SafeAssign Plagiarism Detection Tool

SafeAssign is a plagiarism detection tool that is already built into Blackboard. SafeAssign can be used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly cite sources.

SafeAssign compares student papers against several different resources, including:

- **Internet** – comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet;
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform database** with over 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access);
- **Institutional document archives** containing all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions *[note that it will take some time for NWACC to gather a comprehensive sample]*;
- **Global Reference Database** containing papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.

Once a paper has been processed, an "originality report" is available that details the percentage of the submitted paper that matches existing sources. It also shows the suspected sources of each section of the submitted paper that returns a match.

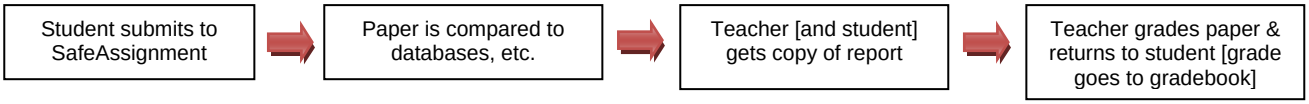
NOTE: Because SafeAssign identifies all matching blocks of text, it is important for the instructor to read the report carefully and investigate whether or not the block of text is properly attributed. **Although a percentage is given, this number should not be used as the sole determining factor in plagiarism, as there are many legitimate circumstances under which text could match existing sources.**

Setting Up SafeAssign in Your Class

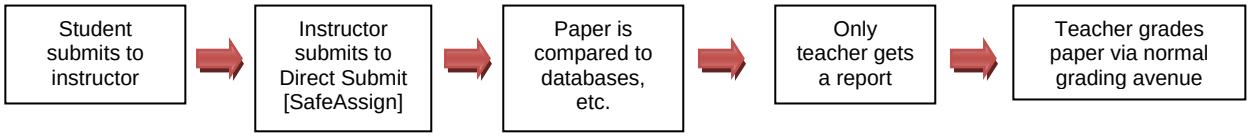
SafeAssign is already included in your Blackboard tools, under the **Add Content Link** button at the top of the Homepage [from the **Build** tab]. Functionally, SafeAssign is a completely separate tool from the regular assignment submission tool, and has to be set up independently on the home page of the course.

There are two ways that SafeAssign can be used:

1. **SafeAssignments:** Students submit their papers to a special SafeAssignment drop box instead of the regular assignment area. Under this method, either the instructor alone, or both instructor and student, can get a copy of the originality report. From within the Safe- Assignment, the instructor grades & returns the paper, and grade goes automatically into the gradebook.



2. **Direct Submit [see page 7]:** In the Direct Submit method, students submit their papers to the regular assignment area, and then the instructor submits them to SafeAssign. Only the instructor gets an originality report back from SafeAssign [students do not get a copy of the report]. The teacher returns to the regular assignment submission dropbox and grades the papers as usual.



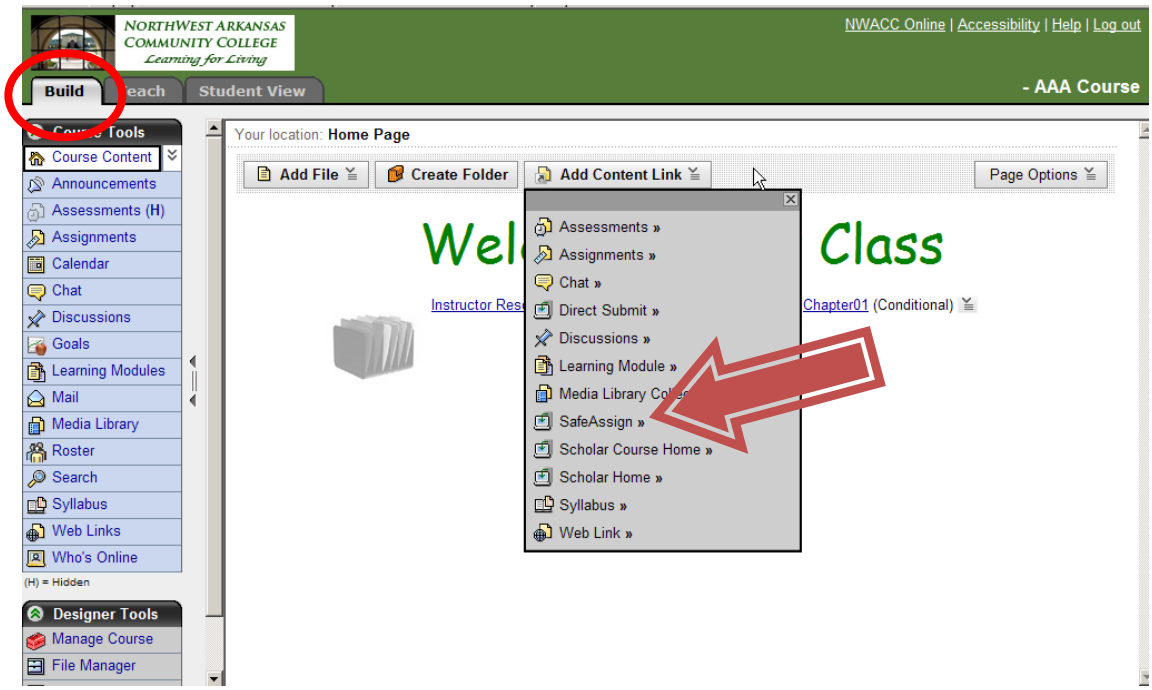
FYI: Direct Submit is global, meaning if you set up a Direct Submit tool in more than one class, the icon in either class will lead to the same SafeAssign file management area.

Several NWACC instructors have found that **Direct Submit** seems to be less complicated and easier to use than the SafeAssignments option.

