one Goal Completion Assessment is possible, but ALEKS will not reassess the student if a only small number of topics need to be relearned.

These are all “progress” style assessments. Some modification of the parameters given above is possible; please contact ALEKS Corporation Customer Support for assistance if you would like to adjust them.

Note that a Progress, Login Time, or Periodic Assessment “resets the clock”, so that assessments do not occur one on top of another. In general, ALEKS will avoid triggering unnecessary re-assessments.

Progress made by the student through the Learning Mode, or as the result of an assessment, periodically updates the list of available topics, displaying a new pie chart and new choices of concepts the student is “ready to learn.” The automatic assessments check the students' retention of recently learned material, and may also include a few topics the student is ready to learn.

4.3.3 Scheduled Assessments [scheduledassessments]

Instructors can schedule assessments for the entire class or for specific students, using the “Add Assessment” option (in the Basic Module) or “New Scheduled Assessment” option (in the Advanced Module). For example, the instructor, department, or college may wish to have “midterm” assessments under supervision to guarantee reliable results. They have the option to select the style of assessment as progress or comprehensive. Progress assessments are slightly shorter and focus on the student's most recent learning

history; comprehensive assessments are slightly longer and probe more deeply into the student's overall knowledge of the course content.

ALEKS allows the instructor to control the availability of the scheduled assessments by specifying a date and time and how students access that assessment when it becomes available. Also among the options for a scheduled assessment is one to prevent automatic assessments within a certain number of days prior to the scheduled assessment. Note that any assessment scheduled by the instructor “resets the clock” for automatic assessments, so that students will not be assessed too frequently.

For additional information about scheduled assessments, see Secs. 6.4.9 and 7.9.

4.3.4 Requested Assessments for a single student [requestedassessments]

As an instructor, you can also request an assessment for a single student using the “Request Assessment” option (in the Advanced Module). When a requested assessment is triggered, the assessment will take place immediately the next time the student logs in (compared to the scheduled assessment, where the student is only prompted to take the assessment after the date or time specified by the instructor). Similar to the scheduled assessment, a requested assessment for a single student also “resets the clock” for automatic assessments. The results of this assessment will not be included in the Gradebook.

The style of a requested assessment can also be set to progress or comprehensive. Progress assessments are slightly shorter and focus on the student's most recent learning history; comprehensive assessments are slightly longer and probe more deeply into the student's overall knowledge of the course content.

For additional information about requested assessments, see Sec. 7.16.1.

4.4 Buttons [assessbuttons]

The Assessment Mode (Fig. 4.1) has a reduced set of active menu buttons. The student being assessed is able to leave the system, by clicking on their name (top right) followed by “Log out”, or get help on use of the Answer Editor using the “Help” button. Other buttons appear, but they are disabled. All of the ALEKS menu buttons are enabled in the Learning Mode (Sec. 5.2).

The two aspects of the ALEKS interface relevant to work in the Assessment Mode are the Answer Editor and the Assessment Report (Sec. 4.11).

4.5 Answer Editor [ansed]

Input to the ALEKS system is always in the form of proper expressions and constructions, never multiple choice. A critical reason for this is to check students' knowledge

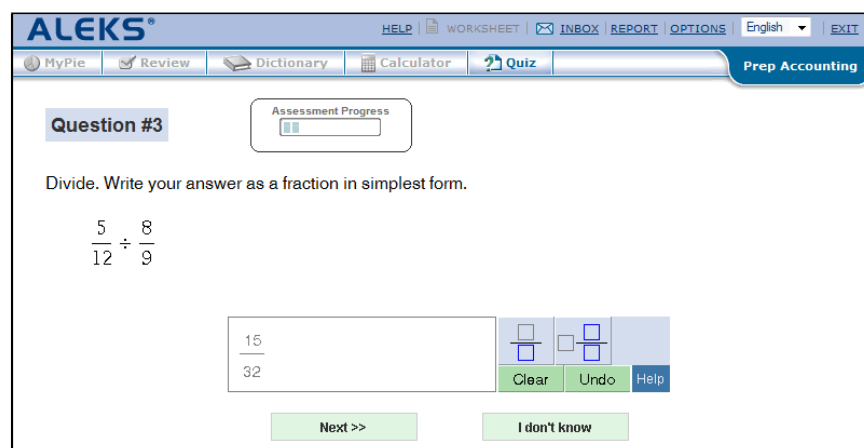


Figure 4.1: The Answer Editor for Mathematical Expressions (Assessment) [assessmentmodule]

accurately.

The general term for the input tools used in ALEKS is the “Answer Editor.” This encompasses a variety of actual modes for user input: an Answer Editor for mathematical expressions, an Answer Editor for the numberline, and an Answer Editor for graphing in the Cartesian plane (with x and y coordinate axes). A student beginning to use ALEKS is trained in how to use the features of the Answer Editor that are relevant to the subject (Sec. 3.8).

In much of what follows in the tutorial, emphasis is on the “Answer Editor for mathematical expressions,” as this is the section which involves the greatest degree of interplay between mouse, keyboard, and on-screen buttons and icons.

4.6 Manipulators for Mathematical Expressions [manipulators]

The Answer Editor for mathematical expressions consists of two parts: a rectangular field where mathematical expressions are entered (the “entry field”) is to the left, and a “keypad” made of buttons with mathematical symbols is to the right (Fig. 4.1). These buttons have labels in the Tutorial, but not afterwards. Mathematical expressions are entered and edited using the buttons of the Answer Editor keypad, as well as the basic keyboard, the Left and Right arrow keys, the Tab, Enter, and Backspace keys, and the mouse.

NOTE. Buttons are displayed to correspond with the kind of problem being solved. The selection is made in such a way as to avoid giving a hint to the correct answer. Keyboard shortcuts (Fig. 4.2) work only when the corresponding button is displayed.

Expression	Answer Editor keypad button	Keyboard equivalent
Square Root	$\sqrt{\quad}$	(none)
Fraction	$\frac{\quad}{\quad}$	/
Mixed Number	$\frac{\quad}{\quad}$	(none)
Repeating Decimal	$\overline{\quad}$	(none)
Absolute Value	$ \quad $	(none)
List of Expressions	$[\quad], [\quad], \dots$,
Exponent	$[\quad]^{[\quad]}$	^ (before exponent)
Multiplication Expression	$[\quad] \times [\quad]$	*
Percentage	%	%
Greater-Than	$[\quad] > [\quad]$	>
Less-Than	$[\quad] < [\quad]$	<
Greater-Than-or-Equal-To	$[\quad] \geq [\quad]$	(none)
Less-Than-or-Equal-To	$[\quad] \leq [\quad]$	(none)
Equal-To	$[\quad] = [\quad]$	=
Not-Equal-To	$[\quad] \neq [\quad]$	(none)
AND	<i>AND</i>	(none)
OR	<i>OR</i>	(none)

Figure 4.2: Mathematical Expressions Produced by the Answer Editor [mathexpressions]

Key	Effect
Right arrow - Tab - Enter	moves the cursor one place to the right (ahead)
Left arrow	moves the cursor one place to the left (back)
Backspace	deletes input immediately preceding (to the left of) the cursor and moves the cursor one place to the left (back) OR deletes selected input

Figure 4.3: Using Special Keys in the Answer Editor [specialkeys]

4.6.1 Basic Input [basicinput]

When a new page is opened and contains a problem whose solution is a mathematical expression, the entry field initially contains at least one blue box. Each blue box represents a mathematical expression forming part of the complete answer. To enter a mathematical expression the student must first click on a blue box. When this is done, the cursor (or “caret”) appears inside the box. The cursor marks the point at which something is entered. Material can be entered using the basic keyboard or the buttons of the keypad. Individual digits can be entered only from the keyboard. Symbols can be entered using the buttons of the keypad or sometimes from the keyboard (Fig. 4.2).

4.6.2 Basic Editing Tools [basiceditingtools]

The cursor, showing the point at which material is entered, can be moved using the Left and Right arrows and the Tab and Enter keys. It can also be positioned using the mouse. Input can be deleted using the Backspace key (Fig. 4.3).

4.6.3 Selecting Input [selectinginput]

It is possible to select a continuous portion of input by dragging the pointer with the mouse button held down. A segment that has been selected by dragging in this way can be deleted by pressing Backspace, replaced by typing, or replaced by clicking the buttons of the Answer Editor keypad. It can also be inserted into a mathematical expression such as a fraction or a square root (the selected portion is placed in the numerator position or under the square root sign, respectively).

4.6.4 Clear and Undo [clearandundo]

After material has been entered, the field can be returned to its empty state by clicking “Clear.” Clicking “Undo” cancels the most recent action. Clicking “Undo” a second time restores the effect of the canceled action (including a “Clear” command).

4.7 Mathematical Expressions [boxes]

The purpose of the Answer Editor for mathematical expressions is to process user input in the form of correct mathematical expressions. One important way in which the Answer Editor guides the user in constructing such expressions is by means of the blue boxes. If a blue box remains on the screen, you know that the input typed so far is not yet complete.

4.7.1 Entering Expressions from the Keyboard [enteringexpressions]

For expressions that do not require the use of the Answer Editor keypad, the user can place the cursor within a blue box and enter the mathematical expression from the keyboard. For many expressions, however, the Answer Editor keypad must be used. Some types of expressions can be entered by either keypad or keyboard (Fig. 4.2).

4.7.2 Using the Answer Editor Keypad to Structure Simple Expressions [keypad]

To form a simple mathematical expression, the user places the cursor in an empty blue box and clicks on the appropriate button from the Answer Editor keypad. The initial blue box disappears and new blue boxes may appear (depending on the button), accompanied by all of the necessary signs. The user can now fill in the new boxes.

4.7.3 Entering Complex Expressions [complexexpressions]

Sometimes it is necessary to enter more complex mathematical expressions, where multiple boxes are used. By placing the cursor in one of these boxes, an expression can be entered from the keyboard, or, by clicking on a button of the Answer Editor keypad, replace it with the structure of a new mathematical expression. Expressions of any degree of complexity can be created in this way.

NOTE. The Answer Editor does not supply parentheses automatically. The user must know when they are necessary. In particular, when there is an expression consisting of more than one symbol that must be raised to a power, the student may need to enclose it in parentheses, just as in writing; otherwise, only the final symbol (the one just before the exponent) will be raised to the given power.

4.7.4 Alternate Ways of Entering Expressions [alternateways]

The buttons of the Answer Editor keypad can be used in other ways as well. In particular, users can select some portion of the input in the entry field which constitutes a complete mathematical expression, and then click on a keypad button. This will create a new mathematical expression within which the expression selected is one component. The same basic rule applies: the minimum unit of manipulation is a complete mathematical expression.

4.7.5 Other Mathematical Signs [othermathematicalsigns]

The following mathematical signs can be entered only from the keyboard:

- The plus sign (+).

- The minus sign (-), both for connecting the two parts of a subtraction expression and for designating a negative number.
- The period (.) used in decimals.
- The comma (,) used to punctuate numbers of more than three places.

4.7.6 The Asterisk for Multiplication [asterisk]

This is a special case. The “x” character on the keyboard cannot be used to enter a multiplication sign. Only the asterisk (*) serves this purpose. (The multiplication sign on the Answer Editor keypad, however, is the traditional x-shaped symbol.)

4.7.7 Mixed Numbers [mixednumbers]

This is another special case. Although fractions can be entered from the keyboard using the front slash character (/), mixed numbers **cannot** be entered this way. In other words, the Answer Editor does not automatically regard a whole number followed by a fraction as a mixed number. The mixed number button on the Answer Editor keypad **must** be used to enter mixed numbers.

4.8 Types of Mathematical Expressions [expressions]

The following set of directions is intended to illustrate the variety of ways in which mathematical expressions can be entered using the Answer Editor.

Here, “Button” will always refer to a button on the Answer Editor keypad. By “select” we mean drag the mouse over the expression to be selected with the mouse button depressed.



Percentage

48%

Here you can use either the Answer Editor keypad or the regular keyboard to enter signs:

- Enter the expression you wish to express as a percentage and click on the percent button; **OR**
- Enter the expression you wish to express as a percentage and then enter the (keyboard) percent sign.



Fraction

$\frac{7}{10}$

Fractions can be entered at least three ways:

- Enter the numerator, enter a (keyboard) forward slash character, and enter the denominator; **OR**

- Enter the numerator, click on the fraction button, and enter the denominator; **OR**
- Click on the fraction button, enter the numerator, then click on the blue square in the position of the denominator and enter the denominator.

**Mixed Number**

$$5\frac{7}{8}$$

Mixed numbers can be entered in more than one way, but each way requires use of the mixed number button:

- Enter the whole number part, click on the mixed number button, enter the numerator, press Enter, and enter the denominator; **OR**
- Click on the mixed number button, enter the whole number part, press the right arrow, enter the numerator, move the cursor to the denominator position, and enter the denominator (i.e., fill in the boxes).

**Repeating Decimal**

$$1.\overline{27}$$

- Enter all digits that precede the repeating pattern, including the decimal point (a period on the keyboard) and any decimal places preceding the pattern, click on the bar button, and enter the repeating pattern; **OR**
- Enter all digits, including the decimal point (a period on the keyboard) and all decimal positions following it, select the repeating pattern only, and click on the bar button.

**Fraction in square root followed by multiplier**

$$\sqrt{\frac{5}{8}} \times 3$$

For this example only one input method is given, but others could be suggested:

- Click on the square root sign button, click on the fraction button, enter the numerator, tab, enter the denominator, then tab, enter an asterisk (from the keyboard), and enter the multiplier.

**List**

$$1, 2, 3$$

For the purposes of the following example, assume that there is a list consisting of three components to be entered:

- Enter the first expression, click on the list button (or press the keyboard comma), enter the second expression, click on the list button, enter the third expression, click on the list button, and enter the fourth expression; **OR**
- Click on the list button (or press the keyboard comma) twice, click on the first blue box, enter the first expression, move the cursor right, enter the second expression, move the cursor right, and enter the third expression.

Answers with Units

$$10 \text{ cups}$$

There are also some cases where the Answer Editor does part of the formatting. For example, in problems where answers must be expressed in some kind of units, such as dollars or candies, the unit expression needed may appear in advance.

**Square Root**

$\sqrt{81}$

- Click on the square root button and enter the expression into the square root sign; **OR**
- Enter the expression you wish to appear under the square root sign, select it, and click on the square root button.

In the simple example just given the second method reverses the sequence of steps of the first method. Such complementary methods are typical.

**Absolute Value**

$|-6|$

Another pair of complementary methods:

- Click on the absolute value button and enter the expression whose absolute value you wish to express; **OR**
- Enter the expression whose absolute value you wish to express, highlight the entire expression, and click on the absolute value button.

**Exponent**

3^2

- Enter the expression you wish to raise to a power, click on the exponent button, and enter the exponent; **OR**
- Click on the Exponent button, enter the base, then move the cursor to the exponent box and enter the exponent.

NOTE. If the number you wish to raise to a power is more complex, it may need to be enclosed in parentheses (Sec. 4.7.3).

**Square Root Preceded by Multiplier**

$2\sqrt{6}$

With more complex expressions, you can use the mouse to place the cursor in the needed position, as in the second method:

- Enter the multiplier, click on the square root button, and enter the expression you wish to be under the square root sign; **OR**
- Click on the square root button, click to the left of the square root sign, enter the multiplier, tab (or press the right arrow, or press Enter, or click on the blue box under the square root sign), and enter the expression you wish to be under the square root sign.

4.9 Advanced Mathematical Expressions [advancedexpressions]

The following types of mathematical expressions occur in more advanced subjects.



To create a matrix, the user clicks on an icon corresponding to the dimensions desired (2×2 , 2×3 , etc.), then fills in the cells with appropriate values.



For topics involving set notation, there will appear icons for each of the special symbols required, such as curly braces, “belongs to,” “such that,” the real numbers, the integers, and so forth.

4.10 The Answer Editor for Graphing [graphing]

The Answer Editor for graphing consists of a Cartesian plane with x - and y - coordinate axes and a selection of other tools for graphing lines and regions of the plane.



To graph a line, use the pencil tool to plot two points. Then, align the straightedge (ruler) on the two points (it is a “grabby” tool and will jump to a point when it is near it). Then use the pencil tool to draw the line. Note that the effect of the straightedge continues past its ends, so there is no need to move it to make a line going from edge to edge of the depicted plane. The line should be started within the graph area, however.



To fill in a region, first, draw all the lines defining the region. Then use the region tool and click in the desired region of the plane. In order for one or more of the lines defining a region to be dotted (as in the graph of a system containing one or more strict inequalities), click on the line with the dotted line tool. This may be done before or after the region is filled.



To draw a graph, use the pencil tool to plot a point. Then, click on the Plot point button twice.



To plot a point where the coordinates are non-integers, use the Plot point button. Using the keyboard, type the numerical values into the coordinate boxes and click “Plot point.”



To draw a graph requiring an asymptote, use the asymptote tool (broken horizontal or vertical line) to place the asymptote as needed. A slanted asymptote may be placed by first drawing two points and then using the tool with a broken diagonal line. Plot the additional points needed for the graph, and then click on the graph button (curved line connecting “X”s).



For each type of conic section, there is a special tool allowing the construction of its graph. Normally, the user clicks once with the tool to establish the center or vertex of the graph, and then one or more additional times to determine its final form.



As with the numberline, select the eraser tool and click on any part of a line, arc, or other component to remove it.

4.11 Assessment Report [report]

At the conclusion of an assessment, the system presents the Assessment Report. The interpretation of this report is the same as for pie chart displays found in other places within ALEKS (such as in “MyPie”). The standard report format is used for all assessment reports (Fig. 4.4).

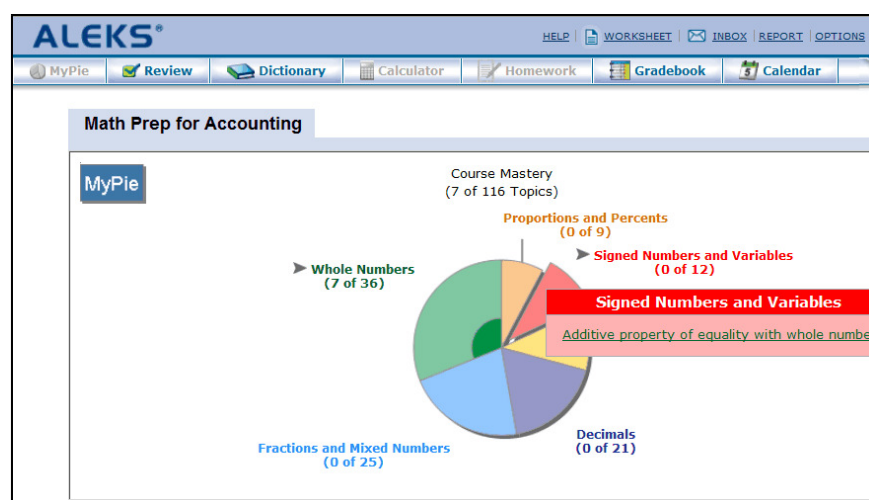


Figure 4.4: Assessment Report [report]

4.11.1 Interpreting the Pie Chart [reportinterpreting]

A pie chart expresses the results of a given assessment. It contains the following types of information:

- The topics included in the syllabus.
- The relative size of the parts of the syllabus.
- To what extent the student has attained the knowledge for each part of the syllabus, according to the assessment.

Each color-coded slice of the pie chart refers to a particular part of the syllabus, such as “Whole Numbers” or “Proportions and Percents.” The portion of the chart taken up by any one area (slice) reflects the size of that area relative to others in the given syllabus.

The degree to which each slice is filled by darker color shows the extent to which the student has mastered that area.

By placing the pointer over one of the slices of the pie chart, the slice expands out of the pie, displaying a list of concepts the student is currently ready to learn. Not every slice necessarily contains such a list, even if the slice has not yet been fully mastered. This is because a student may not be ready to learn a concept in a given slice before concepts in another slice have been mastered. Clicking on any one of these concepts takes the user into the Learning Mode to begin working on that concept.

4.12 Ready to Learn [readytolearn]

The concepts given as most “ready to learn” do not represent a casual selection of concepts that the student has not yet mastered. By resuming study with one of these concepts, the student is following the most efficient path to mastery of the complete course (Chap. 9).

4.13 Progress Bars [progressbars]

Another graphic expression of the student’s progress is given by the bar graphs at the bottom of the report (“History”). These represent the general extent of the student’s mastery:

- The blue portion of each bar represents material that was learned as of the given assessment.
- The green portion represents material mastered in the Learning Mode since that assessment.
- The yellow portion represents material belonging to the curriculum for the given level that has yet to be learned.

When the bar is entirely blue, or a combination of blue and green, the student has completed the curriculum for that course.

Chapter 5

Learning Mode [learning]

5.1 The ALEKS Learning Mode [learningmodule]

The purpose of the Learning Mode is to assist students in mastering mathematical concepts. Students using ALEKS choose which concepts they wish to work on from the pool of available topics in the pie slices. This list of available topics is constantly being updated through progress made by the student in learning mode or as the result of an assessment. As students are only presented with material the system has determined they are most ready to learn, the benefit of their work is maximized.

In the Learning Mode students always work on one concept at a time. The Learning Mode provides students with a rich array of resources to help in mastering concepts. This includes explanations, references to a textbook if one has been integrated with ALEKS, links to supplemental tutorial material and interactive applications, practice problems, diagnostic feedback on problem solutions, and access to a student dictionary. Moreover, the Learning Mode is designed to monitor the progress made by students toward mastery of a given concept and advise them on continuing or changing concepts. A student is required to solve an appropriate number of practice problems correctly before the system will conclude that the concept has been mastered. (If the student makes mistakes, additional practice will be required.) Once the concept has been mastered, the student is encouraged to choose a new concept from the (updated) pie chart, but more practice is available if desired.

If the student has difficulty, the system may suggest that the student pay closer attention to the explanations or offer the name of a classmate who has recently mastered this concept (Sec. 5.7). A new selection may also be encouraged. The student continues to work in the Learning Mode until a new assessment is triggered, either by the instructor or automatically.

Automatic assessments are triggered when the student has either spent a certain amount of time in ALEKS, or made a certain amount of progress since the last assessment (Sec. 4.3.2).

5.2 Interface Features [learnbuttons]

The student has a variety of interface features for using their account. These features allow the student to edit personal information related to their account, view reports and gradebook information, and access helpful tools such as the ALEKS Dictionary, Calculator, and Review.

Students also have the ability to print certain screens in ALEKS. The “Print” feature will be available when the student generates a worksheet, views their reports and utilizes the “Explain” page in learning mode. More detailed explanations of these options can be found below.

5.2.1 Ending an ALEKS Session [exitbutton]

Students can end a session with ALEKS in two ways: click on their name (top right), followed by “Log out,” or simply close the browser window. Also, if no input is supplied to the system for 30 minutes, the session is terminated automatically. Whichever way you exit, the system will return you to the same place when you next log in to ALEKS.

5.2.2 Options [optionsbutton]

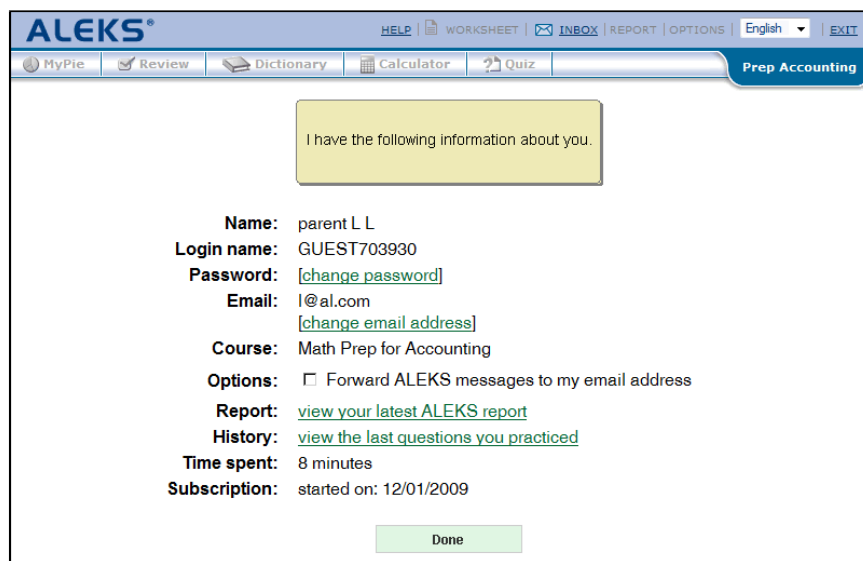


Figure 5.1: The Options Page [options]


OPTIONS The “Options” link in ALEKS contains user and course information specific to the student. A checkbox for joining “Ask a Friend” may be available, depending on the student’s course (Sec. 5.7).

The “Report” link connects the student to a menu of all assessment reports (Sec. 5.2.3).


The “History” link displays a list of concepts the student has worked on recently, indicating the level of mastery achieved and providing the opportunity to return to that concept for further practice.

The “Options” page includes the time the student has currently spent in the ALEKS course. Subscription information is displayed, including the beginning and expiration dates of the account (Fig. 5.1). To return to Learning Mode, click on the “Done” button.

5.2.3 Report [reportbutton]

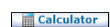
 Clicking on the “Report” link displays a drop-down menu of all past assessments and time(s) in learning mode. Any assessment or learning mode session can be selected (by date) from the menu. Click “OK” to see the results. The results will include a pie chart, a list of topics recently learned, a list of topics the student is ready to learn, and progress bar graphs (Sec. 4.13). Some ALEKS course products include a Common Core Standards report in the student’s account. This report displays the student’s mastery of the Common Core Standards in the ALEKS course. The student also has the Time and Topic Report available under their “Report” link. This report displays the amount of time spent each day in ALEKS as well as the topics the student has attempted and mastered each day. (The number of topics attempted does not include topics the student worked on in Review mode.) To return to Learning Mode, click on the “Done” button.

5.2.4 Dictionary [dictionarybutton]

 The online dictionary provides scientific and mathematical terms and definitions used in the course. Clicking on the “Dictionary” button produces a new browser window tab, with a list of section(s) correlated to the pie chart. Students can also access the Dictionary by clicking on underlined words (hypertext links) anywhere in the Learning Mode. Click on any section(s) to access the definition of terms used in that section. Dictionary definitions are designed to present concepts in their simplest form first, moving into greater depth as the definition proceeds (Fig. 5.2).

The Dictionary screen also includes a text entry field to quickly search for key terms and a link to access the Complete Mathematics Dictionary. Selecting the “Complete Mathematics Dictionary” link gives access to an index of all the Dictionary’s headings and subheadings. Beneath the index is the Dictionary entry, with links to other entries and graphic illustrations as appropriate. Close the Dictionary window to return to the Learning Mode.

5.2.5 Calculator [calculator]



Search [DICTIONARY](#) | [CLOSE WINDOW](#)

Simplest Form (of a Fraction)

Definition:
 A [fraction](#) is in *simplest form* when its [numerator](#) and [denominator](#) have a [GCF](#) of 1 .

- The fraction $\frac{5}{6}$ is in simplest form. The only [common factor](#) of 5 and 6 is 1 .
- The fraction $\frac{4}{6}$ is *not* in simplest form. 4 and 6 have a common factor of 2 .

We can [simplify](#) a fraction that is not in simplest form.
 We get a fraction that is [equivalent](#) to the original.

- The fraction $\frac{4}{6}$ can be simplified.

To do this, we divide the numerator and denominator by their GCF, 2 .


$$\frac{4}{6} = \frac{4 \div 2}{6 \div 2} = \frac{2}{3}$$

$\frac{4}{6}$ written in simplest form is $\frac{2}{3}$. These two fractions are equivalent.


Figure 5.2: Dictionary [dictionary]

The Calculator button is available for topics where ALEKS permits use of a calculator. Click on this button to use the online calculator.


5.2.6 Review [reviewbutton]

 The “Review” button gives a list of concepts the student has recently worked on in the Learning Mode. The link “Click here for more review” gives a comprehensive list of all topics mastered by the student. For more information see Sec. 5.5.

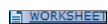
5.2.7 Gradebook [gradebookbutton]

 The student can access the Gradebook for the course by clicking on the “Gradebook” button. For more information see Sec. 6.5.


5.2.8 Calendar [calendarbutton]

 The student can access the Calendar for the course by clicking on the “Calendar” button. For more information see Sec. 6.4.13.

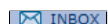
5.2.9 Worksheet [worksheetbutton]

 The student may obtain an individualized, printable homework sheet by clicking “Worksheet.” The questions on the worksheet are based on the student’s most recent work in ALEKS. For more information see Sec. 5.6.

5.2.10 Assignments [assignmentsbutton]

 The student can complete an assignment (Homework, Quiz, Test, or Scheduled Assessment) assigned by the instructor or check the results of assignments by clicking on the “Assignments” button. If assignments are currently available, the student will see an orange burst on the “Assignments” button. If the assignment has been scheduled by the instructor, so that the student must begin the assignment as soon as it becomes available, the student will be “forced” into the assignment on login to ALEKS (Sec. 6.4.2).

5.2.11 Inbox [messagebutton]

 The Inbox allows the student to send messages to the instructor requesting assistance with a topic in ALEKS, help with a specific problem, or for other purposes. The student can compose a message by clicking on “Compose.” It is possible to include mathematical notation and illustrations in the message as follows:

1. Click the “math” symbol at the right end of the tool bar. This will switch the user into the “Enhanced message editor,” with its robust set of math input tools.
2. Click the “Graphs” tab for graphing tools, or on “Algebra,” “Trig,” “Matrix,” or “Stat” for symbolism specific to these areas.

While working in the Learning Mode, the student can message a specific problem type they are working on to their instructor. This message will contain a link to a screenshot of the practice problem. With the practice problem on the screen, the specific problem may be attached to the email as follows:

1. Click on the “Inbox” link. This will take you into the ALEKS Message Center.
2. Click on the “Compose” button.
3. Below the body message section, check the box next to “Attach Page.”
4. Click on the “Send” button to send the message.

It is possible to include attachments up to 2MB in size (Secs. 6.1.4). It is also possible to send messages directly to ALEKS Corporation. Click on “Done” to return to the Learning Mode.

5.2.12 Help [helpbutton]

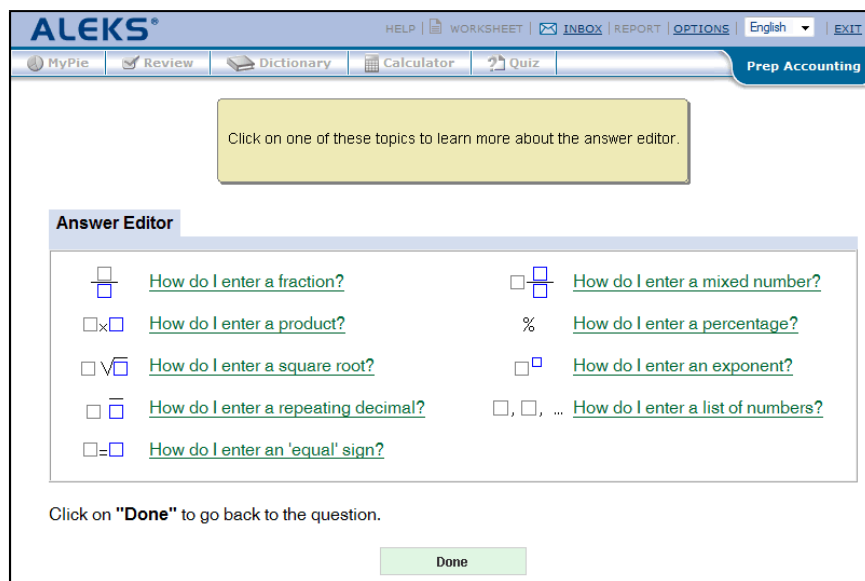


Figure 5.3: The Help Menu [help]

HELP

The “Help” button in the Assessment and Learning Modes provides detailed assistance with use of the Answer Editor (Fig. 5.3). The Help Menu contains a list of questions on how to use the various icons of the Answer Editor; clicking on one of the items will take you through a brief tutorial on the use of the icon. The “Help” screen includes a link to the ALEKS User’s Guide.

5.2.13 MyPie [mypiebutton]

MyPie

Clicking on “MyPie” produces a pie chart display reflecting the current state of the student’s mastery in the Learning Mode (Sec. 4.11). The student can use this button to select a new concept to work on from among those currently most “ready to learn.”

5.3 The Learning Mode Interface [learninginterface]

The ALEKS Learning Mode allows students to practice topics they are ready to learn. When students successfully solve a series of problems of the same type, ALEKS will add this problem type or “topic” to the student’s pie chart. If a student experiences difficulty with a topic, ALEKS will attempt to help the student in several ways. Different examples of how to solve the problems will be displayed on the “Explain” pages. The “Explain” pages provide definitions of terms, a comprehensive mathematics dictionary, a “Help” option, and immediate feedback on the answers.

5.3.1 Practice Page [practice]

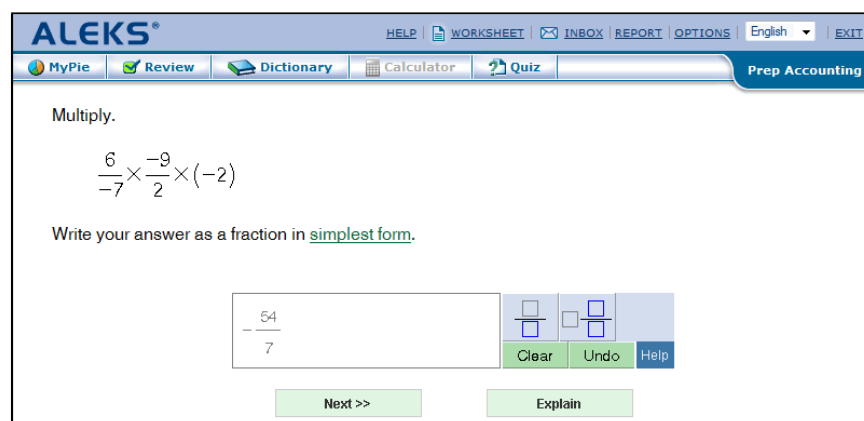


Figure 5.4: Practice Page [practice]

Clicking on the name of a topic from the student’s pie chart will display a page containing an instance of the problem, followed by the Answer Editor. This is where a solution to the problem can be attempted (Fig. 5.4). All practice problems are generated by algorithms, with randomly selected numerical values, so that the variety of problem instances for any topic is very high.

Below the Answer Editor are buttons labeled “Next” and “Explain.” Clicking on “Next” has the same effect as described for the Assessment Mode: it submits the answer. Here, however, the user is given immediate feedback on their answer (Sec. 5.4). If correct, the student will receive a congratulatory message. Next, a new problem is presented. In the case where the topic is considered mastered, the student will receive two options; the student can choose to click “Done” to move on to a different topic, or they can click “More Practice” to practice the topic further.

When the student enters an incorrect answer, ALEKS will return the presentation of the original problem with feedback on the student’s error. Students can then click on the “Explain” button.

5.3.2 Explanation Page [explanation]

ALEKS HELP WORKSHEET INBOX REPORT OPTIONS English EXIT

MyPie Review Dictionary Calculator Quiz Prep Accounting

Signed fraction multiplication

Multiply.

$$\frac{1}{-5} \times \frac{-1}{7} \times 7$$

Write your answer as a fraction in [simplest form](#).

Read this explanation carefully.

$$\frac{1}{-5} \times \frac{-1}{7} \times 7 = \frac{1 \times (-1) \times 7}{(-5) \times 7}$$

Write the product as a single fraction.

$$= \frac{1 \times (-1) \times \cancel{7}^1}{(-5) \times \cancel{7}_1}$$

Cancel the [common factors](#).

$$= \frac{-1}{-5}$$

Do multiplications in numerator and denominator.

$$= \frac{1}{5}$$

Cancel the negative signs.

Figure 5.5: Explanation Page [explain]

The explanation page (Fig. 5.5) begins with the title of the current item and an instance of that item. The answer to the problem is given at the end of the explanation.

When ALEKS is used with textbook integration, a reference will appear at the bottom of the explanation page showing the chapter and section of the textbook where additional information about the concept may be found (Sec. 6.3.2). Additional tutorial material and interactive applications may also be found through links at the bottom of the explanation page.

Here again, mathematical terms are linked to dictionary definitions. The system may suggest looking up certain key terms to help with the explanation (especially if the explanation has already been visited). At the bottom of the page is the “Practice” button. Clicking on this button produces a new instance of the same problem-type. Sometimes there may also be a button for “Additional Explanation” or “Detailed Explanation.” You can also return to the pie chart to choose a different topic by clicking on the “MyPie” icon.

5.3.3 Wrong Answer Page [wrong]

The wrong answer page will appear only after an incorrect answer has been submitted on the practice page (Fig. 5.6). The system may explain why the answer is incorrect

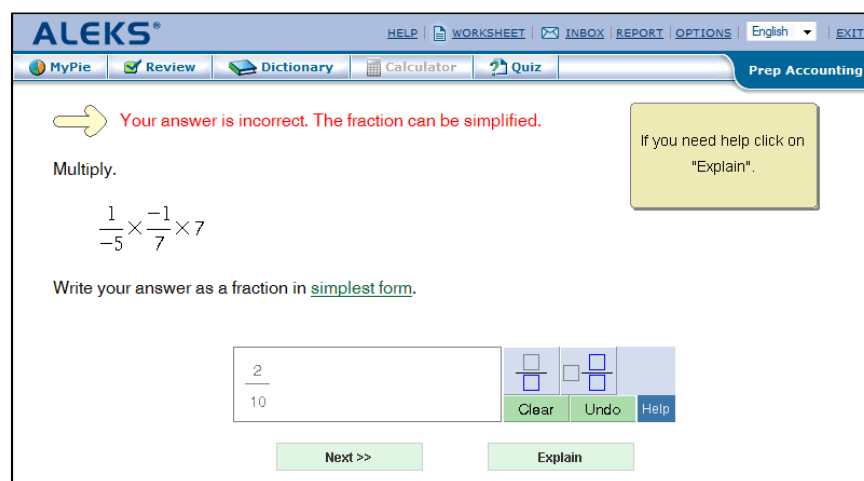


Figure 5.6: Wrong Answer Page [wrong]

and may offer advice on the error. Underlined words (hypertext links) may also appear on the screen for students to look up in the Dictionary.

The old, incorrect answer appears in the Answer Editor, where it can be corrected and resubmitted. Again, clicking on “Explain” is an option that leads to an explanation of the problem. Please note that the system may also take the student directly to the “Explain” page if an item is missed too many times.

5.4 Feedback in Learning Mode [learningfeedback]

In the Learning Mode feedback is integrated into a sophisticated system of guidance for the student. Some errors prompt ALEKS to give specific hints and suggestions (Fig. 5.6). For example, it may say that a fractional answer needs to be reduced or that a list of expressions is incomplete. After a correct answer, the system will ask a limited number of questions for the same concept before judging that it has been mastered. If an item is missed too many times, however, a new topic will be suggested. If a concept has been left without mastery being attained the system may suggest returning to it after one or two other topics have been covered.

5.5 Review [review]

A student using ALEKS can review topics recently worked on in the Learning Mode by using the “Review” button (Fig. 5.7). Clicking on any of these topics provides the chance for additional practice; this is particularly useful when the student knows that a new assessment is imminent. “Click here for more review” gives a comprehensive list of all topics mastered by the student. ALEKS will periodically offer a student the option

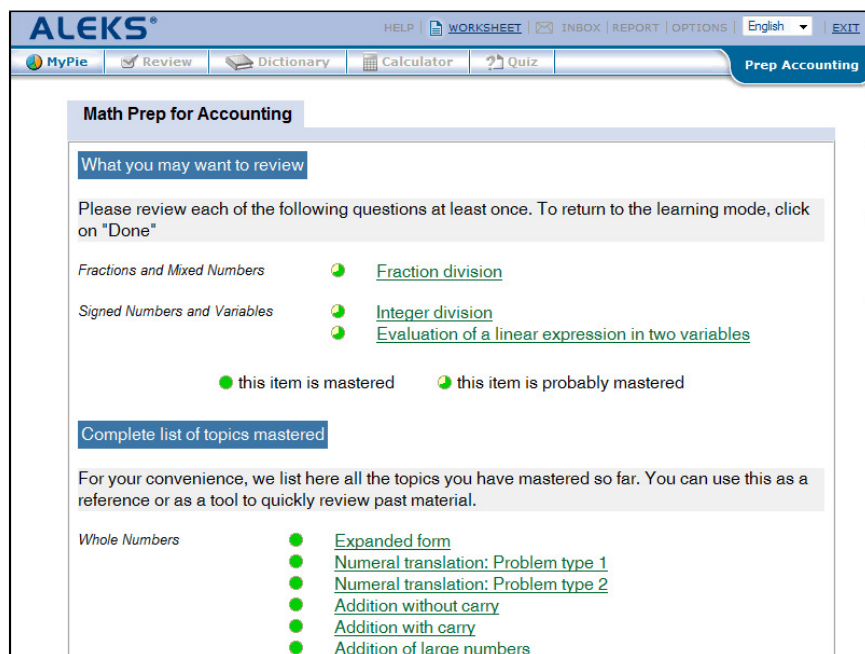


Figure 5.7: Review [review]

of reviewing past material at the time of login. The student can select a topic to review from these recently mastered topics. Clicking on the “Done” button will return the student to the Learning Mode.

