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This document tracks the time I spent to learn the Online Course "**Introduction To WordPress**", course number **B129.03** taken at **http://www.eclasses.org/** from reading the text book, reading and documenting online lectures, reading online resources, software installations and programming.

(Note: the ".03" in B129.03 refers to the number of times the course has been given).

WordPress is a state-of-the-art publishing platform with a focus on aesthetics, web standards, and usability. WordPress is both free and priceless at the same time. More simply, WordPress is what you use when you want to work with your blogging software, not fight it.

A WordPress Theme is a collection of files that work together to produce a graphical interface with an underlying unifying design for a weblog. These files are called **template files**. A theme modifies the way the site is displayed, without modifying the underlying software. Themes may include customized template files, image files (`*.jpg`, `*.gif`), style sheets (`*.css`), custom Pages, as well as any necessary code files (`*.php`).

The Difference between a Blog and CMS?

Software that provides a method of managing your website is commonly called a CMS or "Content Management System". Many blogging software programs are considered a specific type of CMS. They provide the features required to create and maintain a blog, and can make publishing on the internet as simple as writing an article, giving it a title, and organizing it under (one or more) categories. While some CMS programs offer vast and sophisticated features, a basic blogging tool provides an interface where you can work in an easy and, to some degree, intuitive manner while it handles the logistics involved in making your composition presentable and publicly available. In other words, you get to focus on what you want to write, and the blogging tool takes care of the rest of the site management.

WordPress is one such advanced blogging tool and it provides a rich set of features. Through its Administration Panels, you can set options for the behavior and presentation of your weblog. Via these Administration Panels, you can easily compose a blog post, push a button, and be published on the internet, instantly! WordPress goes to great pains to see that your blog posts look good, the text looks beautiful, and the html code it generates conforms to web standards.

A valid theme complies with a widely accepted set of standards used by designers, Web browsers, and operating systems, which will ensure that the Website is viewed correctly by your visitors.

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Total number of hours I spent on Introduction to WordPress *(details below)* $= 100.5 \, hrs$
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***********Course Description*********
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Introduction to WordPress - course number **B129.03**

Start Date: 01-March-2010; **Duration:** 6 weeks; **CEUs:** 3.0; **Course Number:** B129.03; **Instructor:** Frank Stepanski

How eClasses Work

These online classes are primarily conducted via **Moodle**. Moodle, Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, is a free and open-source e-learning software platform, also known as a Course Management System, Learning Management System, or Virtual Learning Environment.

Instructors post lectures, reading selections, and hands-on assignments once a week in the online classroom. Students can discuss the assignments with the instructor and amongst themselves in the classroom area. **This format has no set meeting time**, which allows students to attend class at a time most convenient to them, yet still, provides logically organized communication between class participants. Students can apply for the completion certificate after finishing the class.

About eClasses.Org - Affordable Web Technology Learning

Since 1998 eClasses.Org has provided the very best in online training to 80,000 Web developers and other professionals. It offers a catalog of 60 online courses covering the breadth of Web work, from HTML to Flash; from CSS to XML. All classes are taught by fellow experts and working professionals in the field.

- Online, instructor-led web technology classes

- Affordable and flexible learning solution

- 4 Web certificate programs

The classroom environment is a threaded messaging system. Instructors post weekly lessons, reading selections, and hands-on assignments. Course materials are available during the class period (usually six weeks). Students have about one week to complete each assignment. Students can also post questions in the classroom area. This format has no set meeting time, which allows students to attend class at a time most convenient to them, yet still provides logically organized communication between class participants. After students successfully finish the class, they can apply for the completion certificate. We also offer [Web Study Certificates](). The main benefit of our courses is the interaction among you, your instructor and other students in classroom (online message board). Students can post comments or questions to the instructor or other students, share ideas, communicate about your learning experience, or discuss topics of the course with other interested students.

- **Convenience**: Complete all courses via the Internet.

- **Flexibility**: Attend an online class at any time and from anywhere you would like to.

- **Instructor-Led Course**: Our instructors will help you with assignment questions, provide you additional education resources, and keep you up-to-date with rapidly changed internet and web technologies.

- **Affordable**: We provide high quality web education with much lower tuition in comparison to other training providers.

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Course Outline: Introduction to WordPress

WordPress is one of the most popular blogging tools on the web, making it easy for anybody to post their ideas, pictures, and audio/video. WordPress can be used for not only blogging posts but also to store static information that can be easily updated like a content management system (CMS).

This class teaches the new user how to get their blog up and started quickly while teaching students to fully understand the right way to install, administer, customize and market their blog.