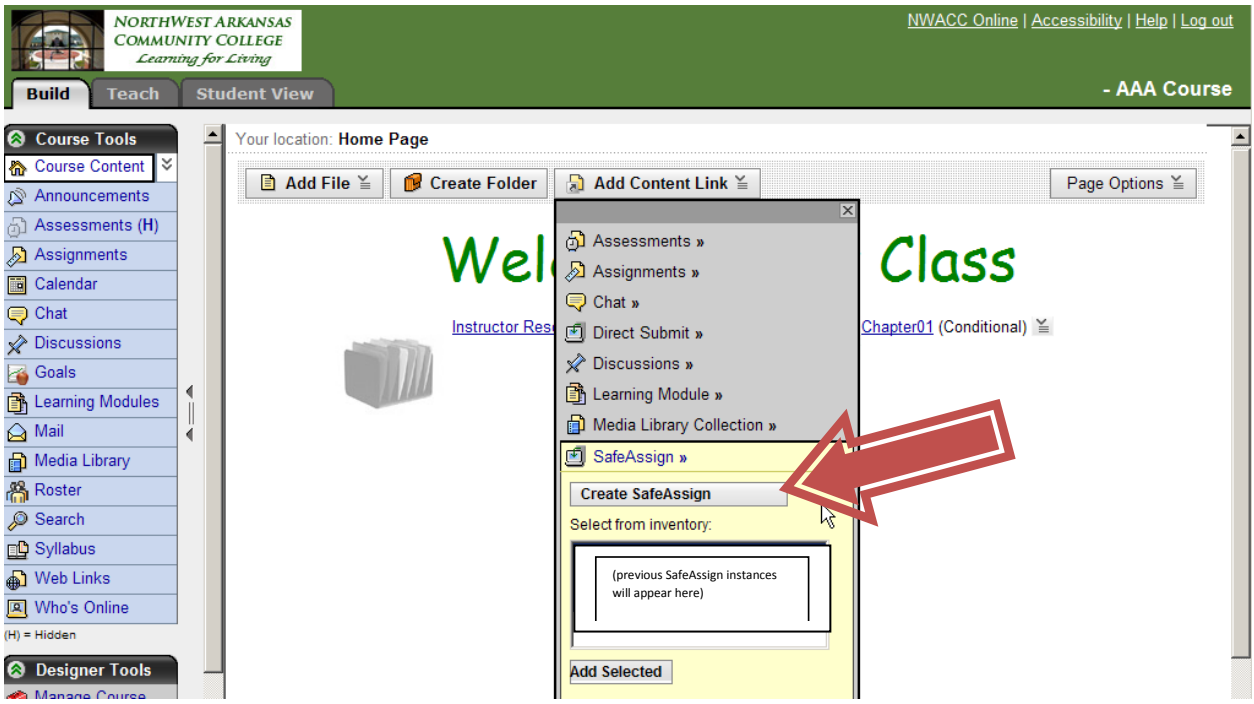
Method 1: SafeAssignments

First, you have to set up the SafeAssign tool on your homepage.

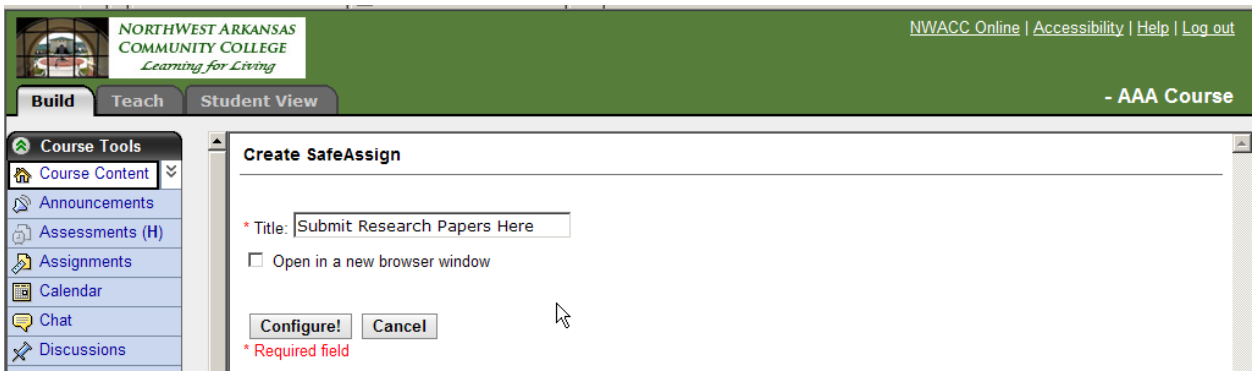
1. From the **Build** tab, click on the **Add Content Link** button and choose **SafeAssign**