In Review, a student can sort course topics either by “Objectives View” or by “ALEKS View.” “Objectives View” organizes topics based on the textbook integration or intermediate objectives set up by the instructor. “ALEKS View” organizes topics based on the pie slices.

NOTE. Work done in Review mode does not affect the student’s pie chart or records of progress.

5.6 Worksheet [worksheet]

Clicking the “Worksheet” button generates an individualized, printable homework sheet (in PDF format) containing a number of questions based on the student’s most recent work in ALEKS (Fig. 5.8). When the student does this, a sheet containing answers for this individual worksheet (labeled with the student’s name and the date) is sent to the instructor via the ALEKS message system (Sec. 6.1.4). The instructor may permit students access to their worksheet answers (Sec. 6.4.12).

A record will be kept on the Worksheet page of all worksheets produced by the student. The student can click on the link for any past worksheet in order to obtain that work-

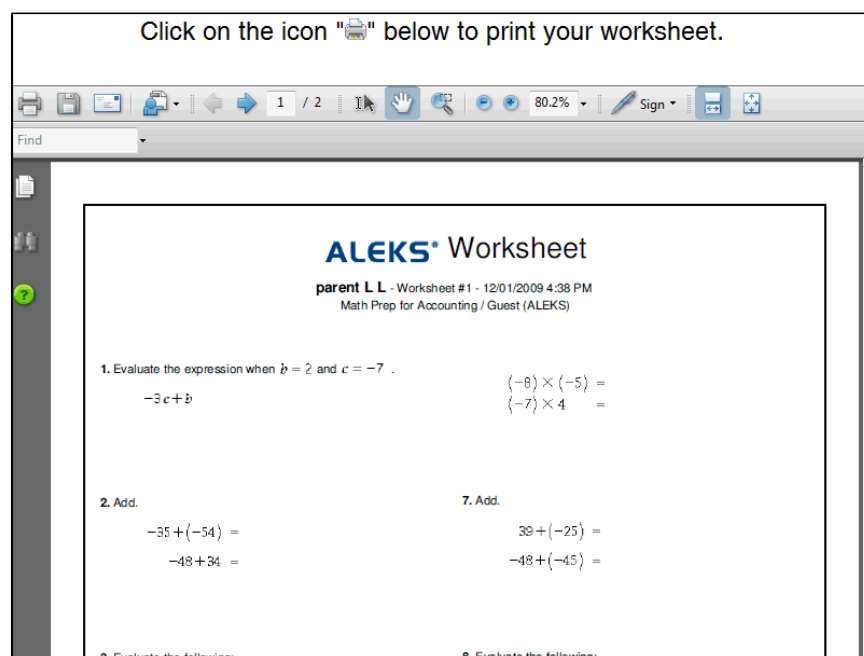


Figure 5.8: Worksheet [worksheet]

sheet again. If the instructor has permitted access to worksheet answers, there will also be links on this page to answer keys for each of the worksheets.

NOTE. In order to view or print documents in PDF format, such as the ALEKS worksheet, Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Acrobat Reader must be installed on your computer. Most computers have this software. If for any reason your computer does not, there is a link on the ALEKS Worksheet page to download it. Also, because the worksheet is opened in a new browser window, it may be necessary to disable your pop-up blocker temporarily in order to view or print the ALEKS worksheet.

5.7 Ask a Friend [friend]

The Ask a Friend feature, if enabled, allows students who are having trouble mastering a topic to know the name of a student in the course who has already mastered that particular topic. The student then has the option of asking the other student for assistance.

The student can choose to participate in this feature via the Options link. A button marked “Ask a Friend” will appear at the bottom of the page in the Learning Mode, if the following conditions are met:

- The student was unsuccessful in answering the concept.

- There is another student in the course who has successfully mastered the concept in an assessment and who has also chosen to participate in the “Ask a Friend” feature.

Chapter 6

Basic Instructor Module [im2basic]

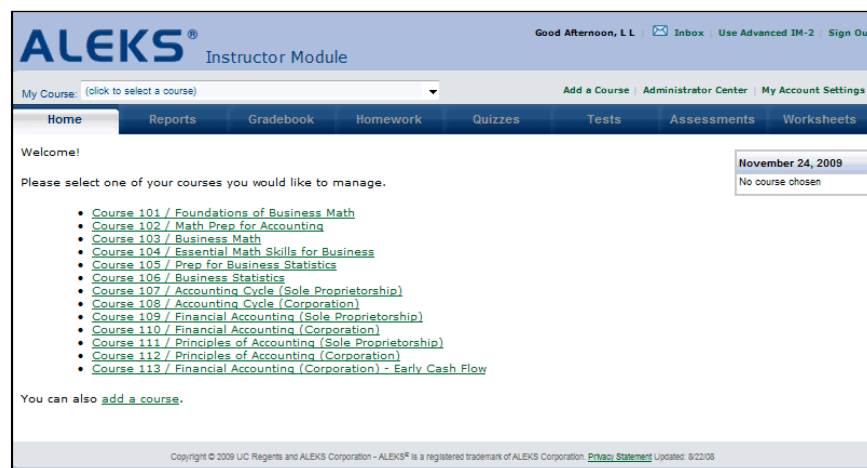


Figure 6.1: Course List [courselist]

The ALEKS Instructor Module enables instructors to quickly and easily manage their courses and monitor student progress. It puts powerful and flexible tools for course customization in the instructor’s hands, making possible a closer coordination between an ALEKS course and the range of integrated textbooks. Like earlier versions of the Instructor Module, it is based on the “Wizard” principle, meaning that all actions are broken into clear, logical steps for easy use even by those new to the system. For experienced users, there is an Advanced Instructor Module that uses the familiar Selector panel and object-based functionality (Chap. 7).

6.1 Instructor account [courselist]

When logging on to your Instructor account, you will be prompted to create a course if there is none yet created. If there is only one course under your name, you will see the Home page for that course (Sec. 6.1.10). If there is more than one course, you will see a list of your courses and be able to click on the name of a course in order to begin working with it (Fig. 6.1). Clicking on the name of a course brings you to the Home page for that course. The course can also be chosen from the “Class” drop-down menu in upper left of the screen. A new course can be created by clicking “Add a Course” to upper right or lower left (Sec. 6.3).

If you have Administrator status, this page will also provide access to the courses of other instructors at your college.

See Sec. 6.6 for information regarding the Administrator Center.

6.1.1 My Account Settings [myaccountsettings]

The screenshot displays the 'My Account Settings' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'My Course: (click to select a course)' on the left and 'Add a Course', 'Administrator Center', and 'My Account Settings' on the right. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with 'Home', 'Reports', 'Gradebook', 'Homework', 'Quizzes', 'Tests', 'Assessments', and 'Worksheets'. The main content area is titled 'Account Preferences' and shows the user's name as 'Mr. Clarck' and 'Login Name: IM2BCLARK'. A date indicator shows 'December 10, 2009' and a note 'No course chosen'. A message states: 'Please make all necessary changes below, then click on "Save".' The form includes fields for 'Title: Mr.', 'Name: First: Bob', 'Initial:', 'Last: Clark', 'Password: [masked]', and 'Password (again): [masked]'. There is also an 'Email and ALEKS message options' section with an 'Email:' field and five checkboxes: 'Forward all messages to my email address.', 'Forward messages sent by my students to ALEKS Customer Support to my account.', 'Enable my students to send me messages.', 'Enable my students to send messages to each other.', and 'Forward messages sent to my students to their regular email account.' A green 'Save' button is located at the bottom center.

Figure 6.2: My Account Settings [myaccountsettings]

Click on “My Account Settings” to check and modify your ALEKS Instructor account data: name, title, password, email, and automatic log out time (Fig. 6.2). You can also set options affecting the message system and the use of your email address (Sec. 6.1.4).

6.1.2 Student View [studentview]

The Student View is a tool to allow instructors to see exactly what the student experiences in a particular course. Instructors can take the tutorial, take an ALEKS

Assessment, view a pie chart, or complete an assignment. The Student View is not included on the instructor's roster, and no scores from it will be reported in the Gradebook or reports. A Student View option is provided for each course under the instructor's account.

To access the Student View, select the course, then click on the link at the top of the screen that says "Student View." The next page will show a summary of the feature and how to use it.

To receive the maximum benefit from the Student View, instructors should already have set up homework, quizzes or tests. Clicking on the "Reset the Student View" button will delete any previous work done in that Student View.

From the Welcome page, instructors can choose to fast-forward through the ALEKS tutorial and Initial Assessment by clicking on the "Next>>" button. To log out of the Student View, instructors should click on the "Exit" link in the upper right-hand corner of the window. Instructors returning to the Student View, after previously working as a student in the course, will be taken to the screen where they left off, unless they checked the "Reset the Student View" box on the summary page.

6.1.3 Course Forum [courseforumim2basic]

The Course Forum is a feature in ALEKS that allows the instructor to share ideas with their students, post the course syllabus, and maintain an open channel of discussion. Students can also use the Course Forum to post questions and ideas.

The Course Forum is specific to a particular course and must be authorized by the instructor for each course where it is to be used. To authorize the Course Forum, select the course, then click on Course Forum (upper right) and select "Authorize This Course Forum."

Postings in the Forum can be displayed either by topic or by date. The instructor can monitor the postings and selectively hide messages. The Course Forum can be deactivated by the instructor at any time in the Advanced Instructor Module. To deactivate the Course Forum, select the course and then click on the Home tab. Next, click on the Course Options link, and then the Access Options link. Here you can uncheck "Allow access to this Course Forum."

6.1.4 Inbox [inbox]

The ALEKS system contains a full-featured internal message system (Sec. 5.2.11). Instructors access the system through the "Inbox" icon in the upper part of the Instructor interface. After clicking this icon, you will see your Inbox with all current messages. The messages can be viewed and managed using the features of the message system, which resemble those of a standard email client. To compose a message, click "Compose."

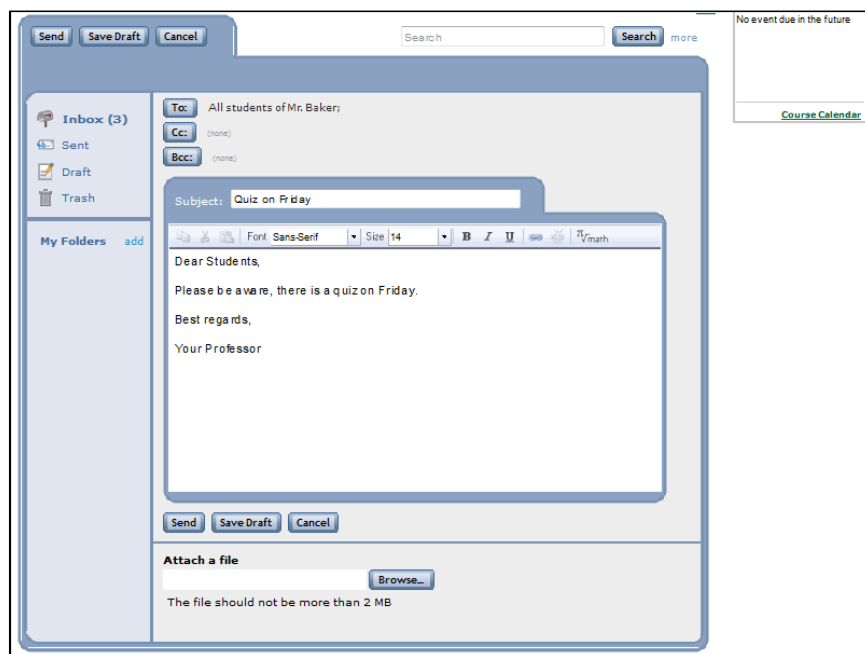


Figure 6.3: Compose Message [inbox]

The features of the message editor page also resemble those of standard email programs. In order to include mathematical

notation and illustrations in your messages, click the “math” symbol at the right end of the tool bar. This switches you to the “Enhanced Message Editor,” with a robust set of input tools (Fig. 6.3). Click on the “Graphs” tab for graphing tools, or on “Algebra,” “Trig,” “Matrix,” or “Stat” for symbolism specific to these areas.

After composing the message, the instructor can check the box next to “Mark as urgent” if desired. When students receive a message marked as urgent, they will see “URGENT Message” displayed above their ALEKS INBOX icon.

You also have the option to include attachments in your messages. The attachments can be up to 2MB in size. By default, messages sent to you through the ALEKS message system will be copied to your email address (if provided). This option and others affecting the message system can be changed under “My Account Settings” (Sec. 6.1.1).

6.1.5 ALEKS Community [alekscommunity]

The ALEKS Community is a discussion forum for instructors to share ideas, discuss best practices, and ask questions. All ALEKS instructors are members of the ALEKS Community and are encouraged to post new topics or comment on existing discussion threads.

You can join the discussion by clicking on the ALEKS Community button when logged

into ALEKS with your instructor login name. Instructors will be prompted to click the box stating that they have read and agree to the terms of the Community, prior to obtaining access to the forum. Instructors can also access the ALEKS Community from the ALEKS website under Instructor Resources. When instructors join the ALEKS Community, they will receive a daily email summary of the approved messages discussed in the forum.

NOTE. The ALEKS Community forum is for ALEKS instructors only. Students do not have access to this forum. This forum should not be confused with the ALEKS Course Forum for students (Secs. 6.1.3, 6.6.5).

6.1.6 ALEKS Training [alekstraining]

The ALEKS Training link connects you to the online Instructor Training Center, where you can learn more about ALEKS features and how to use them. The website includes pre-recorded videos and printable tutorials with step-by-step instructions for commonly used features in ALEKS.

6.1.7 Archiving Classes and Instructors [archiving]

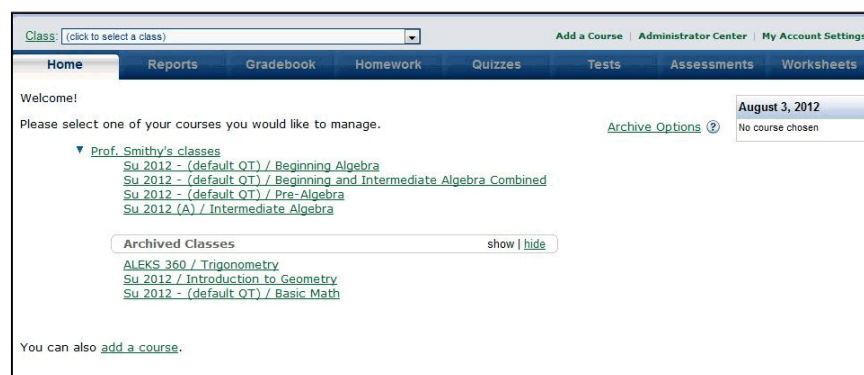


Figure 6.4: Class List [classlist]

Instructors can archive their own classes to simplify their Instructor Module display so that only relevant classes appear. Administrators can archive other instructors' classes and accounts. This feature is especially helpful for instructors and administrators who manage a large set of classes and instructors.

Archiving does NOT delete or deactivate classes, shared course access, or instructor accounts. Archived classes and instructor accounts are simply moved to archived folders to aid organization, but are still accessible to administrators, instructors, and students.

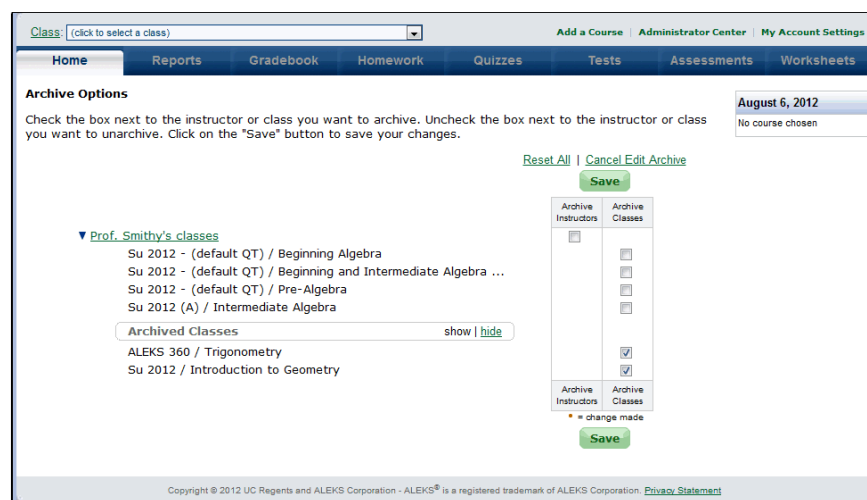


Figure 6.5: Archiving Options [archivingoptions]

Options After logging into your ALEKS account, click on the “Archive Options” link (Fig. 6.4). Alternatively, you can access the feature by first clicking on the “Class” link located to the left of the class selection drop-down menu (Fig. 6.4). Once on the Archive Options screen, each course is listed in a separate row with a checkbox under the column heading “Archive Instructors” or “Archive Classes” (Fig. 6.5). As you scroll through the list, each row appears highlighted in the color yellow to indicate the checkbox applicable to the class.

On the Archive Options screen, you can do the following:

1. **To archive**, check the box next to the desired class (or instructor).
OR
To unarchive, uncheck the box next to the desired class (or instructor).
2. Click on the “Save” button to save your changes.

Once you have archived classes, you will see a section called “Archived Classes” at the bottom of your class list. Administrators will see other archived instructors on that list.

The class drop-down menu does not contain any archived classes by default. However, if you view an archived class after selecting it from an “Archived Classes” folder, the class will then be shown in the class drop-down menu and “(Archived)” will be displayed next to the class name. Once you select another class in the drop-down menu, the archived class will no longer be displayed.

NOTE. If administrators archive other instructors’ classes, this **will** affect the Instructor Module display for those instructors. Instructors will see an “Archived Classes” section at the bottom of their class list after logging into their ALEKS account. If administrators check the box under the “Archive Instructor” column, this will only archive the instructor account, but not the classes.

Automatic Archiving. When creating a new class, instructors can check the box next to “Automatically archive this class after the end date” to automatically archive the class following the selected end date (Fig. 6.25). Instructors who wish to keep only active classes in their class list should check this box each time they create a new class.

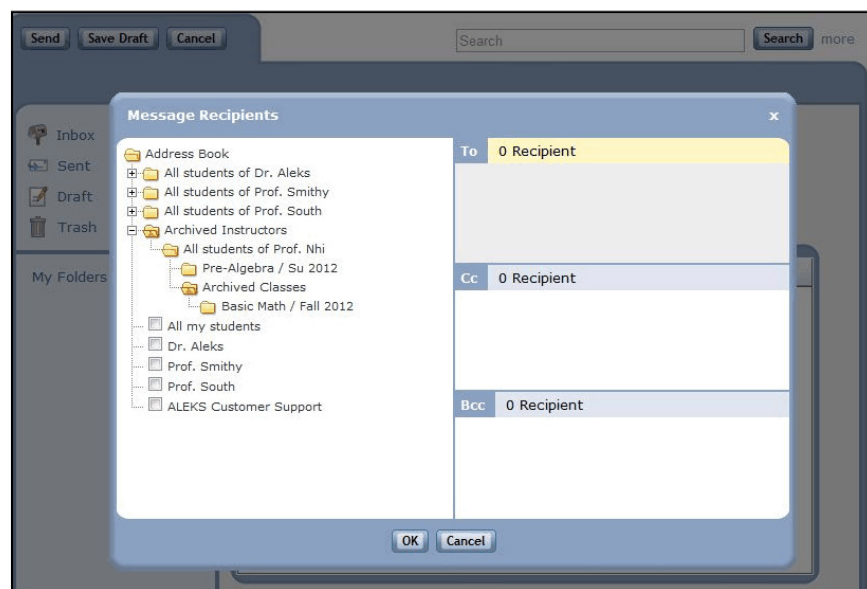


Figure 6.6: Messaging Archive Classes [messagingarchiveclasses]

Messaging. Through the ALEKS “Inbox” Instructors (or administrators) can still send messages to students (or instructors) when their classes have been archived.

When the instructor has at least one archived class, an “Archived Classes” folder will appear. Clicking on the “+” sign next to the “Archived Classes” folder will expand the archived classes list and display the list of students in the archived class.

If at least one instructor has been archived, administrators will see an “Archived Instructors” folder at the bottom of the instructor list. Clicking on the “+” sign will expand the “Archived Instructors” folder.

6.1.8 Use Advanced Instructor Module [useadvancedim2]

To switch to the Advanced Instructor Module, click on “Use Advanced IM-2” at upper right. The Advanced Instructor Module has much the same functionality as the Basic Instructor Module, but the interface is simplified to provide more efficiency for users who are familiar with the system. See Chap. 7 for complete information.

6.1.9 Sign Out [signout]

To exit your Instructor account, click on “Sign Out” at upper right. You can also just close the browser window to end the session. It is a good idea to close the session when done, to avoid accidentally exposing student data.

6.1.10 Course Home Page [home]

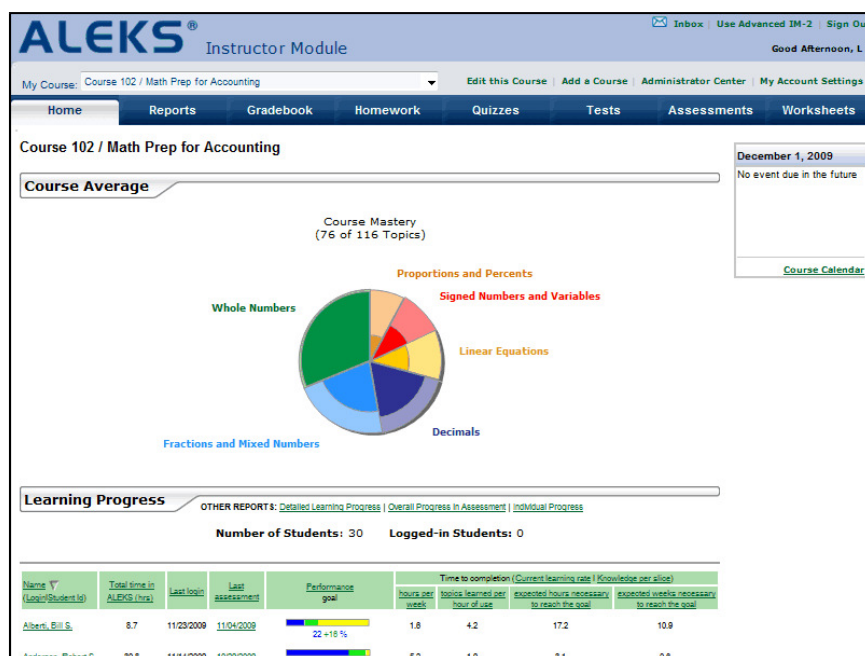


Figure 6.7: Course Home Page [home]

Once a course has been selected, all features of the Instructor Module become available (Fig. 6.7). In particular, the tabs “Reports, Gradebook, Homework, Quizzes,” etc., become active. Also, in the right-hand margin, there is a box showing upcoming due dates for assignments in this course; at the bottom of the box is a link to the Course Calendar (Sec. 6.4.13).

The Home page for a course displays a pie chart for the average progress of students in the course (similar to “ALEKS Pie Average Report,” Sec. 6.2.6), and a list of the students with their current individual progress (similar to “Learning progress since latest assessment,” Sec. 6.2.10). Other frequently-used reporting options are also available directly from this page; in order to access all reporting options, click “Reports” (Sec. 6.2).

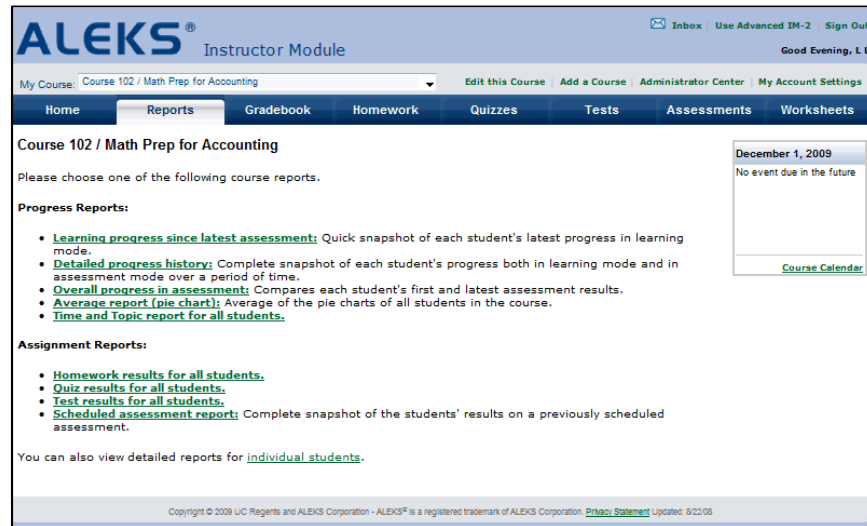


Figure 6.8: Reports [reports]

6.2 Reports [reports]

The Reports page displays the ALEKS reports that are available for the current class. Each report is represented by an icon and includes a “Class” link and an “Individual” link just below the icon (Fig. 6.8). Instructors can access the Reports page by selecting a class and clicking on the “Reports” tab.

6.2.1 Available Reports [availablereports]

ALEKS offers a wide range of dynamic, automated reports that display individual student and class data in a variety of ways. Instructors can use these reports to track usage, progress, grading, and attendance.

Although individual student data is also available through the class reports, the individual link should be used when looking at reports in the presence of a third party (such as a student), to avoid violating the privacy of other students who would also appear in the class reports.

The reports are organized by the following report types:

- ALEKS Pie
- Progress Bar
- Time and Topic
- Knowledge Per Slice
- Assignments

NOTE. The report icons will not appear on the Reports page when they are not applicable to the course. Also, when there are no students in the course, the report icons will appear on the page but will not be active.

Beside each report type is a “?” icon. Instructors can click on this icon to see a description of the report type. To run a class report, click on the “Class” link below the report icon. To run an individual student report, first click on the “Individual” link below the report icon, and then click on the name of the student. Alternatively, students can be viewed by Login Name or Student ID, using the toggles below the list of names.

6.2.2 Download Report Data [downloadreportdata]

Reporting data can be printed or downloaded from any of the report styles. Use the ALEKS Print icon to print, or the link marked “Download Excel Spreadsheet” at upper right to download in Excel format.

6.2.3 Send Message To Selected Students [sendstudentmessage]

Instructors can send messages to selected students from most class reports and from the Gradebook. To select students, click on the numbered icons next to students’ names. The icons will change from grey to yellow to indicate which students are selected. By clicking on “All,” instructors can select all students in the report. To deselect a student, instructors click on the associated yellow icon (which turns the icon back to grey).

After selecting the students, click on the “Send Message to Selected Students” link. This opens a message in the ALEKS Inbox, and the students’ names will automatically appear in the “Bcc” field of the email message. (When “Bcc” is used, students who receive the message will not know the names of other students to whom it was sent.) After composing the message, the instructor can check the box next to “Mark as urgent” if desired. When students receive a message marked as urgent, they will see “URGENT Message” displayed above their ALEKS INBOX icon.

NOTE. Instructors can quickly select all the students from one number to another by using the “Shift” key. For example, to select all the students from 1 to 4, they can do the following:

1. Click on number 1.
2. Hold down the “Shift” key while clicking on number 4.

6.2.4 Viewing Student History Across Multiple ALEKS courses [studenthistorydata]

This feature allows administrators and instructors to view student history across multiple ALEKS courses. This comprehensive view can be used to easily identify each

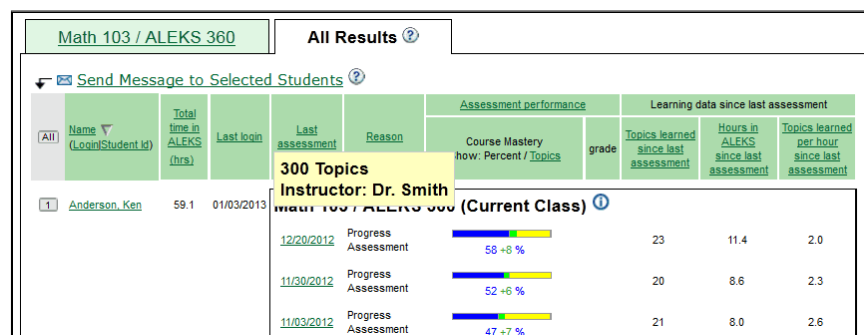


Figure 6.9: Student History [allresultstab]

student’s progress history, and to preserve a record of their work after they have been moved to a new ALEKS 360 course. This feature can be found in the following reports:

- ALEKS Pie for an individual student (Sec. 6.2.7).
- Progress Bar for the class (Full progress)(Sec. 6.2.12)
- Progress Bar for an individual student (Sec. 6.2.13)

To see the student history data available click on the “All Results” tab in the report. Moving the cursor over the “i” next to the course name will display the number of topics and instructor name of that course (Fig. 6.9). The ”All Results” tab will not be active if students were not in a prior ALEKS course.

NOTE. Depending on the options selected by the administrator at the school, instructors are able to see report history for only the courses they have taught or report history for all courses taken by the student (Sec. 7.19.1). Administrators can see all report history for all students. This feature will display student history from August 1, 2012 through the present day; performance prior to this date may appear as a grey bar.

6.2.5 Interpreting Bar Graphs [interpretingbargraphs]

Bar graphs are used in several of the ALEKS report styles. Although the meaning of the bar graphs varies by report style, there are some common features.

Bar Graph Colors

The colors used to fill the bar indicate the level of mastery of the course contents at a particular time. The bar is filled from left to right.

- **Blue** means that mastery was shown on assessment.
- **Green** that tentative mastery was achieved in Learning Mode.
- **Yellow** indicates the part of the course material not mastered.
- **Blank (white)** indicates an assessment is in progress.

- **Grey** means the student was moved from a different course product; any assessments from the earlier course product will appear greyed out in the new course. Student performance prior to August 1, 2012 may appear as a grey bar.
- **Aquamarine** shows progress made between the first and latest assessment.
- An **asterisk** by a greyed-out bar graph or any other color, in some reports, indicates that a new assessment is underway.

Values underneath Bar Graphs

Underneath the bar are percentages corresponding to the like-colored portion of the bar graph; for example, a “25%” in dark blue under the bar graph indicates that the dark blue portion of the bar is 25% of its total length. Instead of percentages, you can view student progress by the number of topics. Simply click on the “Percent” or “Topics” link in the Course Mastery column to toggle between the two views.

Multiple Bar Graphs

Where there is more than one bar graph per student, the bar graphs represent different points in the student’s learning history, generally associated with assessments taken by the student. **Bar graphs showing a segment of the student’s learning history are stacked, with the earliest on the bottom and the most recent at the top.**

More Features

There are several ways of accessing student data using reports:

- The list of students in a bar-graph report can be sorted on any of the report columns by clicking on the text in the header for that column. Clicking on the text in the header section of the column will bring up an ascending or descending arrow, which can then be used to sort the column.
- You can navigate to other kinds of reports by clicking on hyperlinked names or dates. Clicking on a student’s name takes you to the detailed learning history for that student (Sec. 6.2.13).
- Clicking on the date for an assessment takes you to a detailed (pie chart) report for that assessment (Sec. 6.2.7).

NOTE. On some reports, if students have been in a different ALEKS course previously, it is possible to toggle between viewing their total time in ALEKS and their total time in the current course. This toggle will appear below the report. For students who have only been in one ALEKS course, the displayed time will be the total time in the current course.

6.2.6 ALEKS Pie (Average Report) [averagereport]



The ALEKS Pie Report features a color-keyed pie chart showing the breakdown of student learning for the average of all students in the course, letting instructors

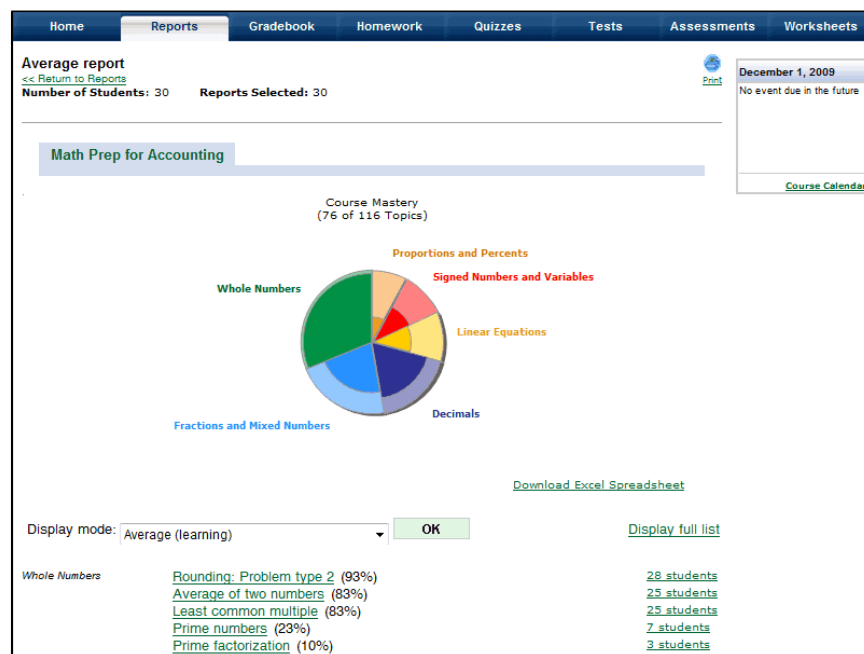


Figure 6.10: ALEKS Pie (Average Report) [averagereport]

see at a glance how the students are meeting the course goals. This report allows instructors to group students easily based on their prerequisite knowledge and to direct instruction according to what students are ready to learn (Fig. 6.10).

You can use the “Show” drop-down box to filter the report by “Current Learning,” “Most Recent Assessment,” or “Initial Assessment.” The “Current Objective” title and the dotted lines on the pie chart are displayed only when “Current Learning” is selected and the course is set up with intermediate/chapter objectives. Complete details on which topics students have mastered, not mastered, and are ready to learn in the course are available in the section below the pie chart and can be viewed by Objectives (if you are using textbook integration, Objectives, or Modules in the course) or by ALEKS Table of Contents (Secs. 6.3.2).

In either the ALEKS Table of Contents tab or the Objectives tab (when present), you can toggle between viewing and hiding topics. To preview a sample problem of a topic, click on the topic name. ALEKS generates a new instance of the problem each time you click on a topic name.

If you click on a percent link for a topic you will see a breakdown of student mastery of that topic. You can send a message to students directly from this report, and view additional topics that a group of students is ready to learn. The topics with the highest numbers of students “Ready To Learn” are the ones ripest for classroom presentation; trying to teach topics with low numbers in this display is more likely to produce boredom and frustration, because most students either have learned them already or are not yet

ready for them (Sec. 8.5).

NOTE. Students who have not taken an Initial Assessment will not be shown in this report, but they will be shown in the Excel spreadsheet downloads. The Excel spreadsheet (sub-slice) download shows the number of topics each student has mastered and the number of topics they are ready to learn for each sub-slice of the ALEKS Pie. If Objectives or Modules are used in the course, a third download link will be available to “Download Excel Spreadsheet (Objective).”

6.2.7 ALEKS Pie Report (Individual) [reportparticularstudent]

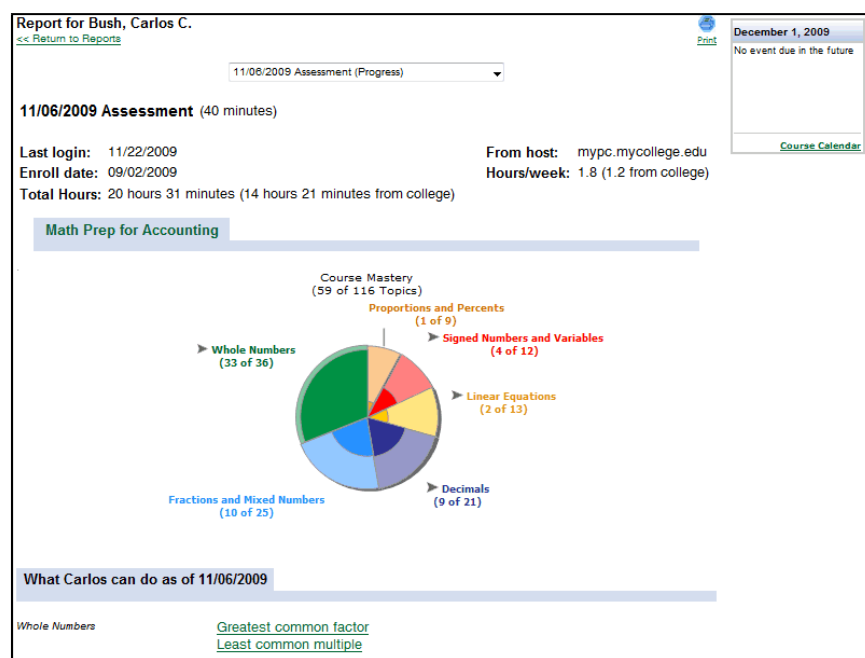


Figure 6.11: Report for a single student in this course (pie chart) [reportparticularstudent]

The pie chart report for a particular student shows the student’s current progress toward mastery of the curriculum (Fig. 6.11). There is also a menu giving access to earlier points in the student’s progress; the menu choices are dates with the notations “Assessment” (meaning the pie chart represents the student’s knowledge immediately after the assessment on the given date) or “Learning” (meaning the pie chart represents the student’s knowledge just before the next assessment).

Objective Pie View. When instructors are viewing a student’s latest learning result, they can toggle their view from the full ALEKS Pie view to the Objective Pie view by clicking on the “Switch to Objective Pie” link. For more details about this feature see Sec. 6.2.8.

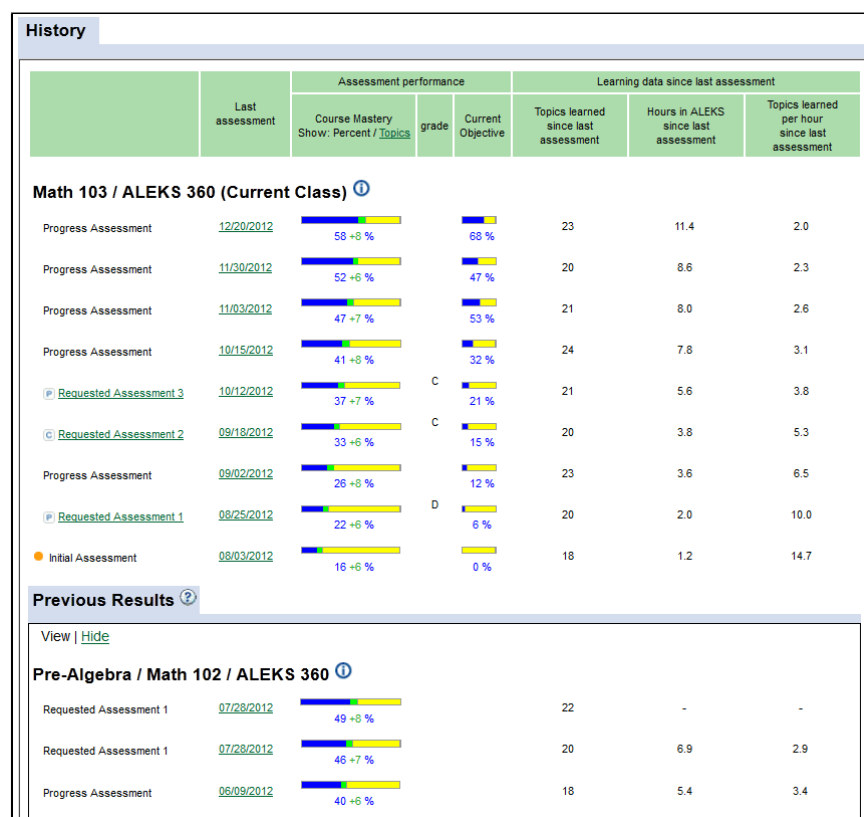


Figure 6.12: Individual pie chart Report [piehistoryreport]

Beneath the pie chart is a list of concepts the student has recently mastered (“What *student’s name* Can Do”) and another list of concepts the student is currently (as of the given assessment) ready to begin learning (“What *student’s name* is ready to learn next”). To see a complete list of topics mastered by the student, click on the link “and many other more elementary concepts.”

Show me what the student sees. This link will be available for a student who has completed the current objective in a course where Objectives with end dates are in use. By default, this report uses the current textbook chapter or objective for the course as a frame of reference, that is, the last chapter or objective whose due date has not passed. To switch to the frame of reference for a student working ahead of the current objective, click on “Show me what the student sees.”

In courses where **Objective completion by Mastery Level (without end dates)** is in use, the instructor and the student will always have the same frame of reference. For more details about Objectives with End dates and Mastery Levels please see Sec. 6.3.4.

At the bottom of the page there will be a “History” section that contains the student’s progress for the current course (Fig. 6.12). The assessment currently being viewed is indicated with an orange dot. To view the student’s progress in other courses, the

instructor can click on the “View” link under “Previous Results” (if applicable). Student progress history can also be viewed on a student’s pie report by clicking on any assessment date link from a current or previous course (Sec. 6.2.4).