One of the main advantages of WordPress is the use of themes and plugins which can dramatically change the look and functionality of your blog website. Students will learn how to find and install various themes and plugins as well as learn how themes work behind the scenes using template tags with PHP.

Each weekly lecture will give explanations, illustrations, resources, and practical scenarios of setting up your own Wordpress blog.

Outline

Week 1 – Getting Started with WordPress

- Blogging Basics

- Types of blogs

- Manual installation on a web server

Week 2 - Administration

- Understanding the Dashboard

- Setting up user accounts

- Elements of a Post

- Managing Posts, Categories and tags

- Adding an About page

- Adding your links

Week 3 - Site Design: Themes

- How to find and install new themes

- The basics components and files of a theme

- How to use widgets

- Quick PHP Overview

- Review of basics template tags

Week 4 - Adding Functionality and Interactivity to your Blog

- What is a Plugin?

- How to find and install plugins

- Popular and useful plugins

Week 5 - Marketing your Blog

- Adding Analytics and RSS Feeds

- SEO Optimization

- Integrating social media sites

- How to monetize your blog

Week 6 - Themes: 'Under the Hood'

- Blog design considerations

- Dissecting how a theme works

- Creating a basic theme from scratch

Prerequisites
Good understanding of HTML. CSS and PHP knowledge would be helpful but not required.

Requirements
You must have an online web host account that is UNIX based (not Windows server) that supports PHP and a MySQL database.

Required Book: WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide [[by Jessica Neuman Beck, Matt Beck, Paperback, 2nd edition, 288 pages, **ISBN**: 0321679210, **Publisher:** Peachpit Press; 1 edition, **Pub.Date**: Nov. 22, 2009

Instructor: Frank Stepanski
Frank Stepanski has over nine years experience in the IT field ranging from Senior Analyst, Designer and Web Developer. Frank has worked with technologies such as PHP, MySQL, ASP.NET, SQL Server as well as HTML, CSS and JavaScript. He has also taught web programming classes over five years at a local community college as well as online classes.

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How eClasses Work

About the Classroom

Instructors post lectures, reading assignment, and hands-on assignment once a week. eClasses^{sm} start on a certain date but this format has no set meeting time, which allows students to attend class at a time most convenient to them. Students only need to complete the assignment within one week and continue with another assignment in the following week.

The main benefit of our eClasses is the interaction among you, your instructor and other students in classroom (online message board). Students can post comments or questions to the instructor or other students, share ideas, communicate about your learning experience, or discuss topics of the course with other interested students.

What are CEUs?

One Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is generally defined as ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship and qualified instruction. For instructor-led online learning, each course is assigned a number of CEUs for that course which may not relate to the total number of hours an individual takes to complete the course. The number of CEUs awarded is the average number of hours required to complete a course.

About Moodle

From MoodleDocs

Moodle is a software package for producing Internet-based courses and web sites. It is a global development project designed to support a social constructionist framework of education.

Moodle is provided freely as Open Source software (under the GNU Public License). Basically this means Moodle is copyrighted, but that you have additional freedoms. You are allowed to copy, use and modify Moodle provided that you agree to: **provide the source to others; not modify or remove the original license and copyrights**, and **apply this same license to any derivative work**. Read the license for full details and please contact the copyright holder directly if you have any questions.

Moodle can be installed on any computer that can run PHP, and can support an SQL type database (for example MySQL). It can be run on Windows and Mac operating systems and many flavors of linux (for example Red Hat or Debian GNU). There are many knowledgeable Moodle Partners to assist you, even host your Moodle site.

The word Moodle was originally an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, which is mostly useful to programmers and education theorists. It's also a verb that describes the process of lazily meandering through something, doing things as it occurs to you to do them, an enjoyable tinkering that often leads to insight and creativity. As such it applies both to the way Moodle was developed, and to the way a student or teacher might approach studying or teaching an online course. Anyone who uses Moodle is a Moodler. Moodle is designed to help educators create online courses with opportunities for rich interaction. Its open source license and modular design mean that people can develop additional functionality. Development is undertaken by a globally diffused network of commercial and non-commercial users, streamlined by the Moodle Company based in Perth, Western Australia.

Moodle has many features expected from an e-learning platform, plus some original innovations (like its filtering system).

Moodle is modular in construction and can readily be extended by creating plugins for specific new functionality. Moodle's infrastructure supports many types of plugins:

- Activities (including word and math games)

- Resource types

- Question types

- Data field types (for the database activity)

- Graphical themes

- Authentication methods

- Enrollment methods

- Content Filters

Many third-party Moodle plugins are freely available making use of this infrastructure.