2. Click on the **Create SafeAssign** button.

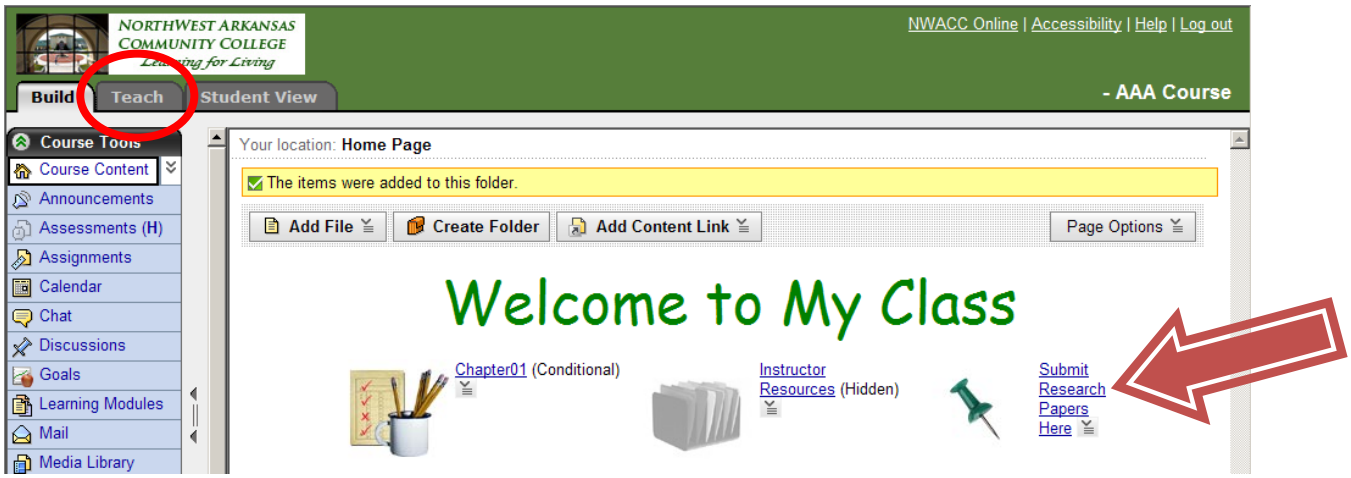


3. **Title:** The title you enter here will appear as a home page icon and should cover the breadth of all the Safe-Assignments you want to put inside it – for example, if you plan to have students submit two research papers as SafeAssignments, you could title this icon "**Submit Research Papers Here**". **CHOOSE CAREFULLY – THIS TITLE CANNOT BE EDITED AFTER BEING CREATED.** Click on **Configure!**

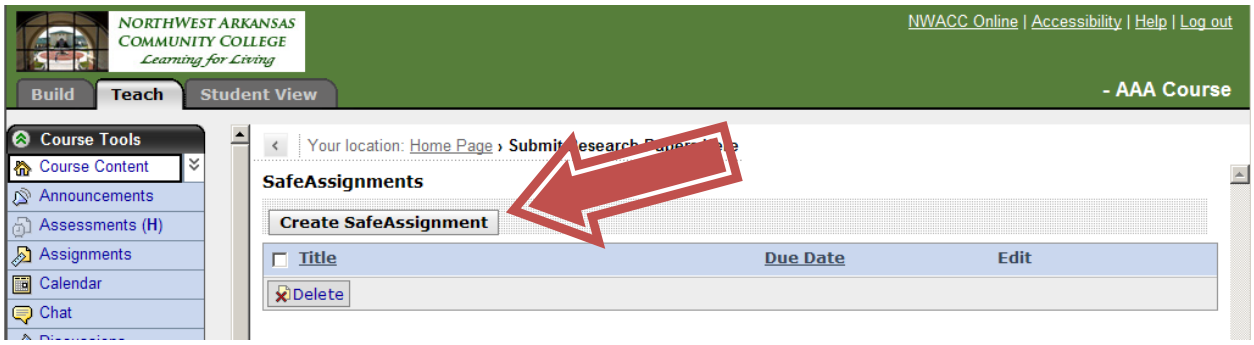


Now you need to set up the actual SafeAssignments "inside" the icon you just created. These are different from the regular assignments set up under the left button and there is no connection between them. **It is not possible to make an existing assignment into a SafeAssignment,** so if you switch to using Safe-Assign as the submission method, hide [or delete] the old assignment under the left Assignments button.