6.2.8 Objective Pie View [objectivepiereport]

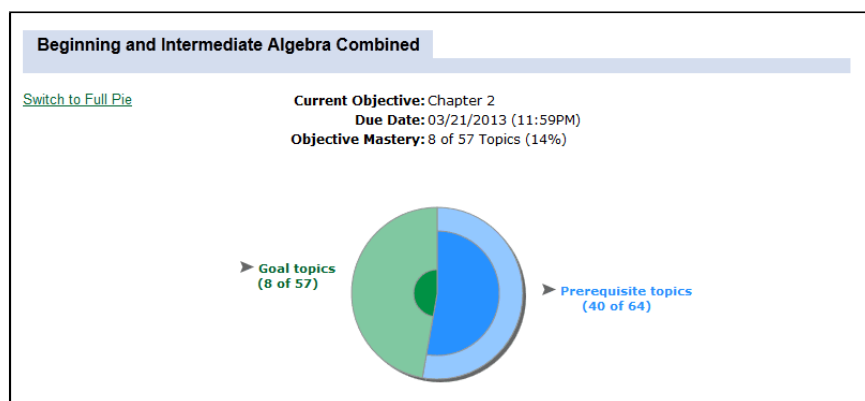


Figure 6.13: Objective Pie View when End Dates in use [objpiewithendddates]

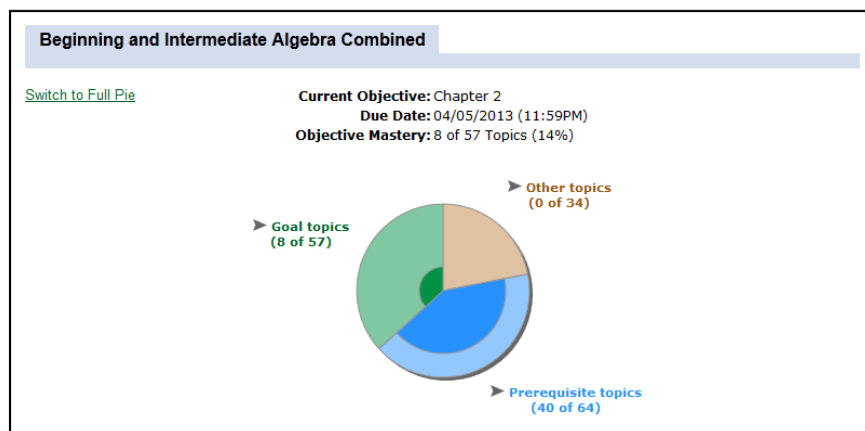


Figure 6.14: Objective Pie View when Mastery Levels in use [objpiewithoutendddates]

Objectives with End Dates

The Objective Pie encompasses all the topics in the current Objective and contains only two slices (Fig. 6.13). Goal topics are all the topics the student must master for the current Objective. Prerequisite topics are those that will help the student learn some or all of the goal topics.

Objectives with Mastery Levels (without End Dates)

The Objective Pie encompasses all the topics in the current Objective and contains only

three slices (Fig. 6.14). Goal topics are all the topics the student must master for the current Objective. Prerequisite topics are those that will help the student learn some or all of the goal topics. The Other topics slice shows topics from earlier Objectives that have not yet been mastered.

6.2.9 Progress Bar Reports [progressbarreports]

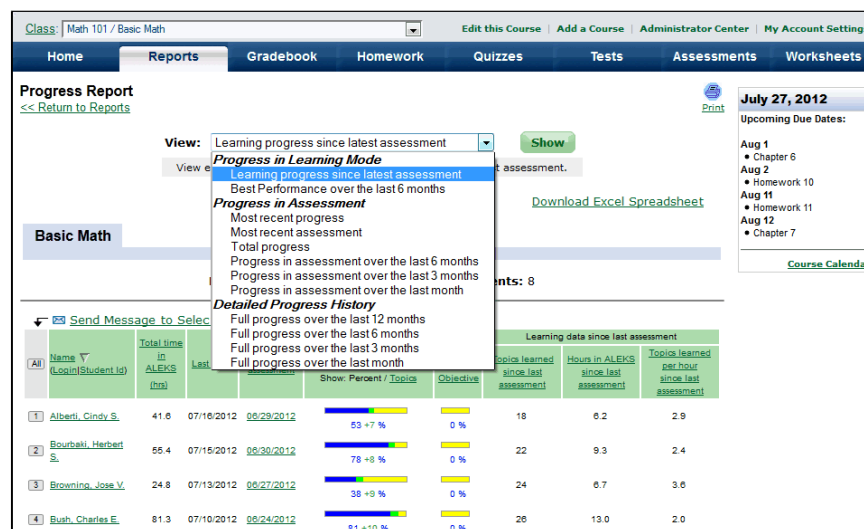


Figure 6.15: Progress Bar Reports [progressbar]



Using the Progress Bar reports, instructors can view student progress on assessments and in Learning Mode at various time intervals. Instructors can change the report view by making a selection in the “View” drop-down menu and then clicking on the “Show” button (Fig. 6.15). A description of the selected report will be displayed below the drop-down menu.

NOTE. If you navigate away from a Progress Bar report and return at a later time, the report that was last selected will remain in effect.

6.2.10 Learning progress since latest assessment [learningreport]

This report shows each student’s progress in Learning Mode since the most recent assessment. Students are listed with their total hours spent in ALEKS, the date of their last login, the date of their last assessment, and a bar graph indicating their current level of mastery of all course materials (Fig. 6.16). If Textbook Integration or Objectives (Sec. 6.3.2) are used, the column to the right of the bar graphs will show

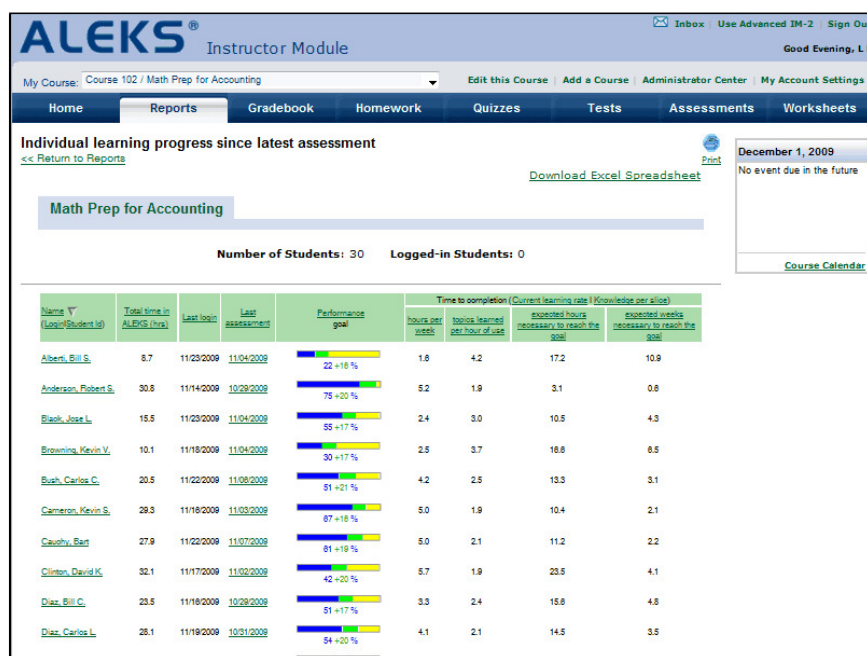


Figure 6.16: Learning progress since latest assessment [learningreport]

the percentage of the material the student has completed in the current chapter or Objective.

If the instructor is utilizing Objectives without End Dates (Sec. 6.3.3), the Objective number will be displayed above the percentage.

If the “Learning Rates” feature is used, there may also be a “grade” column (Sec. 7.4.4). Additional columns to the right may contain other statistical information; links at the top of the columns permit the user to choose among types of statistics (“Topics learned since last assessment,” etc.). For additional information regarding the interpretation of the bar graphs, see Sec. 6.2.5.

6.2.11 Total progress (Overall progress) [overallreport]

Here is another variant on the bar-graph style of report, intended to show the overall gain made by students in a course, as confirmed by assessment (Fig. 6.17). There is one bar graph per student; the blue portion shows the level of mastery shown on the student’s Initial Assessment, the aquamarine portion shows the level of mastery shown on the student’s most recent assessment. Note that any progress made by the student in Learning Mode **since the most recent assessment** is not shown in this report.

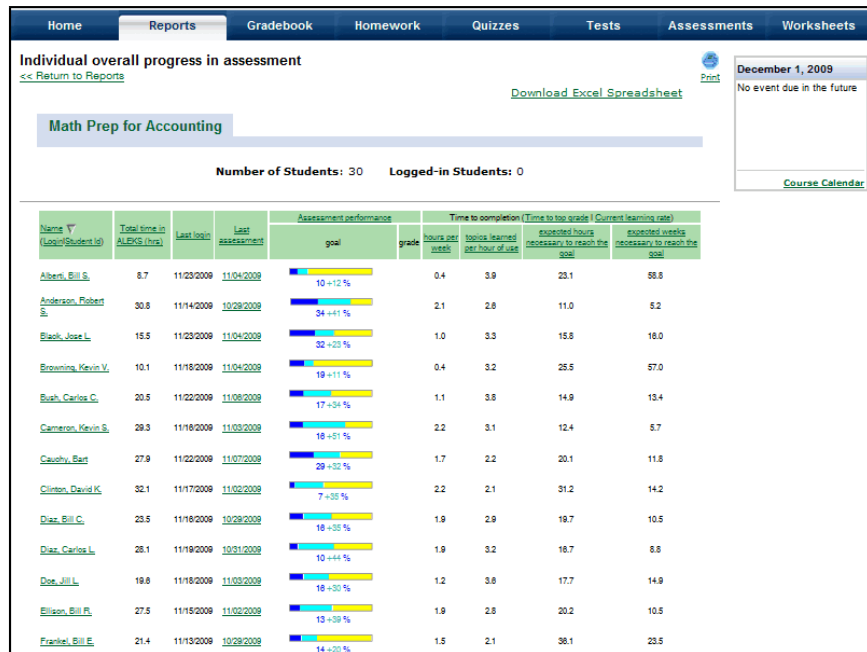


Figure 6.17: Overall progress in assessments [overallreport]

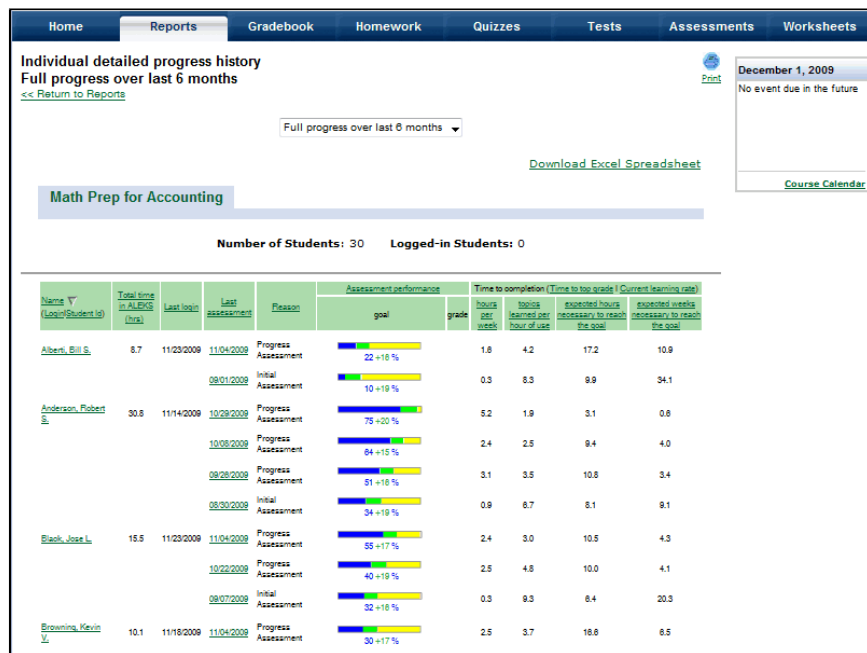


Figure 6.18: Detailed progress history [detailedreport]

6.2.12 Detailed progress history - Class [detailedreport]

“Detailed progress history” is an expanded version of “Learning progress since latest assessment” (Fig. 6.18). It shows the student’s learning history, with one bar graph for each assessment taken by a student. The bar graphs are stacked, the earliest on the bottom and the most recent at the top. To the left of each bar, there is the date of the assessment and a notation indicating the reason for the assessment (see Sec. 4.3).

In other parts of ALEKS, this style of report may be called “Full progress.” Above the report is a menu from which you can select the period of time for which the report should be compiled (that is, how far back in time the report should go).

Clicking on the “All Results” tab will display all students’ current and previous class progress results (if applicable) (Sec. 6.2.4). The current class can be distinguished by the “(Current Class)” label. Clicking on a student’s name will take the instructor to the individual progress report for the student (Sec. 6.2.13). Clicking on an assessment date link will take the instructor to the individual student’s pie report, displaying their progress at that point in time (Sec. 6.2.7).

6.2.13 Progress report for a single student in this course [progressparticularstudent]

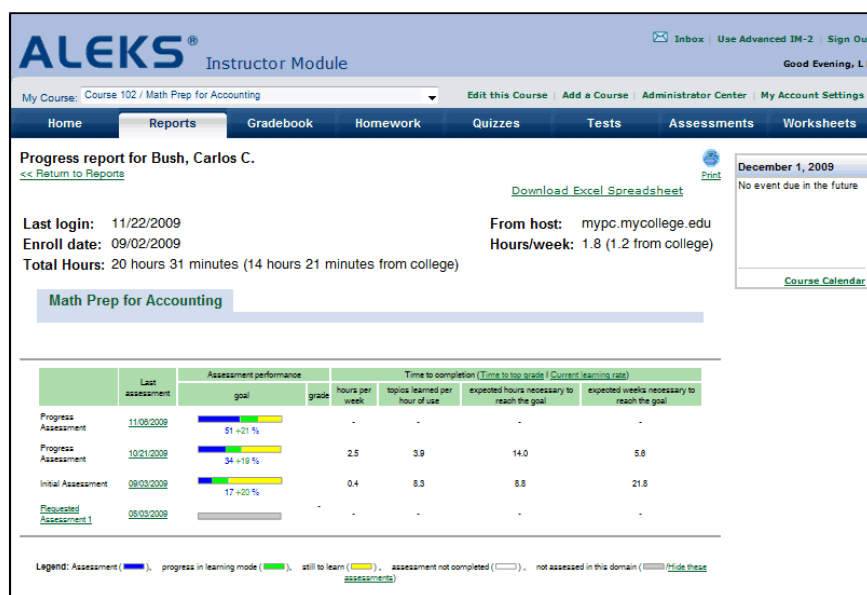


Figure 6.19: Progress report for a single student in this course [progressparticularstudent]

This report shows bar graphs for each of the assessments taken by the student (Fig. 6.19); for interpretation of the bar graph display, see Sec. 6.2.5. Also displayed are the student’s enrollment date, last login date, and total hours spent working in ALEKS.

Clicking on the “All Results” tab will display the student’s current and previous class progress results (if applicable) (Sec. 6.2.4). Clicking on an assessment date link will take the instructor to the individual student’s pie report, displaying their progress at that point in time (Sec. 6.2.7).

6.2.14 Time and Topic Report [timeandtopicreport]

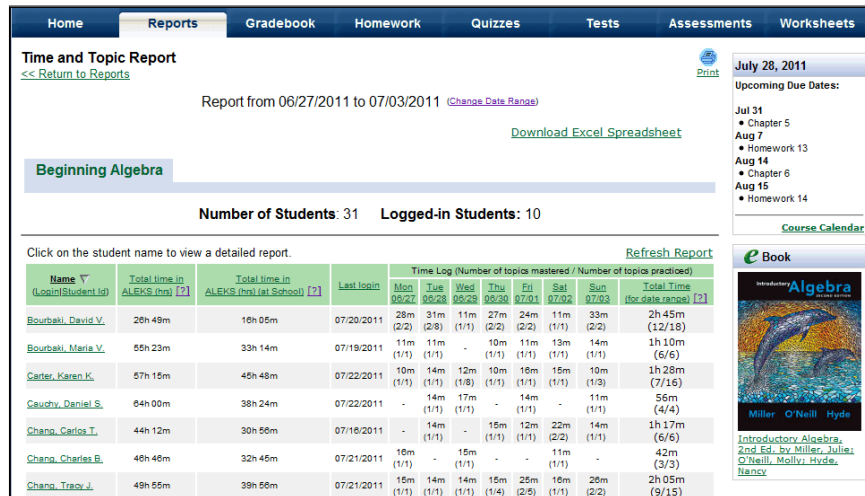


Figure 6.20: Time and Topic report [timeandtopic]

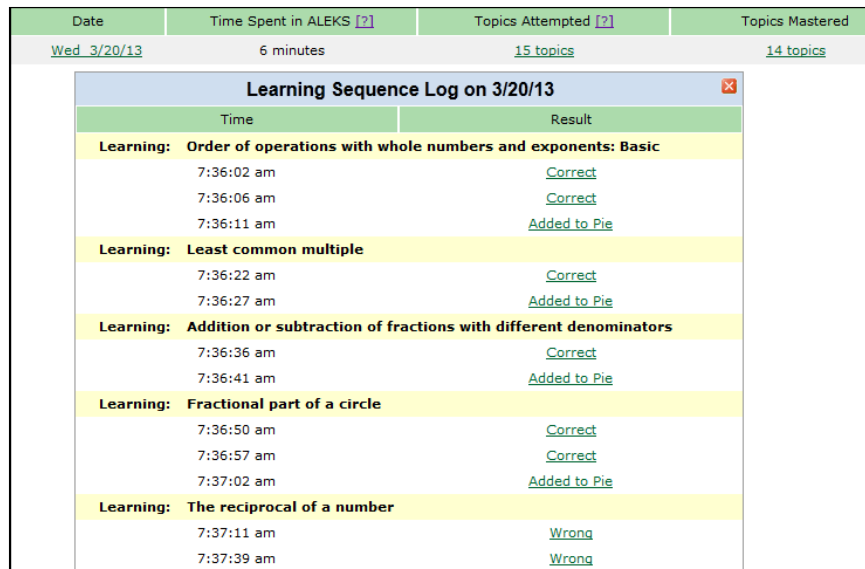


Figure 6.21: Time and Topic Learning Log [timetopiclearninglog]



The Time and Topic Report allows instructors to view quickly the amount of time spent by each student in ALEKS as well as the topics the student attempted and mastered. (The number of topics attempted does not include topics the student worked on in Review mode.)

The report can be generated for all students in the class or for individual students by clicking on the “Class” or “Individual” link below the “Time and Topic icon.”

Class View

The class-wide report will display a list of the students’ names, their total time in the course, possibly the total time spent in ALEKS from college, the last login date, the total time spent in ALEKS for this date range, and a listing of the number of topics attempted and mastered daily over the last week (Fig. 6.20). The date range for the report must be a minimum of one week, with a maximum range of up to 20 weeks, using the link directly over the table (“Change Date Range”). You can set a custom date range using the “From Date” and “To Date” drop-down selections, or check the “Date Range” drop-down menu to select a certain number of weeks to display. You can also choose how the information is broken down, by clicking on the daily, weekly, and monthly boxes. More than one selection may be included in the same report if desired.

Individual Student View

Clicking on individual student names in the report gives you detailed information on the topics each student has attempted and mastered. Each topic attempted or added to the Pie can be viewed with an example of that problem type. To see the student’s Learning Sequence Log on a certain date, click on the date link. The **Learning Sequence Log** will display the time and result of the attempted topic. By clicking on the “Result” link (Wrong, Correct, or Added to Pie), it is possible to see specific problems the student worked on, along with their answer and the solution (Fig. 6.21).

If a student has spent some time on an ALEKS assessment during that day, the session will be marked with a blue triangle in the top right hand corner. The total amount of time shown for a specific day includes time worked in learning mode, as well as any quizzes, homework, review problems, or assessments the student has done.

Instructors can also see the total time spent in ALEKS when viewing the Individual Time and Topic Report. This provides a more comprehensive view of a student’s progress in the program, and includes the last login date, enrollment date, total hours in ALEKS, and hours per week. This information is also added in the Excel download for use with your external gradebook.

If the student wishes to view their Time and Topic Report, they simply click the Report link at the top of their page and select the tab for the appropriate report.

6.2.15 Knowledge Per Slice [knowledgeperslice]

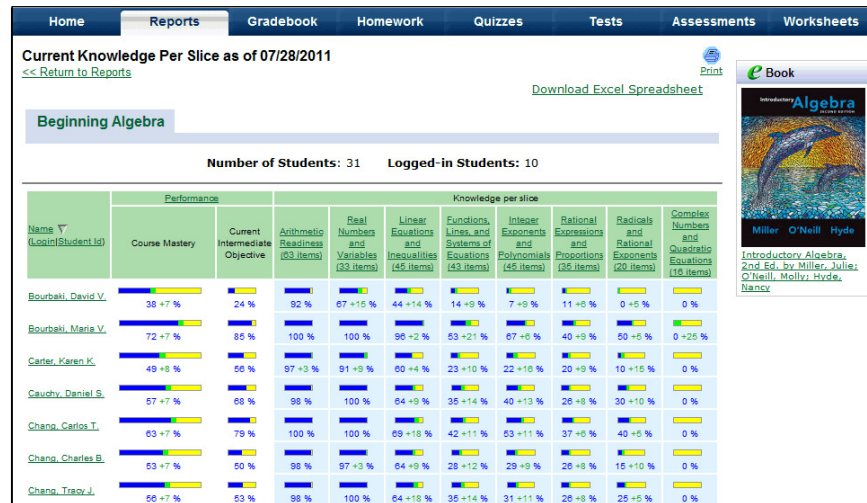


Figure 6.22: Knowledge Per Slice [knowledgeperslice]



The Knowledge Per Slice report allows instructors to view students' overall progress in each slice of the pie chart independently. This report is viewed by clicking the Reports tab and then selecting the "Class" or "Individual" link below the "Knowledge Per Slice" icon.

The class report will show a list of the students' names and their overall course mastery as seen in the general Progress Report (Fig. 6.22). The remaining columns show the names of pie slices and the percentages for each student's mastery in each. The bar graphs show the student's mastery as of their most recent assessment and their most recent progress in learning mode through the blue and green segments, respectively.

6.2.16 Assignment Reports [assignmentreports]



These are the reports which show the results of instructor-created assignments: Homework, Quizzes, Tests, and scheduled assessments. An assignment table provides instructors with quick access to Homework, Quiz, Test, and scheduled assessment results. Click on the name of the assignment to see the detailed class or individual results.

6.2.17 Homework, Quiz, and Test Results [homeworkreport]

Home Reports Gradebook Homework Quizzes Tests Assessments Worksheets

Homework results (Student scores)
Results currently available to the students.
[Return to Reports](#)

[Download Excel Spreadsheet](#)

Course Average: 85%
(30 out of 30 students)

December 1, 2009
No event due in the future
[Course Calendar](#)

Homework 8
View: [Student Scores](#) | [Per Question Results](#) | [Detailed Student Results](#)

Student <small>(Name) (Last, First)</small>	Date Submitted	Score	Grade
Albert, Bill S.	10/14/2009	82%	B
Anderson, Robert S.	10/07/2009	100%	A
Black, Jose L.	10/02/2009	82%	B
Browning, Kevin V.	10/06/2009	82%	B
Bush, Carlos C.	10/14/2009	76%	C
Cameron, Kevin S.	10/10/2009	88%	B
Cauchy, Bart	10/08/2009	82%	B
Clinton, David K.	10/14/2009	82%	B
Diaz, Bill C.	10/08/2009	94%	A
Diaz, Carlos L.	10/05/2009	94%	A
Doe, Jill L.	10/10/2009	88%	B
Ellison, Bill R.	10/15/2009	88%	B
Frankel, Bill E.	10/05/2009	94%	A
Frankel, Jennifer V.	10/13/2009	71%	C
Fredericks, Jennifer R.	10/15/2009	82%	B
Green, Daniel L.	10/14/2009	82%	B
Green, Jose J.	10/03/2009	76%	C
Green, Ken T.	10/15/2009	88%	B
Lewinsky, Joel K.	10/10/2009	94%	A
Lopes, David V.	10/11/2009	82%	B
McArthur, Ken J.	10/14/2009	76%	C
Nguyen, Bart B.	10/13/2009	82%	B
Nguyen, Kevin L.	10/15/2009	94%	A
Patel, Bill V.	10/04/2009	94%	A
Sanchez, Robert T.	10/09/2009	82%	B

Figure 6.23: Homework Results [homeworkreport]

Fig. 6.23 shows the report page for Homework; the report pages for Quiz and Test are practically identical. For each student, we see the date the assignment was submitted, the percentage score, and the grade (if a grading scale was assigned). Clicking on the student's name gives a menu of all Homework (resp. Quiz, Test) results for that student; clicking on the submission date gives a detailed report on the assignments for the student, with access to the actual questions and the student's answers, showing the point values awarded. Point values can be adjusted manually by the instructor if necessary. At the bottom of the detailed results view is a link to delete the results; if this is done and the assignment is still active, the student will be able to retake the assignment.

Above the main display and to the right, ALEKS shows the average score for the course and the number of students who have submitted the assignment out of the total in the course. Also, there are links at the top left to "Per Question Results," with a breakdown of the students' overall success on each question of the assignment, and "Detailed Student Results," which summarizes success or failure on each question for each student. Results are analyzed to considerable depth; keep on clicking the hyperlinks in this area to see all the available connections.

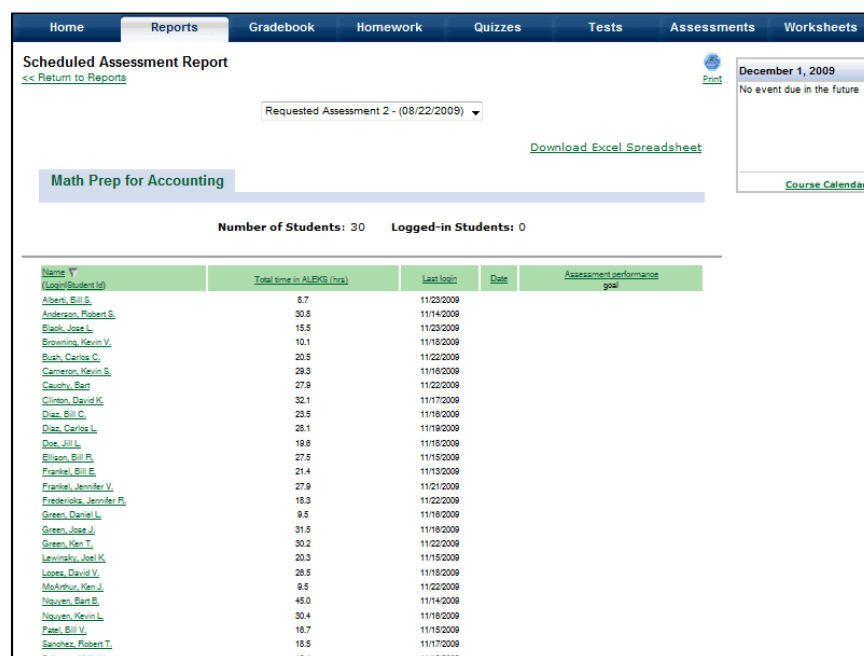


Figure 6.24: Scheduled assessment report [scheduledreport]

6.2.18 Scheduled assessment report [scheduledreport]

The report for scheduled assessments (those requested deliberately by the instructor, Sec. 6.4.9) is another bar-graph reporting style (Fig. 6.24). The difference from other such reports is that these show assessment results only, not work in the Learning Mode, so that there is only a dark blue bar showing the level of the student's mastery. Reports of this type may contain gaps; where no bar graph appears for a given student, this means that the student has not taken the assessment yet, or, if the period of availability is over, that the student did not take it before it was due.

Above the display of assessment results is a menu of all scheduled assessments for the course.

NOTE. These assessment results are also included in all other reports where assessment results are displayed.

6.3 Course Creation and Configuration [addeditcourse]

Courses are added (created) and edited in ALEKS through the same basic interface. To edit a course, select that course from the list, then click “Edit this Course” in the upper part of the window; the page that follows gives a list of course areas that may be modified (click on “edit” to modify, Fig. 6.32). To create a course, click “Add a Course.”

The procedure for creating or editing a course includes the setup of Textbook Integration and content customization (if these are desired). It does not include creating Homework, Quizzes, Tests, or Scheduled Assessments, but these steps may then be completed later.

6.3.1 Basic Information [basicinformation]

The screenshot displays the 'Course Set-Up Wizard - Basic Information' interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'ALEKS Instructor Module' and user options like 'Inbox', 'Use Advanced IM-2', and 'Sign Out'. Below this is a 'My Course' dropdown menu. The main content area contains several form fields: 'Course Name (example: MA075): Math Prep for Acct (Required)', 'Section Name (example: 220): (Optional)', 'ALEKS Course: Math Prep for Accounting (Required)', and 'Course Dates: Start: Dec 1, 2009; End: Apr 28, 2010'. A 'Next Step' button is located at the bottom right. A progress indicator is visible at the bottom of the form area.

Figure 6.25: Basic Information [basicinformation]

Administrator accounts can assign the course to another instructor when setting up the course.

The course is required to have a name; this name can be the name appearing in your institution’s course catalogue or anything else you wish (Fig. 6.25). The Section Name is optional. Including the term and year in the section name makes it easier to keep track of ALEKS courses over time (e.g., “F 2011”). The ALEKS Course is the course product that will be used for the course (e.g., “Pre-Algebra”). This should not be changed after the course has begun unless absolutely necessary, as doing so will be disruptive to the students’ learning and to the course reports and records. Other values on this page can usually be changed without disruption.

The Course Dates are used to configure the Course Calendar, and should include the entire period of time that the students will be using ALEKS. Instructors can also check the box “Automatically archive this class after the end date” to automatically archive the class following the selected course End Date (Sec. 6.1.7).

6.3.2 Textbook Integration, Custom Objectives, and Modules [selecttextbook]

ALEKS provides a flexible range of options for organizing the material of a course, with or without the support of a textbook. These options may be chosen either when a course is created (“Add a Course”) or added to an existing course (“Edit this Course”).

ALEKS® Instructor Module

My Course: (click to select a course) Add a Course Administrator Center My Account Settings

Home Reports Gradebook Homework Quizzes Tests Assessments Worksheets

December 1, 2009
No course chosen

Course Set-Up Wizard - Select Textbook

You have the option to integrate a textbook^(*) with your course.

(1) With Textbook Integration, ALEKS will automatically place chapter and section references on the ALEKS explanation pages. This way, your students can easily look up parallel material in their textbook to expand on what they are doing in ALEKS.

(2) Textbook Integration can also divide up the material in the ALEKS course according to your textbook chapters, making it possible to assign completion dates as in a normal syllabus.

Do you plan to use a textbook with ALEKS?

Yes
 No

Select your textbook:

(Choose one) my textbook isn't here...

(Choose one) (2). However, if you wish to

ALEKS Curriculum

have only the references, please click the box below.

Only reference the textbook; do not direct student learning.

(*)References to any part of any textbook are for identification purposes only. No implication is intended that ALEKS Corporation is endorsing any textbook, or that any textbook author or publisher is endorsing ALEKS. ALEKS Corporation is solely responsible for the development, selection, and sequencing of all ALEKS content.

[Previous Step](#) [Next Step](#)

Figure 6.26: Select Textbook [selecttextbook]

In the Course Set-Up Wizard, immediately following the Basic Information page, is the page for Textbook Integration, Custom Objectives and Modules. Here you can make several choices about the structure of your course, the first being whether to integrate a textbook or not.

Textbook Integration. If you choose the option to use a textbook with ALEKS, you must choose this textbook from the list of available choices using the dropdown window. ALEKS will automatically place chapter and section references to this textbook on the explanation pages.

One choice in the list of textbooks is the “ALEKS curriculum,” which is a division of the topics based on the slices of the ALEKS pie chart rather than chapters of a textbook. This choice enables student learning to be structured without the use of a specific textbook.

Next you must choose from one of the following three options (all three options automatically include textbook references and, with ALEKS Corporation books, media assets on the Explain pages):

Chapter-based Objectives with optional Custom Objectives

If this option is selected, you will be able to choose entire chapters from the textbook as objectives for your course, and set due dates for these objectives (Sec. 6.3.3). This is the most efficient way of directing student learning in ALEKS. You can also create custom objectives to split chapters into multiple objectives or combine material across multiple chapters into single objectives.

Both these types of objectives will include all ALEKS topics that correspond with the chapter.

All Modules (Custom Objectives)

If this option is selected, you will need to create all of the objectives for your course manually. This option provides the instructor with the greatest control over the course structure.

No Objectives or Modules of any kind

If this option is selected, students will see references to the textbook, but the textbook will not direct their learning.

NOTE. If you choose any of the options for structuring objectives in your course, whether by textbook chapters, custom objectives, or a combination of these, topics will not be included in the course unless they are included in one of your objectives. It will be possible, however, to remove topics after they have been included as part of a chapter or custom objective (Sec. 6.3.8). This is relevant when you wish to structure your course based on textbook chapters, but do not want to include everything that ALEKS would normally have as the content of a particular chapter. If only Custom Objectives are used, it will not usually be necessary to do further customization of the content.

Without Textbook Integration. If no textbook is integrated within the course, no textbook will be referenced in ALEKS and you will only have the choice of the following two options:

All Modules (Custom Objectives)

If this option is selected, you will need to create all of the objectives for your course manually.

No Objectives or Modules of any kind

If this option is selected, student learning will be guided by ALEKS without objectives.

See the following sections for additional detail on the choices outlined above.

6.3.3 Select Objectives [selectchapters]

Chapter Selection and Order. Initially, all textbook chapters appear in their normal order and all are checked for inclusion in the course (Fig. 6.27). You can remove chapters by unchecking the box in the Include column. Chapters can be reordered by clicking on the up and down arrows in the “Include” column. Chapters can also be reordered by clicking on the chapter name or start date and dragging and dropping the chapter to a different position.

ALEKS permits you to order chapters freely, but a reasonable and conventional ordering of the materials should be maintained. ALEKS will move topics among chapters in

ALEKS® Instructor Module Inbox Use Advanced IM-2 Sign Out
Good Evening, L L

My Course: (click to select a course) Add a Course Administrator Center My Account Settings

Home Reports Gradebook Homework Quizzes Tests Assessments Worksheets

Course Set-Up Wizard - Select Chapters

Customize your course content [?](#)

Textbook(*) in use: ALEKS Curriculum

Include	Chapter	Start Date ?	End Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Whole Numbers	12/01/2009	12/31/2009
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fractions and Mixed Numbers	01/01/2010	01/27/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decimals	01/28/2010	02/25/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Proportions and Percents	02/26/2010	02/28/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Signed Numbers and Variables	02/27/2010	04/02/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Linear Equations	04/03/2010	04/28/2010

Drag and drop the values in the Chapter column to change the order in which the content is presented.

Check the "Include" box next to chapters you want to include. Uncheck the box to remove chapters you want to exclude.

Select end dates for each chapter. ALEKS will automatically assign a start date for each chapter to follow the previous chapter's end date.

December 1, 2009
No course chosen

When students complete a chapter assignment before the scheduled End Date, they can either be automatically assessed on this material or moved to the next chapter.

Choose your preference below:

Students who complete the current chapter before the End Date will be given an assessment to ensure mastery of the chapter material. (Recommended)

Figure 6.27: Chapter-based Objectives [selectchapters]

order to maintain prerequisite relations among specific topics, with the result that an unusual ordering of the chapters may not produce the best results for your course structure. The default ordering of chapters may be the best choice for a smooth ALEKS implementation.

Creating Custom Objectives. To create an objective that does not correspond exactly to a textbook chapter, use the button marked “Create a New Custom Objective,” located below the list of textbook chapters.

This tool can be used to:

- Divide a chapter into parts.
- Combine material across multiple chapters.
- Create review modules with material from a sequence of chapters.

See Sec. 6.3.7 for the use of the custom objective tool.

6.3.4 Objective Completion [objectivecompletion]

When setting up objectives for your ALEKS course, you can choose to define end dates **or** set a Mastery Level for each objective. When using Mastery Level for objective completion (Objectives without End Dates), no objective end dates are defined. Instructors will select a final day when all objectives will be due.

- **End Dates for Objectives.** When an End Date is assigned to an objective, students should do their best to complete the objective before this date. After

this date, students will be moved to the next objective, and the material in the past objective will not be available unless it is prerequisite for current learning. Completion dates are assigned by clicking the box in the End Date column and choosing a date from the popup calendar. The Start Date for the first chapter is always the start date of the course, set under Basic Information. The Start Date for any other chapter is one day after the End Date of the previous chapter. Start Dates cannot be set manually, chapters cannot overlap in the calendar, and each chapter included must have an End Date.

- **Mastery Levels for Objectives (Objectives without End Dates).** If you choose this option, students will be moved to the next objective when they meet the mastery level set for the current objective. They will still be able to access the remaining unmastered topics from all previous objectives via their pie chart. To access previous objective topics, click on the black arrows, adjacent to the pie slices. To use Mastery Level, completion click on the “Switch to Objectives without End Dates” link. You can set the Mastery Level for each objective (90% is the default setting). Also, a final due date must be set for all objectives, when scores for all objectives will be sent to the gradebook. The default setting for this date is the course end date.

6.3.5 Objective Completion Assessment [objectivecompletionassessment]

When students complete an objective assignment before the scheduled end date, or reach the assigned Mastery Level (for objectives without end dates) they can either be automatically assessed on their mastery of this material or be moved to the next objective without an assessment. To complete the configuration of the objectives, you must indicate your preference in the box below the “Create a New Custom Objective” button (Fig. 6.28).

Based on the experience of many ALEKS users, it is recommended that you choose to have the students assessed. The additional review will benefit their retention and comprehension of the material. Students who do not complete the objective material before the due date, or who do not meet the Mastery Level, will not have an assessment triggered by this option. As with all assessments, once the student has started the assessment, they must complete it, even if the due date for the objective has passed.

The assessment score will not affect the student’s score for the objective completion in the Gradebook. This assessment will reset the “assessment clock” so that the student will not have two assessments in quick succession.

NOTE. To avoid over-assessment of students, ALEKS will prevent all automatic assessments for students with 10 items or less remaining in an objective in the 48 hours preceding the end date of the objective. If there is no end date for the objective, automatic assessments will be prevented for students with 10 items or less remaining to complete the current objective, regardless of the mastery levels set.

When students complete an Objective assignment *before* the scheduled End Date, they can either be automatically assessed on this material or moved to the next Objective.

Choose your preference below:


Students who complete the current Objective before the End Date will be given an assessment to ensure mastery of the Objective material. (Recommended)

Students who complete the current Objective before the End Date will be allowed to move to the next Objective without being assessed.

Note: After the Objective End Date, all students will move to the next scheduled Objective.

Objective Pie

Enable the Objective Pie view for students in this class. (Recommended)



When this option is enabled, students can switch between the full ALEKS Pie, encompassing all topics in this course, and the Objective Pie, encompassing the topics involved in the current Objective. ?

Figure 6.28: Objective Completion Options and Objective Pie View [objectiveassessmentpie]

6.3.6 Objective Pie View [objectivepieview]

The last choice on the Objectives Editor page is to enable the Objective Pie view for students in this course (Fig. 6.40). If this feature is enabled, students will be able to change their view from the full ALEKS Pie view to the Objective Pie view, focusing their attention on the goal topics needed for the current Objective. Instructors can see the Objective Pie View using the link on the ALEKS Pie Report for individual students (Sec. 6.2.7).

6.3.7 Using the Custom Objective Tool [customobjectives]

To create a new Custom Objective, click on the “Create a New Custom Objective” button in the Select Objectives window (Fig. 6.29). A new window will open, in which you can select the chapters, sections, and topics that you would like to include (Fig. 6.30).

If a textbook is integrated with the course, you will see tabs for Textbook View and ALEKS Slice Table of Contents View. The Textbook View allows you to select content based on the structure of the textbook. The ALEKS Slice Table of Contents View allows you to select content based on the structure of the ALEKS pie.

- Click on the plus sign (+) to the left of each folder to view its contents.

Course Set-Up Wizard - Select Objectives

Textbook(*) in use: Demana/Waits/Foley/Kennedy: Precalculus - Graphical, Numerical, Algebraic, 7th Ed. (Pearson Addison Wesley)
[Switch to Objectives without End Dates](#) ?

Objective	Start Date ?	End Date ?
Module #1(Edit)	07/27/2012	07/31/2012
Module #2(Edit)	08/01/2012	08/15/2012
Module #3(Edit)	08/16/2012	09/19/2012
Module #4(Edit)	09/20/2012	10/10/2012

[Create a New Custom Objective](#)

How to use this tool:

Step 1: Click on the "Create a New Custom Objective" button to create as many Objectives as needed for this course.

Step 2: Drag and drop your Objectives so they are in the order in which your students should take them – the first Objective at the top and the last Objective at the bottom.

Step 3: Select the end dates. Objectives are due by 11:59pm on the end date.

ALEKS will automatically assign a start date for each Objective to follow the previous Objective's end date.

When students complete an Objective assignment *before* the scheduled End Date, they can either be automatically assessed on this material or moved to the next Objective.

Choose your preference below:

Students who complete the current Objective before the End Date will be given an assessment to ensure mastery of the Objective material. (Recommended)

Students who complete the current Objective before the End Date will be allowed to move to the next Objective without being assessed.

Note: After the Objective End Date, all students will move to the next scheduled Objective.

July 31, 2012
 Upcoming Due Dates:
 Today
 • Module #1
 Aug 15
 • Module #2
 Sep 19
 • Module #3
 Oct 10
 • Module #4
[Course Calendar](#)

Figure 6.29: Custom Objectives [customobjectives]

Course Set-Up Wizard - Select Objectives

Objective Start Date ? End Date How to use this tool:

Create a Custom Objective

Select the chapters, sections, and topics that you would like to include in this Custom Objective.