 PHP can be used to author and contribute new modules. Moodle's development has been assisted by the work of open source programmers. This has contributed towards its rapid development and rapid bug fixes.

By default Moodle includes the TCPDF library that allows the generation of PDF documents from pages.

Specification

Moodle runs without modification on Unix, Linux, FreeBSD, Windows, Mac OS X, NetWare and any other systems that support PHP and a database, including most webhost providers.

Data is stored in a single database: Moodle version 1.6 could use MySQL or PostgreSQL. Version 1.7, released November 2006, makes full use of database abstraction so that installers can choose from one of many types of database servers (Oracle and Microsoft SQL Server are two specific target DBMSes).

Verdana, Georgia and Trebuchet hat have been specifically commissioned and designed for web use. Verdana, Georgia and Trebuchet are fonts that have been designed with the viewer in mind. Their design ensures that they are the most legible even when viewed at smaller sizes. Arial is also an acceptable font to use, but it's slightly narrower than Verdana and not as easy to read.

About WEFT: The Web Embedding Fonts Tool (WEFT) lets Web authors create 'font objects' that are linked to their Web pages so when viewed through the browser, pages are displayed in the style contained in the font object.

Fed up with arial, verdana, serif fonts on your web pages? Then why not use others that you may have on your PC. Microsoft has a program called WEFT (free download) that converts your PC font to a special .eot file and allows you to use this special font file in your pages AND your visitors will see the font even though they may not have it on their PC. Works for Internet Explorer Only. http://www.cssplay.co.uk/ie/weft.htm---

What is the difference between plugins and widgets?

Plugins are functions that do something to your website. They could serve a back-end purpose and never be visible to you or the public. On the other hand, a widget usually is the representation of a plugin in the form of an object that can be placed somewhere on your Website via the widgets interface under the appearance menu.

WYSIWYG

  "What You See Is What You Get." System that displays to a user exactly what a document will look like when printed. A feature called print preview is considered to be this type of application. This feature is useful when trying to determine what items need to be altered or added before a document is printed. WYSIWYG editors are also used by web designers to arrange and style web pages, without actually changing the code.

What are feeds and how do I use them? A feed is a regularly updated summary of web content, along with links to full versions of that content. When you subscribe to a given website's feed by using a feed reader, you'll receive a summary of new content from that website. **Important:** you must use a feed reader in order to subscribe to website feeds.

What is RSS? RSS is a feed format. Right now, Google News supports RSS 2.0.

Validating a WordPress Website is challenging because all the HTML errors I get are either due from the external plugins installed generating code that is not valid (e.g. the AdSense plugin I have), or some attributes that WordPress or the Theme use that are not HTML valid (e.g. role="main", aria-required="true").

Documentations: The documents - **file names** - that I wrote/created are:

1.   TimeSpentToLearnIntroductionToWordPress.doc
2.   Most Documents are in *.html (or *.htm) format.

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Date	Time Spent (hrs)	Description (mainly)
Monday March 1, **2010**	1.25	**Start of Introduction to WordPress-**course number **B129.03** **Reading** and **Documenting general** course materials and week1-6 lectures. Documents **created** are located at: C:\Users\boutros\Documents\My Programs\eClasses.Org\Course_IntroWordPress_B129.03\
Wednesday March 3, 2010	2.5	**Read** and **Documented general** course materials and week1-6 Lectures. **Read** General Class online references: http://www.understandingwordpress.com/blog/ **Online** Search for a WordPress theme for my Blog.
Thursday March 4, 2010	5.25	**Read** week1 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** General Class online references: **http://wordpress.org/** **http://wordpress.com/** **http://mu.wordpress.org/** http://codex.wordpress.org/Main_Page **Read** Week1 online references: http://technorati.com/state-of-the-blogosphere/ http://www.zooomr.com/ http://www.flickr.com/ http://imageshack.us/ http://www.smugmug.com/ http://www.hulu.com/ http://wordpress.org/showcase http://codex.wordpress.org/Using_Themes http://codex.wordpress.org/Installation#Detailed_Instructions http://codex.wordpress.org/Make_a_Directory_Writable **http://filezilla-project.org/** **http://www.coreftp.com/** **http://www.coffeecup.com/free-ftp/** **http://www.smashingmagazine.com** **Finished** week1 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/ **Installed** Yslow from **http://developer.yahoo.com/yslow/** Yslow analyzes web pages and suggests ways to improve their performance based on a set of rules for high performance web pages. YSlow is a Firefox add-on integrated with the Firebug web development tool. YSlow grades web page based on one of three predefined rule set or a user-defined rule set. It offers suggestions for improving the page's performance, summarizes the page's components, displays statistics about the page, and provides tools for performance analysis, including Smush.it™ and JSLint.