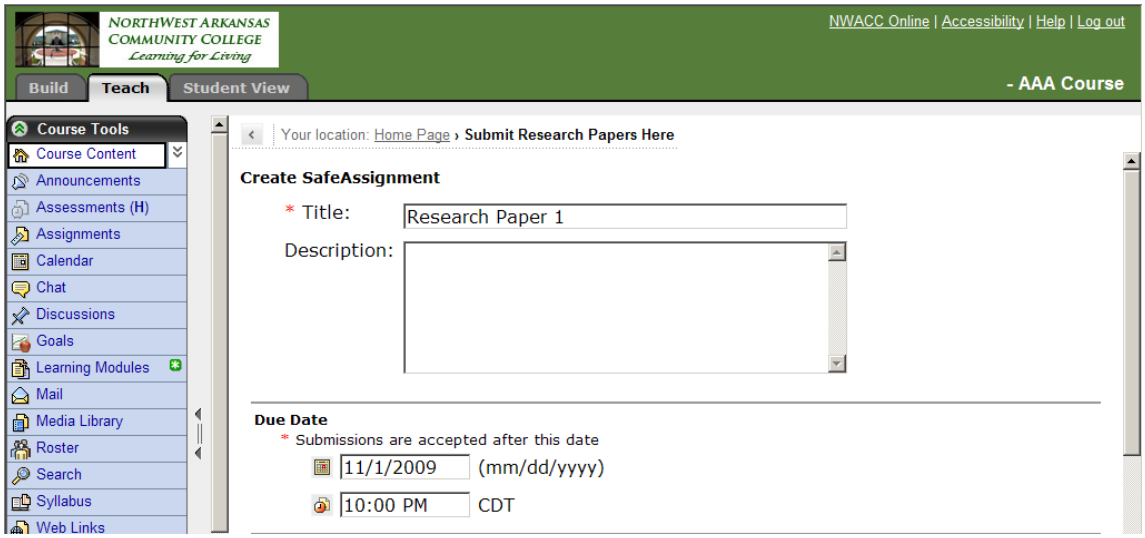
4. **SWITCH TO THE TEACH TAB**



5. Click on the new icon you just created on the home page. Click on **Create SafeAssignment.**

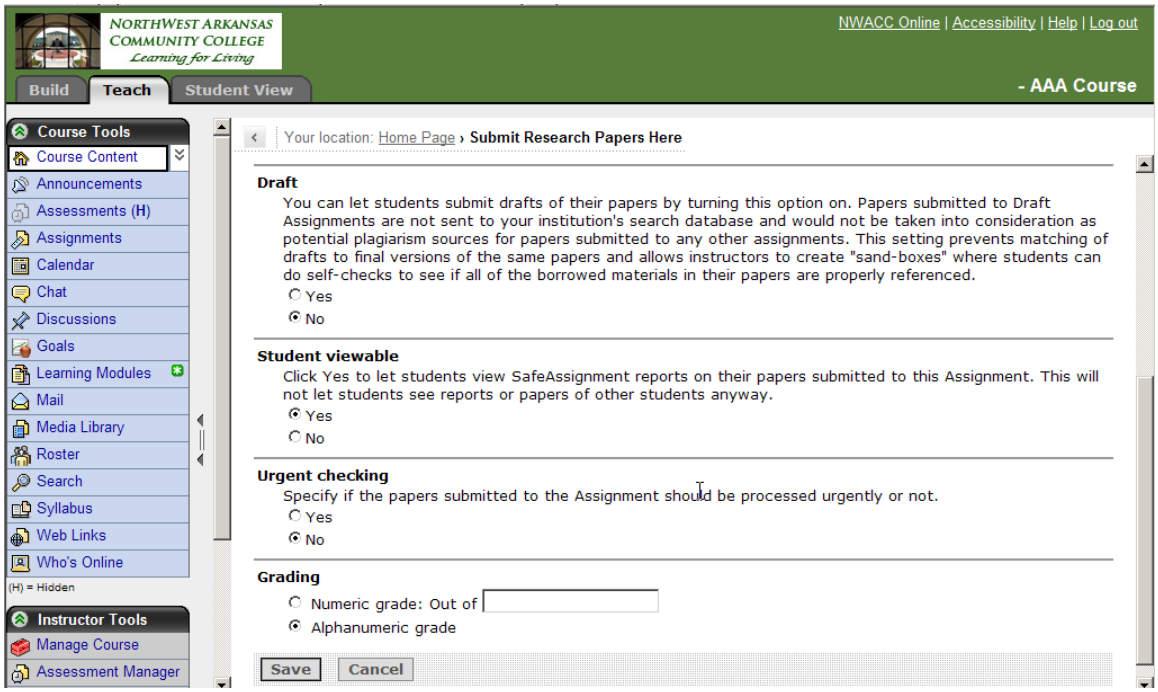


6. Enter the title of the assignment. **The length of the title determines the width of the gradebook column, so you probably want to keep it short.** The description is optional.



7. **Due Date** -- **It is not possible to set up absolute dues dates for SafeAssignments.** The date here will indicate the date by which students should submit, but does not block them from submitting after this date. **If you want more control over dates, you might want to use the Direct Submit option [see page 7] in conjunction with the normal assignment tool.**

8. **Draft** – **CAUTION:** Selecting "Yes" gives students the option to resubmit a paper multiple times, but also causes subsequent submissions to overwrite previous ones. **So for final papers use NO so students cannot accidently submit twice.**



9. **Student Viewable:** If you want the student to see a copy of the originality report, select **Yes.**

10. **Urgent Checking:** If Yes is selected, it might speed up the checking process, but this will depend on how many papers from all the institutions using SafeAssign are in the queue. **In general, you will need to plan on a 2-hour turn around for the report to come back, but it could be much sooner.**

11. **Grading:** Enter the point value of the assignment.

12. Click **Save.**

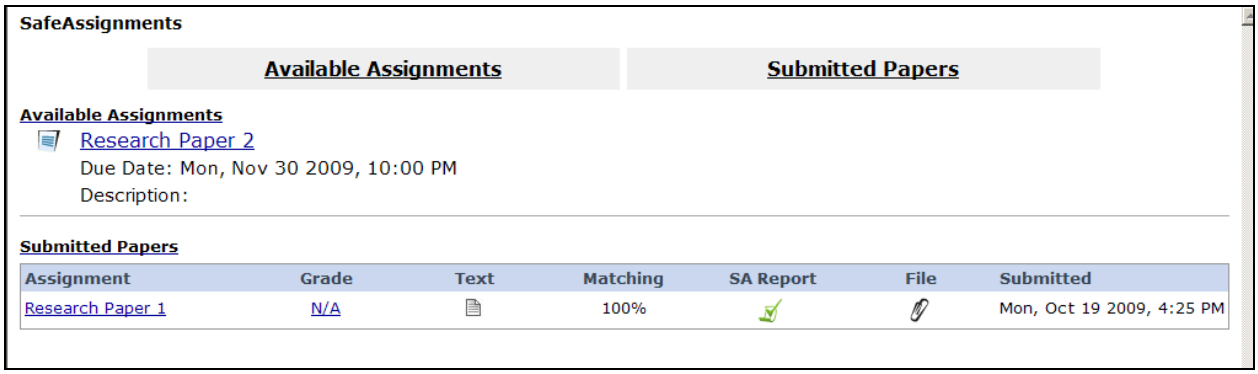
To create more individual SafeAssignments within the SafeAssign icon – repeat steps 4 – 12

SafeAssignments from a Student Point of View

The student will click on the Icon on the home page [in our example, the one that says "Submit Research Papers Here"] and then on the assignment under the **Available Assignments** section. Papers already submitted will show under the **Submitted Papers** area. The settings the instructor chose above for Draft and Viewable parameters will be reflected in what the student will see here:

- If the instructor chose **Yes** for Draft, the assignment will continue to show under the **Available Assignments** section no matter how many times the student submits [see **CAUTION** at #8 above].
- If the instructor chose **No** for Viewable, the student will have N/A under the **Matching** and **SA Report** columns.