Please enter a relevant name for your Custom Objective. The name will be reflected in the gradebook, reports, and other areas visible to you and your students.

(Required) Custom Objective Name: 25 characters max

You have selected 7 topics out of 383 available. [Reset Changes](#)

- [-] ALEKS Curriculum [open all | close all]
- [-] Arithmetic Readiness
- [-] Real Numbers and Variables
 - [-] Integers and Rational Numbers
 - Fractional position on a number line
 - Plotting integers on a number line
 - Plotting rational numbers on a number line
 - Writing a signed number for a real-world situation
 - Ordering integers
 - Integer addition: Problem type 1
 - Integer addition: Problem type 2
 - Integer subtraction: Problem type 1
 - Integer subtraction: Problem type 2
 - Integer subtraction: Problem type 3

[Done](#) or [Cancel](#)

Objective.

Figure 6.30: Objectives Editor [objectiveeditor]

- Check the box to the left of a topic name to include that topic in your objective.
- Check the box to the right of a folder icon to include all topics in that folder.

A running count of the number of included topics will be displayed just above the directory window.

- Use the “Custom Objective Name” field to change the name assigned to the objective.
- Click the “Done” button when you have finished customizing the objective.

The new objective will appear in the table of objectives. You should now schedule an End Date for this objective. This procedure can be repeated to create additional custom objectives. Objectives can be reordered by clicking on the up and down arrows in the “Include” column. Objectives can also be reordered by clicking on the objective name or start date and dragging and dropping the objective to a different position.

To edit a Custom Objective, click on the “Edit” link next to the objective in the Select Objectives window. To delete a custom objective, select “Delete this Custom Objective” link.

Before continuing to the next step of the course set-up, you will need to choose whether or not students will be assessed on early completion of an objective (Sec. 6.3.3).

6.3.8 Edit Content [editcontent]

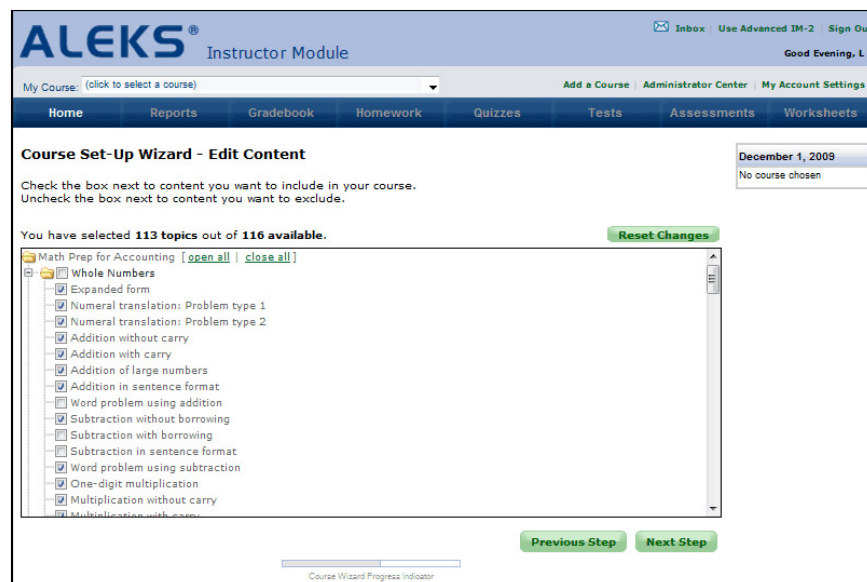


Figure 6.31: Edit Content [editcontent]

Textbook integration tailors the contents of the ALEKS course to the content of the textbook, so that some topics normally included in a given ALEKS course product may be omitted. Even though ALEKS allows relative freedom to determine the content of your course, caution should be used regarding deep cuts to the content, as these may cause ALEKS to function incorrectly. Only minor adjustments should be made to the content once students have begun working, to avoid unexpected disruption of the students' work.

In the Edit Content window:

- All topics that are checked are currently included in the course.
- Unchecked topics are excluded from the course.
- Topics may be checked to include them in the course, or unchecked to remove them.
- To see a sample problem for any topic, double-click on the topic name.

NOTE. In courses that are configured with objectives, the Content Editor will only display topics contained and structured according to those objectives. As course content can be modified through the objectives themselves, the Content Editor is mainly for use in courses where objectives are not in use. If an instructor removes a substantial number of fundamental topics from the course, ALEKS will display a warning.

6.3.9 Section Level Content [sectionlevelcontent]

For certain textbooks, the ALEKS items displayed in the Content Editor are organized not only by chapter, but also by section, making it more convenient to customize content on the basis of the textbook structure. Where available, section-level organization is also visible when you are choosing topics to include in Homework, Quizzes, and Test assignments.

6.3.10 Supplementary Textbook Topics [supplementarytextbooktopics]

When textbook integration is used, you can also choose to include supplementary course topics available in ALEKS for certain textbooks. These supplementary topics are not specifically covered in the textbook, but can logically be associated with particular chapters. These supplementary topics are excluded from the course by default and must be manually selected to be included. Not all ALEKS courses have supplementary topics.

6.3.11 Core Readiness Topics in the Content Editor [readinessreviewchapters]

For some textbooks integrated with ALEKS, there is an initial chapter, preceding Chapter 1, that may be called a “Readiness Chapter.” (The exact name of the Readiness

Chapter can vary across books.) This chapter contains material that is not strictly part of the course coverage, but is important as foundational material.

If you would like the Readiness/Review chapter to be a distinct unit in the student's work, it should be assigned a completion date, like other chapters. If no separate completion date is assigned to this chapter, its core material will still be included, but as part of the first chapter.

For courses not using textbook integration, these topics will be listed in the Content Editor under the section "Core Readiness Topics," and you may remove as many of these topics as you wish. The other (non-core) topics coming from the Readiness Chapter are also shown in the Content Editor under the section "Other Topics," but these topics will not be included in the course.

NOTE. If custom objectives are used, ALEKS will automatically include core material if at least 50% of the topics from the first regular chapter (or from the second pie slice) are included in the course coverage.

6.3.12 Edit Course [editcourse]

The screenshot shows the ALEKS Instructor Module interface. At the top, it says 'ALEKS® Instructor Module' with links for 'Inbox', 'Use Advanced 3N-2', and 'Sign Out'. Below this is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Reports', 'Gradebook', 'Homework', 'Quizzes', 'Tests', 'Assessments', and 'Worksheets'. The main content area is titled 'Course Set-Up Wizard - Review and Save'. It includes a dropdown menu for 'My Course:' and links for 'Add a Course', 'Administrator Center', and 'My Account Settings'. The course details are as follows:

- Course Name: Math Prep for Acct (edit)
- Section Name: n/a (edit)
- ALEKS Course: Math Prep for Accounting (edit)
- Start Date: 12/01/2009 (edit)
- End Date: 04/28/2010 (edit)
- Textbook: ALEKS Curriculum (edit)
- Selected Chapters: 6 out of 6 chapters selected (edit)
- Course Content: 113 topics (edit)

At the bottom, there are 'Previous Step' and 'Save' buttons, and a 'Course Wizard Progress Indicator'.

Figure 6.32: Edit Course [editcourse]

To edit the course details, select a course and then click on "Edit this Course." You will see a screen listing all of the course creation areas. Click on "edit" for any area to go back and revise your choices. Click "Save" to complete the process. The course configuration can be altered at any time, but it is better to finalize your choices before the students begin working in ALEKS.

To access the automatic archive class option, click on "edit" for Course Name, Section Name, ALEKS Course, Start Date, or End Date (Sec. 6.1.7).

ALEKS Course Syllabus

Also on this screen is a link to download the ALEKS Course Syllabus. You will have the choice of two formats, an HTML webpage or a PDF document. The

ALEKS Course Syllabus contains a detailed summary of your course as it has been configured.

6.4 Assignments [homeworkquiztest]

The following kinds of assignments can be created in ALEKS: Homework, Quizzes, Tests, and Scheduled Assessments. All are optional: ALEKS can be used without any of these, but they may enhance the effectiveness of ALEKS in certain instructional contexts. Homework, Quizzes, and Tests are similar in how they are configured. The process of creating a Homework assignment will be described below in full detail; Scheduled Assessments will be treated more briefly, focusing on how they differ from Homework, Quizzes, and Tests.

All assignments are separate categories in the ALEKS Gradebook (Sec. 6.5), and so it is helpful to keep them distinct from the viewpoint of course management and grading.

6.4.1 Homework [homework]

If Homework assignments have been created for this course, clicking on the Homework tab will display a table listing these assignments (Fig. 6.33). The table includes the following information: The Homework Name, Start Date, Due Date, Status of the Homework, and an Action drop-down menu.

Possible Status values are:

- **Current.** The Homework assignment is currently available.
- **Enabled.** The Homework assignment will be available at a future date.
- **Completed.** The Homework assignment due date has passed.
- **Disabled.** The Homework assignment has been set up as Disabled in Step 1 on the Homework setup screen.

Available Actions are:

- **Edit Homework.** Instructors can modify an existing Homework in the course.
- **Disable/Enable Homework.** Instructors can block or allow student access to the Homework after the start date.
- **View Homework Report.** Instructors can view a report showing each student's result on a Homework assignment.
- **Duplicate Homework.** Instructors can copy the configuration of an existing Homework.
- **Print Homework.** Instructors can print up to five instances of the Homework.
- **Delete Homework.** Instructors can delete a Homework assignment.

The screenshot shows the ALEKS Instructor Module interface. At the top, the user is logged in as 'Good Evening, L L'. The course is 'Course 102 / Math Prep for Accounting'. The 'Homework' tab is active. The main content area is titled 'Homework Status' and includes a 'view in calendar' link. Below this, there are instructions: 'Create homework: Add Homework' and 'Modify existing homework by selecting from the below list and editing in the action box to the right.' A table lists homework assignments with columns for Homework name, Start Date, and End Date. Homework 7 is highlighted. To the right, there are 'Homework Options' for 'December 1, 2009' showing 'No event due in the future' and a 'Course Calendar' link. A detailed view for 'Homework 7' shows its status as 'Completed', start date of Sep 18, 09, start time of 9:00 am, end date of Oct 2, 09, and end time of 11:59 pm. Action links for 'edit homework' and 'notify my students' are provided.

Homework	Start Date	End Date
Homework 9	Oct 9, 09	Oct 23, 09
Homework 8	Oct 2, 09	Oct 16, 09
Homework 7	Sep 18, 09	Oct 2, 09
Homework 6	Sep 10, 09	Sep 24, 09
Homework 5	Aug 20, 09	Sep 3, 09
Homework 4	Aug 5, 09	Aug 19, 09
Homework 3	Jul 29, 09	Aug 12, 09
Homework 2	Jul 15, 09	Jul 29, 09
Homework 1	Jul 8, 09	Jul 22, 09

Figure 6.33: Homework Status [homework]

6.4.2 Add Homework [addhomework]

Instructors can create a new Homework assignment by clicking on the Add Homework button under the “Homework” tab (Fig. 6.33). The following steps are needed to complete the assignment creation process (Fig. 6.34):

- **STEP 1: Name and Date.** Basic information about the homework assignment is entered such as a name and date that it will be available (Sec. 6.4.3).
- **STEP 2: Content.** In this step content is added to the assignment (Sec. 6.4.4).
- **STEP 3: Gradebook Settings.** Instructors can specify when students can see their grades, or if multiple attempts are permitted for the assignment (Sec. 6.4.5).
- **STEP 4: Advanced Options.** In this step instructors can control student access to the assignment (Sec. 6.4.6).
- **STEP 5: Grading Scale.** A grading scale can be set for the assignment, with options for how this score is visible to students (Sec. 6.4.7).

6.4.3 Basic Information [assignmentbasic]

STEP 1. This step allows the instructor to select a start date and time and end date and time for the Homework. The Homework will be available to the students during this period. By default, the start date and time is when you begin creating the Homework; the end date and time is 11:59 PM of the same day.

- **Name.** A sequential name for the Homework will be generated (e.g., Homework 1, Homework 2, etc.), or the instructor can choose a name.

New Homework

STEP 1: Name & Date

Name: Homework 10

Status: Enabled

Start Date: Month: Dec, Day: 1, Year: 2009, Time: 6:12 pm

End Date: Month: Dec, Day: 1, Year: 2009, Time: 11:59 pm

Location: Anywhere

Time Limit: 1:30

Publish this Homework to the student calendar.

STEP 2: Content

Please select the content for this Homework. You must choose a minimum of 5 questions, with a maximum of 30 questions.

Randomly add 5 questions from Whole Numbers **Add +**

Topic	Points
1. Ordering large numbers	1
2. Estimating a sum	1
3. Estimating a difference	1

Figure 6.34: Add Homework [addhomework1]

- **Status.** Normally, the Homework will be left “Enabled”; if you wish to keep it hidden for the time being, change the Status to “Disabled” using the drop-down menu.
- **Time Limit.** By default, there is no time limit on a Homework, but one may be assigned.
- **Allow students to save this assignment for later and go back to Learning Mode.** By checking this box, instructors can allow students to start an assignment and then save it to complete later. This will permit students to work in Learning Mode or on other assignments before finishing the started assignment. This option is not available for timed assignments.
- **Publish this Homework to the student calendar.** The assignment is normally published to the student calendar, but this can be disabled.
- **Location.** If IP addresses are used to restrict access to assignments to within the college, a Location drop-down menu will be available (Sec. 7.19.1).
- **Allow student access to “Worked Example” while working on this Homework.** By default, students will be allowed to access a “Worked Example” while working on the Homework. Uncheck the box to disable this feature.

6.4.4 Content [assignmentcontent]

STEP 2. There are several ways to select the topics that the Homework assignment

will cover.

- Using the directory on the left-hand side of the Selector window, select the topics you wish to include, and click on the “Add” button underneath the Selector. Shift and Ctrl can be used for easy selection of multiple topics. The directory may be organized by the textbook, if Textbook Integration is used (Sec. 6.3.2); otherwise, it will be organized using ALEKS’s own categories.
- Select the All Assignments tab to create a Homework that contains the same topics used in another Homework assignment, Quiz, or Test.
- Another way to add questions is to specify the number of questions and the chapter from which they are to be taken, then click “Add” above the Selector window. The questions will be chosen at random from the chapter you specify. You can also do this for different chapters, then “Shuffle” them if desired. The total number of questions on the Homework cannot be less than 1 or greater than 60.
- To remove topics from the Homework, select them on the right-hand side and click the “Remove” button. The order of topics can be changed by dragging them in the list, or by selecting them and using the up and down arrows. Or, you can randomize the order by clicking the “Shuffle” button.

Instructors can modify the points assigned to each topic, ranging from 1 point up to 99 points. This allows some topics to be weighted more heavily on the assignment than others.

To see a sample question for a topic, double-click on the name of the topic. This is not the question that your students will see; the actual questions appearing on the assignment will be generated algorithmically at the time the Homework is taken. Each student will see a different question, but it will be equivalent to the sample question in topic and difficulty.

6.4.5 Gradebook Settings [assignmentgrbksettings]

STEP 3. You can choose whether the students will see their scores and grades immediately (default), or only after the end date (Fig. 6.35). You can also specify whether the assignment may be taken once or multiple times. If you click the option “This Homework can be taken multiple times,” a window will open in which you can select a number of attempts, as well as options for which score should appear in the Gradebook (the best score, the final score, or the average of all attempts). Also in this window you can choose one of the following retake options:

Full Retake

Students must retake all problems (default).

Quick Retake

Students only retake incorrect problems.

STEP 3: Gradebook Settings

- Make grades available to student after end date
- Make grades available to student immediately upon completion
- This homework can be taken only once.
- This homework can be taken multiple times.
- This homework can be taken an unlimited number of times.

STEP 4: Advanced Options

- Assign to entire class
- Assign to specific student(s)

STEP 5: Grading Scale

To change the grading scale, drag the green bars to the desired percentages. Type in new grading terms to replace the letter grades, as needed.
(As the Homework is completed, results are tallied using blue bars.)

NOTE: To view student grades once this Homework is completed, select the Homework from the gradebook, click on the "view detailed results" link in the action box, and view the Student Scores report.

Do not show letter grades on reports

Show letter grades on instructor reports only

Show letter grades on instructor and student reports.

Next ▶

Figure 6.35: Add Homework (cont.) [addhomework2]

STEP 5: Grading Scale

To change the grading scale, drag the green bars to the desired percentages. Type in new grading terms to replace the letter grades, as needed.
(As the Homework is completed, results are tallied using blue bars.)

NOTE: To view student grades once this Homework is completed, select the Homework from the gradebook, click on the "view assignment gradebook" link, and view the Student Scores report.

Score in percent

Display Options:

- Do not show letter grades on reports
- Show letter grades on instructor reports only
- Show letter grades on instructor and student reports

Apply these settings to all future assignments created in the "Homework" category. (Excludes name, content, and start and end dates)

Next ▶ **Cancel**

Figure 6.36: Add Homework (cont.) [addhomework3]

6.4.6 Advanced Options [assignmentadvoptions]

STEP 4. The **Prevent automatic assessments** option allows you to postpone automatic assessments for up to 7 days prior to the beginning of the assignment (defaults to 5 days). Postponed automatic assessments will occur as soon as the assignment is completed or its end date passes.

The instructor can choose whether to assign the Homework to the entire class or only to some students in the class (including a single student, or no students). If you click the option for “specific student(s),” you will see a list of the names of students in the class with checkboxes.

NOTE. When an assignment is scheduled for some students, rather than the entire class, the assignment will be considered extra credit in the ALEKS gradebook. This ensures that the assignment will not hurt any students’ grades.

Next you will be given the choice of how your students will access the Homework assignment. There are two options:

Students choose when to start Homework assignment after it is available

Students have the flexibility to choose when to start the Homework assignment so they can continue to work in other parts of ALEKS without being forced into the assignment.

Included in this option is the ability to password-protect the Homework assignment, providing more control of when and where the Homework assignment can be taken.

Students must begin the Homework assignment as soon as it is available

Students are “forced” into the Homework assignment as soon as they log in, after it becomes available. With this option, students will not be able to work in any other areas of ALEKS until they have completed the Homework assignment. Sec. 6.4.10 for examples of how ALEKS will behave when this option is used.

6.4.7 Grading Scale [assignmentgrscale]

STEP 5. By default, no grading scale is used, and the students see only a percentage score. If the grading scale is used, its default is a conventional A, B, C, etc. scale using standard percentage breakpoints. The sliders on the scale, however, can be moved and renamed; you can also add or remove sliders to set practically any scale desired. The labels on the sliders, which are used as grade notations, are limited to a few letters or numbers; to set the label, click on the existing label, type in the new label, then press “Return.”

Use the “Display Options” under the grading scale to set whether the scale will be used. Even if the scale is not used, the graph will be populated as a histogram once the students begin taking the Homework, giving a useful illustration of the students’ performance.

NOTE. You can choose to apply the settings on this screen to all future assignments created in this category, in the course by checking the box underneath the display options. This will not include the name, content, and start and end dates.

To complete the process, click “Next” at the bottom of the New Homework page, check the specifications of the Homework, then click “Back” to revise or “Save” to finalize. If you do not wish to save the Homework Assignment, click the “Cancel” button.

6.4.8 Edit Homework [edithomework]

The screenshot shows the 'Edit Homework' interface. The main form is titled 'Edit Homework' and has a 'STEP 1: Name & Date' section. The form includes fields for Name (Homework 12), Status (Enabled), Start Date (Aug 22, 2012, 8:00), End Date (Sep 5, 2012, 11:59), Location (Anywhere), Time Limit (0:00), and several checkboxes for student options. A 'Create Extension' button is visible at the bottom of the main form. A modal window titled 'Create Extension:' is open, showing a list of student names with checkboxes next to them. The modal also has 'Create Extension' and 'Cancel' buttons and a note: 'Be sure to Click on "Next" on the Homework page to validate this change.'

Figure 6.37: Create Extension [assignmentextension]

Clicking on the Homework tab displays the Homework Status screen, listing previously created Homework assignments for this course. Homework can be modified up to the moment when the first student begins to take it; extensions can be created at any time.

Edit a Homework assignment by clicking on the “edit homework” link under the Homework assignment name (or choose “Edit Homework” from the Action menu for that assignment). STEP 1 through STEP 5 can be edited on this screen. Also, at the bottom of the Edit Homework screen is a “**Delete this homework**” button. Clicking this button will delete the Homework assignment.

Create Extension. The feature is available in the Edit Homework page. Extensions can be created for one or more students. To create the extension, click on the “Create Extension” button, make the desired changes, choose the student(s) who will be given the extension, and click the “Create Extension” button (Fig. 6.37).

6.4.9 Assessments [assessmentsim2basic]

New Assessment Wizard

STEP 1: Name & Date

Assessment Name: Requested Assessment 4
 Status: Enabled

Assessment Dates:
 Start Date: Dec 1, 2009 8:16 pm
 End Date: Dec 1, 2009 11:59 pm
 To be taken in School Only
 No end date

Publish this Assessment to the student calendar.

STEP 2: Advanced Options

Prevent automatic assessment up to 5 days before

Assign to entire class
 Assign to specific student(s)

STEP 3: Grading Scale

To change the grading scale, drag the green bars to the desired percentages. Type in new grading terms to replace the letter grades, as needed.
 (As the Assessment is completed, results are tallied using blue bars.)

NOTE: To view student grades once this Assessment is completed, select the Assessment from the gradebook, click on the "view detailed results" link in the action box, and view the Student Scores report.

Grading Scale Diagram: A horizontal bar divided into five segments labeled E, D, C, B, and A from left to right. Green vertical bars with triangular heads and tails are positioned at the boundaries of each segment, indicating they can be dragged to adjust the scale.

Figure 6.38: Add an Assessment [addassessment]

Scheduled assessments have many of the same options as Homework, Quizzes, and Tests (Fig. 6.38). The fundamental difference is that you do not specify the content of an assessment; the assessment is produced by ALEKS automatically, as with all other assessments (Sec. 4.3).

Scheduled Assessment features:

- When creating a scheduled assessment, the instructor has a choice between a “Progress” style assessment and a “Comprehensive” style assessment. Progress assessments are slightly shorter and focus on the student’s most recent learning history; comprehensive assessments are slightly longer and probe more deeply into the student’s overall knowledge of the course content.
- Scheduled assessments will not allow access to worked examples, integrated eBooks, or multiple attempts.
- It is helpful to block automatic assessments for a number of days prior to the scheduled assessment, using the Prevent automatic assessment option. A scheduled assessment will “reset the clock” for automatic assessments, so that the “blocked” assessments do not kick in when the assessment is completed.

Assessments and Grading. The score for all ALEKS assessments, including those scheduled as assignments, is always a percentage representing the student’s knowledge

of the entire course contents. Assessments do not measure the students' knowledge of a particular chapter, unit, or other portion of the course contents. Many instructors prefer not to use scheduled assessment results as part of the grading scheme. If scheduled assessments are used for grading, the grading scale should be set carefully, to reflect your expectation of what the students will have learned at the time the assessment is taken. For more information on setting a goal percentage for a scheduled assessment, see Sec. 6.5.5.

6.4.10 Scheduled Assignment Behaviors [sysresponsetoscheduledassignment]

The following are several examples of how the ALEKS system will behave when a student must begin a scheduled assignment as soon as it becomes available in ALEKS.

- If a student is currently working on any kind of assessment, and a scheduled test or scheduled quiz becomes available, the system will interrupt the assessment, and the student will be prompted to take the scheduled test or quiz immediately. After the student completes the scheduled test or quiz, the assessment will continue where the student left off.
- If a student is working on any kind of assessment, and a scheduled assessment becomes available, the system will stop and discard the current assessment. The student will see a message that says the assessment was canceled. The student will be prompted to take the scheduled assessment immediately.
- If a student is currently working on a homework, quiz, or test, and another homework, quiz, test, or scheduled assessment becomes available, the system will not interrupt the student's work. The system will wait until the student has completed the current assignment before prompting the student to take the scheduled assignment.

6.4.11 Edit all Assignment Dates [editallassignmentdates]

Instructors can edit one or more of the course assignment dates by clicking on the “Edit all assignment dates” link. This link is available when clicking on any of the following buttons from the instructor's homepage: Homework, Quizzes, Tests, Assessments, or Course Calendar. The “Edit all assignment dates” link will display a page that includes all the assignments in the course. Using the “Show” drop-down menu allows you to filter by assignment type.

Quick Shift. To shift the start and end date on a group of assignments, first select the assignments. Next, use the Quick Shift tool to specify the number of days to shift forward or back. Then, click on the “Apply to selected” button to see your changes in the table below. After you have reviewed your changes, click on the “Save” button.

Edit Individual Assignment Dates. To change the start or end date on an individual assignment, use the calendar drop-down menus to enter a new date. Click the “Save”

button near the bottom of the screen to save the changes.

6.4.12 Worksheets [worksheets]

Figure 6.39: Worksheet Options [worksheetoptions]

This tab lets you create individual worksheets for students in the course, or view worksheets that have been created in the past. Students also have the ability to print their own worksheets (Sec. 5.2.9).

To create a worksheet for a single student, select a student from the list.

Worksheet Options. Located to the right of the Manage Worksheets screen is the “Worksheet Options” link. There are several options available for worksheets in ALEKS (Fig. 6.39). Worksheets consist of 16 questions; by default, these are drawn from the student’s recent learning history, but optionally four of the 16 may be chosen from material that the student may be working on soon (“Ready to Learn Questions”). Instructors can also manually select their own worksheet combination by using the drop-down menus to specify the number of “Review Questions” or “Ready to Learn Questions,” to include in the worksheet. If this option is chosen, worksheets must have at least one question.

By default, the instructor always receives messages in ALEKS with the answers to worksheets that students have generated independently. This option can be turned off.

Other options are: to remind the students to print a worksheet at the end of an ALEKS session; to let students see the answers to their own worksheets; and always to “refresh” the worksheet content when a new worksheet is printed (by default, it is refreshed only if the student has done some work in Learning Mode).

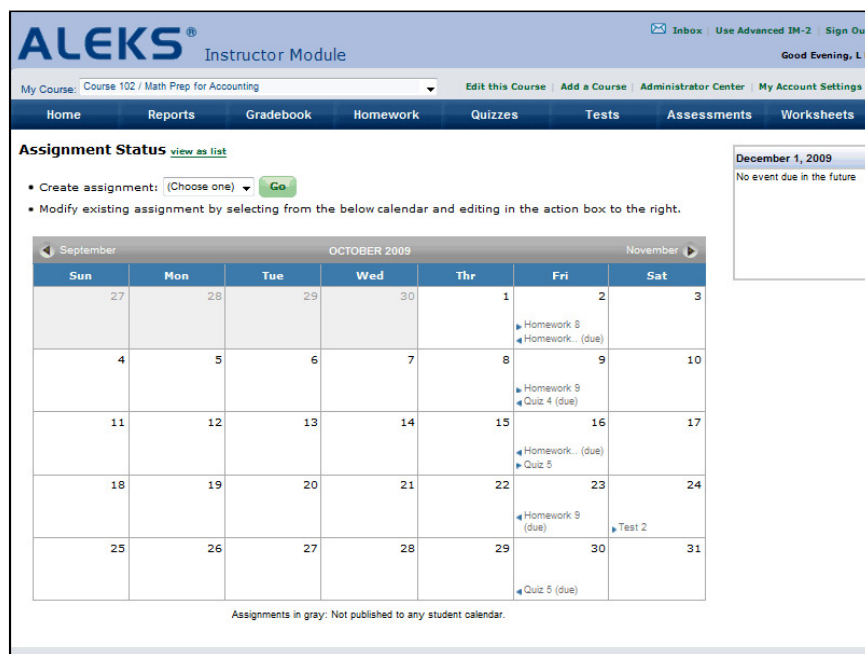


Figure 6.40: Course Calendar [coursecalendar]

6.4.13 Course Calendar [coursecalendar]

The Course Calendar can be accessed from any page in the Instructor Module where a course has been selected, by clicking “Course Calendar” in the Upcoming Due Dates box in the right-hand margin. It is similar to the Course Calendar viewed by students, but also permits you to create and modify assignments (Secs. 6.4-6.4.9). The Course Calendar shows all “assignments” in the course, with their start and end dates (Fig. 6.40).

The Course Calendar provides a link to the “Edit all assignment dates” page (Sec. 6.4.11).

Date Range. Hovering your mouse pointer over either a start date or an end date will highlight both the start date and the end date for the assignment. Clicking on either a start date or an end date will open an information box containing links for editing or viewing more details about the assignment. New assignments can be created from the menu just above the Calendar display.

Calendar and Gradebook. The Course Calendar is parallel to the Gradebook, as it is based on ALEKS assignments. All assignments appearing in the Calendar may be included in the course grading scheme. Assignments do **not** have to be graded, however, to appear in the Calendar. All assignments, graded or not, will appear in the Calendar unless deliberately excluded (each type of assignment has the option of not being displayed in the Calendar). The contents of the Calendar can also be shown in simple list format by using the link “view as list” to upper left.

Calendar Notes. It is also possible to add arbitrary notes to the Calendar by clicking the link, “Add note to Calendar” (upper right).

6.5 Gradebook [gradebook]

Students (Name Login Student ID)	Total Grade for date range	Homework 1 Jul 22, 09	Homework 2 Jul 29, 09	Quiz 1 Aug 5, 09	Homework 3 Aug 12, 09	Homework 4 Aug 19, 09
Alberti, Bill S.	91%	92%	92%	79%	94%	
Anderson, Robert S.	91%	85%	92%	79%	100%	
Black, Jose L.	96%	92%	92%	95%	94%	
Browning, Kevin V.	91%	69%	100%	79%	83%	
Bush, Carlos C.	76%	92%	92%	84%	89%	
Cameron, Kevin S.	89%	77%	100%	79%	89%	
Cauchy, Bart	87%	100%	92%	89%	89%	
Clinton, David K.	91%	92%	85%	95%	89%	
Diaz, Bill C.	84%	100%	92%	84%	83%	
Diaz, Carlos L.	90%	85%	92%	79%	89%	
Doe, Jill L.	86%	92%	85%	95%	72%	
Ellison, Bill R.	91%	92%	85%	84%	83%	

Figure 6.41: Gradebook [gradebook]

The Gradebook is central to the course management capacities of the ALEKS Instructor Module. There are currently six types of data that can be used by the Gradebook: Quizzes, Tests, Homework, Scheduled Assessments, Objectives (Chapter Completion), and External Assignments. These are what we call “assignments” in discussing the Gradebook features. When configuring the Gradebook for a course, the instructor can choose any selection of these types of data (or none, if the Gradebook is not being used). Also, it is possible to use these kinds of assignments and not include them in the Gradebook configuration; for example, the instructor may choose to set up a series of Homework assignments for the course to prepare students for Quizzes or Tests, but not make the Homework assignments part of the grade.

NOTE. The full benefit of the ALEKS Gradebook will be obtained if the configuration is thought out carefully before the beginning of the course, and then left unchanged while the course is in progress. In particular, if the students have begun to complete assignments, and grades for the assignments appear in the Gradebook, changes to the configuration may be confusing to students who check their Gradebook data.

6.5.1 Gradebook Interface [gradebookinterface]

The main Gradebook interface is shown in Fig. 6.41. Several options are available for this display. By default, all gradebook data is displayed, but the “Show” menu lets you select one specific category of data for separate display.

Display Options. The menu lets you choose to see the grading information in terms of points (based on the points allotted for each category in the Gradebook configuration) or by percentage of the total points possible; it also lets you set a date range for the display. For any changes to the display to take effect, you must click the “Update Display” button.

Full Screen View. Click on the link to view the Gradebook in an expanded screen.

Send Message to Selected Students. Instructors can quickly send a message to students while viewing the Gradebook. There is a number icon by each student’s name that gives the position of the student in the sorted list. Since the default sort is by student name, the numbers will reflect the position of the student in the alphabetical list. If instructors sort on a different column, the numbers will show the position of the student relative to the new sort. By sorting on a column and then using this feature, you can quickly send messages to groups of students who have high or low values for any column. Furthermore, you can send messages without having to navigate through the ALEKS Message Center or lose your place within the Gradebook.

Download to Excel. As with other reporting displays in ALEKS, the contents of the Gradebook can be downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet for use outside of ALEKS. It is recommended that you download the Gradebook into Excel on a regular basis in order to have a backup file on hand. This can be useful in the event of a discrepancy or if edits need to be made to student scores.

Students are listed in the left-hand column; there are also options to show their ALEKS Login Names or student ID numbers instead of names.

Total Grade. The Total Grade column appears when choosing “Show: All” from the drop-down menu. It shows a computation of the student’s current grade based on assignments completed or for which the due date has passed. This column attempts to predict or approximate the student’s grade for the course based on any work to date; for example, if the course is half completed and a student has 70% in this column, it means that if the student’s work continues at the same level for the remainder of the course, it is likely that the final grade will be around 70%. If a particular category (e.g. Quizzes) is chosen rather than “All,” it shows the grade to date based on that category of assignments. If a date range is specified other than the entire period of the course, the display will use only the assignments whose dates fall within that range.

Gradebook Setup. To view or set the configuration of the Gradebook, click on the “Gradebook Setup” button (Sec. 6.5.5).

Specific assignments are displayed in the remaining columns in chronological order by due date. Each assignment has a name, is color-coded by category, and shows its due

date. As the students complete the assignments, values are inserted into the corresponding cells. Cells where the student has not completed the assignment are empty or, if the due date has passed, contain a value of 0. If the student has completed the assignment but the due date has not passed, the value appears in grey, and it is not used in computing the current “Total Grade.” For some types of assignments (e.g., Homework with multiple attempts, Sec. 6.4.5), students have the option of redoing or retaking the assignment, so that values in grey may change before the due date.

If you click on the heading for the “Students” or “Total Grade” column, the list will be sorted on the values in that column. If you click on the “[Edit]” link in any column for a specific assignment, a box will open containing options to edit and view student results. These are similar to the analytical options in the regular report views for similar assignments (Sec. 6.2.17).

Students using ALEKS have access to Gradebook information for their own work, similar to the information described here.

NOTE. The Chapter or Objective Completion score in the Gradebook is received from the Textbook Integration or Objective features (Sec. 6.3.2). In these features, each chapter or objective has a due date by which students are expected to complete the material in that unit. If a student completes the chapter or unit before the due date, a grade of 100% is entered into the student’s cell for that assignment. The score will appear in grey, and it will not be used to compute the Total Grade until the due date has passed. It is not, however, subject to change; even if the student loses material in a subsequent assessment, the 100% score will remain. If the student does not complete the unit by the due date, the percentage of unit material that the student did complete will appear in the cell as the student’s score.

6.5.2 External Assignments [externalassignments]

The External Assignment feature is ideal for including student scores on assignments or exams completed outside of ALEKS. To access, click on the Gradebook tab. Then, click on “Add External Assignment” to the upper right.

Creating the External Assignment. Enter the name of the assignment, adjust the assignment date if necessary, assign a maximum score, and click on the “Set Maximum Score” button.

Entering Student Scores. Either type in the scores for each student in the table, or paste in the scores from a spreadsheet. To paste the scores in from a spreadsheet, follow these steps:

1. Download the student roster by clicking on this link: [Excel template](#) (this includes the entire student roster for this course).
2. Instead of clicking on “Open” in pop-up file window, click on “Save” and save the file to your desktop.

3. Open the file. If you receive a warning message from Excel, click on “Yes.” Follow the instructions included in the Excel document to enter your students’ scores into the ALEKS Gradebook.

Unlimited Categories. If you have more than one External Assignment category, you can add additional categories and rename them. This enhanced feature allows you to use the ALEKS Gradebook to capture and grade various non-ALEKS assignments more accurately within the ALEKS Gradebook. Instead of recording all non-ALEKS assignments in the catch-all “External Assignments” category with a single weight towards the grade, you can create an unlimited number of external assignment categories, each with a different weight.

To access:

- Select a course and, under the Gradebook tab, click on the “Gradebook Setup” button.
- To change the name of an external assignment category, click on the “Edit Name” link.
- To add an assignment to a particular category, assign an overall weight to the category and click on the “Add External Assignment” link.
- If you wish to delete an external assignment category, click on the “Edit Weight for Each Assignment” link, delete the assignments and then click on the “Delete Category” link.

6.5.3 Adjust Student Scores [adjustscoresgradebk]

Instructors can adjust student scores for ALEKS assignments and external assignments directly through the Gradebook.

To access:

1. Click on the “Gradebook tab.”
2. Click on “Edit” for the assignment you want to adjust.
3. Click on “Edit Student Scores.”
4. Edit the scores as necessary.
5. Click the “Save” button.

6.5.4 Gradebook Log [gradebooklog]

The Gradebook Log is a record of any adjustments made to student scores in the ALEKS Gradebook. Adjustments may be made to Gradebook scores by you, the primary instructor, teaching assistants, or other instructors who have edit privileges for the course

Gradebook. This feature can also be used to monitor adjustments made to the Gradebook by anyone with Shared Course Access (Sec. 6.6.9). This feature can be accessed through a link just above the main Gradebook table, to the right.

6.5.5 Gradebook Setup [gradebookweighting]

The screenshot shows the ALEKS Instructor Module interface for 'Course 102 / Math Prep for Accounting'. The 'Gradebook' tab is selected, leading to the 'Advanced Weighting Options' page. The page features a table with the following data:

Assignment	Total Weight	Drop	Number of Assignment	Weight Per Assignment
Quiz	20	the lowest 1 score(s)	5	5
Test	50	the lowest 0 score(s)	2	25
Homework	5	the lowest 2 score(s)	9	0.7
Assessment	10	the lowest 0 score(s)	3	3.3
Intermediate Objective	10	the lowest 0 score(s)	0	n/a

Below the table are 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons. To the right, there is a 'Return to Gradebook' link and a 'Course Calendar' for December 1, 2009, which shows 'No event due in the future'.

Figure 6.42: Gradebook Setup [gradebookweighting]

For each of the six grading categories (Quizzes, Tests, Homework, Assessments, Objectives, and External Assignments), a total percentage can be assigned (Fig. 6.42). If a value of 0 is assigned, that category is not included in the Gradebook. For categories whose Total Weight is greater than 0, the percentage determines the total weight of that category.

Assignment Weights. The assignments within each Gradebook category can also have different weights. The weight of each individual assignment can be assigned by clicking on the link “Edit Weight for Each type of assignment.” When entering the weight for each assignment, you have the option to click on the link “Show Details” of the weight of each assignment. These details include the percent value of each assignment within the category and the percent value of the assignment relative to all assignments within the overall Gradebook.

Dropping Low Scores. Suppose you have defined ten ALEKS Quizzes for the term and have specified that the two lowest scores be dropped. ALEKS will do nothing with that specification until the 9th Quiz has been completed by the students. At that time, the lowest of the nine scores is determined and it is dropped when ALEKS computes the overall score for the Quiz category in the Gradebook. When the 10th Quiz has been completed by the students, the two lowest of the 10 scores are determined, and they are dropped when ALEKS computes the overall score for the Quiz category in the Gradebook. ALEKS recommends that you wait until the end of the course to drop the lowest score(s).

Extra Credit. Instructors can designate assignments to be for extra credit. Students who do not complete the extra credit assignment will not be penalized. (Students who do complete the assignment can only improve, never hurt, their grades.) Extra credit assignments are differentiated from regular assignments by a “+” next to the score.

NOTE. In ALEKS, assignments not assigned to the entire class are by default flagged as Extra Credit. This ensures that the assignment will not hurt the grades of other students.

Assessments. In the Gradebook, assessments refer only to Scheduled or Requested Assessments; results from other assessments cannot be used in the Gradebook (Sec. 4.3). Each scheduled assessment in the course can be assigned a goal percentage. The “Goal” is the percentage of the course that grades on the assessment are based on. For example, midway through the course, the goal for an assessment might be set at 50%. Then, a student who assessed as knowing 40% of the entire course would get a score of 80% on the assessment. (Exceeding the goal percentage gives a score of 100% for the assessment.)

Disable Gradebook. You can choose to disable to the course Gradebook. You will find this feature by clicking on the “Gradebook Setup” button under the Gradebook tab. Clicking on the “Hide the Gradebook for this course” link will do the following:

- Hide the contents below the Gradebook Setup.
- Hide the course Gradebook from you and the students in the course; the “Gradebook” tab will still be visible, however.
- The “Hide the Gradebook for this course” link will turn into a “Show the Gradebook for this course” link.

You have the option to reactivate the Gradebook at any time.

Total Grade Display Settings. By default, the option “Show total grades to students” will be selected in this section of the Gradebook setup. If desired, you can elect to hide the total grades from students by selecting “Hide total grades from students.”

6.5.6 Grading Scale for Total Grade [gradingscaletotalgrade]

The Grading Scale for Total Grade allows the instructor to assign a grading scale for the total course grade. By default, no grading scale is used, and the students see only a percentage score. The default grading scale is a conventional A, B, C, etc., scale using standard percentage breakpoints. The sliders on the scale, however, can be moved and renamed; you can also add or remove sliders to set practically any scale desired. The labels on the sliders, which are used as grade notations, are limited to a few letters or numbers; to set the label, click on the existing label, type in the new label, then press your “Return” key.

Use the options above the grading scale to set whether the scale will be used or not, and who will see it. Even if the scale is not used, the graph will be populated as a histogram, giving a useful illustration of the distribution of students’ scores.

6.6 Administrator Center [administratorcenter]

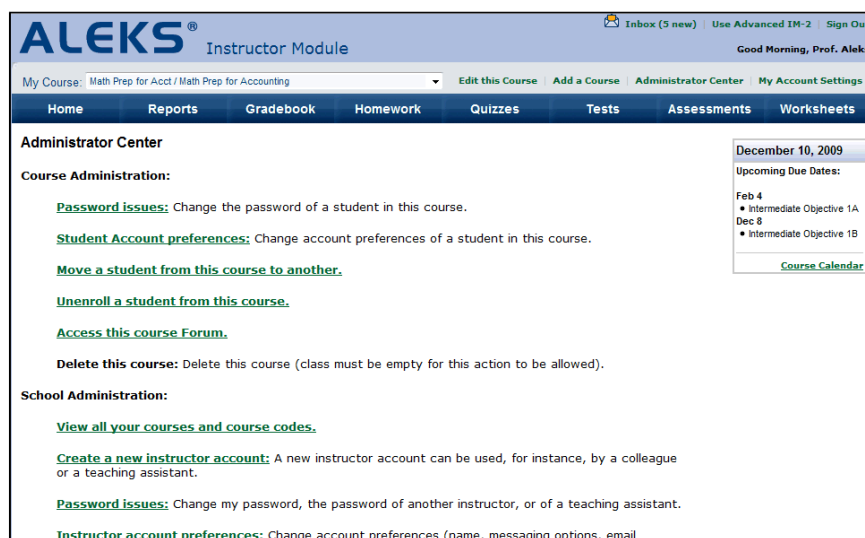


Figure 6.43: Administrator Center [administratorcenter]

The Administrator Center is used for the management of student enrollment in your courses (Fig. 6.43). You can edit student account information, unenroll students or move them to new courses, and delete empty courses. You can also obtain a list of all courses and course codes.

6.6.1 View Course Roster [viewcourseroster]

To see a list of students enrolled in this course, click “View course roster.” This list includes the student name, login name, and the date that the student account will expire. You can print the course roster by clicking on the “Print” icon, or download it to an Excel spreadsheet. The number of students in the course is displayed at the top of the list.

NOTE. Passwords are not included in the roster. A column for “Student ID” will be displayed if at least one student in the course entered a student ID during the registration process in ALEKS. If there are more than 200 students in the course, up to 200 students will be displayed per page, and you can use the links provided to see the remaining students.

6.6.2 Student Account Preferences [studentaccountpreferences]

Student Account preferences allows you to make corrections or changes to a student’s name and email address. To edit a student’s account preferences, click “Student Account

preferences” and then click the student account to be edited.

6.6.3 Move a Student from this Course to Another [moveastudenttoanother-course]

To move a student from the current course to another course click “Move a student from this course to another.” Click the name of the student to be moved. Select the course from the list displayed. If you are an ALEKS Administrator at the college, all courses at the college will be displayed in the list.

6.6.4 Unenroll a Student from this Course [unenrollastudentfromthiscourse]

To unenroll a student from this course, click “Unenroll a student from this course.” Click the box next to the student(s) to be unenrolled. To checkmark all the students, check the box next to “select all.” There is also a check box for “select none” of the students listed. After the student or students are selected to be unenrolled, click “Next.” Click “Confirm” to proceed with unenrolling the student or students from the course.

If a student is accidentally unenrolled from a course, an instructor can re-enroll the student using the Advanced Instructor module. The process of enrolling students, previously unenrolled or in another course, is explained in the next chapter (Sec. 7.3.4).

6.6.5 Access this Course Forum [accessthiscourseforum]

The course forum can be accessed either through the Administrator Center or by clicking on the “Course Forum” link, in the upper part of the screen on the course Home page (Sec. 6.1.3). Through the Administrator Center, click on “Access this course Forum” to access the forum. If the course forum has not been previously authorized, you will be prompted to authorize it. You can use the Course Forum to share ideas with your students, post your course syllabus, and maintain an open channel of discussion in ALEKS.

6.6.6 Delete this Course [deletethiscourse]

Courses with no currently enrolled students can be deleted. Click “Delete this course” to delete the course in ALEKS. This link will not be active if there are students currently enrolled in the course.

6.6.7 Financial Aid Code [financialaidcode]

A Financial Aid Access code can be requested to allow students enrolled in the course free temporary access to ALEKS. The code is valid for a period of 2 weeks. If the

course is set for 6-week access codes only, the Financial Aid Access Code is valid for two days after activation. The Financial Aid Access code is designed to assist students experiencing financial aid delays.

To request a Financial Aid Access Code for your course, click on Administrator Center. Next, click on the Financial Aid Code link. (If this link is not available in the Administrator Center, please contact ALEKS Customer Support to have it enabled for your college.) Click on the “Request a Financial Aid Code” button; you will receive a message in your ALEKS Message Center Inbox containing your course code, Financial Aid Access Code, and instructions for the students on how to register with ALEKS. It is recommended that you print out the email or forward it to the students who need it. The code can be used by any number of students in the course, but only for that course. This process should be completed for each course where the Financial Aid Code is needed.

NOTE. When students purchase their access code, the time used in ALEKS with the Financial Aid Access code will be subtracted from the time available on the purchased access code; in other words, **using the Financial Aid Access code does add two weeks to the total length of an account.**

6.6.8 Student Groups [studentgroups]

Instructors have the option of dividing their courses into Student Groups. These Student Groups can then be used to filter reports and Gradebook scores. This feature is available in the Administrator Center after the Instructor selects a course. Click on the option that says “Student Groups,” then click on “Add Student Group” to create a new group. Students can be added to more than one Student Group; in other words, Groups can overlap. Instructors can enter a name for the group or use the default name, then select the students to be added to the group and click the “Save” button.

Instructors can edit, view, or delete existing Student Groups. To edit or modify an existing Student Group, the Instructor clicks on the “edit student group” link; an action column will appear. Click on “Save” for changes to take effect. Using “Show all students and groups” will show all students and the groups they belong to. Each column can be sorted in ascending or descending order by clicking on the column title.

Instructors can choose “View Student Group” to filter the different Student Groups using a drop down menu which will contain “All Students,” “Students not in any group,” and the Student Groups already created and named. Instructors can filter reports by Student Groups using the “Show” drop-down menu to select from the currently created Student Groups. Instructors can also filter Gradebook scores by using the “Group Filter” drop-down menu to display the Gradebook scores for the selected group.

6.6.9 Share Course Access [sharecourseaccess]

Instructors can share access to their courses with TAs (Teaching Assistants) and other instructors by assigning access levels through the Share Course Access feature. Clicking on the Share Course Access feature will pop up a window displaying a summary of how to use this feature. This pop-up window will continue to appear each time the feature is selected, until the instructor assigns access levels. Only TAs and Instructors who have been setup in ALEKS will be included in the list of instructors to share the course with.

The instructor of the course will have three options for assigning an access level:

Read Only

TAs and instructors can review and download reports in ALEKS. Read Only access will prohibit modifications to the Gradebook, assignments, or any other course settings.

Gradebook

TAs and instructors can review reports in ALEKS. Gradebook access will allow changes to Gradebook scores. No other course modifications are allowed.

Full

TAs and instructors can modify the Gradebook, assignments, and many other course settings. Only a few settings cannot be modified, such as “Delete Course” and “Move Course.”

When an instructor or TA shares a course with another instructor, the course will be displayed on the Home tab in ALEKS, with the instructor’s name in italics.

NOTE. College administrators always have full access to all courses within the school.

6.6.10 Course Resources [courseresources]

Instructors can add Course Resources to their courses. Course Resources are shared files and links to aid student learning. An example of a Course Resource is an online video that relates to a particular topic in ALEKS.

Uploading a file:

1. Click on the “Course Resources” link. (The first time you click on this option, you will be prompted to agree to the terms of the ALEKS Course Resources.)
2. Click on the “Add Resource” button.
3. Enter the name for the resource.
4. Select the “Upload a file” option.
5. Click on the “Browse” button to upload a file into ALEKS.
6. Click on the “Add Resource” button.

After a file has been uploaded, you can edit its name. You can also delete the file or preview the file after uploading.

NOTE. The file upload size is limited to 4MB per file. The total amount of resources that instructors can upload in each course is limited to 30MB. Many file extensions are accepted for upload.

Adding an Internet Link:

1. Click on the “Course Resources” link. (The first time you click on this option, you will be prompted to agree to the terms of the ALEKS Course Resources.)
2. Click on the “Add Resource” button.
3. Enter a name for the resource.
4. Select the “Paste a link” option.
5. Enter the URL in the textbox provided.
6. Click on the “Add Resource” button.

NOTE. Valid URLs must begin with `http://`, `https://` or `www`. There is no limitation on the number of links that instructors can add as Courses Resources.

When more than one resource has been added to a course, you can use the arrows in the “Reorder” column to move the resource into the desired position.

6.6.11 View all your Courses and Courses Codes [viewallyourcoursesandcoursecodes]

The option to view all your courses and courses codes displays a table showing each course, how many students are enrolled in the course, and the corresponding course code. ALEKS administrators will see all ALEKS courses, for each instructor at the college, in the list.

6.6.12 Create a new Instructor Account (Admin only) [createnewinstructor]

Instructors with administrator privileges can create new instructor accounts using this link. Fill in the new instructor’s name, email address, and instructor account type. The following is a list of instructor account types:

Instructor

Can create, configure, and view their own courses only.

Instructor and Administrator

Can create, configure, and view their own courses and those of other instructors; can create new instructor accounts.

TA (Instructor)

Has no courses of his or her own; can access only the courses of other instructors, based on access and permission levels that the other instructors provide (Sec. 6.6.9).

6.6.13 Password Issues (Admin only) [passwordissues]

The Password issues link allows ALEKS administrators to reset their own ALEKS password or any other instructor's password.

6.6.14 Instructor Account Preferences (Admin only) [editinstructor]

ALEKS administrators can edit the accounts of other instructors using ALEKS. Along with the data that instructors can edit (Sec. 6.1.1), the administrator can also set the permissions for the instructor account (Sec. 6.6.12).

The Instructor Account Preferences screen has options relating to ALEKS messaging. These options can be set or adjusted for the instructor.

6.6.15 Move a Course from One Instructor to Another (Admin only) [movea-coursefromoneinstructor]

ALEKS administrators can move a course from one instructor to a another instructor. This will move the ALEKS course and all the students enrolled in the course to the new instructor. Prior to clicking on "Move a Course from One Instructor to Another," verify that the course displayed in the "My Course" drop-down is the course you want to move. Next, click on "Move a Course from One Instructor to Another." This will display a list of instructors. Choose the instructor to whom you wish to move the course.

6.6.16 Delete an Instructor Account (Admin only) [deleteaninstructoraccount]

You can delete an instructor with no courses by clicking on the link "Delete an Instructor Account." Select the name of the instructor you wish to delete. You will not be able to delete an instructor account if any courses are set up for that instructor, even if these courses contain no students; the courses should be deleted first.

Chapter 7

Advanced Instructor Module [im2advanced]

The Advanced Instructor Module in ALEKS provides alternative, more efficient access to essentially the same features as are found in the Basic Instructor Module. The fundamental technique in using the Advanced Instructor Module is to select a course, instructor, or student from the Selector window, then click on an action or operation from those offered underneath the Selector window (and organized by tab: “Home,” “Reports,” etc.). The action or operation will affect the account selected. Users with Administrator privileges have greater scope (Sec. 7.19).

For the most part, the actions carried out in the Advanced Instructor Module are identical to those in the Basic Module. This chapter will not repeat the details from the previous chapter, but rather provide references to the corresponding sections. There are some functions, however, that do not appear in the Basic Instructor Module. Here is a list for quick reference:

- Cleanup Tool (Sec. 7.2.2)
- Instructor Resources (Sec. 7.2.4)
- Course Options (Sec. 7.3.1)
- Duplicate Course (Sec. 7.3.3)
- Assessment Options (Sec. 7.9.1)
- Student Gradebook (Sec. 7.12)
- Request Assessment (Sec. 7.16.1)
- Cancel Current Assessment (Sec. 7.16.2)

A number of functions exclusive to the Advanced Instructor Module are associated with the Administrator privilege level:

- Master Templates (Sec. 7.18)

- Edit College (Sec. 7.19.1)
- Search College (Sec. 7.19.2)
- LMS Integration (Sec. 7.19.3)
- Add Instructor (Sec. 7.19.4)
- Schedule Domain Upgrade (Sec. 7.19.8)
- Enrollment List (Sec. 7.19.9)
- Edit Subscription (Sec. 7.19.10)
- Server Reports (Sec. 7.19.11)

These areas are fully described in the current chapter.

7.1 Selector Window [selectorwindow]

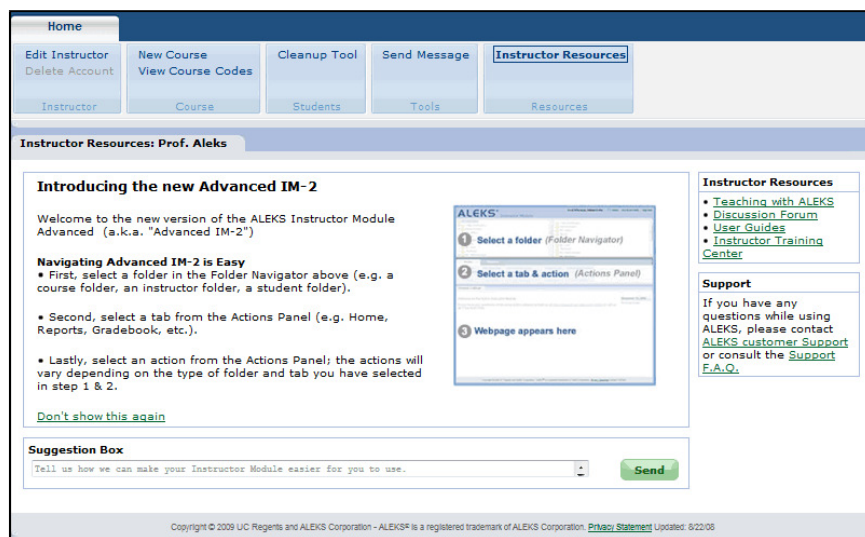


Figure 7.1: Selector Window and Instructor Resources [instructorresources]

The Selector window is divided vertically into two sections (Fig. 7.1). Selecting any account in the left-hand or right-hand section displays contained accounts in the right-hand section. For example, selecting a course account displays the students contained in that course. The institution account contains instructors, the instructor account contains courses, and the course account contains students. Selecting any one of these displays the corresponding actions (organized by tab) in the space below the Selector. Only instructors with Administrator privileges can see accounts above the instructor level.

Here is an alternative technique for navigating the Selector: click the plus sign (“+”) for any group to expand the group, or the minus sign (“-”) for any group to collapse the group.

7.2 Instructor Folder [instructorfolder]

Figure 7.2: New Course [instructornewcourse]

Selecting the Instructor account displays the following actions under “Home” (Fig. 7.2):

- Edit Instructor (Sec. 6.6.14 and Sec. 7.2.1)
- Archive Options (Sec. 6.1.7)
- Delete Account (Administrators only, and only when there are no courses or students for that instructor)
- New Course (Sec. 6.3)
- View Course Codes (Administrators only, Sec. 7.19.7)
- Cleanup Tool (Sec. 7.2.2)
- Send Message (Administrators only, Sec. 7.2.3)
- Instructor Resources (Sec. 7.2.4)

7.2.1 Edit Instructor [editinstructorinadv]

Clicking on “Edit Instructor” allows you to modify your instructor account data: name, title, password, email, log out time, and messaging options.

Archive Account. Check this option to archive your ALEKS instructor account. If the option is checked, your Instructor Module display will not be affected. It will affect

Edit Instructor: Prof. Smithy Login Name: JSMITHY

Edit Instructor August 3, 2012
No course chosen

Last Login Information
Last Login: 08/03/2012

Account Information

Prof. First: Initial: Last:

Login Name:

New Password:

New Password (again):

ID (Optional):

**Email: Forward all ALEKS messages to my email address.

**Recommended, but not required.

Type of Instructor Account
Regular Instructor

Archive Account
 Archive this account (This account is still active, but checking this box will make the account appear under the Archive Instructors folder)

Account Status
Enabled

Log Out Time
Automatically log out after of inactivity.

ALEKS Messages

Forward messages sent to ALEKS Customer Support by my students to my account

Enable my students to send me messages

Enable my students to send messages to each other

Forward messages sent to my students to their regular email account

Send me a message when registered students are waiting for my authorization

Figure 7.3: Edit Instructor [editinstructorinadvfig]

the administrator display, however, by moving your instructor folder (and classes) to the “Achived Instructors” folder.

7.2.2 Cleanup Tool [instructorcleanuptool]

The Cleanup Tool should be used with **extreme caution**. The actions shown here are not reversible and may cause great disruption to your course. Most instructors do not need to use these tools and can disregard them.

- **Clear Stats** removes all records of time spent by your students in the system, along with any statistics that involve time.
- **Clear Records** removes all records of student work.
- **Unenroll Students** removes all student accounts from your course.
- **Clear Stats (second)** removes all records of time spent by your students in the system, along with any statistics that involve time, and unenrolls them.
- **Clear Records (second)** removes all records of student work and unenrolls them.
- **Delete Students** destroys the students’ accounts.

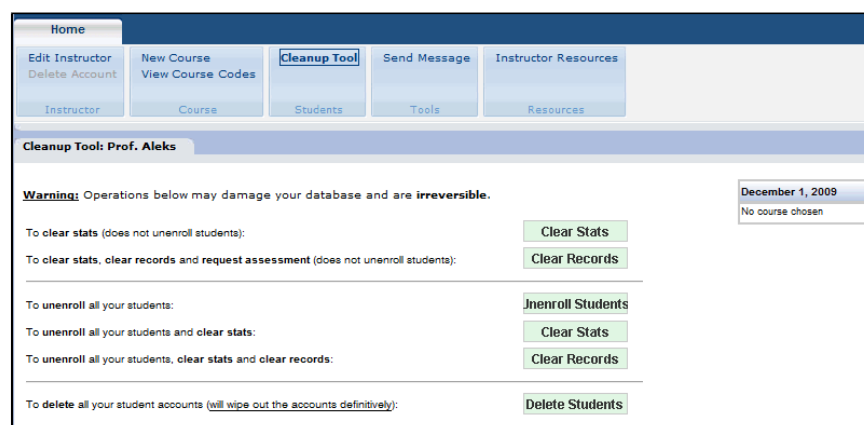


Figure 7.4: Cleanup Tool [instructorcleantool]

In particular, when these tools are used with the instructor account selected, they will have effect for all courses under that instructor. This kind of cleanup is **very risky** and seldom needed.

7.2.3 Send Message [im2sendmessage]

Clicking on this link enables you to send messages to different ALEKS users depending on the level from which it is accessed under the Home tab. Selecting the course folder and then clicking “Send Message” will send the message to the entire class. Selecting a student’s name and then clicking “Send Message” will send the message to the selected student. An instructor can check the box next to “Mark as urgent” if desired. When students receive a message marked as urgent, they will see “Urgent Message” displayed above their ALEKS INBOX icon. If you have Administrator privileges in ALEKS, clicking on an instructor’s folder and then “Send Message” will send the message to that instructor.

7.2.4 Instructor Resources [instructorresources]

This link provides convenient access through the Instructor account to a set of informational and training resources (also available directly from the ALEKS web site) (Fig. 7.1).

7.3 Course Home [coursehome]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Home” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.5):

Figure 7.5: Edit Course [editcourseim2adv]

- Edit Course (Sec. 6.3)
- Course Options (Sec. 7.3.1)
- Advanced Options (Sec. 7.3.2)
- Actions (Sec. 7.3.3)
- Textbook Selection (Sec. 6.3.2)
- Objectives Editor (Sec. 6.3.3)
- Course Content (Sec. 6.3.8)
- Enroll Students (Sec. 7.3.4)
- Cleanup Tool (Sec. 7.2.2)
- Financial Aid Code (Sec. 6.6.7)
- Course Roster (Sec. 6.6.1)
- Course Forum (Sec. 6.1.3)
- Course Calendar (Sec. 6.4.13)
- Course Resources (Sec. 6.6.10)
- Send Message (Sec. 7.2.3)

7.3.1 Course Options [courseoptions]

Clicking on Course Options gives you the following choices:

Access Options

These options allow you to close enrollment to the course or constrain the students' access to it: Regular (assessment and learning), or Denied (no access). This screen also allows you to close or open enrollment in the course.

Learning Options

These options allow you to choose the learning options available to students and ask for notification (to yourself and to the student) of Objective completion. See Sec. 6.3.2 for a description of Chapters and Objectives.

Archive Options

This option allows instructors to archive their own classes. After selecting this option, instructors check the box next to “Archive this class” and then click on the “Save” button. An “Archived Classes” folder will appear at the bottom of the instructor’s class list. Clicking on the “+” sign will expand the “Archived Classes” folder.

To unarchive a class, first navigate to “Archived Classes” and then select a class folder. Click on “Edit Course” and choose Archive Options. Uncheck the box next to “Archive this class” and click on the “Save” button.

7.3.2 Advanced Options [advancedoptions]

The items on the Advanced Options link are all comprehensively discussed in the previous chapter.

- Share Course Access (Sec. 6.6.9)
- Student Groups (Sec. 6.6.8)

7.3.3 Actions [actions]

Selecting the Actions link displays the following operations:

New Course. See Sec. 6.3 for a detailed explanation of how to use the Course Set-Up Wizard.

Move Course. To move a course, select the instructor who is going to teach the course. This option is available only to instructors with Administrator privileges.

Duplicate Course. Use this link to create a duplicate of the selected course. After duplication, you will be able to modify the new course in any way you wish. This is a good, time-saving way to create multiple sections based on a course, especially when there has been much customization to the master or template course. For instructors with Administrator privileges, see also Master Templates, Sec. 7.18.

Delete Course. This link will only be available if no students are enrolled in the course.

7.3.4 Enroll Students [enrollstudentsinstructor]

Using this link, you can click on a course in the Selector window to see a list of students currently enrolled at the college. Students highlighted in grey are enrolled in the current course. Students highlighted in green are enrolled in another course. Instructors with Administrator privileges will also see any students not highlighted in any color, who are unenrolled. Instructors without Administrator privileges therefore are unable to enroll

students, but they can move enrolled students from another course into the current course.

7.4 Reports [im2advreports]

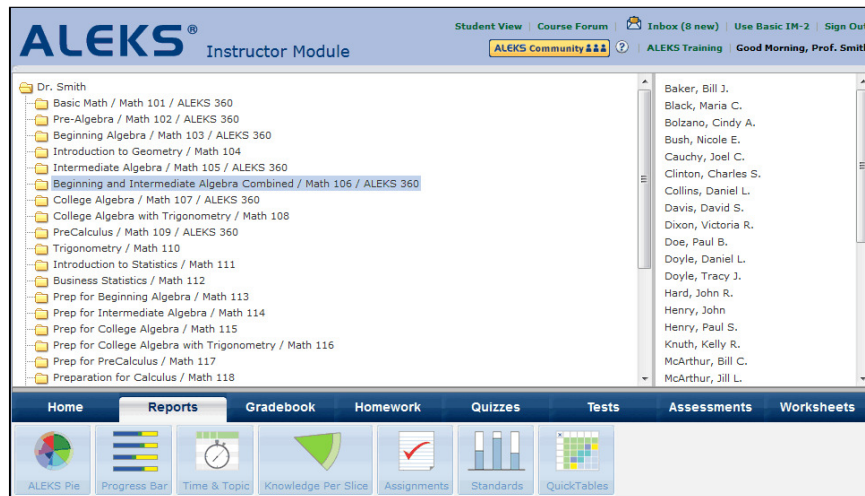


Figure 7.6: Report Options [reportsim2adv]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Reports” tab will display icons for the available reports in the blue navigation bar (Fig. 7.6). Hovering over an icon will display a description of the report.

7.4.1 Course Reports [classreportim2adv]

If instructors want to run a course report, for example the ALEKS Pie report, they first select the course name folder, and then click on the “Reports” tab. Finally, they click on the ALEKS Pie icon.

7.4.2 Individual Student Reports [indreportim2adv]

If instructors want to run an individual student report, for example the ALEKS Pie report, they first select the class name folder, then click on the name of the student for whom they want to run the report. Then, they click on the “Reports” tab. Finally, they click on the ALEKS Pie icon.

7.4.3 Available Reports [availablereportsim2adv]

The reports are organized by the following report types:

- ALEKS Pie (Secs. 6.2.6, 6.2.7)
- Progress Bar (Secs. 6.2.9, 6.2.10, 6.2.11, 6.2.12, 6.2.13)
- Time and Topic (Sec. 6.2.14)
- Knowledge Per Slice (Sec. 6.2.15)
- Assignments (Sec. 6.2.16, 6.2.17, 6.2.18)

7.4.4 Assign Learning Rates [assignlearningrates]

Some of the report styles in the Advanced Instructor Module have a link in the upper right of the screen, “Assign Learning Rates.” This link will bring you to a page where you can set three types of “grading” scales for the students’ work. If they are used, the values will appear on relevant report pages. The three types of “grading” scales are: percentage of course goals mastered, total hours spent in ALEKS, and the average items gained per hour of use. Note that this feature is unrelated to the ALEKS Gradebook and does not feed data to the Gradebook (Sec. 6.5). For additional information on Assign Learning Rates, see Sec. 8.13.

7.5 Course Gradebook [coursegradebook]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Gradebook” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.7):

- Course Gradebook (Sec. 6.5)
- Gradebook Setup (Sec. 6.5.5)
- Gradebook Log (Sec. 6.5.4)
- External Assignments Weights (Sec. 6.5.2)
- Edit External Assignments (Sec. 6.5.2)
- Add External Assignment (Sec. 6.5.2)

Please see Sec. 6.5 for a complete discussion of the Gradebook features.

7.6 Course Homework [coursehomework]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Homework” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.8):

Course Gradebook: Math 106 - ALEKS 360 / Beginning and Intermediate Algebra Combined

Course Code: NUYPB-MFYXX

Gradebook

Show: All

Send Message to Selected Students

All	Students (Name Login Student ID)	Total Grade	Requested Assessment 2 [Edit]	Requested Assessment 1 [Edit]	Homework 1 [Edit]	Homework 2 [Edit]
			no end date	no end date	Dec 14, 2011	Dec 22, 2011
1	Anderson, David B.	67%	21%		89%	+88%
2	Baker, Cindy S.	74%	25%	15%	74%	+88%
3	Browning, Cindy V.	73%	24%	20%	100%	+81%
4	Browning, Jose J.	75%	31%	25%	100%	+88%
5	Cameron, Kai L.	72%	28%	17%	79%	+75%
6	Cameron, Kevin B.	79%	33%		95%	+94%
7	Doe, Charles R.	68%	27%	15%	89%	+94%
8	Doe, Paul L.	80%	35%	25%	79%	+88%
9	Garp, Robert B.	81%	55%	43%	79%	+100%
10	Garp, Victoria C.	79%	41%		95%	+81%
11	Hard, Jane R.	71%		14%	84%	+75%
12	Knuth, David K.	57%	11%		95%	+100%

Download to Excel

May 16, 2012

Upcoming Due Dates:

- May 23
 - Chapter 5
- May 24
 - Quiz 6
- Jun 1
 - Homework 11
- Jun 3
 - Chapter 6

Course Calendar

Book

Gradebook Legend

- score: Dropped score
- +score: Extra credit
- score: Submitted but not due yet (not part of grade)

Figure 7.7: Gradebook Weighting [gradebooktabim2adv]

Homework List: Math 103 - ALEKS / Beginning Algebra

Course Code: JGGG00-JGGG00

Homework Status [view in calendar](#)

Create homework: [Add Homework](#)

Modify existing homework by selecting from the below list and editing in the action box to the right.

Homework	Start Date	End Date
Homework 12	Jul 16, 09	Jul 30, 09
Homework 11	Jul 10, 09	Jul 24, 09
Homework 10	Jun 29, 09	Jul 13, 09
Homework 9	Jun 22, 09	Jul 6, 09
Homework 8	Jun 4, 09	Jun 18, 09
Homework 7	Jun 1, 09	Jun 15, 09
Homework 6	May 14, 09	May 28, 09
Homework 5	May 12, 09	May 26, 09
Homework 4	Apr 22, 09	May 6, 09
Homework 3	Apr 20, 09	May 4, 09
Homework 2	Apr 3, 09	Apr 17, 09
Homework 1	Mar 31, 09	Apr 14, 09

July 2, 2009

Upcoming Due Dates:

- Jul 6
 - Homework 9
- Jul 9
 - Chapter 5
- Jul 13
 - Homework 10
- Jul 15
 - Quiz 4

Course Calendar

Figure 7.8: Homework List [homeworklist]

- New Homework (Sec. 6.4.2)
- Duplicate Homework (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Homework (Sec. 6.4.8)
- Edit All Dates (Sec. 6.4.11)
- Homework List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Homework Report (Sec. 6.2.17)
- Print Homework (Sec. 7.6.2)

Please see Sec. 6.4 for detailed information on how to create Homework assignments in ALEKS.

7.6.1 Duplicate Homework [duplicatehomework]

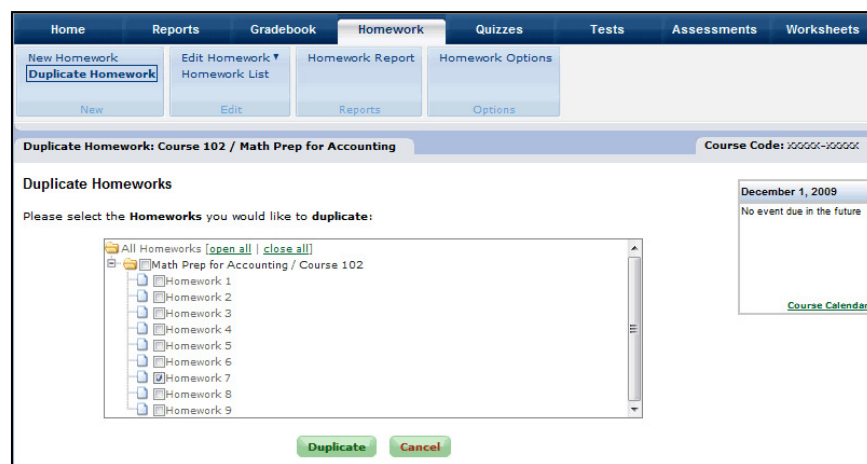


Figure 7.9: Duplicate Homework [duplicatehomework]

To duplicate a Homework assignment previously created in ALEKS, click “Duplicate Homework.” From the folders provided, select the Homework to be duplicated (Fig. 7.9). The Homework assignment will be created in the current course and can then be modified. Instructors who are ALEKS Administrators have the option to duplicate Homework from other instructors’ courses.

7.6.2 Print Homework [printhomework]

ALEKS allows you to print up to five different instances of a Homework (Fig. 7.10). This may be useful if the Homework is to be taken without computers, or if a printed version is needed for any other reason. The Homeworks are created in PDF format and may take up to a minute to generate.

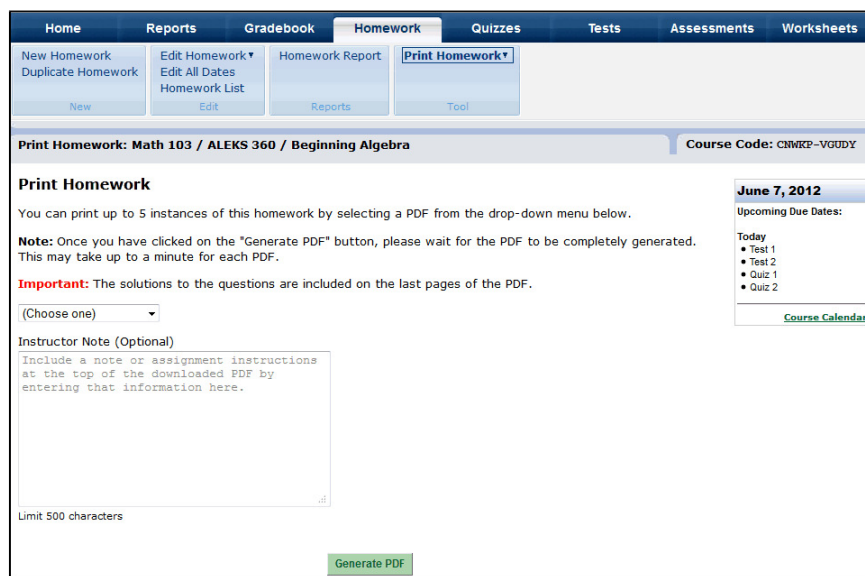


Figure 7.10: Print Homework [printhomework]

7.7 Course Quizzes [coursequizzes]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Quizzes” tab displays the following actions:

- New Quiz (Sec. 6.4.2)
- Duplicate Quiz (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Quiz (Sec. 6.4.8)
- Edit All Dates (Sec. 6.4.11)
- Quiz List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Quiz Report (Sec. 6.2.17)
- Print Quiz (Sec. 7.6.2)

Please see Sec. 6.4 for detailed information on how to create a Quiz in ALEKS.

7.8 Course Test [coursetest]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Tests” tab displays the following actions:

- New Test (Sec. 6.4.2)
- Duplicate Test (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Test (Sec. 6.4.8)

- Edit All Dates (Sec. 6.4.11)
- Test List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Test Report (Sec. 6.2.17)
- Print Test (Sec. 7.6.2)

Please see Sec. 6.4 for detailed information on how to create a Test in ALEKS.

7.9 Course Assessments [courseassessments]

Assessment	Start Date	End Date
Requested Assessment 3	Sep 10, 09	n/a
Requested Assessment 2	Aug 22, 09	n/a
Requested Assessment 1	Aug 3, 09	n/a

Figure 7.11: Scheduled Assessment List [scheduledassessmentlist]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Assessments” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.11):

- New Scheduled Assessment (Sec. 6.4.9)
- Edit Scheduled Assessment (Sec. 6.4.9)
- Edit All Dates (Sec. 6.4.11)
- Scheduled Assessment List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Scheduled Assessment Report (Sec. 6.2.18)
- Assessment Options (Sec. 7.9.1)

7.9.1 Assessment Options [assessmentoptions]

It is possible to restrict assessments to the college network if desired. For this to take effect, the campus IP addresses must be entered in ALEKS (Sec. 7.19.1).

By default, you will be notified if any student assesses at 100% in your course material. This may be an indication that the student has substantially completed the material and can be moved to a higher-level course. However, you can adjust the percentage used here to some degree.

7.10 Course Worksheets [courseworksheets]

Selecting a course account and clicking the “Worksheets” tab displays Worksheet Options. See Sec. 6.4.12 for a description of the Worksheet Options.

7.11 Student Home [studenthome]

Figure 7.12: Edit Student [editstudent]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Home” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.12):

- Edit Student (Sec. 6.6.2)
- Unenroll from class (Sec. 7.11.2)
- Cleanup Tool (Sec. 7.2.2)
- Course Forum (Sec. 6.1.3)
- Course Calendar (Sec. 6.4.13)
- Send Message (Sec. 6.1.4)

7.11.1 Move Student By Drag and Drop [movestudentbydragdrop]

Individual students can be moved from one class to another using drag and drop. Click on the student you would like to move, hold the mouse button, move the student to the class you would like them to be in, and then release the mouse button.

ALEKS has a “15 Day” rule built in that affects how the system behaves when a student is moved via drag and drop. If the student is moved less than 15 days after the account was enrolled in the course:

- The student will appear in the new course.
- The student and her record/progress will no longer appear in the old course.

If the student is moved after 15 days past the enrollment date in the course:

- The student will appear in the new course.
- The student and her record/progress will still appear in the old course.

If the ALEKS course product for the old course is the same as the ALEKS course product for the new course, the student’s progress will be carried forward from the old course to the new course and they will not need to take a new initial assessment. If the course products are different, progress will not be carried forward and a new initial assessment will be given.

7.11.2 Unenroll from class [*unenrollfromclass*]

This action enables you to unenroll the selected student from the course. Click “Confirm” to complete the process.

7.12 Student Gradebook [*studentgradebook*]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Gradebook” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.13):

- Student Gradebook (Sec. 6.5)
- Course Gradebook (Sec. 6.5)

The Student Gradebook view provides detailed information on grades for the student selected (Fig. 7.13). The features are similar to those for the course Gradebook, but for a single student only. The Course Gradebook can also be accessed from this tab.

7.13 Student Homework [*studenthomework*]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Homework” tab displays the following actions:

- New Homework (Sec. 6.4.2)

Student Gradebook: Browning, Kevin V.

Gradebook / Browning, Kevin V. [Return to Gradebook](#)

Show: All From: Jul 1, 2009 To: Dec 1, 2010 View by: Percentage

Students (Name Login Student ID)	Total Grade for date range	Homework 1 Jul 22, 09	Homework 2 Jul 29, 09	Quiz 1 Aug 5, 09	Homework 3 Aug 12, 09	Homework 4 Aug 19, 09
Browning, Kevin V.	91%	69%	100%	79%	83%	83%

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Grades from Jul 1, 09 to Dec 1, 09	Quiz	Test	Homework	Assessment	Intermediate Objective	Overall
Total Percent of the course	21.1%	52.6%	5.3%	10.5%	10.5%	100%
Percent Assigned for date range	21.1%	52.6%	5.3%	0%	0%	78.9%
Average Score for date range	93%	90%	89%	n/a	n/a	91%

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Figure 7.13: Student Gradebook [studentgradebookipsum]

- Duplicate Homework (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Homework (Sec. 6.4.8)
- Homework List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Homework Report (Sec. 6.2.17)

All actions listed here are links to other parts of the Advanced Instructor Module. The first four options link to the corresponding actions for Course Homework, and the last action links to the Student Reports tab.

7.14 Student Quizzes [studentquiz]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Quizzes” tab displays the following actions:

- New Quiz (Sec. 6.4.2)
- Duplicate Quiz (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Quiz (Sec. 6.4.8)
- Quiz List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Quiz Report (Sec. 6.2.17)

All actions listed here are links to other parts of the Advanced Instructor Module. The first four options link to the corresponding actions for Course Quizzes, and the last action links to the Student Reports tab.

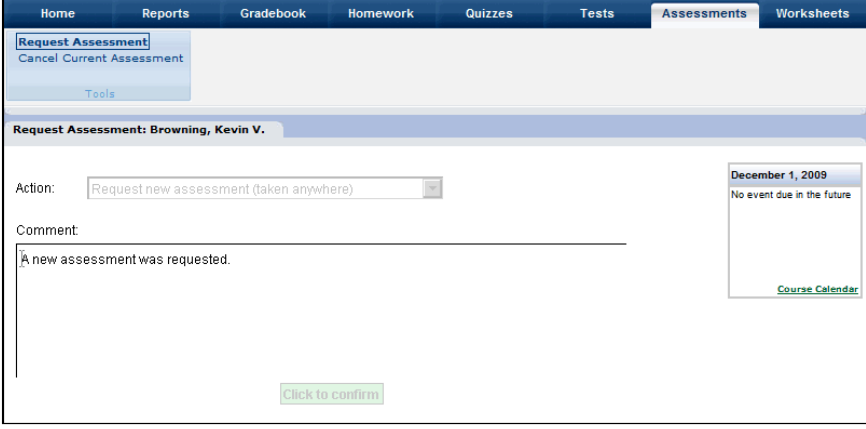
7.15 Student Tests [studenttest]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Tests” tab displays the following actions:

- New Test (Sec. 6.4.2)
- Duplicate Test (Sec. 7.6.1)
- Edit Test (Sec. 6.4.8)
- Test List (Sec. 6.4.1)
- Test Report (Sec. 6.2.17)

All actions listed here are links to other parts of the Advanced Instructor Module. The first four options link to the corresponding actions for Course Tests, and the “Test Report” action links to the Student Reports tab.

7.16 Student Assessments [studentassessments]



The screenshot shows the 'Request Assessment' form within the 'Assessments' tab of the Advanced Instructor Module. The navigation bar at the top includes Home, Reports, Gradebook, Homework, Quizzes, Tests, Assessments, and Worksheets. The 'Request Assessment' button is highlighted. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Request Assessment' and 'Cancel Current Assessment', and a 'Tools' button. The main content area is titled 'Request Assessment: Browning, Kevin V.'. It features an 'Action:' dropdown menu with 'Request new assessment (taken anywhere)' selected, a 'Comment:' text area containing 'A new assessment was requested.', and a 'Click to confirm' button. On the right side, there is a 'December 1, 2009' calendar widget showing 'No event due in the future' and a 'Course Calendar' link.

Figure 7.14: Request Assessment [requestassessment]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Assessments” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.14):

- Request Assessment (Sec. 7.16.1)
- Cancel Current Assessment (Sec. 7.16.2)

7.16.1 Request Assessment [requestassessment]

This button enables you to request an assessment for a single student, effective immediately. Choosing “Progress Assessment” produces an assessment focusing on the student’s most recent learning. Choosing “Comprehensive Assessment” produces a slightly

longer, more probing assessment of the student’s overall mastery of course materials. You can choose, via the drop-down action menu, where the student takes the assessment. If your college has IP addresses in place at the school level, you can restrict the assessment to be taken on campus (Sec. 7.19.1). The comment box allows the instructor to type a message that the student will see when they log in to take the assessment.

7.16.2 Cancel Current Assessment [cancelcurrentassessment]

Using this tool will cancel any current or pending assessment for the student, until midnight of that day. An automatic reassessment that is cancelled in this way will become active again on the following day.