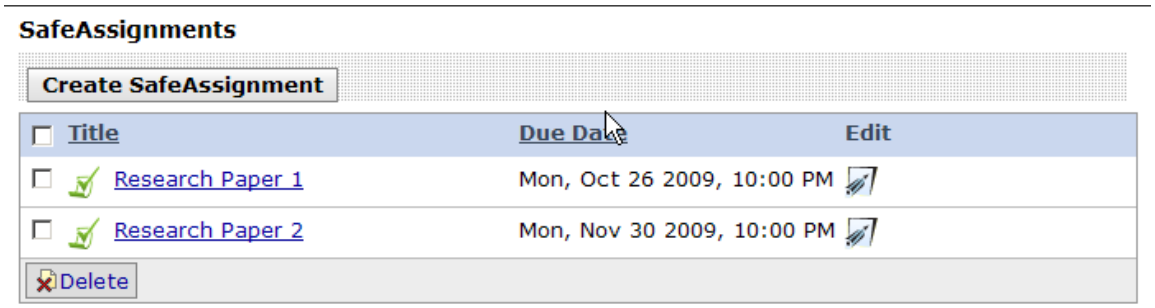
Students can see their grade under the normal **My Grades** button, or can return to the SafeAssignment area. They can click on the grade under the **Grade** column to see any feedback and file attachments returned.



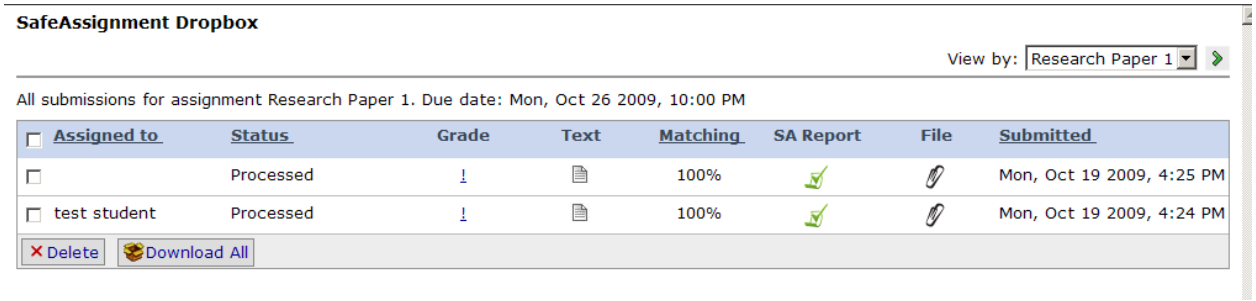
Grading SafeAssignments

1. From the **Teach** tab, click on the homepage icon for the SafeAssignment area you wish to enter.

2. Click on the title of the assignment you wish to grade.



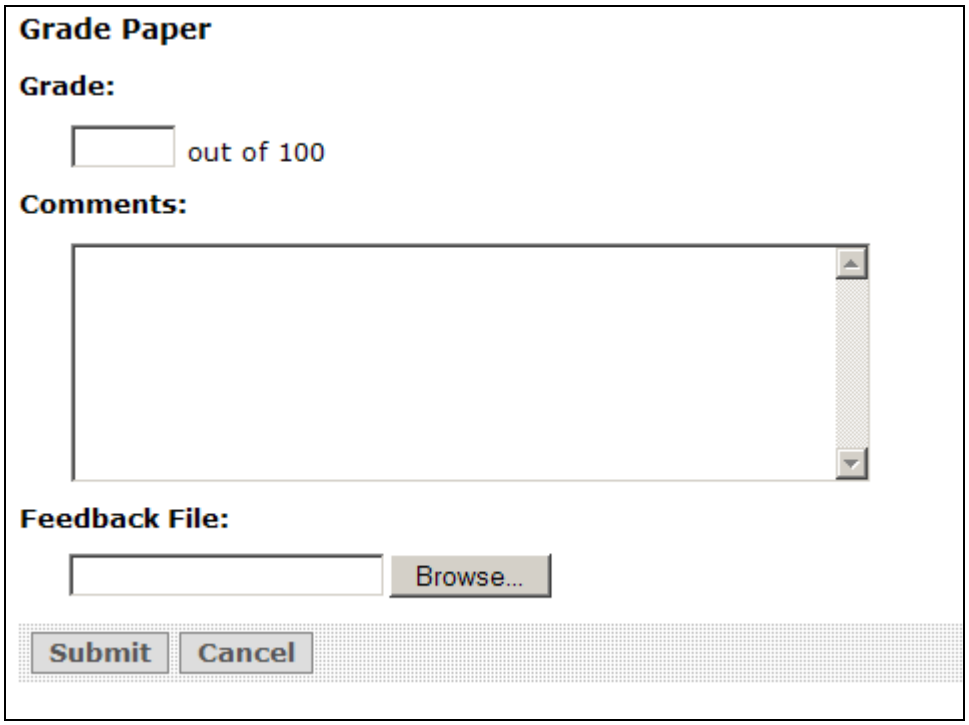
3. You will see all the submissions listed for that assignment, with the names of all the students that have submitted down the left column.



4. Click on the green check under the **SA Report** to view the results of the SafeAssign scan. A sample report and information about interpretation can be found here: http://wiki.safeassign.com/display/SAFE/Interpret+Reports

5. You can view the original text of the student's submission by clicking on the icon under the **Text** column.

6. Assign a grade and give feedback by clicking on the **!** symbol under the Grade column. Note that you can attach a file by using the Browse button.