7.17 Student Worksheets [studentworksheets]

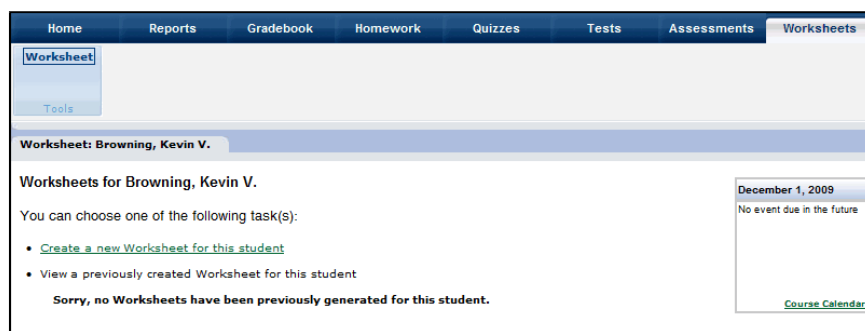


Figure 7.15: Worksheet [worksheetipsum]

Selecting a student account and clicking the “Worksheets” tab displays the Worksheet action (Fig. 7.15). See Sec. 6.4.12 for a description of the Worksheets feature.

7.18 Master Templates [mastertemplate]

The Master Template provides an efficient way to create a master course with multiple linked courses that mirror all settings of the master. Instructors who have Administrator privileges can create a Master Template, add assignments, and create any number of linked courses based on the Master Template. Instructors teaching the linked courses can edit their individual course settings and assignments, and add their own assignments. If this feature is not available in your account, please contact ALEKS Customer Support to request that it be enabled.

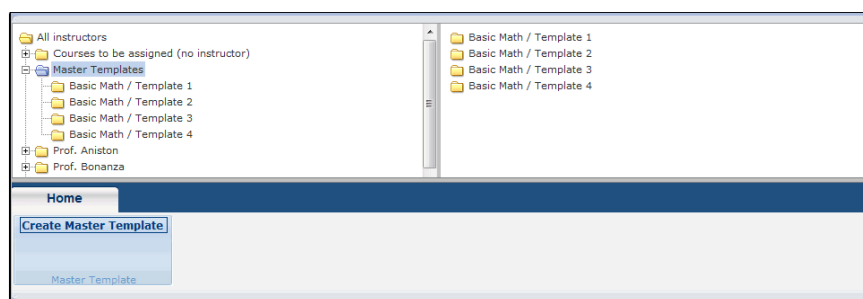


Figure 7.16: Master Template Home [mthome]

7.18.1 Getting Started [mastertemplategettingstarted]

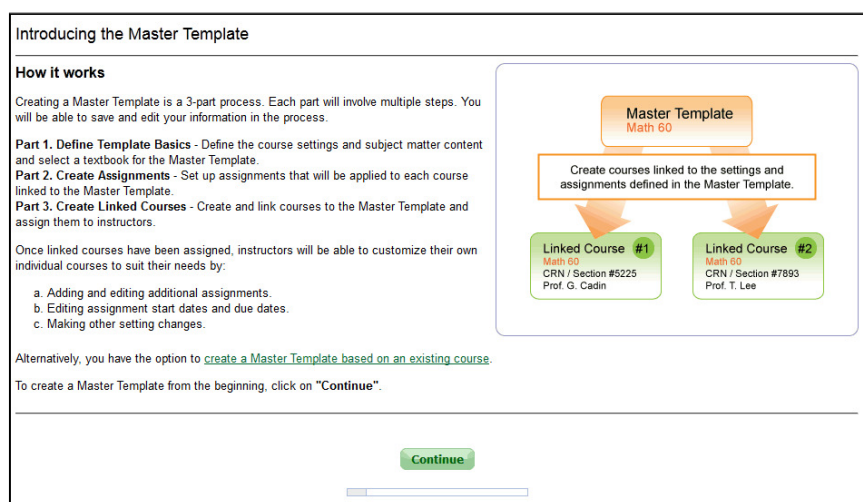


Figure 7.17: Getting Started [mtgettingstarted]

Selecting the purple “Master Templates” folder from the Selector window and clicking the “Home” tab displays the “Create Master Template” option (Fig. 7.16).

Clicking this action will give you two options to create a Master Template (Fig. 7.17). From the introductory page, you can choose to:

- Create a Master Template from scratch. This option allows you to customize your own course settings and assignments. Click “Continue” to “Define Template Basics” (Sec. 7.18.3).
- Create a Master Template based on an existing course at your institution. This timesaving option allows you to copy all course settings and assignments from the existing course into the new Master Template. Click “create a Master Template based on an existing course” to start the process (Sec. 7.18.7).

Creating a Master Template is a 3-part process. After the Master Template is created, Administrators can view it under the purple Master Templates folder in the Selector window. The template is listed as ALEKS Course / Master Template Name.

7.18.2 Master Template Summary [mastertemplatesummary]

Master Template Summary

You have completed the Master Template.

✔ **Part 1. Template Basics** [Expand / Collapse](#)

You have completed Part 1: "Define Template Basics". [[view/edit](#)]

Here is how your Template Basics will be set up:

- **Master Template Name:** Spring 2012
- **ALEKS Course:** Basic Math
- **Subscription Type:** Higher-Ed any access code
- **Start Date:** 05/14/2012
- **End Date:** 05/14/2013
- **Textbook:** n/a
- **Course Content:** 278 topics

✔ **Part 2. Assignments** [Expand / Collapse](#)

You have completed Part 2: "Create Assignments". [[view/edit](#)] [[create assignments](#)]

[Edit all assignment dates](#)

Assignment	Start Date	Due Date	Action
Homework 1 edit homework	May 14, 2012 1:36PM	May 14, 2012 11:55PM	Select Action... ▾

✔ **Part 3. Linked Courses** [Expand / Collapse](#)

You have completed Part 3: "Create Linked Courses". [[view/edit](#)] [[create linked courses](#)]

CRN/Section	Instructor	Course Code	Linked Course Actions
Section 1	Prof. Aniston	QXW44-WQW6T	Edit Linked Course
Section 2	Courses to be assigned (no instructor)	REFE3-XRLMN	Edit Linked Course
Section 3	Prof. Smith	NDWHT-U6X9Y	Edit Linked Course

Figure 7.18: Master Template Summary [mtsummary]

The Master Template Summary page may be used as a guideline to show which parts have been completed or require completion (Fig. 7.18). At the end of each part, Administrators can view or return to the Master Template Summary page by clicking on "View Master Template Summary." Administrators can view or edit by selecting the appropriate link next to each part.

7.18.3 Define Template Basics [defineterminplatebasics]

Part 1 of the Master Template creation process is Define Template Basics. This part allows you to select the ALEKS course product and textbook, edit the content, and define other course settings. Select the "Start Template Basics" button to customize the following options (Fig. 7.19):

Basic Information

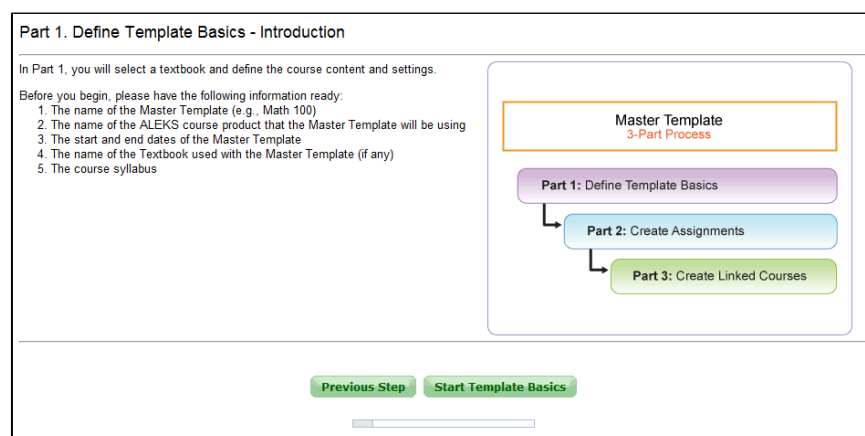


Figure 7.19: Define Template Basics [mtpart1definemplate]

- The Master Template is required to have a name; this name can be the name appearing in your institution’s course catalogue or anything else you wish. The Master Template name will be a part of the linked courses’ names. ALEKS Course is the course product that will be used.
- Course Dates are used to configure the Course Calendar, and should include the entire period of time that the students will be using ALEKS. All linked courses created with this Master Template will have the same Start and End dates. The option to automatically archive the linked course is also available at this step (Sec. 6.1.7).

Textbook Integration, Custom Objectives, and Modules

For complete details, see Sec. 6.3.2.

Edit Content

For complete details, see Sec. 6.3.8.

Within the “Part 1. Define Template Basics - Review and Save” screen, you can make changes by clicking on the “edit” link next to each item or click on “Previous Step.” Click on “Save” to finalize your settings.

7.18.4 Additional Options in Part 1 [additionaloptionsinpart1]

Once you have completed Part 1 of the Master Template creation process, the confirmation screen will display the following options (Fig. 7.20):

Download ALEKS Course Syllabus

Click this link to see a detailed summary of your course as it has been configured. You can download this information in HTML or PDF format.

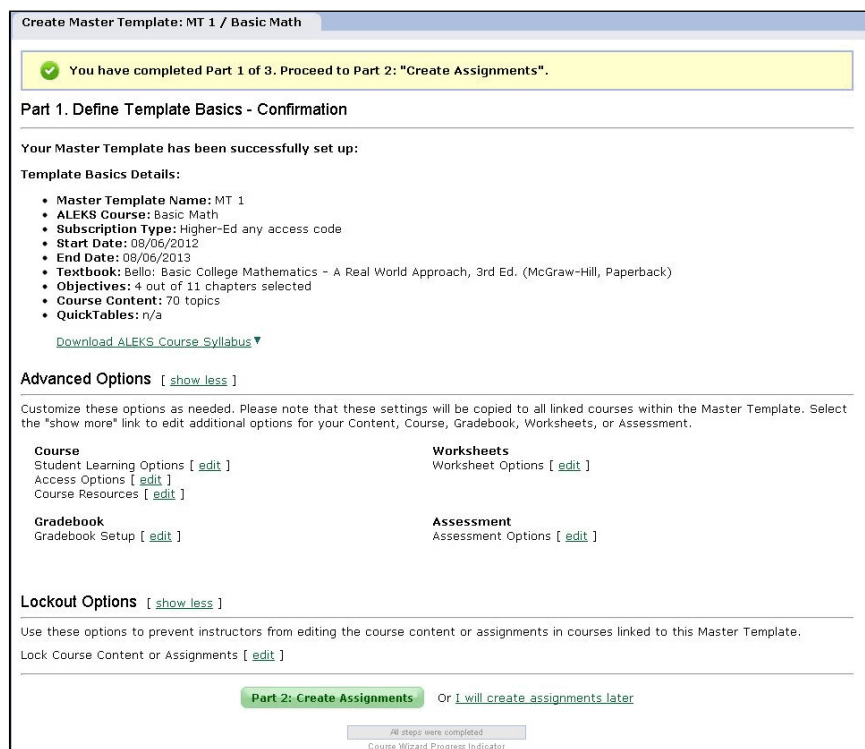


Figure 7.20: Define Template Basics - Confirmation [mtpart1advancedoptions]

Advanced Options

Click the “show more” link to view other relevant options for the Master Template, such as Course, Gradebook, Worksheets, or Assessment. Customizing the settings for these options in the Master Template will apply to all linked courses. Instructors can then edit these settings for their individual courses. Click “edit” next to each option to customize the setting as needed:

- Student Learning Options (Sec. 7.3.1)
- Access Options (Sec. 7.3.1)
- Course Resources (Sec. 6.6.10)
- Gradebook Setup (Sec. 6.5.5)
- Worksheet Options (Sec. 6.4.12)
- Assessment Options (Sec. 7.9.1)

Lockout Options

Click on “show more” and then the “edit” link to view options to prevent instructors from editing the course content or assignments in courses linked to the Master Template.

- **Course Content.** If this option is selected, instructors of linked courses cannot edit the course content for their linked courses. Additionally, if administrators use textbook integration or objectives with the Master Template,

instructors of linked courses can edit the due dates for each objective, but cannot edit the content within an objective.

- **Assignments.** If this option is selected, instructors of linked courses cannot edit or delete their assignments linked to the Master Template. However, they can adjust the dates for these assignments and also create additional assignments for the linked courses.

NOTE. If Administrators want to create external assignments in the Master Template, they can do this after clicking on the “[edit]” link by “Gradebook Setup.” Only the assignment name and date can be set at the Master Template level; the student grades and maximum point values are set at the linked course level.

At the bottom of this confirmation screen, you have the option to continue to Part 2 of the Master Template creation process to create assignments, or you can do this at another time. Selecting the “I will create assignments later” link takes you to the Master Template Summary page. Selecting the “Part 2: Create Assignments” button takes you to Part 2. Create Assignments - Introduction page.

7.18.5 Create Assignments in Master Template [part2createassignments]

Part 2. Create Assignments - Introduction

All assignments created in the Master Template will be copied into each linked course. Instructors have the option of adding or editing assignments within their individual course.

Select if you want to create a new assignment or duplicate an existing assignment

Create a new assignment
 Duplicate an existing assignment

Select the assignment type

Homework
 Quiz
 Test
 ALEKS Assessment

Click on "Create Assignments" to start.

[Create Assignments](#) Or [View Master Template Summary](#)

Figure 7.21: Create Assignments in Master Template [mtpart2createassignments]

Part 2 of the Master Template creation process is Create Assignments. This part allows you to create assignments in the Master Template. From the “Part 2: Create Assignments - Introduction” screen, you will see two options for creating an assignment (Fig. 7.21):

- **Create a new assignment.** This option takes you through the ALEKS assignment creation process (Sec. 6.4).
- **Duplicate an existing assignment.** This option allows you to duplicate an existing assignment (Sec. 7.6.1).

You must specify the assignment type that you wish to create or duplicate, such as Homework, Quiz, Test, or ALEKS Assessment.

After creating assignments, you will see an Assignment list with the assignments created in the Master Template. You have the options to change the display of assignment categories, create another assignment, and edit, disable, duplicate, print, or delete an assignment. You also have the option to create linked courses in Part 3 of the Master Template creation process. To do this, click the “Part 3: Create Linked Courses” button. Otherwise, click on “View Master Template Summary.”

7.18.6 Create Linked Courses [part3createlinkedcourses]

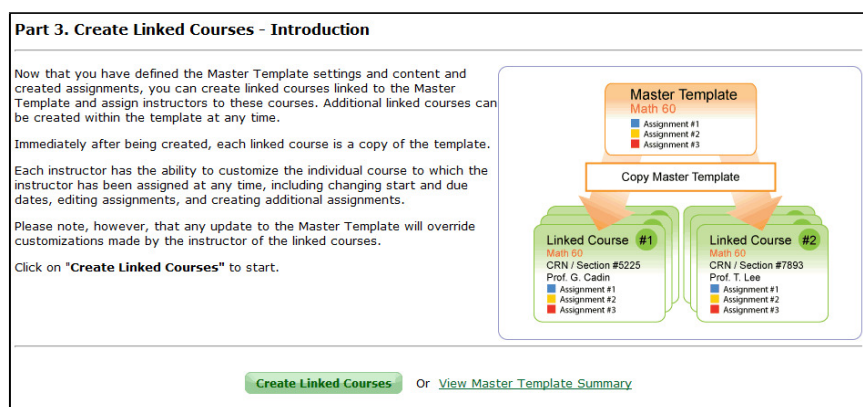


Figure 7.22: Create Linked Courses [mtpart3createlinkedcourses]

Part 3 of the Master Template creation process is Create Linked Courses. A linked course contains the same content and settings as the Master Template. Once a linked course is created, all existing course settings and assignments from the Master Template will be applied to the linked course. Both the Administrator and the instructor assigned to the course will receive a message in their ALEKS Message Center Inbox containing important information about the linked courses.

To start adding linked courses, from the introductory page of Part 3, click on the “Create Linked Courses” button (Fig. 7.22).

On the “Assign Instructor to Linked Courses” page, enter the name of the Course CRN/Section and assign an instructor to the individual linked course. There are three options for the “Instructor” field:

Existing ALEKS Instructor

Select this option and then use the drop-down menu to select the name of the Instructor teaching the linked course.

Instructor to be announced (TBA)

Select this option if the name of the instructor is unknown. The linked course can be assigned at another time (Sec. 7.18.11).

Create a new Instructor

Select this option if the instructor does not have an existing ALEKS account. Enter the title, first and last name, and e-mail address of the Instructor teaching the linked course. ALEKS will send an email message containing login information to the instructor. If an email address is not provided, the Administrator will need to edit the instructor account, change the password, and send it to the instructor at another time (Sec. 6.6.14).

A maximum of 15 linked courses can be created at a time. To add more linked courses, click the “Create another Linked Course” button. Click the “Save” button to finish creating the new linked course(s).

NOTE. There is no limit on the number of linked courses you can have in a Master Template. To add more than 15 linked courses, you must return to the Master Template Summary screen by selecting “Edit Master Template.”

At the end of Part 3, you will see a confirmation page with the linked courses created in the Master Template. You can create another linked course, edit the linked courses, or complete the Master Template set-up process by clicking “I am done creating linked courses.”

7.18.7 Create a Master Template based on an Existing Course [createmas-tertemplatebasedonexistingcourse]

Figure 7.23: Create Master Template Based on Existing Course [mtcreatefromexisting]

After clicking on “create a Master Template based on an existing course,” use the drop-down menu to select an existing course, and then click on “Create Master Template” (Fig. 7.23). The course template basics will show up in Part 1 and the assignments that were copied from the existing course will be in Part 2. Administrators can click on “Go to Master Template Summary” to create linked courses in Part 3.

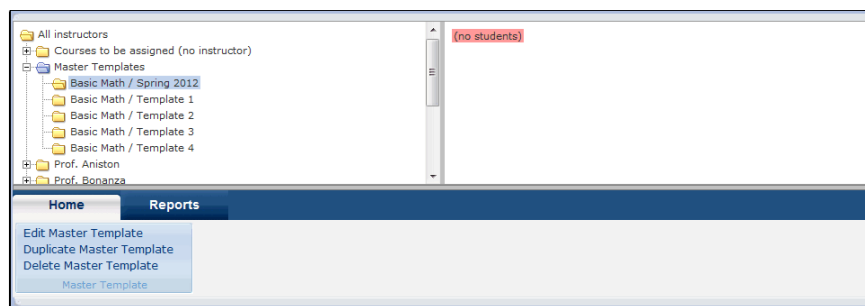


Figure 7.24: Manage Master Template [mtmanagetemplates]

7.18.8 Edit Master Template [editmastertemplate]

Selecting a Master Template course and clicking the “Edit Master Template” link (under “Home,” Fig. 7.24) will take Administrators to the Master Template Summary page to modify the course basic settings, assignments, or linked courses.

The effects of editing a Master Template are:

- Edits to the Master Template will apply automatically to all linked courses under the Master Template.
- Updates to the Master Template will override customizations made by the instructors of the linked courses.
- Instructors will receive a message in their ALEKS Message Center (Inbox) when an Administrator has made a change to the Master Template.

Use the “Expand/Collapse” link to view all the details of each part of the Master Template, or use the “view/edit” link to customize specific settings. You can also add more assignments by selecting “Create Assignments,” or add more linked courses by selecting “Create linked courses.”

7.18.9 Duplicate Master Template [duplicatemastertemplate]

Selecting a Master Template course and clicking the “Duplicate Master Template” link (under “Home”) (Fig. 7.24) is a quick and easy way to create a new Master Template. This action will duplicate Part 1 and Part 2 of the Master Template creation process.

The settings that will be duplicated are:

- Content Editor
- Textbook Integration
- Grading
- Assignments

- Other Miscellaneous course options

Once the Master Template is duplicated, Administrators will need to create linked courses, assign instructors, and change the course start and end dates and assignment dates.

7.18.10 Delete Master Template [deletemastertemplate]

Selecting a Master Template course and clicking the “Delete Master Template” link (under “Home”) (Fig. 7.24) will remove the selected template from the system.

The effects of deleting the Master Template are:

- The deletion will not delete any courses linked to the Master Template.
- Settings in any of the linked courses will not be affected by the deletion.
- A message will be sent to the instructors of the linked courses saying that the Master Template has been deleted.

To proceed with the deletion, click the “Confirm” button.

7.18.11 Courses to be assigned [coursestobeassigned]

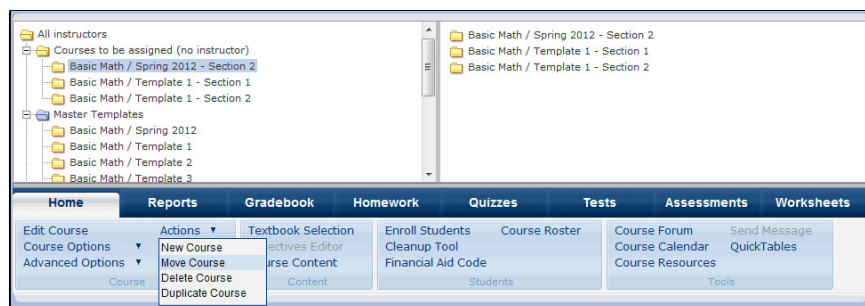


Figure 7.25: Courses to be Assigned [mtcoursestobeassigned]

The “Courses to be assigned (no instructor)” folder in the selector pane contains linked courses that were set to “Instructor to be announced (TBA)” (Fig. 7.25). Click on the “+” sign to expand the folder, and then click on the name of the linked course to assign an instructor.

Under the Home tab, click on “Actions” and then choose the “Move Course” option. Select the instructor who is going to teach the course.

Once a linked course has been assigned, the instructor assigned to the course will receive a message about the new course information in their ALEKS Message Center (Inbox).

Instructors will be able to view and edit their linked courses after selecting their folder name. The Master Template name will be part of the linked Course Name; instructors can view this information by clicking on “Edit this Course” in Basic Module and “Edit Course” in Advanced Module.

7.18.12 Master Template Reports [mastertemplatereports]

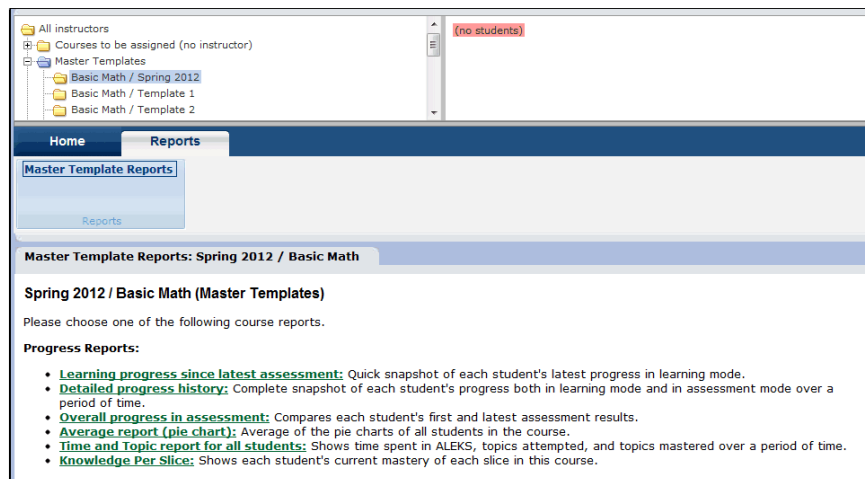


Figure 7.26: Master Template Reports [mtreports]

Administrators can run reports quickly and easily at the Master Template level using the Master Template Reports feature. This feature allows Administrators to generate a single report for all courses linked to a Master Template.

For each Master Template in use:

- Administrators can select from a variety of report options.
- ALEKS will generate the report and email it to the Administrator as an Excel attachment.
- The report will include the students’ names, instructors’ names, class sections, and the relevant report data.

To access the Master Template reports (Fig. 7.26):

1. From the Selector window, click on the “+” next to the purple “Master Templates” folder.
2. Select the Master Template for which you wish to run reports.
3. Under the Reports tab, click on the “Master Template Reports” link.

4. You will see a list of available reports. Click on the link of the report you would like to generate.
5. Click on the “Email me the report” button. Alternatively, you can click on the “Email me the report” button directly from the Sample Report window after selecting the “Example” link.

At the end of the process, you will see a confirmation message letting you know that the request is being processed.

NOTE. Blank Excel attachments will be generated if linked courses to a Master Template do not contain students.

7.19 Administrator Account [administratoraccount]

The screenshot displays the Administrator Home Tab interface. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Home' and 'Reports'. The 'Home' tab is active, showing a navigation menu with options: 'Edit College', 'Search College', 'LMS Integration', 'Add Instructor', 'Instructor Resources', 'Archive Options', 'View Course Codes', 'Schedule Domain Upgrade', 'Enrollment List', and 'Edit Subscription'. Below the navigation menu, the main content area is titled 'Edit College: Aleks College'. The form contains the following sections:

- College Information:** Name: Aleks College, State: California, Time Zone: America, Los Angeles, Current Time: 12:25 PM PDT.
- College Networking:** Public IPs, Local IPs, and a checkbox for 'Single IP School Assignment'.

At the bottom of the form, there are 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons. A date indicator shows 'August 6, 2012' and a message 'No course chosen'.

Figure 7.27: Administrator Home Tab [adminhometab]

For instructors with Administrator privileges in ALEKS, all instructors using ALEKS at their campus will be visible, along with their courses and students. The following actions are available to Administrator accounts. The folder marked “All instructors” in the far upper left of the Selector window stands for the institution or campus account itself. Selecting “All instructors” and clicking the “Home” tab displays the following actions (Fig. 7.27):

- Edit College (Sec. 7.19.1)
- Search College (Sec. 7.19.2)
- LMS Integration (Sec. 7.19.3)
- Add Instructor (Sec. 7.19.4)

- Instructor Resources (Sec. 7.19.5)
- Archive Options (Sec. 7.19.6)
- View Course Codes (Sec. 7.19.7)
- Schedule Domain Upgrade (Sec. 7.19.8)
- Enrollment List (Sec. 7.19.9)
- Edit Subscription (Sec. 7.19.10)

Selecting “All instructors” and clicking the “Reports” tab displays a number of reports for the college as a whole. Descriptions of these reports can be found in Sec. 7.19.11.

Administrators will also have access to the Master Template feature, located directly below the “All Instructors” folder. For information on utilizing this feature, see Sec. 7.18.

7.19.1 Edit College [editcollege]

This page can be used to modify the state and time zone settings for the institution in the ALEKS database. Usually, these are set correctly when the institution account is first created, and do not need to be changed.

Under **College Settings** are the two options for the access level to Student History report data across multiple ALEKS courses at the College. Please see Sec. 6.2.4 for more details about the reports available for student history.

- **Limited Access (Default setting).** Administrators can see report data for all courses taken by a student. Instructors can only see report data for courses they have taught.
- **Full Access.** Administrators **and** instructors can see report data for all courses taken by student.

Under **College Networking**, there are spaces for entering the IP (Internet Protocol) addresses used by computer networks at the institution. These are needed if you wish to restrict assessments, homeworks, quizzes or tests to the campus network (Sec. 7.9.1).

Single IP School Assignment will require students to complete all assessments from the same IP address where they began them. This reduces the flexibility of access that students usually have to their ALEKS accounts, but in some cases it may be desired.

7.19.2 Search College [searchcollege]

Use this tool to search for a particular student, instructor, or course in your campus accounts (Fig. 7.28).

Figure 7.28: Search College [searchcollege]

Figure 7.29: Learning Management System (LMS) Integration [lms]

7.19.3 Learning Management System (LMS) Integration [lmsintegration]

You can set up Single Sign On (SSO) by integrating ALEKS with your school Learning Management System (LMS), such as Blackboard, Desire2Learn, Moodle, etc. This will allow instructors and students to link from your LMS to ALEKS without having to remember separate login names and passwords. It will also remove the need to share Course Codes by letting the LMS feed course information directly to ALEKS. LMS integration is available for all ALEKS Higher Ed courses.

ALEKS is a Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) 1.1 compliant Tool Provider. Your school can integrate ALEKS with any LTI compliant LMS. It is a two-part process, which involves Part 1 - logging into ALEKS to obtain the LTI parameters, and Part 2 - logging into the school's LMS to input the parameters.

Part 1 - Obtain Parameters. After logging into ALEKS in the Advanced Instructor Module, administrators click on the "All instructors" folder. From the Home tab, click on the "LMS Integration" link. You will arrive at the Learning Management System

(LMS) page. To obtain the parameters for the college, use the drop-down menu to select the LMS that the college is using or the mode of integration. If your LMS is not listed, you can integrate ALEKS with any LTI compliant LMS by selecting “Basic LTI/LTI 1.1” from the list as your mode of integration. If you wish to integrate your LMS with ALEKS using McGraw-Hill (MH) Campus, a service that allows instructors using a LMS to have access to McGraw-Hill educational materials within their LMS, select MH Campus from the list.

After making a selection in the drop-down menu, the parameters for the selected LMS or mode of integration will appear on the screen. Enabling LMS Gradebook Integration will allow instructors to synchronize the overall score for each student in their ALEKS gradebook with their LMS gradebook. Review the parameters carefully and then click on the “Save” button. This will complete the first part of the integration.

Part 2 - Configure a School’s LMS with ALEKS. Administrators now log into their college’s LMS to configure the integration with ALEKS using the parameters obtained from the ALEKS “LMS Integration” page. Some of the LMS selections will show one or more “?” icons on the page. Clicking on a “?” will open a pop-up with instructions on this part.

Once the setup between the LMS and ALEKS is complete, instructors and students can pair their LMS accounts and courses with their ALEKS courses. For detailed instructions on institution, instructor, course, and student pairing, please visit the ALEKS Training Center.

7.19.4 Add Instructor [addinstructor]

Frequently, instructor accounts are created by ALEKS Corporation for the college. Administrators, however, are able to create them independently using this tool (Fig. 7.30). Note that new instructors may be set up with Administrator privileges.

7.19.5 Instructor Resources [instructorresourcesadmin]

This link provides convenient access through the Instructor account to a set of informational and training resources (also available directly from the ALEKS web site) (Fig. 7.1).

7.19.6 Archive Options [adminarchiveoptions]

This option allows administrators to archive multiple classes or instructors at once. For a complete description of archiving classes and instructors, see Sec. 6.1.7.

Figure 7.30: Add Instructor [addinstructor]

7.19.7 View Course Codes [viewcoursecodesadmin]

This action displays a complete list of courses and course codes for the institution, organized by instructor.

7.19.8 Schedule Domain Upgrade [scheduledomainupgrade]

ALEKS Corporation periodically releases new versions of its course products. When this occurs, there is an announcement to users of the window of time during which users may upgrade, as well as the default date on which the upgrade will occur if no action is taken. If the college wishes to schedule the upgrade earlier than the default date, the Administrator can use this tool to pick the desired date. Note that there is also a great deal of detailed information available from this page on how exactly the course product will be changed in the upgrade. Click on the underlined name of the course product to see the details (Fig. 7.31).

7.19.9 Enrollment List [enrollmentlistadmin]

Clicking on “Enrollment List” produces a list of all students who have been enrolled in ALEKS at the college. (The list contains past students as well as students currently active.) Information such as Login Name and recent usage data also appears in the list.



Schedule Domain Upgrade: Individual College (1/4) / ALEKS HigherEd Math			College Code: YXGWJFG
<p>ALEKS for Basic Math and ALEKS for Pre-Algebra have been improved. The changes were designed to broaden the scope of these subjects, improve their educational content, and make the learning paths followed by students as efficient as possible. We believe that the improved subjects will make ALEKS an even more powerful tool in assisting your students in achieving success.</p> <p>All ALEKS accounts in your college will be automatically upgraded to the new version according to the following schedule. This will not require any action on your part.</p>			
Subject	Date on which your college will be upgraded	Latest date on which the upgrade can be scheduled	
Basic Math	08/11/2012 	08/11/2012	
Pre-Algebra	08/11/2012 	08/11/2012	
Subject	Date on which your college will be upgraded	Latest date on which the upgrade can be scheduled	
<p>What to expect before the upgrade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will be able to continue using ALEKS just as you have. There will be no loss of performance or features. Merely, any new features or content contingent on the upgrade will not be available until the upgrade occurs. <p>What to expect after the upgrade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some changes may occur in the pie charts, Objectives, syllabi used by courses, Content Editors, and books offered for integration. To see a detailed explanation of how a subject will be affected, click on the name of the subject above. If you would like the upgrade for your college to occur on a different date, click on the calendar icon to the right of the corresponding dates above. The upgrade will occur at 11:59pm (Pacific Time) on the date that you choose. This upgrade does NOT require a new ALEKS plugin. The upgrade is irreversible. 			

Figure 7.31: Schedule Domain Upgrade [scheduledomainupgrade]

It can be downloaded in CSV (comma separated values) format using the link to upper right. If the list is more than 1000 students long, it will be divided into “pages” of a fixed length, which may be downloaded.

7.19.10 Edit Subscription [editsubscription]

For some purposes, it may be preferable to use “subscriptions” (or virtual account inventory) rather than access codes for creating student accounts in ALEKS. If the college has used subscriptions for any of its students’ access to ALEKS, a summary of subscription activity will appear on this page: how many have been purchased, how many used, and how many are remaining. Detailed information on the use of subscriptions can be found by clicking the underlined numbers under “Used.”

NOTE. This page does not show the usage of access codes at the college. Many institutions use only access codes; in such cases, no information will appear on this page.

7.19.11 Reports [serverreports]

A number of campus-wide reports are available under this tab.

- **Enrollment/Activity** shows the total number of students ever enrolled in ALEKS from the institution, and the numbers of students active in the system during the

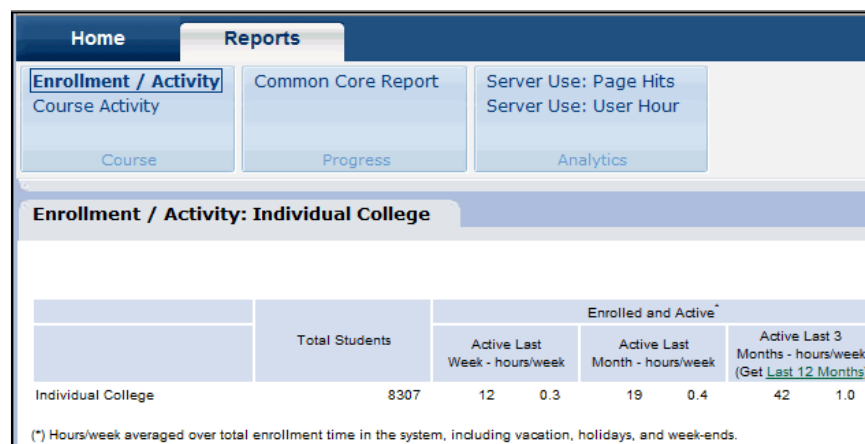


Figure 7.32: Administrator Reports [adminreportstab]

last week, the last month, or the last three months (optionally 12 months). For each of these intervals, it also shows the average number of hours spent weekly by the students who were active.

- **Course Activity** is a more detailed view of campus activity. For each instructor and course, it shows the total number of students ever enrolled, then, for each of the last six full months, the number of students active and the average hours per week spent by active students. (Note that the current month does not appear in this report.) Click on the instructor's name to view that instructor's courses, or on the “++” at the top to see all courses for all instructors. This report can be generated for either ALEKS or QuickTables using the drop-down menu.
- **Server Use: Page Hits** presents a graph of page hits over time by users of ALEKS at the college. The “Data Range” menu can be used to set the time period that is graphed. Beneath the graph may appear summary statistics, depending on the time span chosen.
- **Server Use: User Hour** is similar to the “Server Use: Page Hits” report, but graphs the number of user-hours over time.

Chapter 8

Teaching with ALEKS [teaching]

8.1 The ALEKS Educational Paradigm [paradigm]

ALEKS is based on the understanding that students learn math in different ways, at differing speeds. Starting from an accurate assessment of their current knowledge, students in ALEKS are only offered what they have shown themselves ready to learn. They therefore experience less frustration (from material that is too difficult) and boredom (from material that is too easy). Students are engaged in the learning process, and grow in confidence and independence as they use the program. ALEKS periodically reassesses students to test their retention of new knowledge, and if they forget what was once learned, ALEKS smoothly and efficiently guides them through necessary review and reinforcement. With time and persistence, every ALEKS student will progress toward mastery, in a way clearly visible to both student and instructor.

It is normal for students to be in disparate knowledge states; ALEKS puts this information clearly at the instructor's disposal. The relative mastery attained by students appears clearly from the "Learning Progress Since Latest Assessment" Report in the Instructor Module. ALEKS does not require students to progress as a unified group. ALEKS will permit a student to work on any topic in the category "ready to learn," a list of topics which the student has not yet learned, but has demonstrated (within ALEKS) the readiness to begin learning.

Students using ALEKS will experience new independence and excitement in learning. Instructors also may find different opportunities for optimizing their role in the learning process, with a greatly expanded ability to accurately monitor and effectively promote their students' learning. The role of the instructor is critical in providing structure, support, and reward for the students' effective use of ALEKS. If ALEKS is used properly, the instructor's scope for individual coaching and small-group instruction will be greatly expanded, as will the freedom to teach math in a broader and richer way.

ALEKS gives the instructor a set of powerful resources. Various styles of use of ALEKS are possible. The following should be understood as suggestions, designed to give in-

structors a sense of the possibilities offered by ALEKS's extensive library of tools.

8.2 The Instructor and ALEKS [teacherandaleks]

ALEKS is often used in regular classroom settings.

The instructor in an ALEKS course need not be collecting, correcting, or distributing papers, organizing groups, managing materials, giving instructions, or supervising activities. The instructor in an ALEKS course may be just as busy teaching mathematics to individual learners: getting one student started on a new topic, checking another student's work, responding to questions, suggesting alternate methods and explanations, making or reinforcing connections among concepts, and congratulating those who "add an item to their pie." ALEKS provides comprehensive support to the student in every phase of its use; yet the instructor will find that the additional direct support given this way is especially productive. Suddenly the relation of teacher and student is based on knowledge and discovery, not management and sanction. No one is "behind" in ALEKS; setbacks are readily addressed and overcome; every student can expect to make progress and be recognized.

It is important, especially in the early stages of an ALEKS course, that the instructor be generous in recognizing student progress. Students need to understand that when they add an item to their pie, or show progress in a new assessment, it is an achievement. Soon this will become second nature and learning will be its own motivation. At the same time, formal rewards for the effective use of ALEKS need to be built into the course structure and made clear from the outset (Sec. 8.3).

Students will be assessed at the beginning of their use of ALEKS (following Registration and the Tutorial), and at regular intervals after that. The instructor does not need to supervise all ALEKS assessments; normally, students will be using ALEKS both in and out of the classroom, and taking assessments at various times and locations. Once the students realize that the purpose of the ALEKS assessment is to provide appropriate material in the Learning Mode, there will be little reason to get help, use the textbook or calculator inappropriately, or in any other way achieve inaccurate assessment results.

We recommend that the Initial Assessment be supervised. The students may need assistance in their first use of the system, they will need to be reassured that the assessment is not for a grade, and it is important that the results of this Initial Assessment be valid, so that the students' work in the Learning Mode be productive from the start. For the instructor's own information, other supervised assessments may also be held at regular intervals to provide accurate "snapshots" of overall progress by the course (Sec. 8.10). We suggest that such supervised assessments be scheduled at the midpoint and end of the class. Also, any assessment results which may be used as a component in the students' grades should, of course, be obtained from supervised assessments (Sec. 8.13).

NOTE. In cases where students do not seem to be making adequate progress in ALEKS,

the student may have received help, or inappropriately used a calculator on an unsupervised assessment, skewing the assessment results and leading to inappropriate material in the Learning Mode. This can be corrected by requesting a new assessment for the student.

8.3 Planning the ALEKS Course [planning]

Planning a course with ALEKS can be simpler than planning other kinds of courses. The instructor has complete freedom in planning lectures, lessons, and assignments, while ALEKS ensures that students can progress toward mastery regardless of their level of preparation. It is not necessary for the instructor to constrain the interactions of the ALEKS system with individual students. To the extent that students will be working independently in ALEKS, the content of lab classes is provided by their work in ALEKS. Instructors can, however, plan focused small-group instruction from week to week (Sec. 8.5).

It is important to make ALEKS an integral part of the course requirements and grading scheme. The main factor influencing the success of students using ALEKS is the time that they spend in it. This means that the students must be required to spend a suitable amount of time in ALEKS on a weekly basis. (A minimum of three hours is recommended.) They should be informed of this at the beginning of the course, and the instructor should monitor their fulfillment of this obligation. The amount of time required must be reasonable and in balance with other requirements for the course; the instructor should not simply include an ALEKS requirement without reducing the other requirements that the students have to fulfill. For example, the quantity of homework problems may be reduced, as the students will be solving problems in their ALEKS sessions.

These are only suggestions, and experienced instructors may well choose approaches that will be more effective with their own students. The underlying idea is that there must be clear, formal support for the use of ALEKS.

One approach is to provide a certain number of points toward the final grade for each week that the student fulfills their required hours. It is advisable to reward each week, so that the student does not fall into the expectation that all of the required hours can be done at the end; consistency should be rewarded, along with total hours. If a student falls short of the specified hours during a particular week, that week is not rewarded, but neither is the “deficit” carried forward; the next week begins with a clean slate (the primary concern is regular use of the system; for this reason a surplus is also not carried forward). Proportional rewards can also be used; each hour spent has a point value, up to the required minimum.