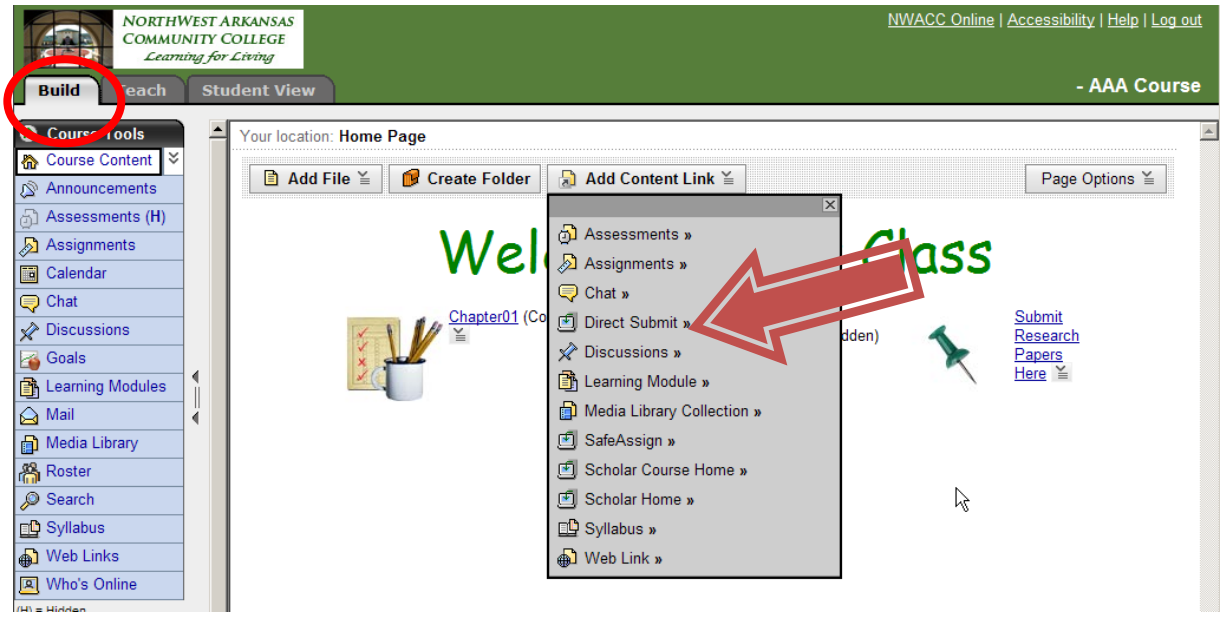
7. Click **Submit,** which returns the grade & feedback to the student, and puts the grade in the gradebook.

Method 2: Direct Submit

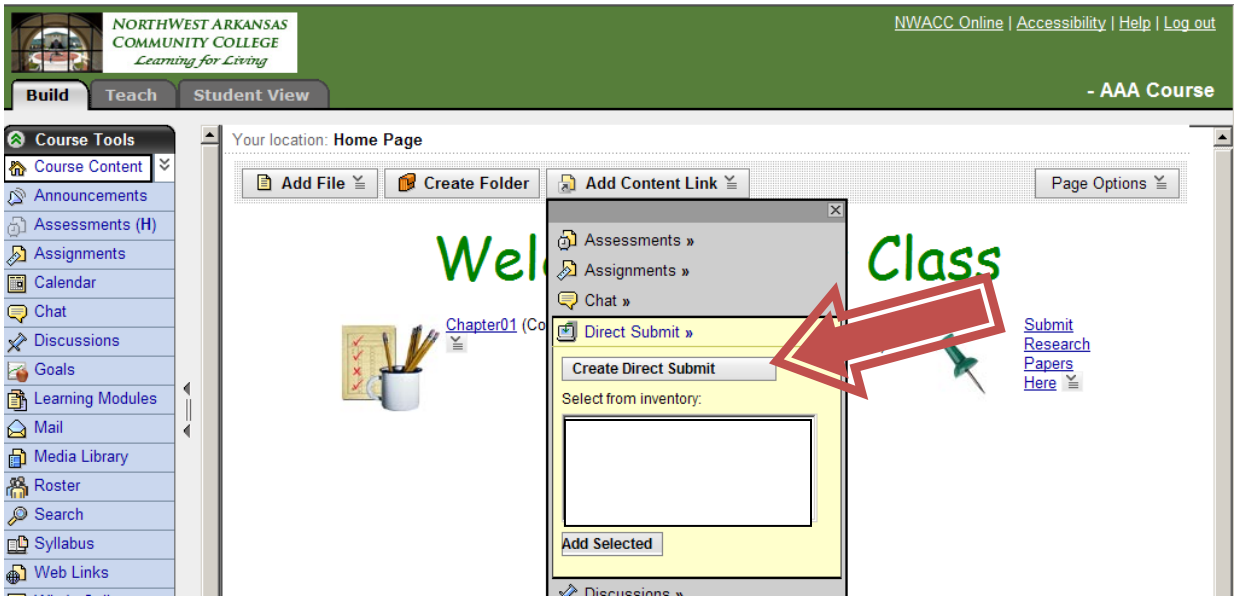
Direct submit is a good option if you already have assignments created under the left Assignments button, and you don't want to re-create them using Method 1 above. You also have more control over some assignment parameters using the normal assignment tool [for example see #7 above] in conjunction with Direct Submit. **Remember, students cannot use Direct Submit, only instructors.** Additionally, there is no Gradebook integration with papers submitted through Direct Submit [see step 11 below].

> **FYI: Direct Submit is global, meaning if you set up a Direct Submit tool in more than one class, the icon in either class will lead to the same Direct Submit file management area.**

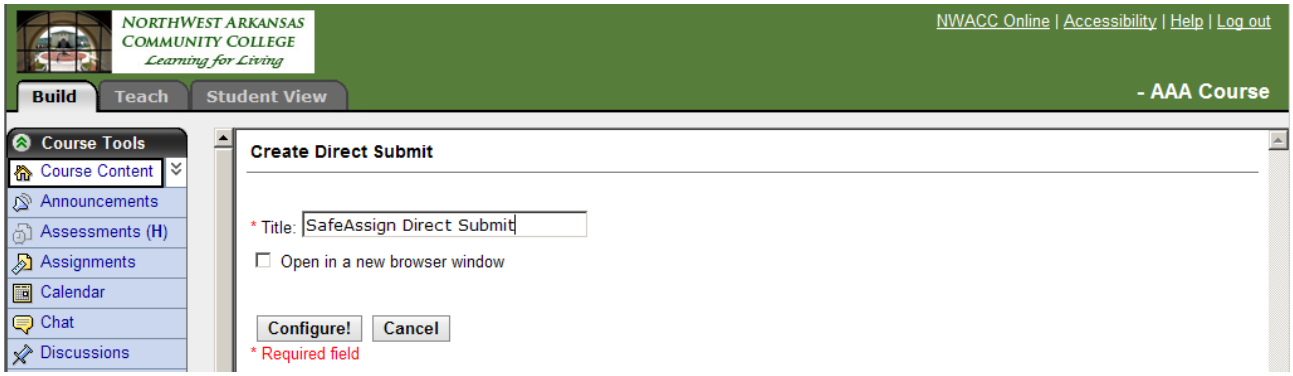
1. From the **Build** tab, click on the **Add Content Link** button and choose **Direct Submit.**