In order to effectively monitor the students’ use, the instructor should check the hours on the “Learning progress since latest assessment” page or the “Time and Topic” report. This page can be printed out every week for record-keeping. In rare cases, students may try to fool ALEKS by logging on to their accounts and doing something else; this can

be seen when the number of items gained per hour is far too low. ALEKS will log the student off if there is no activity after a certain amount of time. Instructors can obtain a precise record of a student's actual work in ALEKS by viewing the student's Report ("Report for a particular student in this course (pie chart)"), under "Learning Log," or, better, the "Time and Topic" report.

The students' achievement in ALEKS (as opposed to their use of the system) may also be used as a component in their final grade. For information on how to do this, see Sec. 8.13.

8.4 Preparing Your Students [preparingstudents]

The following considerations may be useful in preparing your students to begin to use ALEKS.

Difficulty of Assessment Questions

The ALEKS Initial Assessment is always comprehensive, in order to achieve the highest accuracy and reliability. In the course of the assessment, some questions may be too easy or too difficult for some students. The students should be told to click the "I don't know" button if a question is completely unfamiliar to them; otherwise they should do their best to answer. As the assessment proceeds, the questions will focus more and more closely on the outer limits of the student's actual knowledge. In Learning Mode (following the assessment), students will be provided only material that they are prepared to learn.

Length of Assessments

The number of questions asked in an ALEKS assessment varies. Normally, an assessment in Math Prep for Accounting requires between 20 and 30 questions. Occasionally, the number of questions asked may be greater than this.

No Help in Assessments

Explain to the students that they will need paper and pencil for answering assessment questions, but that no help or collaboration whatsoever is permitted during assessment. If the teacher or anyone else helps the student during assessment, even just explaining or rephrasing a question, assessment results may be inaccurate and the student's learning in ALEKS may initially be hindered. Be sure students understand that the purpose of the Initial Assessment is to gain a precise, detailed understanding of what they know, so that in Learning Mode they are given material they are ready to learn. It is not a "test" to pass or fail, and they will not receive a grade on an ALEKS assessment (unless the instructor chooses to use assessments for grading).

8.5 Focused Instruction with ALEKS [focusedinstruction]

The features of the Instructor Module make it possible to prepare students for specific topics that they are going to work on, and to reinforce and expand on knowledge that students have recently acquired. This involves either guiding lectures or focused instruction to small groups of students based on data obtained from ALEKS. These are powerful features of ALEKS, and their use constitutes a proactive integration of ALEKS with the course structure.

The two kinds of “teaching opportunities” cued by ALEKS come from two types of information maintained by the system for students over the entire time that they use it: the set of items a student is “ready to learn” (or “outer fringe” of the student’s knowledge state), and the set of items most recently learned (“what students can do,” the “highest” topics in the student’s knowledge state, called the “inner fringe”). (See the **Instructor’s Manual** under “Inner and Outer Fringes of a Knowledge State,” in the chapter “Knowledge Spaces and the Theory Behind ALEKS”.) The items “ready to learn” are the topics a student may normally choose to work on in ALEKS; the items recently learned (“what a student can do”) are considered the least secure and most likely to need review or reinforcement. (These items can be reviewed by clicking the “Review” button.) When the students are logged on to ALEKS, these two types of information are used automatically to guide and manage their learning. The instructor, however, can also view the inner and outer fringes in a convenient format to plan focused instruction that will parallel, supplement, and enhance the individual work that their students are doing in ALEKS.

To find this information for a course, the instructor can enter the Instructor Module and select the course, then click on “Reports” and select the “ALEKS Pie” report. This report represents the average student in the given course, and displays the weaknesses and strengths of the course as a whole. The “Show” drop-down box can be used to filter the report by “Current Learning,” “Most Recent Assessment,” or “Initial Assessment.” Complete details on which topics students have mastered, not mastered, and are ready to learn in the course are available in the section below the pie chart and can be viewed by Objectives (if textbook integration or intermediate objectives are being used) or ALEKS Table of Contents.

Using the Average Report we can see a breakdown of student mastery for each topic, send messages directly to students, and view additional topics that a group of students is ready to learn. The purpose of this analysis is that the instructor may pick one or more topics from the list and schedule small-group sessions of focused instruction.

The following are examples that illustrate how these features may be used.

Example 1: Basic

On a Friday evening, the instructor sits down to plan lessons for the following week. He or she logs onto ALEKS, selects the name of a course in Math Prep for Accounting, selects “Reports”, and clicks “ALEKS Pie” to access the Average report. A pie chart appears showing the average profile of mastery in the course.

The “slice” of the pie chart for Whole Numbers is full to about 90 percent; the slices for Fractions, Decimals, and Proportions and Percents are filled much less, ranging between 20 and 40 percent. This indicates that lessons for the week may focus profitably on the most advanced Whole Numbers topics as well as on topics of moderate difficulty in Fractions, Decimals, and Proportions and Percents.

Example 2: Intermediate

On a weekend afternoon, the instructor logs on to ALEKS, selects the name of a course in Math Prep for Accounting, and then opens the “Average report (pie chart).” After a look at the pie chart, the instructor selects “Current Learning” from the “Show” drop-down box, and clicks “OK.” Next the instructor clicks on the “View all topics” toggle, in either the ALEKS tab or the Objectives tab, and when the list of topics appears, the instructor scans this list for items of particular difficulty. “Ordering Numbers with Exponents” has 16 students currently able to choose this topic from their pie charts. The instructor notes this topic down for class discussion early in the week. With the benefit of some timely preparation, the students can be expected to master this troublesome topic with little or no difficulty.

Example 3: Advanced

On a Monday morning, the instructor logs on to his or her ALEKS account, selects the name of a course in Math Prep for Accounting, and then opens the “Average report (pie chart).” After a look at the pie chart, the instructor selects “Current Learning” from the “Show” drop-down box, and clicks “OK.” Next the instructor clicks on the “View all topics” toggle, in either the ALEKS tab or the Objectives tab, and the list of topics appears, clearly showing what students have mastered, not mastered and are ready to learn. The experience and expertise of the instructor are used to plan with this information. Suppose that there is only time in the week’s schedule for two small group sessions. (The ALEKS class has only one hour in the lab, and ten minutes are set aside to speak with each small group; the remaining 40 minutes are for helping students in the lab.) The instructor will look over the topics with two questions in mind: which topics have the greatest numbers of students, and which are pedagogically most worth discussing.

For example, looking at the list of topics “Ready to learn,” the instructor sees “Solving a Linear Equation with Absolute Value: Problem Type 1.” The instructor knows from experience that students have difficulty with the concept, and that they are more successful with it if they have had a chance to review. This topic has 12 students out of 30 in the class. The instructor uses the message feature to send a note to these students, asking them to meet in the front of the room at the beginning of the lab; the students will receive this note the next time they log on to ALEKS, no later than the beginning of that lab.

Looking over the list of topics “Mastered,” the instructor sees “Marking a point in the coordinate plane,” with 10 students. Although the number of students is less than for other topics, this one seems to the instructor richer in its content of mathematical culture than the others; students who have just worked on this topic

are may be using the coordinate plane for the first time. Thus this is chosen as the second topic, and a second message is sent to these students, to meet at the front of the room, ten minutes into the lab.

8.6 Models of Classroom Integration [integration]

There are numerous ways in which ALEKS can be and is used in concrete educational situations.

1. Supervised Math Lab

Expert supervision can be provided for the students' use of ALEKS in regularly scheduled math lab periods, whether or not these are part of a conventional class structure. Students benefit from the direct coaching and assistance of qualified instructors in the course of their work with ALEKS.

2. Math Lab in Structured Course

The supervised math lab may be part of a structure of class meetings, combined with conventional and lecture-style classes. The instructor in such a setting need not gear the sequence of topics covered in classes in any way to what the students are doing in ALEKS; the students' independent work in ALEKS will increasingly benefit their performance on quizzes and tests, as well as their understanding of lectures. ALEKS is not designed to "teach to the test," although experience has shown that students' performance on comprehensive tests improves dramatically when they have worked with ALEKS over time.

3. Small-Group Instruction

The recommended use of ALEKS in a classroom setting makes use of the detailed analysis of individual student knowledge provided through the Course Report page to tailor the lectures to the skills of students.

4. Self-Paced Learning

In this scenario students may use the college computer lab on their own, with only informal supervision. ALEKS is used in this case much as it is for distance learning, except that students have the opportunity for closer consultation with the instructor.

5. Distance Learning

ALEKS is used by students who may never enter the physical classroom, or may enter only on a few occasions for orientation and supervised assessments. ALEKS provides a range of features for communication between instructor and student, as well as powerful facilities for the monitoring and evaluation of student work.

Regardless of which approach is used, you can derive more benefit from ALEKS though monitoring the students' use of ALEKS and communicating with them, whether in direct contact, by email, or by messages through the ALEKS system. As discussed

above, we recommend that a certain number of hours in ALEKS each week be required (Sec. 8.3); this should be made clear from the start as part of the published course syllabus and rewarded appropriately through the grading scheme. Students' progress in ALEKS should be recognized and reinforced early on; conversely, students who do not seem to make adequate progress should be contacted promptly.

The following sections of this chapter provide more information on these issues affecting the classroom use and integration of ALEKS.

8.7 Monitoring Student Use [monitoringuse]

In the day-to-day use of ALEKS by a class, a principal concern of the instructor is to monitor that students are using ALEKS regularly and for at least the required amount of time. The most convenient place to find this information is the "Time and Topic report for all students" (under "Reports"). Each student's name is displayed on this page along with the total number of hours that student has spent logged on to the system. There is also a breakdown of how much time the student has spent in ALEKS on a daily basis. Students can see this same breakdown of daily usage in their own accounts by using the "Report" link.

It is also important that critical assessments be supervised by the instructor, to ensure that valid results are received (Sec. 8.2).

8.8 Monitoring the Progress of a Course [monitoringcourseprogress]

The instructor can also use the bar graphs on the "Learning progress since latest assessment" page to see how close each student is to mastery of the subject matter. Keep in mind that the bar graphs displayed on this page show only the students' achievement as of their last assessment (in blue) and any progress made in the Learning Mode since that assessment (in green). For a more panoramic view of the progress made by a group, select the "Total progress" report. This displays the difference between the students' knowledge on their first and their most recent assessments.

To see each of the assessments for a given student, with that student's progress subsequent to each assessment in the Learning Mode, the instructor should view the page "Progress report for a particular student in this course" for the student.

8.9 Monitoring Individual Progress [monitoringindividualprogress]

On the page "Progress report for a particular student in this course" there is a line for each assessment taken by a particular student, with bar graphs showing mastery as of that assessment and subsequent progress made in the Learning Mode. The Initial

Assessment is shown in the bottom line, with later assessments “stacked” upward. By following progression from earlier to later assessments, the instructor can see very clearly how a student is progressing toward mastery of the subject matter.

Use caution in interpreting this information. Students vary widely both in the smoothness and in the speed with which they master material. Progress made in the Learning Mode (green bar) is not always immediately reflected in the student’s level of mastery on a subsequent assessment. Some students progress more quickly in Assessment Mode than in the Learning Mode. In such cases the “new” blue line is further ahead than the green line just below it. On the other hand, many students make faster progress in the Learning Mode than in assessment. In such cases the “new” blue line lags behind the green line below it. It is very common for a student to master the entire subject matter two or more times in the Learning Mode before that mastery is finally confirmed in an assessment. Part of the power of the ALEKS system is that it does not expect students to behave like machines, but makes allowance for individual differences.

NOTE. In cases where a student moves backward in his or her mastery, the instructor should contact the student. If the student did not take the assessment seriously enough, a new one can be requested.

8.10 Ordering Assessments [orderingassessments]

Following the Initial Assessment (which should be taken under the instructor’s supervision), the ALEKS system will automatically schedule other assessments as needed to guide the students’ progress. The instructor, however, can order an individual or group assessment at any time. It is a good practice for the instructor to schedule supervised assessments at regular intervals (midterm and end of the course), as “snapshots” of overall course achievement.

8.11 Independent Study and Distance Learning [independentstudy]

The ALEKS system is well suited to use in an independent study or distance learning context. ALEKS is self-contained and adaptable to any syllabus or course materials. Students using ALEKS under these circumstances know exactly what the course goals are, where they stand in relation to those goals, and where to find the instructional and practice tools to achieve them.

For the instructor administering an independent study or distance learning program, ALEKS solves nearly every problem of management, oversight, evaluation, and communication. All of the information needed to keep track of far-flung independent learners is at the instructor’s fingertips, through the features of the Instructor Module. The internal message system of ALEKS puts the instructor in constant touch with students, without dependence on telephone or email communication.

8.12 The ALEKS Knowledge Structure [structure]

Each ALEKS subject, such as Math Prep for Accounting, has a knowledge structure associated with it. The number of items comprised in a knowledge structure ranges roughly between 200 and 500 topics. A knowledge state is a subset of items which may correspond to the knowledge of an actual student (i.e., there may be a student who has mastered exactly those items, and no others). A knowledge structure is the family of all the knowledge states that we may encounter for a given subject.

An ALEKS structure affects virtually every aspect of ALEKS's functioning. In the ALEKS assessment mode it enables ALEKS to make inferences from student answers, keeping the ALEKS assessments brief but accurate.

The structure is also crucial in the ALEKS Learning Mode. Using the structure of a given course product, the system knows precisely which items are in the inner fringe and outer fringe of each of the knowledge states in ALEKS. The items in the outer fringe of a student's knowledge state are those items that the student is the most ready to learn next. (From a technical standpoint, an item is in the outer fringe of a state if adding that item to the state results in a feasible knowledge state.) These items are presented to the student in MyPie when the student moves the mouse pointer over the ALEKS pie chart. Similarly, an item in the inner fringe of a student's state is an item either recently learned or one whose mastery by the student might be shaky. (Technically, an item is in the inner fringe of a state if removing that item from the state results in another feasible knowledge state.) They are presented to the student when the student is having difficulty in the ALEKS Learning Mode and during ALEKS review.

An additional benefit of the proliferation of connections among items in ALEKS is its extreme flexibility from the students' viewpoint: for any particular topic, there is a vast number of possible approaches, or learning paths, which may lead students to mastery of that topic. This flexibility does not imply, however, that *any* order is possible. Each learning path leading to a particular topic must contain, at a minimum, the items which are "below" such topic in the ALEKS structure.

8.13 Learning Rates in ALEKS [learningratesinaleks]

ALEKS allows instructors to flexibly evaluate and interpret student learning. There are three criteria, which can be used in any combination: percentage of course goals mastered, total hours spent in ALEKS, and average items gained per hour of use. Each can be set to "Private," so that only the instructor sees the evaluations, to "Public," so that the instructor sees the evaluations for all students, and each student sees their own, or to "Disabled," so that no one sees them.

Instructions on how to access the learning rates feature can be found in the **Instructor's Manual** under "Assign Learning Rates," in the chapter "Advanced Instructor Module: Course Reports."

Any of these criteria that is set to “Public” will be seen by the students. For example, if the evaluation for percentage of course goals mastered is set to A for 90 percent, B for 80 percent, C for 70 percent, D for 60 percent, and Failure below that, the students will see these letters in their accounts as long as their percentage mastery is in the ranges given (i.e., D when it is between 60 and 69 percent). This will only make sense when the students are close to finishing the course, and may cause confusion if the grades are made “Public” before then.

The same proviso applies to the other kinds of evaluations available through ALEKS. The value of using these evaluations in the “Public” mode may be greatly enhanced if the instructor decides to set a new scale every week, or at other appropriate intervals. This might mean, for example, that A is set to 20 percent for the first week, to 25 percent for the second week, and so forth, with the other evaluations set accordingly. Such a procedure requires more work by the instructor, but it certainly gives the students a more meaningful frame of reference for their progress.

Some of the kinds of evaluations in ALEKS may be more useful for the instructor alone than for the students. Such evaluations should be set to “Private.” The evaluation based on average items gained per hour, for example, might be set to some minimum value like 1 (in an Algebra class requiring 1 topic of work in ALEKS per hour as a minimum). Now, the instructor would not want to send the message to the students that 1 items gained per hour is “Enough,” since many students in the course may be capable of much more. Conversely, a student whose progress falls below this rate might not be helped by the stern notation in their account that their progress is “Not enough”; the reasons for slow progress may be varied. At the same time, a student making slower progress than this should be brought to the instructor’s attention for intervention of some kind. If the evaluation is set to “Private,” the instructor will see the flag “Not enough” appearing next to the names of students whose progress is slower than this, on the Course Progress page, alerting them to the need for special attention.

Chapter 9

Knowledge Spaces and the Theory Behind ALEKS [theory]

9.1 History [history]

Knowledge Space Theory has been under development since 1983 by Professor Jean-Claude Falmagne, who is the Chairman and founder of ALEKS Corporation, and other scientists (especially, Jean-Paul Doignon from Belgium) in the United States and Europe.

ALEKS is the first computer system to embody Knowledge Space Theory for assessment and teaching.

9.2 Theory [spaces]

A complete exposition of Knowledge Space Theory is not intended here. The Bibliography contains a number of references for those interested in further details (Sec. 9.3). Knowledge Space Theory is expressed in a mathematical discipline often referred to as “Combinatorics.” What follows here is a brief, intuitive summary introducing certain fundamental terms employed in discussions of ALEKS.

9.2.1 Domain, Items, and Instances [domain]

An academic discipline such as Basic Math, Algebra, or Math Prep for Accounting is represented as a particular set of problems or questions that comprehensively embody the knowledge of the discipline. That set is called the **domain**, and the problems are called **items**. A symbolic representation of the domain of Basic Math uses dots standing for items (Fig. 9.1). One of the items, which might be entitled “Word problem with

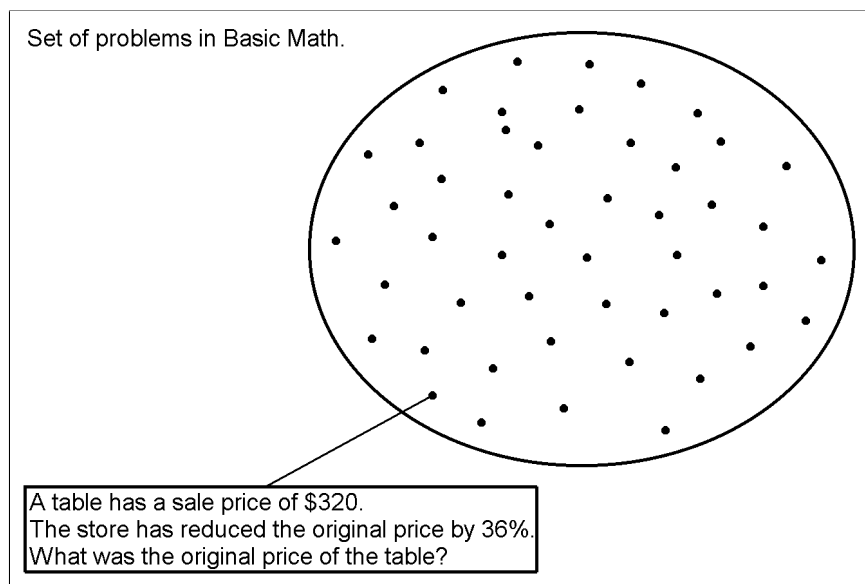


Figure 9.1: Domain of Basic Math [domain]

percentages,” is indicated by a line. The problem in the rectangle is an **instance** of that item.

Each item, or problem type, has at least dozens, more often hundreds or thousands of instances. Full mastery of the subject implies the ability to solve problems corresponding to all the items making up the domain.

Determining the set of items that make up the domain is the first step in constructing a “knowledge structure” for that domain. This is done by research in instructional materials and standards and systematic consultation with professionals. Substantial agreement is achieved among expert pedagogues on the choice and definition of items. The set of items finally arrived at and forming the domain must be comprehensive, that is, it must cover all the concepts that are included in the particular academic discipline.

9.2.2 Knowledge States [states]

The **knowledge state** of a student is represented by the set of items in the domain that he or she is capable of solving under ideal conditions (Fig. 9.2). This means that the student is not working under time pressure, is not upset in some way, etc. In reality, careless errors may arise. Also, the correct response to a question may occasionally be guessed by a subject lacking any real understanding of the question asked. (This will occur very rarely when using the ALEKS system, because multiple-choice answers are not used.) An individual’s knowledge state is not directly observable and has to be inferred from responses to questions.

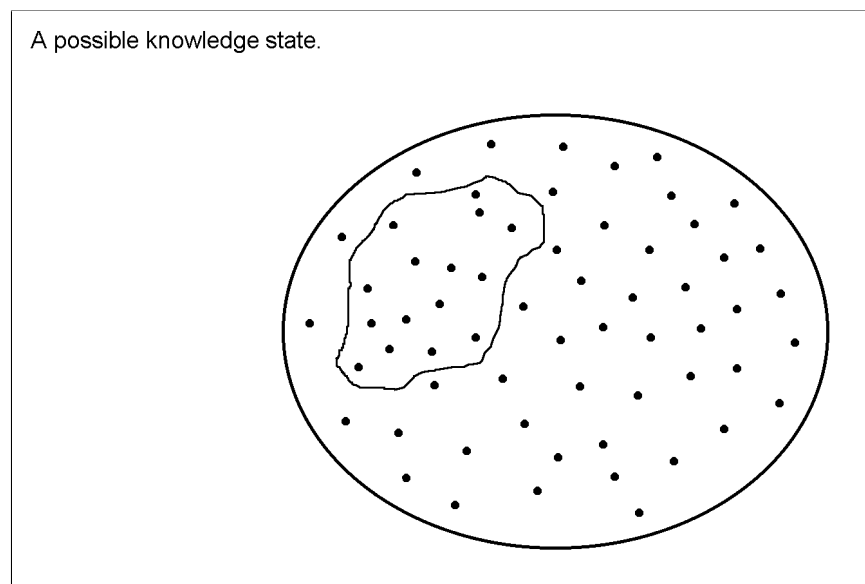


Figure 9.2: Knowledge State [state]

9.2.3 Knowledge Structures and Knowledge Spaces [structures]

It should be obvious that not all possible subsets of the domain are feasible knowledge states. For instance, every student having mastered “long division” would also have mastered “addition of decimal numbers.” Thus, there is no knowledge state containing the “long division” item that does not also contain the “addition of decimal numbers” item. The collection of all feasible knowledge states is referred to as the **knowledge structure**. The very large number of states for any product means that there are many possible ways of acquiring knowledge, i.e., many learning paths (Fig. 9.3). In the ALEKS knowledge structure there are literally billions of such learning paths. A “knowledge space” is a particular kind of knowledge structure.

As in many real-life applications, “noise” and errors of various sorts often creep in, which require the elaboration of a probabilistic theory. The ALEKS System is based on such a probabilistic theory, which makes it capable of recovering from errors. For instance, ALEKS is capable of deciding that a student has mastered an item, even though the student has actually made an error when presented with a problem instantiating this item. This is not mysterious: a sensible examiner in an oral exam, observing an error to a question about addition would nevertheless conclude that the student has mastered addition, for example, if that student had given evidence of skillful manipulation of fractions.

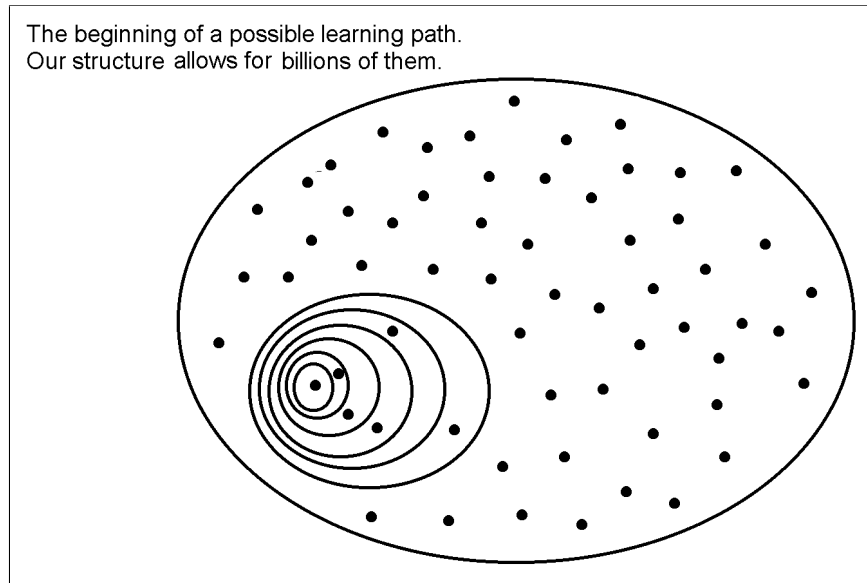


Figure 9.3: Learning Path [path]

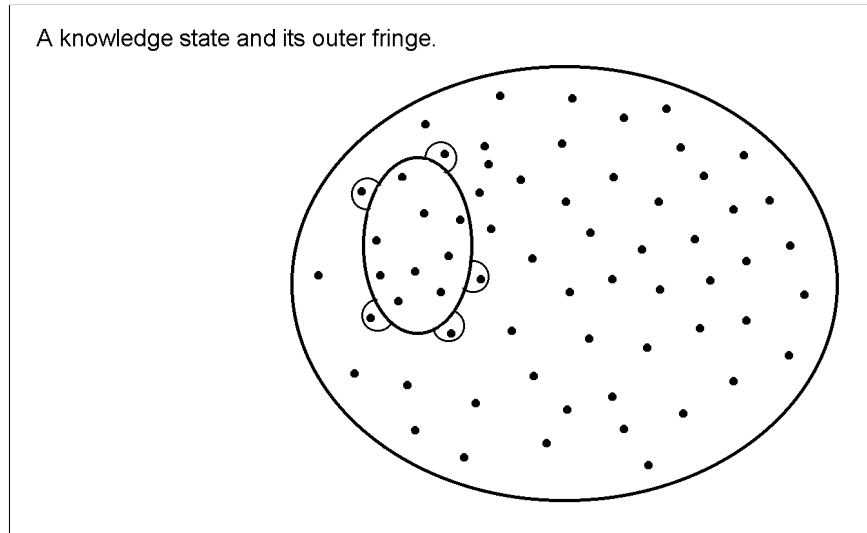


Figure 9.4: Outer Fringe of a Knowledge State [outerfringe]

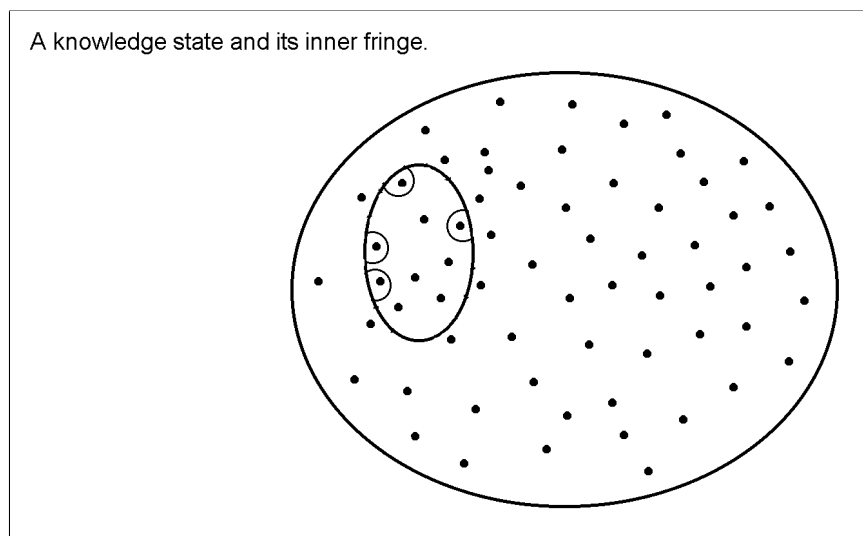


Figure 9.5: Inner Fringe of a Knowledge State [innerfringe]

9.2.4 Inner and Outer Fringes of a Knowledge State [fringes]

An item that has not yet been mastered by a student may not be immediately learnable by that student. Learning one or more prerequisite items may be necessary. Consider a student in a particular knowledge state \mathbf{K} . The set of all items that may be learned immediately by a student in that state \mathbf{K} is called the **outer fringe** of the state \mathbf{K} . The outer fringe of a state \mathbf{K} is defined as the set of all items, any one of which **may** be the next one learned. An item is in the outer fringe of the state \mathbf{K} if the addition of that item to the state \mathbf{K} forms a new, feasible knowledge state (Fig. 9.4). Typically, the outer fringe of a knowledge state will contain between one and several items.

Similarly, an item is in the inner fringe of a state \mathbf{K} if there is some other knowledge state to which that item may be added to form state \mathbf{K} (Fig. 9.5). The **inner fringe** of a state \mathbf{K} is thus defined as the set of all items, any one of which **may** have been the last one learned.

These two concepts of inner and outer fringes are used in powerful ways in the Learning Mode of the ALEKS system. For example, the system always offers a student problems to solve that are based on items in the outer fringe of his or her state. If ALEKS judges that a student is experiencing difficulties in learning some new item, ALEKS typically reviews the mastery of items in the inner fringe of the student's state that are also related to the new item to be learned.

9.2.5 Assessment [statesassessment]

How can ALEKS uncover, by efficient questioning, the particular knowledge state of a student? While the details of ALEKS's method for achieving such a goal are technical,

the guiding intuition is straightforward. At every moment of an assessment, ALEKS chooses a question to be “as informative as possible.” In our context, this means a question which the student has, in the system’s estimate, about a 50 percent chance of getting right. The student’s response (correct or false) determines a change in all the likelihood values: for instance, if the question involved manipulation of fractions, and the student’s response was correct, then all the knowledge states containing this item would have their likelihood values increased. The specific way the questions are chosen and the likelihood values altered makes it possible for ALEKS to pinpoint the student’s state in a relatively short time. In Math Prep for Accounting, for example, approximately 15–25 questions often suffice.

Finally, it should be noted that the assessment report given to students, instructors, and administrators is a very precise **summary** of the student’s knowledge state. If the structure is known, the outer fringe and inner fringe together completely define the student’s knowledge state. Internally, the system registers the student’s knowledge or non-knowledge of each item in the domain.

A more thorough but still accessible overview of Knowledge Space Theory is available on the ALEKS website: Cosyn, Doignon, Falmagne, “The Assessment of Knowledge, in Theory and Practice”:

http://www.aleks.com/about_aleks/Science_Behind_ALEKS.pdf

A comprehensive treatment of Knowledge Space Theory can be found in Doignon and Falmagne, **Learning Spaces** (Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2011).

A comprehensive scientific bibliography on Knowledge Spaces is maintained here:

<http://css.uni-graz.at/kst.php>

For a more selective bibliography, see the following section.

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Chapter 10

Frequently Asked Questions [ifaq]

10.1 General [ifaqgeneral]

General questions on ALEKS concern what it is, its purpose, and what it contains.

What is ALEKS?

ALEKS is an online educational software program based on a cycle of assessment and learning. ALEKS course products include Mathematics, Statistics, Accounting, Business, and Chemistry. By knowing exactly which concepts the student has mastered and which are new but within reach, ALEKS enables the student to work on those concepts the student is most ready to learn. ALEKS is a full-time automated tutor, including explanations, practice and feedback. ALEKS interacts closely with the student, continuously updating its precise map of the student's knowledge state. ALEKS combines the advantages of one-on-one instruction and evaluation with the convenience of being on-call, on your computer, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The cost of ALEKS is a small fraction of the cost of a human tutor.

What makes ALEKS different?

A great many important differences exist between ALEKS and other kinds of "educational software," including its finely individualized instructional features, easy access over the Internet, rigorous and comprehensive educational content, and full-featured course-management module for instructors and administrators.

A critical difference is the capacity of ALEKS for efficient, precise, comprehensive, and qualitative assessment. This not only makes it a valuable tool for monitoring educational progress, but also enables it to provide students with the material they are most able to learn at a particular time. Students will not be given material they have already mastered, or topics for which they have not yet demonstrated prerequisite knowledge.

ALEKS is a self-contained learning environment, with complete sets of practice and explanatory units needed for the subjects that it covers. The units may also

be referenced or linked to textbooks for extended treatment of concepts. There is an online student dictionary accessed by clicking on underlined terms (hypertext links), and a diagnostic feedback facility that, in many cases, is able to explain the nature of misunderstandings and errors made by students.

For instructors, ALEKS offers a complete administrative and monitoring facility through which individual and group progress can be checked, standards established, enrollment managed, and messages exchanged. ALEKS can be configured for use with diverse educational standards.

ALEKS is not a game or “edutainment.” It is an automated educational tool with robust, carefully-designed features for both learners and educators.

What are the parts or “modules” of ALEKS?

The principal “modules” of ALEKS are the **Assessment Mode**, in which student knowledge is rigorously assessed, the **Learning Mode**, where students work on mastering specific concepts, the **Instructor Module**, in which instructors and administrators are able to monitor student progress and carry out administrative functions, and the **Administrator Account**, which permits management and monitoring of an arbitrary number of separate institutions, such as those making up a multi-campus college system. There is also a Tutorial (which students take when first registering with the system), online help, a mathematical dictionary, graphic display of assessment results and learning progress, and many other features.

Why is ALEKS on the Internet?

ALEKS is available on the Internet so that a student who has registered with the system can use it from any suitable computer, in any location. Very little technical preparation is required. All you need is a self-installing, self-maintaining “plug-in” obtained directly from the ALEKS website. No disks, CD’s, peripherals, or backup facilities are required. All data is kept securely on the ALEKS Corporation servers.

10.2 Technical [ifaqtechnical]

The technical information needed to use ALEKS is minimal. These few questions are all that are likely to be asked, even in a large group of users.

What are the system requirements for using ALEKS?

[Sec. 3.2] Fig. 10.1 presents the technical requirements for ALEKS in summary form.

Note that any of the kinds of Internet connection (cable, ISDN, DSL, or wireless) that are typical in computer labs are adequate for use with ALEKS. If your computer lab has security safeguards in place, you will need the cooperation of your technology administrator to install the ALEKS plug-in.

Where can I get more information on ALEKS? How can I try out the system?

	PC	Macintosh
Operating System	Windows	MacOS 10.4+
Processor	Any	Any
RAM Memory	64+ MB	64+ MB
Browser	Explorer 7.0+, Firefox 3+, Chrome 4+	Safari 4+, Firefox 3+
Screen Resolution	1024x768	1024x768

Figure 10.1: System Requirements [ifaqtechnical]

The ALEKS website provides complete information on the ALEKS system, including a Quick Tour, Free Trial use, licensing, history and theory, and technical support.

<http://www.aleks.com>

10.3 Theory [ifaqtheory]

For those interested in looking beneath the surface, these questions concern the principles on which ALEKS is designed and constructed.

What is the theory behind ALEKS?

[Chapter 9] ALEKS is based on a field of Cognitive Science (Mathematical Psychology) called “Knowledge Spaces” (or “Learning Spaces”). The purpose of research in Knowledge Spaces is to model human knowledge in any subject, using mathematical tools such as Set Theory, Combinatorics, and Markovian Processes, so as to make possible fast and accurate assessment through interactive computer applications. There are numerous scientific publications in the field of Knowledge Spaces dating back to the early 1980’s. A recent, authoritative treatment (with Bibliography) is Doignon & Falmagne, **Learning Spaces** (Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2011).

What is an “item”?

[Sec. 9.2.1] In Knowledge Space theory, an “item” is a concept or skill to be learned, the mastery of which is captured by a “problem type” serving as the basis for specific assessment and practice problems. Thus the item “addition of two-digit numbers without carry” might produce the problem (instance) “What is 25 plus 11?”

What is a “domain”?

[Sec. 9.2.1] In Knowledge Space theory, a “domain” is the set of all items making up a particular subject matter, such as Math Prep for Accounting. A learner is considered to have mastered the domain when that learner can solve problems corresponding to all the items in the domain.

What is a “knowledge state”?

[Sec. 9.2.2] In Knowledge Space theory, a “knowledge state” is the set of items belonging to a domain that a learner has mastered at some point in time. We speak of knowledge states in relation to a particular learner and a particular domain. Obviously, a learner’s knowledge changes in time, and the goal of learning is that the knowledge state should eventually include (correspond to) the entire domain.

What is the “outer fringe” of a knowledge state?

[Sec. 9.2.4] In Knowledge Space theory, a learner’s “outer fringe” is the set of items, any one of which can be added to the current knowledge state to make a new, feasible knowledge state. These are the items that the student is considered most “ready to learn.” Progress is made from one state to another through one of the items in the first state’s “outer fringe.”

What is the “inner fringe” of a knowledge state?

[Sec. 9.2.4] In Knowledge Space theory, a learner’s “inner fringe” is the set of items, any one of which can be taken away from the current knowledge state to make a new, feasible knowledge state. These are the items that the student may have learned recently, and thus whose knowledge might need reinforcement.

What is a “knowledge structure”? What is a “knowledge space”?

[Sec. 9.2.3] In Knowledge Space theory, “knowledge structure” or “knowledge space” (the two concepts differ in a technical way) refers to the collection of feasible knowledge states for a particular domain. It is a key point that not all sets of items from the domain (subsets of the domain) are feasible knowledge states. For instance, in mathematics there can be no knowledge state containing the item “finding the square root of an integer” that does not contain the item “addition of two-digit numbers without carry,” since no one will master the first without having mastered the second.

How was the structure created?

The knowledge structures (or, briefly, “structures”) used by ALEKS are created by analysis of the subject matter and extensive querying of experts. When ALEKS assesses a student, it is actually searching the structure for knowledge states that match the student’s present competence.

What is the educational philosophy behind ALEKS?

The educational use of ALEKS is not tied to any particular theory of education or knowledge acquisition. A key insight underlying ALEKS is the existence of a vast multiplicity of diverse “learning paths” or sequences of topics by which a field can be mastered. Based on an inventory of knowledge states that numbers in the tens of thousands (for the subjects currently covered by ALEKS) the specialized tools of Knowledge Space theory make it possible for the system to accommodate literally billions of possible individual learning paths implied by the relations among states. ALEKS does not embody a particular philosophy of teaching mathematics; it is compatible with any pedagogical approach.

10.4 Assessments & Reports [ifaqassessreport]

Much of the power of ALEKS comes from its capacity for accurately and efficiently assessing the current state of a learner's knowledge.

What is an ALEKS assessment?

[**Chapter 4**] An assessment by the ALEKS system consists of a sequence of problems posed to the student. The answers are in the form of mathematical expressions and constructions produced by the system's input tools (no multiple choice). The student is encouraged to answer "I don't know" where appropriate. During an ALEKS assessment, the student is not told whether answers are correct or incorrect. The assessment is adaptive. Each question after the first is chosen on the basis of answers previously submitted. Assessment problems (like practice problems) are algorithmically generated, with random numerical values. The length of the assessment is variable, between 15 and 35 questions. There are no time constraints, but some assessments can take less than a half-hour and a few more than an hour and a half. Students taking an assessment need to have paper and pencil. Calculators are not permitted in some areas in ALEKS, but a basic calculator is part of ALEKS.

No help whatsoever should be given to students taking an assessment, not even rephrasing problems. Outside help can easily lead to false assessment results and hinder subsequent work in the ALEKS Learning Mode.

Students are always assessed when they first register with ALEKS. It is advisable that all assessments from which the instructor uses data for grading or a similar purpose take place under the instructor's supervision. At a minimum, the Initial Assessment should be supervised.

How does the ALEKS assessment work?

[**Sec. 9.2.5**] In assessing a student's knowledge, the system is in fact determining which of the feasible knowledge states for that subject correspond to the student's current knowledge. The assessment is probabilistic, so it is not fooled by odd careless errors. (Lucky guesses are very rare, because multiple choice answers are not used.) Likelihood values (values for the likelihood that the student is in a particular knowledge state) are spread out over the states belonging to the structure. With each correct answer, the likelihood of states containing the item for which a correct answer was given is raised and that of states not containing the item lowered. The reverse occurs for incorrect answers or "I don't know." At each step of the assessment, the system attempts to choose an item for which it estimates, based on current likelihood values, that the student has about a fifty-fifty chance of success; such questions are maximally informative. When the likelihood values of a few states are extremely high and those of all the rest are extremely low—in technical terms, when the **entropy** of the structure is lower than a certain threshold value—the assessment ends and results are produced.

If a student makes a careless error or lucky guess, this will appear inconsistent

with the general tendency of the student's responses, and the system will "probe" that area of knowledge until it is sure. For this reason, inconsistent assessments may require more questions.

How should I interpret the assessment report?

[Sec. 4.11] The results of an ALEKS assessment are shown in the form of a color-keyed pie chart. A pie chart corresponds to a subject matter (domain) or to the curriculum of a particular course. Each slice of the pie corresponds to a general topic. The degree to which the slice is filled in with solid color shows how close the student is to mastering that area.

An extremely important aspect of the pie chart is its indication of what a student is currently most "ready to learn" (that is, the "outer fringe" of the student's current knowledge state). These items are listed beneath the pie chart in an Assessment Report and are also given through the pie chart itself. When the mouse pointer is placed over a slice of the pie, a list expands out of the pie, showing the concepts that the student is most "ready to learn" in that part of the curriculum. Clicking on any of these concepts takes the student into the Learning Mode.