2. Click on the **Create Direct Submit** button.

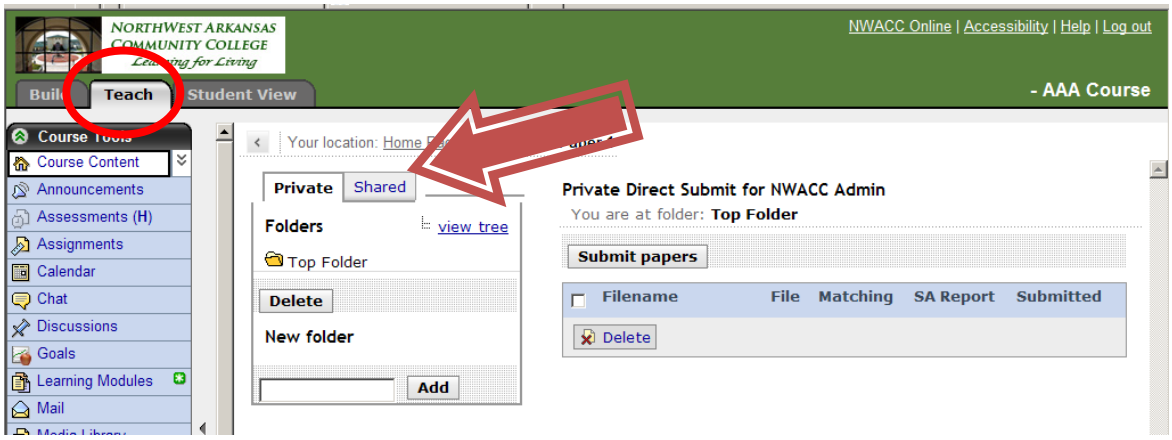


3. **Give the item a title.** Since the instructor will be the only one that can use Direct Submit, the title should indicate your purposes – something like "SafeAssign Direct Submit". **CHOOSE CAREFULLY – THIS TITLE CANNOT BE EDITED AFTER BEING CREATED.** Click on **Configure!**



4. Since students cannot use Direct Submit, go immediately to the icon's Actionmenu and **HIDE** the icon.

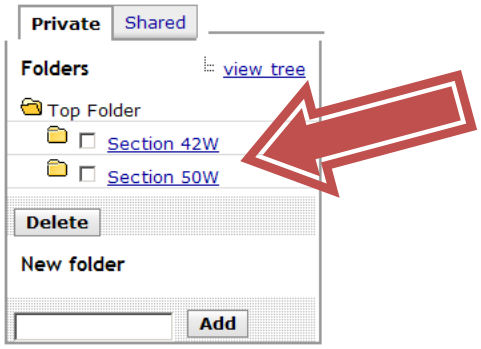
5. Switch to the **TEACH** tab and click on the link you just created. The screen below will appear.



What you see [screenshot above] is basically a file submission area. On the left, you create a "tree" with a folder for each class [and subfolders for each assignment if you wish]. The section on the right is where you submit the papers and get back the originality reports.

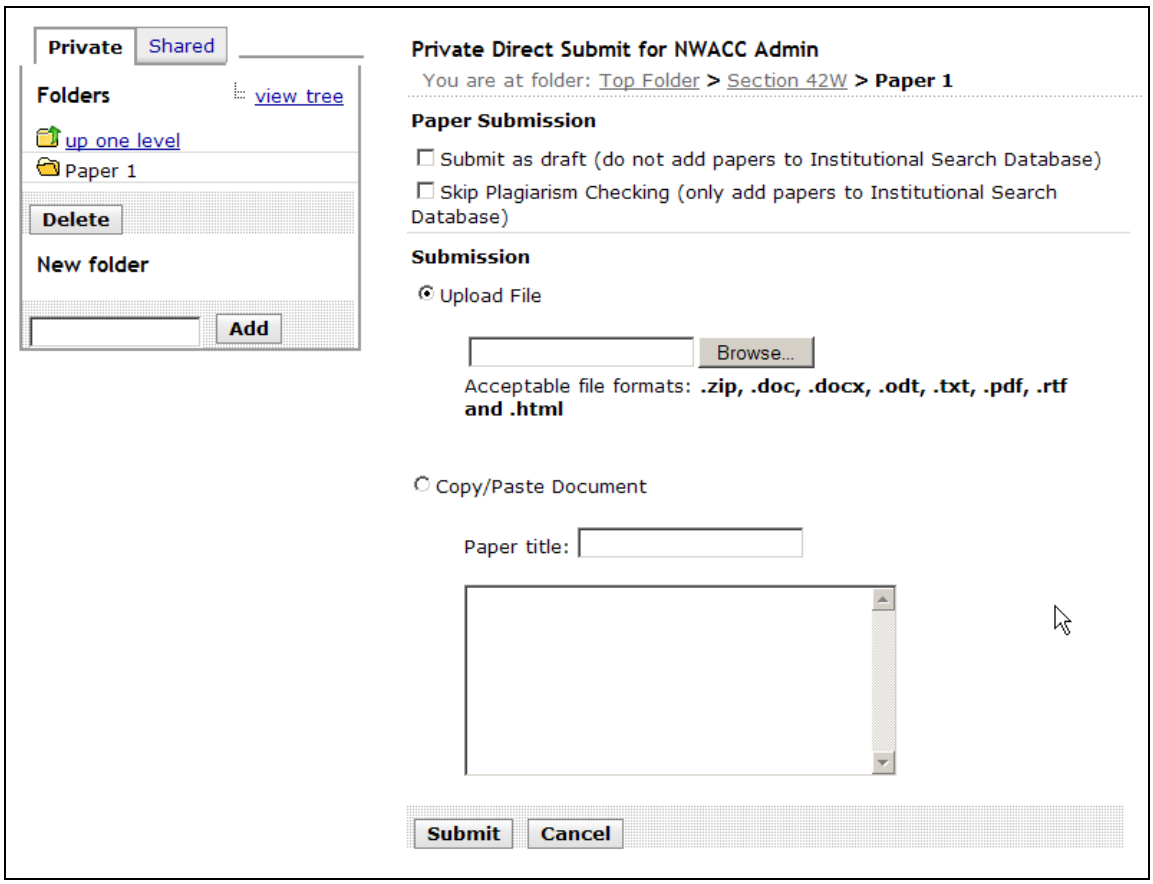
Left Section: Please note the **two tabs** at the top of the left section. Papers added to folders on the **Private** tab are only viewable by you, the instructor. Papers added to folders on the **Shared** tab are viewable by TAs, additional instructors, etc. ***When you create folders [below], make sure you are on the tab you wish to use.***

New Folder: You should create folders to keep your uploads organized — Be on the tab you wish to use [see above] and put a title for the folder in the field and click **Add.** **Because this Direct Submit area is global [i.e. this same Direct Submit file manager area will show up for all your classes] it is best to make a folder for each section, and then subfolders within for each assignment.** Dumping all your papers into the Top Folder is not recommended, as it can be very difficult to find student papers if they are not sorted into folders!



Delete: It is not recommended that folders or files be deleted from Direct Submit, as this will remove them from the institutional database of existing materials.

6. **Select a Tab and Folder:** To upload papers into a specific folder, click on the <u>title</u> of the folder you want the papers in [not the check box] **<u>before</u>** clicking on the **Submit Papers** button. The right section will open.



7. **Paper Submission:**

Submit as Draft: Checking this box means that the paper(s) will not be added to the NWACC institutional database. You may want to do this for drafts so that when you submit a final paper it won't be compared to the draft of itself.
Skip Plagirism Detection: If you only want to add papers to the institutional database so that future submissions will be compared to them, check the box.

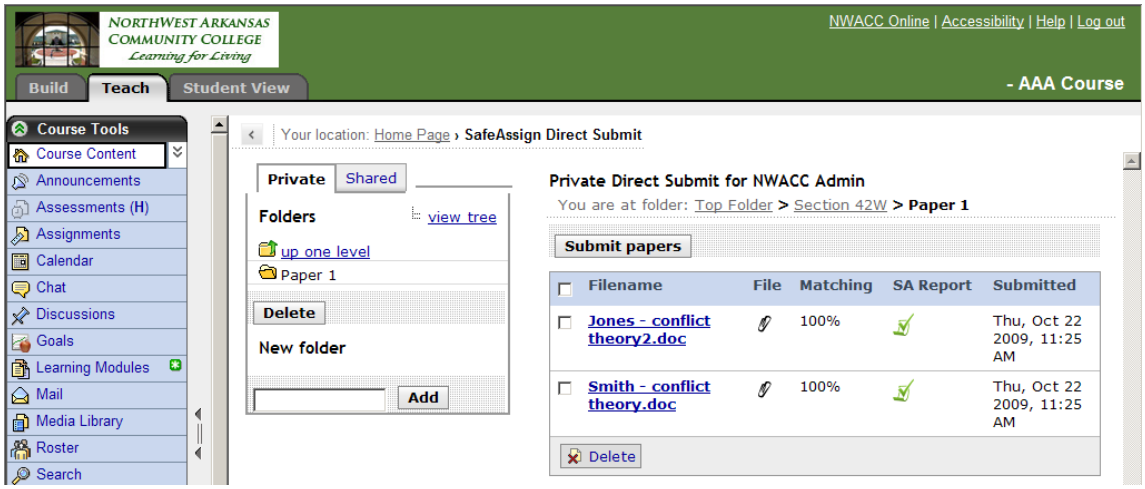
8. Submission: Direct Submit allows Instructors to submit papers one at a time or several at once by including them in a .ZIP file.

- **IMPORTANT:** Instruct your students to put their name in the file title before they submit -- or make sure student names are inside the papers themselves -- so you can identify!
- Acceptable file formats are given on the screen. **PLEASE NOTE:** .ZIP packages should contain no more than 100 papers. .ZIP files that are more than 10 MB in size cannot be submitted.
- If the papers you are directly submitting include images, please note that the images must not exceed 2MB or the submission may fail.
- You can also copy/paste text into the "Copy/Paste Document" section.

9. Click **Submit.**

10. **After Submission**

- The papers will appear in a list on the right. If submitted as a zip file, all the documents contained within will be listed.
- The original document text can be viewed by clicking on the title of the paper.
- Click on the green checkmark under the **SA Report** to view the results of the SafeAssign scan. A sample report and information about interpretation can be found here: http://wiki.safeassign.com/display/SAFE/ Interpret+Reports



11. **Grading**

There is no grading feature built into Direct Submit. So after examining the originality report, you will return feedback via your regular grading method. For example, if the paper was submitted by the student to the normal assignment area, go the Assignment Dropbox on the lower left [Teach tab] to grade as usual.

NOTE: It is not recommended that files be deleted from Direct Submit, as this will remove them from the institutional database of existing materials.