The pie chart is displayed following assessments, after a concept has been worked on in the Learning Mode, or when a student clicks on "MyPie" to change topics. At any given time, a student can only choose to work on concepts that the student is currently "ready to learn." This number may vary between two and a few dozen, depending on what part of the structure is involved.

10.5 Learning Mode [ifaqlearning]

Students spend by far the greatest part of their time in ALEKS in the Learning Mode. The features of the Learning Mode are designed to provide a maximum of support to the student's growing mastery of course materials.

What is the Learning Mode?

[Chapter 5] The Learning Mode in ALEKS contains features to help students practice and master specific mathematical concepts and skills. In the Learning Mode, students are always working on a specific concept that they have chosen and that, in the system's estimation, they are fully prepared to master. If the learner successfully solves an appropriate number of problems based on that concept, the system will tentatively determine that it has been mastered and offer a new choice of topics. If the student has difficulty, the system will attempt to diagnose and interpret the student's errors. It will also provide explanations of how to solve problems and definitions of mathematical terms. It may suggest the name of a classmate who can help. If the student is unable to master the concept right now, or if the student wishes to change topics, a new choice of topics will be offered. After a certain amount of time has been spent in the Learning Mode, or after a certain amount of progress has been made, the student will be reassessed automatically.

What is the relationship between the Assessment Mode and the Learning Mode in ALEKS?

The Assessment and Learning Modes work together in a cyclical fashion, beginning with the Initial Assessment. A student is assessed, and the results of the assessment serve as a basis for the student's entry into the Learning Mode (the student works on concepts that the assessment showed that student most "ready to learn"). After a certain time in the Learning Mode, during which the results of the previous assessment are tentatively updated according to whether the student masters or fails to master new concepts, the student is reassessed and the cycle begins again. In this sense, ALEKS is an interactive learning system guided and powered by ongoing diagnostic assessment.

10.6 Educational Use [ifaqeducational]

ALEKS also provides a full range of features for successful integration into a variety of teaching styles and course plans.

What is the best way to use ALEKS with my course?

The greatest factor in successful use of ALEKS is regular, structured use, with close monitoring of student progress by the instructor. We recommend scheduling regular lab sessions with ALEKS, totalling at least three hours per week, as part of your course requirements. Not every lab session need be supervised by the instructor, but the Initial Assessment should be. Any other interim and concluding assessments scheduled specially by the instructor normally should also be supervised.

There has been successful use of ALEKS in a very wide variety of contexts and structures, including independent study. ALEKS Corporation is happy to consult with instructors on the best way to use ALEKS with their students. Also, extensive materials on implementation strategies in ALEKS are available on the ALEKS website.

Can ALEKS be used with handicapped and learning-disability students? Is ALEKS a remedial tool?

ALEKS is designed to help all students who can read sufficiently to understand what is being displayed on the screen, and who can use a computer. It has been used successfully with students exhibiting a range of learning disabilities. Students with reading difficulties can also use it, provided that there is someone on hand to help them as needed. The system does not currently contain facilities for audio output.

What burden will ALEKS place on our computer lab and Lab Director/LAN Administrator?

Normally ALEKS requires very little support from local computer technicians, given the automatic installation and maintenance of the ALEKS plug-in. Most

of the time, however, the lab administrator will need to assist with installation in order to overcome security obstacles (college computer labs often prevent students from installing their own software). In some cases, the presence of a “firewall” or other security measures may require some action on the technician’s part for successful installation. Again, ALEKS Corporation stands ready to assist with problems of this nature.

Does ALEKS need to be used with a particular textbook or curriculum?

ALEKS is designed to be used with any syllabus, curriculum, or textbook. The system may also be referenced or linked to a textbook or online applications for particular courses. The fundamental idea of the ALEKS system is to allow students to pursue individualized paths to mastery of the subject matter. For this reason instructors may very commonly find their students learning material that has not yet been covered in the course. This should be regarded as a sign of the system’s effective use.

Does ALEKS have special features for educators?

[**Chapters 6, 7**] Students’ use of ALEKS and their progress toward mastery can be monitored using the facilities of the Instructor Module. The Instructor Module also enables instructors and administrators to establish the syllabi and standards used by ALEKS, to configure accounts, to find statistics on multi-campus college system use, and to exchange messages. An instructor or administrator who has been registered with ALEKS enters the Instructor Module immediately upon login.

How can I contact ALEKS Corporation Customer Support?

[**Sec. 11**] You can contact ALEKS Corporation using the information in Chapter 12 of this manual. Students should approach their instructor first with any questions or problems regarding the use of ALEKS. Questions the instructor cannot answer can be brought to our attention.

Chapter 11

Support [support]

NOTE. Troubleshooting information is found in Appendix A.9 of this Instructor's Manual. Most problems can be resolved using this brief reference.

Current information on ALEKS is available at the ALEKS website:

<http://www.aleks.com>

Technical support and consultation on the effective use of ALEKS is provided to educators by ALEKS Corporation. Please contact the support group via the web:

<http://support.aleks.com>

by telephone:

(714) 619-7090

or by fax:

(714) 245-7190

NOTE. We ask that students using ALEKS not contact us directly, but approach their instructors first. It is hoped that the information in this **Instructor's Manual** will enable instructors to answer many of their students' questions.

We also welcome any and all comments and feedback on ALEKS. Here is our mailing address:

ALEKS Corporation Customer Support
15460 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

Appendix A

ALEKS Student User's Guide [users]

A.1 Preface [uginintroduction]

Welcome to ALEKS, one of the most powerful educational tools available for learning mathematics.

ALEKS combines advanced learning technology with the flexibility of the Internet, and provides an interactive system with unmatched features and capabilities. ALEKS was developed with support from the National Science Foundation. It is based on a field of Mathematical Cognitive Science called “Knowledge Spaces,” which models human knowledge for precise assessment and efficient learning in interactive computer programs.

Based on your assessment results, ALEKS will understand what you know, what you don't know, and most importantly, what you are ready to learn next. ALEKS provides individualized, one-on-one instruction that fits your exact knowledge state and helps you select among the ideal topics to work on. That way you learn concepts in the order that's best for you. As you learn, ALEKS constantly challenges you and supplies extensive feedback on what you have accomplished.

Since ALEKS is available wherever you access the Internet, it is designed to fit your busy schedule. To get started immediately, you may refer to the Quick Start Instructions below. More detail is provided in the subsequent sections.

In addition, your instructor can assist you in registering with ALEKS and beginning to use it. ALEKS includes online instructions and feedback and is designed for use without help from a manual. If you need additional information, please refer to this booklet or contact ALEKS Customer Support.

NOTE. Two or more students cannot use the same ALEKS account. ALEKS will regard them as a single person and give incorrect guidance.

A.2 Quick Start Instructions [ugquickstart]

1. System Requirements

- (a) PCs must have at least 64 MB of RAM and Windows. Compatible browsers are Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher, Firefox 3 or higher, and Chrome 4 or higher.
- (b) PowerMacs or iMacs must have at least 64 MB of RAM and operating system Mac OS 10.4 or higher. Compatible browsers are Safari 4 or higher and Firefox 3 or higher.

2. Internet Access Requirements

- (a) ALEKS is used over the Internet. It functions well with a connection of at least 56K.

3. Java Installation

- (a) Java must be installed and enabled in order for ALEKS to function. For best performance, there should be a single installation of a recent version of Java.

4. The ALEKS Plug-in

- (a) The ALEKS plug-in is required for the use of ALEKS. It is normally installed as an automatic part of the registration or login process. The ALEKS plug-in can also be downloaded from the ALEKS website by clicking on "DOWNLOADS."

5. The ALEKS Tutorial

- (a) The ALEKS Tutorial shows how to input answers in ALEKS. Taking the time to learn this is important in order to use ALEKS efficiently.

6. Initial Assessment

- (a) Your first ALEKS assessment will determine what topics you already know, the topics that you don't yet know, and, most importantly, those you are ready to learn.
- (b) Here is some additional information about the assessment:
 - i. It consists of about 20-30 open-response questions (not multiple choice).
 - ii. It has no time limit. You may take breaks or stop the assessment and return to ALEKS at another time.
 - iii. You should have a pencil and paper with you in order to work through the problems.
- (c) You should not seek or receive any help during assessments. If you receive help, ALEKS will get a wrong idea of what you are most ready to learn, and will present you with material you are not ready to learn. This will hold up your progress in ALEKS.

- (d) You should do your best on all questions. Do not click the “I don’t know” button when answering a question unless you truly have no idea how to do the problem. When you click the “I don’t know” button ALEKS assumes that you don’t know how to do the problem type and possibly some of its prerequisite topics. Consequently, topics will be added to your pie chart.
- (e) You should **not** use your browser’s “Back” and “Forward” buttons while logged on to ALEKS. Doing so will not help you make progress and may cause temporary software errors.
- (f) ALEKS will not provide feedback when you are taking the Initial assessment in ALEKS. No messages will be displayed indicating whether you answered correctly or incorrectly during any of the assessment questions in ALEKS.

7. Assessment Results

- (a) Assessment results are presented in the form of a color-coded pie chart.
- (b) Slices of the pie chart correspond to parts of the syllabus.
- (c) The relative size of the slices reflects the importance of each topic area for the syllabus.
- (d) The darker part of each slice indicates the portion of the topics already mastered. The lighter part of each slice indicates the portion of topics still to be learned.
- (e) The topics that you are ready to learn will be listed as you place the mouse pointer over each slice.
- (f) Not all slices will contain available concepts at any given time. They may have been mastered already, or work may need to be done in other slices before they become available.
- (g) You may choose any topic listed and begin learning.

8. Learning Mode

- (a) Clicking on the “MyPie” icon, in the upper left corner of your screen, will display your pie chart and allow you work in ALEKS Learning Mode. Topics you are ready to learn will appear in the pie slices.
- (b) It is possible your ALEKS course will include chapters/objectives that should be completed by a specific date. The chapter/objective will include topics in your pie chart indicated by the white dotted lines in some or all of your pie slices. ALEKS will display a message under your pie chart indicating how many topics you have remaining in the chapter/objective and when it is due.

9. Guidelines for Effective Use

- (a) You should have pencil and paper ready for all assessments and for use in the Learning Mode.
- (b) Basic calculators should be used only when the ALEKS Calculator button is active. A basic calculator is part of ALEKS but is only made available for use when appropriate.

- (c) To maximize successful learning, ALEKS should be used regularly, and for at least three hours per week.
- (d) You will be given additional assessments each time you have learned about 20 topics or spent about 10 hours in ALEKS (since the previous assessment).

A.3 Registration and Installation [ugregistration]

In order to register as an ALEKS user, you need a **Student Access Code** (20 characters), which may be purchased through your campus bookstore, online as part of the ALEKS registration process, or in some other way. If this booklet was purchased through the bookstore, the **Student Access Code** may be inside its back cover. You also need a **Course Code** (10 characters) provided by your instructor. When you register with ALEKS, your name is entered into the database, and records of your progress are kept. If the ALEKS plug-in has not been installed on the computer being used for registration, it will be installed automatically as part of this procedure.

1. Go to the ALEKS website:

<http://www.aleks.com>

When entering this URL, pay careful attention to the spelling “aleks.”



Figure A.1: The ALEKS Website [website]

2. Click on “SIGN UP NOW!” on the left of the page, under the space for Registered Users (Fig. A.1).
3. At the beginning of Registration you will be asked for your **Course Code**. The Course Code is supplied by your instructor. Enter this in the spaces provided, on the **left-hand side** of the window, and click on “>>Continue” (Fig. A.2).

ALEKS[®] HOME

Teachers and instructors, find out how to [adopt or order](#) ALEKS for your class.

Students: [Sign Up](#)

Using ALEKS with a Class?

K-12 - Higher Education

Register here if you are a new student and need to use ALEKS with your class. To begin, enter your 10-character course code below. You should have received this code from your instructor.

Course code: - [what's this?](#)

[» Continue](#)

[I don't have a course code](#)

Using ALEKS on Your Own?

Parents - Students - Homeschoolers - Adult Continuing Educ. - Tutors

If you want to use ALEKS for yourself or a child, but are not required to use it with a class, click "Continue" to purchase ALEKS as a personal tutor.

When you subscribe, you'll also get a Master Account to monitor student progress through automated reports, and much more.

[» Continue](#)

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Figure A.2: Course Code [coursecode]

4. Next, ALEKS will check your Account Status. You will be asked if you have ever used ALEKS before. Check the appropriate response and click on “>>Continue.” If you have used ALEKS before, you will be prompted to enter in your ALEKS login name and password before moving on.
5. To continue your registration you will be asked for your **Student Access Code**. It may be on a sticker inside the back cover of this booklet, or can be purchased directly from ALEKS Corporation by using the link on this page (“purchase an access code online”). Enter the Student Access Code in the spaces provided and click on “>>Continue” (Fig. A.3).
6. Enter your personal information and choose a password. Supplying this information enables your site administrator to help you with problems more quickly. You will also be able to enter your Student ID number.
7. At the end of registration you will be given a Login Name. You will need the ALEKS Login Name and your password to return to ALEKS. You can change your Password at any time (Sec. A.6.5).
Your Login Name and Password can be typed with upper- or lower-case letters. Neither may contain spaces or punctuation. If you forget your Password, click on the link titled “Forgot your login info?” located underneath the Password field on the ALEKS home page.
8. When you enter your Login name and Password on the ALEKS home page, ALEKS will check to see if the ALEKS plug-in is installed. If you do not have a plug-in, one will be installed. Do not interrupt this process until a message appears saying

Figure A.3: Access Code [accesscode]

that the installation is complete. Then you will need to quit your Web browser (“Exit,” “Close,” or “Quit” under the “File” menu), open your Web browser again, and go back to the ALEKS website (use your Bookmark/Favorite).

A.4 Student Account Home [studentaccounthome]

After completing the registration process, you will be taken to the Student Account Home. The Student Account Home groups all ALEKS student accounts for a single student under the same umbrella account. This allows students to manage and add more ALEKS courses to their umbrella account rather than creating separate accounts for each ALEKS course. Students will also only need to remember one login name and password.

The Student Account Home lists all of your current and previous ALEKS courses, and includes options to sign up for new courses, switch courses, suspend courses, extend access to courses, and remove courses from the Student Account Home.

A.4.1 Account Management [accountmanagement]

When you log in to your ALEKS account, you will arrive at the Student Account Home main screen and have the following options available to you:

Account Settings

To access the account settings, you can click on your name in the upper right corner of the Student Account Home main screen. The account settings display information for both the



Figure A.4: Student Account Home main screen [studentaccounthomemain]

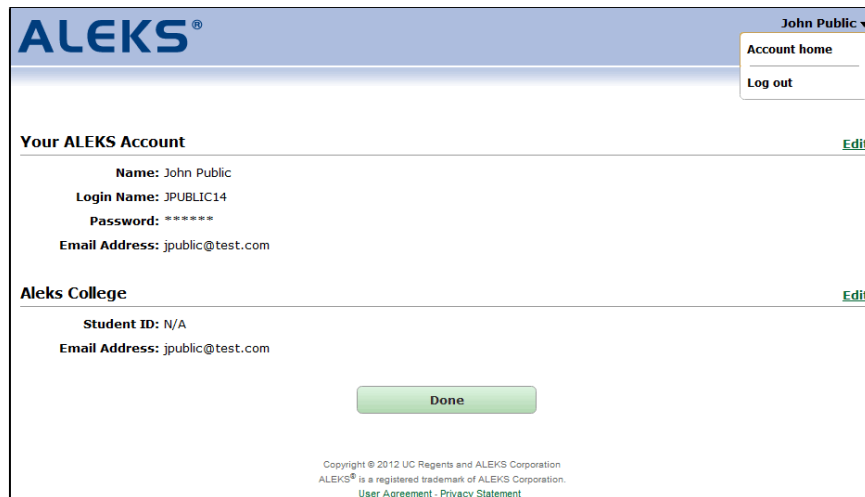


Figure A.5: Student Account Home settings [studentaccounthomesettings]

umbrella account and the college that you attend. This information includes your name, the login name for the umbrella account, the account password (encrypted), and the email address linked to the account. You can edit certain entries simply by clicking on the “Edit” link to the right. To return to the main screen, click on the “Done” button.

Adding a New Course

You can add a new course by clicking on the “Sign up for a new class” button (Fig. A.4). You will be prompted to enter in the course code for the new course and then purchase a new access code. Once the new course has been added, it will be displayed in the ACTIVE section on the Student Account Home main page.

Active Courses

All courses in which you have an active account will be listed here. You will see the name of the course, the name of the instructor, the date you last logged in to the account, and the date your access to the course will expire. Additional information can be accessed by clicking on the “Show more” link, including the course code, the reference name for the account, the date the account was started, the amount of time spent in the course, and the current level of progress.

Inactive Courses

The INACTIVE section will display a list of your courses that are no longer active. The same course information that is displayed in the ACTIVE courses is available here.

Accessing a Course

You can access an active course by clicking on the course name. You will be taken to your pie chart for that course and will be able to work on topics. To return to the Student Account Home main screen, you can click on your name in the upper right corner and select the “Account home” option. To completely log out, choose the “Log out” option after clicking on your name.

A.4.2 Course Management [coursemanagement]

ACTIVE Course Options

The following options are available for ACTIVE courses by clicking on the Actions button:

Switch to a new class. You can switch to a new course by entering in a new course code.

Suspend Access to this Course. This option will only appear when your subscription meets the eligibility requirements for suspension (Sec. A.4.4). Once suspended, an account appears under the ON-HOLD section.

Extend Access to this Course. You can extend access to your course by selecting the “Extend” option and entering a new 20-character access code.

ON-HOLD Course Options

The following options are available for ON-HOLD courses by clicking on the Actions button:

Reactivate Accounts. You can click on the Reactivate button when you are ready to reactivate a course that was suspended or placed on hold by a leave of absence (Sec. A.4.4 and Sec. A.4.5).

INACTIVE Course Options

The following options are available for INACTIVE courses by clicking on the Actions button:

Download Progress (PDF). This allows you to view a progress report for an inactive course.

Renew access to this course. This option allows you to renew access to an account by entering in a new 20-character access code.

Delete from my account. Inactive course accounts may be deleted and will no longer be displayed in the Student Account Home.

A.4.3 Switching to a New Course [switchingtoanewcourse]

If you need to move an account into a new course, ALEKS will behave differently depending on when you make the switch.

If you switch into a new course within 15 days of enrollment:

- Your new course will appear in the ACTIVE section
- Your old course will no longer appear (not even in the INACTIVE section)
- Any progress you made in the old course will not be retained, unless you are switching to a course using the same ALEKS course product
- If you switch into a different ALEKS course, you will be required to take another Initial Assessment

If you switch into a new course after 15 days of enrollment:

- Your new course will appear in the ACTIVE section
- Your old course will appear in the INACTIVE section
- If you are switching into a course using the same ALEKS course product, your progress will be carried over
- If you are switching into a different ALEKS course, you will be required to take a new Initial Assessment

A.4.4 Suspend Account [suspend]

This feature is intended to provide additional flexibility in the student's access to an already purchased subscription with ALEKS. The "Suspend access to this class" feature is used when a student has already purchased an access code and registered with ALEKS,

but then decides to drop the course with the intention of taking it again at the next opportunity.

This feature can be used within a limited time after the student activates their account.

- 6-week access codes can be suspended within 7 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 5 hours of use, whichever comes first.
- 11-week access codes can be suspended within 14 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 8 hours of use, whichever comes first.
- 18-week, 2-semester, 3-quarter, and 52-week access codes can be suspended within 30 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 10 hours of use, whichever comes first.

To suspend access to their class, students choose the action “Suspend access to this class” from the Actions drop-down menu.

After students select this option, they will be asked to confirm whether or not they wish to suspend the account. Once this feature has been activated, the system will suspend the account for a period of time equal to the length of the access code they purchased (6 weeks, 11, weeks, 18 weeks, etc.). At the end of this period the account will be reactivated automatically, and its time will begin to run. Once the account is reactivated, the student will have the full subscription length originally purchased.

Cancel Suspension. Should the student suspend their account and then need it to be reactivated, they will need to contact ALEKS Customer Support. If the suspension is cancelled, the time remaining for the access code will be recalculated from the original start date. Note that the Suspend feature can only be used once per account.

A.4.5 Leave of Absence [leave]

In contrast to the Suspend feature, the Leave of Absence feature applies only to 2-semester (40 week), 3-quarter (also 40 weeks), and 52-week access codes; it takes effect automatically after a certain number of weeks have passed since the access code was activated.

First notification. 20 weeks after the access code was used to activate the account, students will see a warning message informing them that their first 21 weeks of use will expire on a specified date. The leave will begin automatically 21 weeks after the account is activated.

Second notification. When students log in after the 21st week, they will see another message informing them that the account is on hold, and the date the account will automatically resume, if not manually reactivated.

If students choose to resume using the account prior to the specified automatic reactivation date, they will be asked to confirm the reactivation. Once confirmed, students will be given access for the appropriate length of time remaining on the access code.

A.5 Tutorial [ugtutorial]

The screenshot shows the ALEKS Answer Editor interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HELP, WORKSHEET, INBOX, REPORT, and OPTIONS. Below this is a secondary bar with icons for MyPie, Review, Dictionary, Calculator, Homework, Gradebook, and Calendar. The main content area contains the following text:

Sometimes, you will need to enter more complicated answers. As practice, enter the expression

$$\sqrt{\frac{5}{8}} \times 3$$

Click on the "Square root" icon. Then, click on the "Fraction" icon.

Below the text is an empty input box with a blue cursor. To the right of the input box is a toolbar with the following icons:

<input type="checkbox"/> $\sqrt{\quad}$	<input type="checkbox"/> $\frac{\square}{\square}$	<input type="checkbox"/> $\square \frac{\square}{\square}$
Square root	Fraction	Mixed number
<input type="checkbox"/> \times <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> \square^{\square}	<input type="checkbox"/> %
Times	Exponent	Percent
Clear		Undo

Now, fill in the empty blue boxes with 5 and 8. (You can use the arrow keys or the "tab" key to move from one to another, or you can click on each box one at a time with your mouse.)

Then, click to the right of the square root sign (or press the "tab" key twice). Finally, click on the "Times" icon followed by 3. You could also use * (the "star" key on your keyboard) to enter the "×" sign.

Note: You can also first enter the fraction, then drag the mouse to select it, and finally click on the "Square root" icon.

Figure A.6: The Answer Editor (Tutorial) [tutorial]

ALEKS avoids multiple-choice questions. Most answers are complete mathematical expressions and constructions. After Registration, the ALEKS Tutorial will teach you how to enter your answers in ALEKS (Fig. A.6). There is plenty of feedback to help you complete it successfully. The Tutorial is not intended to teach mathematics. It just trains you to use the ALEKS input tool (called the "Answer Editor"). Online help is also available while you are using ALEKS; just click the "Help" button, which gives you access to the sections of the Tutorial.

A.6 Assessments and Learning [ugassessmentsandlearningmode]

A.6.1 Assessments [ugassessments]

Instruction through ALEKS is guided by precise understanding of your knowledge of the subject. This information is obtained by assessments in which ALEKS asks you to solve a series of problems. (ALEKS's estimate of your knowledge is also updated when you make progress in the Learning Mode.) Your first assessment occurs immediately after the Tutorial.

NOTE. Your instructor may require that the first assessment be taken under supervision. **Don't try to begin your Initial Assessment at home until you find out where your instructor wants you to take it.** Additional assessments may be scheduled for you by the instructor. These may or may not need to be supervised, depending

on the instructor's preference. ALEKS also prompts automatic re-assessments when you have spent a certain amount of time in ALEKS or have made a certain amount of progress.

A.6.2 Results [ugresults]

Assessment results are presented in the form of a color-coded pie chart. Slices of the pie chart correspond to parts of the syllabus. The solidly colored part of a slice indicates how close you are to mastering that part of the syllabus; the lighter portion represents the material you have left to master.

A.6.3 Learning Mode [uglearning]

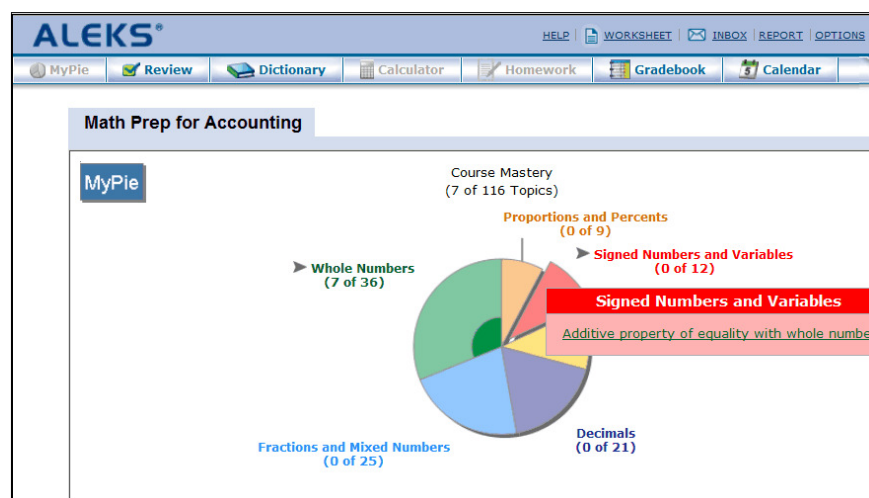


Figure A.7: Assessment Report [report]

Following the presentation of assessment results, ALEKS will introduce you to a pie chart navigation tool (“MyPie”) (Fig. A.7). By placing the mouse pointer over slices of the pie, you can see which concepts you are now most ready to learn. Not all slices will contain concepts at any given time. They may have been mastered already, or work may need to be done in other slices before they become available. The concept you click on becomes your entry into the Learning Mode. ALEKS will help you to master that concept and “add it to your pie.”

A.6.4 Progress in the Learning Mode [ugprogress]

In the Learning Mode, you are given problems based on the chosen topic. Additionally, you have access to explanations of how to solve the particular kind of problem and to

a dictionary of concepts. Underlined terms are links to the dictionary. Click on any term to get a complete definition. ALEKS will require a number of correct answers before it assumes that you have mastered the concept. When the topic is mastered, ALEKS will add the topic to your pie. At that point, a revised pie chart will be shown reflecting your new knowledge. You will be able to choose a new concept to begin. If you make mistakes, more correct answers may be required. If you tire of the topic and wish to choose another, you can click on “MyPie” near the top of the window. If you make repeated errors on a concept, the system will conclude that the concept was not mastered, and will offer you a new choice of other concepts.

A.6.5 Additional Features [ugfeatures]

All buttons described below are available in the Learning Mode. In the Assessment Mode, certain buttons may be temporarily inactive.

HELP

For online help with the use of the Answer Editor, click “Help.”

WORKSHEET

To print out an individualized homework sheet based on your most recent work in ALEKS, use the “Worksheet” button.

INBOX

Your instructor can send you messages via ALEKS. You see new messages when you log on. You can also check for messages by clicking on “Inbox” (Sec. A.6.6). ALEKS provides a way to message your instructor a specific problem you are working on in ALEKS. Your instructor can choose to let you reply to messages as well.

REPORT

Any time you wish to look at your assessment reports, click on “Report.” Choose any date from the drop-down menu and click “OK.”

OPTIONS

This page gives you the options to participate in “Ask a Friend” or forward your ALEKS messages to your email account. This page also shows the total number of hours you have spent using ALEKS.

RESOURCES

To access any special resources posted to your course by your instructor, click on the “Resources” button.

Log out

To end your ALEKS session and exit, click on your name (top right), and select “Log out” from the drop-down menu.

MyPie

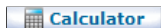
Clicking “MyPie” gives you a pie chart summarizing your current mastery. You can use this pie chart to choose a new concept.



To review past material, use the “Review” button.



To search the online dictionary, click “Dictionary.” You can also click on hyper-linked terms in the ALEKS interface to access the Dictionary.



To access the online ALEKS Calculator, use the Calculator button. This button will be inactive for material where the use of a calculator is not appropriate. When this button is inactive, do not use any calculator.



To see the results of assignments you have taken in ALEKS or to begin an assignment assigned to you by your instructor, use the “Assignments” button. If assignments are currently available, you will see an orange burst on the “Assignments” button.



To access the Gradebook for your course, click on the “Gradebook” button.



To access the Calendar for your course, click on the “Calendar” button.

A.6.6 ALEKS Inbox [uginbox]

The Inbox allows you to send messages to your instructor if you need assistance with a topic or problem in ALEKS. To compose a message, click “Compose.” There is an option to include mathematical notation in your messages.

To include mathematical notation and illustrations:

1. Click the “math” symbol at the right end of the tool bar. This switches you to the “Enhanced message editor,” with a robust set of math input tools.
2. Click on the “Graphs” tab for graphing tools, or on “Algebra,” “Trig,” “Matrix,” or “Stat” for symbolism specific to these areas.

While working in the Learning Mode, you can message a specific problem type to your instructor for assistance. This will include a link in the message, showing a screenshot of the practice problem that you see on your screen.

To attach a specific problem, make sure the practice problem is still on the screen, then:

1. Click on the “Inbox” link. This will take you into the ALEKS Message Center.
2. Click on the “Compose” button.
3. Below the body message section, check the box next to “Attach Page.”
4. Click on the “Send” button to send the message.

You also have an option to include attachments in your messages. The attachments can be up to 2MB in size.

A.7 Guidelines for Effective Use [ugguidelines]

Please take note of the following important suggestions for successful use of ALEKS.

Supplementary Materials

You should have pencil and paper ready for all assessments and for use in the Learning Mode. Basic calculators should be used only when you are instructed to do so. (A basic calculator is part of ALEKS.)

Assessments

You should not ask for any help during assessments. Even explanations or rephrasing of problems are not permitted. If you receive help, ALEKS will get a wrong idea of what you are most ready to learn, and this will hold up your progress. If you are sure you don't know the answer, click "I don't know."

Learning Mode

You should learn to use the special features of the Learning Mode, especially the explanations and the dictionary. A button marked "Ask a Friend" may also appear from time to time. Clicking on this button will prompt ALEKS to suggest the name of a classmate who has recently mastered the concept.

Review

Whenever ALEKS suggests topics for you to review, you should review them. Spending a few minutes daily on such review will help you retain what you have learned.

Regular Use

Nothing is more important to your progress than regular use of ALEKS. Three hours per week is a recommended minimum.

Put ALEKS into your weekly schedule and stick to it!

A.8 Frequently Asked Questions [sfaq]

For further information on any of these questions, follow the references provided to other sections of this Guide.

What are the rules for taking an assessment in ALEKS?

[Sec. A.7] You must have paper and pencil when taking an assessment in ALEKS. A basic calculator should be used only when you are instructed to do so. A basic calculator is part of ALEKS. No help whatsoever is permitted, not even rephrasing a problem.

Cheating is not an issue, since each student is given different problem-types in different sequences. Even if, by chance, two students sitting next to one another were to get the same problem-type at the same time, the actual problems would almost certainly have different numerical values and require different answers.

During the assessment, you will not be given feedback about your answers. **The assessment is not a test.** Its main purpose is to determine what you are most ready to learn and help you make the best progress possible toward mastery.

How do I add concepts to my pie?

[Sec. A.6.4] You fill in your pie and achieve mastery in the subject matter by working in the Learning Mode on concepts and skills that the assessment has determined you are most “ready to learn.” When you master a concept in the Learning Mode by successfully solving an appropriate number of problems, you will see that your pie chart has been changed by the addition of that concept. The goal is to fill the pie in completely.

Why is it that I mastered all the concepts in the Learning Mode, but my assessment still says I have concepts to learn?

In the Learning Mode, you are always working on one concept at a time, whereas assessments are cumulative and evaluate you on everything in the given subject matter. It may be more difficult to show mastery of concepts you have recently worked on, when you are being quizzed on many different topics at the same time. For this reason, your assessment results may not exactly match what you had mastered in the Learning Mode. This is normal and simply means that you should keep working in the system. (Sometimes the opposite also occurs, and progress in the assessment turns out to be faster than in the Learning Mode.)

Why doesn't my pie chart show any concepts from a slice if I haven't filled in that slice yet?

[Sec. A.6.3] You are completely “ready to learn” a set of concepts or skills when you have mastered all the prerequisite concepts or skills that are required. For example, in order to learn “addition of two-digit numbers with carry” you might have to first learn “addition of two-digit numbers without carry” and nothing else. Your pie chart will not offer you concepts to work on if you are not ideally ready to begin learning them, that is, if they have prerequisites you have not yet mastered. For this reason, your pie chart may show that you have mastered only 8 out of 10 concepts for a particular slice of the pie (a particular part of the curriculum), but the pie chart says you have no concepts available from that slice to work on. This means that the concepts left to master have prerequisites in other areas of the curriculum that you must master first. Keep working in the other slices, and eventually the concepts in that slice will “open up.”

How can I best use the Learning Mode to help me learn?

[Sec. A.6.4] In the Learning Mode, you should do your best to solve the problems that are offered to you. You should not change topics casually or stop before the system tells you that you are done or suggests choosing another concept.

The Learning Mode will always tell you if your answer is correct or not. In many cases it will provide information on the kind of error you may have made. You should pay attention to this feedback and be sure to understand it.

At the bottom of the Explanation page you have the “Practice” button, and sometimes other options for more detailed explanations and help. The Explanation page may also contain a link or reference to a textbook used with the course. If you click the “Practice” button following an explanation, you are offered a different problem of the same type, not the one whose solution was explained. In order to master the concept and add it to your pie, you must successfully solve a certain number of practice problems. If you wish to choose a new concept, you can click the “MyPie” button on the ALEKS menu bar.

You should **not** use your browser’s “Back” and “Forward” buttons while logged on to ALEKS. Doing so will not help you make progress and may cause temporary software errors.

Keep in mind that ALEKS is always giving you material that, in its estimation, you are ideally ready to learn. It does not offer material you have already mastered, except in the Review mode. To go back to concepts you have already worked on, click the “Review” button on the ALEKS menu bar.

How does ALEKS create problems?

ALEKS creates problems in both Assessment and Learning Mode by means of computer algorithms, based on the definition of a particular concept or skill to be mastered. Thus, a particular concept or problem-type may serve as the basis for a very large number of specific problems, each with different numerical values and sometimes (as in application problems) differing in other ways as well.

Why is ALEKS giving me a new assessment?

[Sec. A.6.1] New assessments may be prompted automatically by ALEKS when you have spent sufficient time in the Learning Mode or when you have made adequate progress. Your instructor may also request an assessment for you personally, or for everyone in the course. In this case it may be stipulated that the assessment must be taken at school. (If you attempt to work at home when an assessment has been ordered to be done at school, ALEKS will deny access and tell you that you need to log on from school.)

Why do I need to take the Tutorial to use ALEKS?

[Sec. A.5] The Tutorial is a brief interactive training program that teaches you to use the ALEKS input tools, or “Answer Editor.” ALEKS requires that answers be given in the form of numbers, mathematical expressions and geometrical and other constructions. The Answer Editor is a flexible set of tools enabling you to provide such answers. Although the Answer Editor is easy to use, the Tutorial will make sure you are completely proficient with it before beginning the ALEKS system. The Tutorial guides you through every step of learning to use the Answer Editor.

What can I do if I make a mistake entering an answer?

If you make an error entering an answer with the Answer Editor, you should click on “Undo” to go back one step, or on “Clear” to start over. You can also use the “Backspace” key on your keyboard in the usual way.

NOTE. You cannot use “Undo” or the “Back” button on your browser to go back if you have submitted an answer by clicking on “Next.” If you realize that the answer you submitted is incorrect, you should not be concerned; the system will most likely recognize this as a careless error based on your other answers and make allowances for it.

What are the icon buttons for?

They are used to enter mathematical symbols and to create forms for mathematical expressions. In some cases the keyboard equivalents for icon buttons can be used.

How do I get help while using ALEKS?

[Sec. A.6.5] You can get help using the Answer Editor by clicking the “Help” button on the ALEKS menu bar.

Can my instructor or friend help me (or can I use a calculator) in the Learning Mode?

[Sec. A.7] Help and collaboration are allowed in the Learning Mode. Keep in mind, however, that if you get too much help, the system will start giving you problems that you are not prepared to solve.

You need paper and pencil for the Learning Mode, just as you did for the assessment. ALEKS provides a calculator when appropriate; when the Calculator button is active, the use of the calculator is permitted.

Why are some of the words I see hyperlinked?

[Sec. A.6.5] Underlined words in the Learning Mode are links to the online Dictionary. You can click on any hyperlinked word to see its definition. You can also access the Dictionary by clicking the “Dictionary” button on the ALEKS menu bar. The Dictionary is not available during assessment.

Note that the Dictionary is opened in a new window. When you are finished reading the definition, you can close or minimize the window, and you will see the previous screen.

What is the “Ask a Friend” button for?

[Sec. A.7] The “Ask a Friend” button sometimes appears when you are having difficulty with a particular concept. When you click on the button, the system suggests the name of a classmate who has recently mastered the concept and may be able to help you.

How can I change my Password?

[Sec. A.4.1] You can change your Password by clicking your name in the upper right corner of your screen, selecting the “Account Settings” option followed by the Edit link.

How can I review material I have already worked on?

[Sec. A.6.5] You can click on the “Review” button to work on material you have already spent time on.

How can I choose a new topic to work on?

[Sec. A.6.5] To see your current pie chart and choose a new concept in the Learning Mode, click on “MyPie” (on the ALEKS menu bar), move around on the pie, and choose a new concept in the Learning Mode.

How can I print something in ALEKS?

[Sec. A.9] To print the contents of the screen, you can click on the “Print” icon in the upper part of the ALEKS window. This produces a new, printable window (the ALEKS display is not normally printable). Depending on your browser, you may also have to click the browser’s “Print” button. When you are done, you can close the new window.

What should I do if it’s taking too long for a new page to load (or if the program freezes)?

[Sec. A.9] It shouldn’t take more than a few seconds for ALEKS to respond when you click on any button. If you experience delay, freezing, or crashing, you can click your browser’s “Reload” or “Refresh” button. If this doesn’t work, you can close your browser and restart it. In extreme cases, use Ctrl-Alt-Delete (Cmd-Opt-Esc on Macintosh) and end the task. You will come back to the exact place you left off when you log back on to ALEKS.

How do I exit the ALEKS program?

To leave ALEKS, you can click your name (top right) and select “Log out” or simply close your browser. ALEKS always remembers where you left off and brings you back to that place.

What if I have a question or problem using ALEKS?

If you have a question or problem using ALEKS that is not answered here, please contact your instructor. Your instructor has been provided with extensive information on the operation of ALEKS and should be able to answer almost any question you may have.

What if I forget my Login Name or Password?

If you forget your Login Name or Password, you can use the link on the ALEKS home page marked “Forgot your login info?” If you entered an email address at registration time and you remember your Login Name, a link to reset your password will be sent to you by email. Otherwise, please contact your instructor.

How do I extend or renew my ALEKS account?

To extend your account, wait for it to actually expire. Your records and progress will not be lost. Obtain the correct Course Code from your instructor. You will also need to purchase a 20-character Student Access Code to renew your registration (this can be done online at the time of renewal). When your account expires, you will be unable to access your account; instead, you will get a message indicating that the account has expired. On this page, click on the **left-hand** button. (Do **not** use the right-hand button.) Enter the 10-character Course Code and other information as prompted. You will now be able to continue using your ALEKS account.

A.9 Troubleshooting [trouble]

Difficulties in using ALEKS can often be resolved by following the suggestions given in this section.

Login Not Successful

Be careful to type your Login Name and Password correctly, with no spaces or punctuation. If you forget your Login Name or Password, you can use the link on the ALEKS home page marked “Forgot your login info?” If you entered an email address at registration time and you remember your Login Name, a link to reset your password will be sent to you by email. Otherwise, please contact your instructor.

Mixed Number Difficulties

Mixed numbers **must** be entered using the Mixed Number icon, **not** by entering the whole part and then using the Fraction icon.

Freezing and Slow Response

If you are logged on to ALEKS and the program is either not responding or taking too long to load a new page, try the following:

1. Click on your browser’s “Reload” (or “Refresh”) button;
2. Close the browser and log on again (the system will bring you back to where you left off); if you cannot close the browser, use Ctrl-Alt-Delete (PC) or Cmd-Opt-Esc (Macintosh) and end the task (or reboot if necessary).

Open applications, other than the web browser that you are using to access ALEKS, are another cause of slowness. Closing these applications may correct the problem.

If slowness persists, it is most likely due to a problem in the local network. Bring this to the attention of your instructor.

Lengthy Assessment

It is not possible to know exactly how many questions will be asked in an assessment. The number of questions asked does not reflect your knowledge of the subject matter.

Loss of topics from Pie Chart

You may observe a loss of concepts in your pie chart following an assessment. This is not a malfunction in the system, but results from errors made by you on material you had previously mastered. Don’t worry: that is the way the system works. In particular, it is not unusual to have a “bad” assessment, one that, for external reasons (distractions, etc.), does not reflect your actual knowledge. ALEKS will quickly bring you back to where you belong.

Printing Problems

To print ALEKS output (for instance, the pie chart Report) you must press the ALEKS “Print” button (on the ALEKS menu bar). This opens a new browser

window containing the contents of the previous window in the form of a “Print Preview.” When this page has been printed, it should be closed to return to the normal ALEKS interface.

Appendix B

Syllabi in ALEKS [domains]

B.1 Math Prep. for Accounting [finac]

Whole Numbers

arith066 Expanded form
arith028 Numeral translation: Problem type 1
arith060 Numeral translation: Problem type 2
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