Friday March 5, 2010	3.5	**Read** General Class online references: http://lorelle.wordpress.com/ http://www.problogger.net/ http://weblogtoolscollection.com/ http://www.jtpratt.com/blog/ http://technorati.com/blogs/top100 http://yoast.com/ http://developer.yahoo.com/performance/rules.html http://developer.yahoo.com/yui/compressor/ **Read** Week1 online references: http://webdesignledger.com/tips/13-useful-code-snippets-for-wordpress-development http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS_(file_format) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/URL_redirection http://codex.wordpress.org/Moving_WordPress http://httpd.apache.org/docs/trunk/howto/htaccess.html http://codex.wordpress.org/Using_Permalinks http://codex.wordpress.org/Introduction_to_Blogging
Tuesday March 9, 2010	4.0	**Read** week2 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week2 online references: http://tinymce.moxiecode.com/index.php **Learning** in details about Google analytics and Google Webmasters tools at: https://www.google.com/analytics/ http://www.google.com/webmasters/
Wednesday March 10, 2010	6.0	**Finished** week2 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/ **Downloaded** WEFT 3.2(Microsoft Web Embedding Fonts tool 3) http://www.microsoft.com/typography/AboutFontsOverview.mspx
Thursday March 11, 2010	2.75	**Read** Week2 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/Dashboard_SubPanel#Dashboard http://codex.wordpress.org/Writing_Posts#Visual_Versus_HTML_Editor http://codex.wordpress.org/Posts_Categories_SubPanel http://codex.wordpress.org/Pages_Edit_SubPanel http://codex.wordpress.org/Links_Edit_SubPanel http://codex.wordpress.org/Using_Permalinks http://codex.wordpress.org/Customizing_the_Read_More **Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Introduction; Chapter 1 [pages 1 - 6] .
Friday March 12, 2010	4.25	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 1 [pages 7 - 18]; Chapter 2 [pages 19 - 46]. **Installed** Google Gears: http://gears.google.com/ **Gears** is an open source project that enables more powerful web applications, by adding new features to your web browser: 1. Let web applications interact naturally with your desktop; 2. Store data locally in a fully-searchable database; 3. Run JavaScript in the background to improve performance. **Read** Week2 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Backups http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/

Wednesday March 17, 2010	3.0	**Read** week3 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Reading** Week3 online references: http://www.freewpthemes.net/ http://www.themelab.com/free-wordpress-themes/ http://www.wpthemespot.com/ http://www.site5.com/wordpress-themes/
Thursday March 18, 2010	2.0	**Read** Week3 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Feeds http://codex.wordpress.org/Plugins/WordPress_Widgets http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PHP http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/wp_list_pages http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/wp_get_archives http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/wp_list_categories http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/wp_tag_cloud http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_cloud http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/get_calendar http://www.w3schools.com/php/php_syntax.asp http://codex.wordpress.org/Stepping_Into_Template_Tags http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags/Anatomy_of_a_Template_Tag
Friday March 19, 2010	3.5	**Working on** week3 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class.
Saturday March 20, 2010	5.0	**Finished** week3 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/
Tuesday March 23, 2010	2.75	**Learning** in details about Google analytics and Google Webmasters http://www.google.com/webmasters/ http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/ http://www.google.com/webmasters/checklist/ http://docs.google.com/present/view?id=dc5x7mrn_245gf8kjwfx
Wednesday March 24, 2010	2.25	**Learning** in details about Google analytics and Google Webmasters tools at: https://www.google.com/analytics/ **Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 3 [pages 47 - 56].
Thursday March 25, 2010	3.5	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 4 [pages 57 - 88]; Chapter 5 [pages 89 - 104]. **Read** Week4 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/Creating_a_Static_Front_Page
Friday March 26, 2010	2.0	**Read** week4 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week4 online references: http://en.wordpress.com/api-keys/ http://codex.wordpress.org/Plugins/Plugin_Compatibility/ **Working on** week4 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class.

Saturday March 27, 2010	2.25	**Finished** week4 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class.
Sunday March 28, 2010	4.0	**Finished** week4 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/
Monday March 29, 2010	3.25	**Reading** week5 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week5 online references: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Googlebot http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_crawler http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index_(search_engine) http://www.google.com/addurl/ https://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/submit http://www.bing.com/webmaster/SubmitSitePage.aspx http://www.dmoz.org/ http://technorati.com/ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PageRank http://www.googlerankings.com/prindex.php http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_marketing http://www.webceo.com/pricing/index.htm#free http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS_(file_format) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aggregator **Installed** *Web CEO* -- A tool for Search engine marketing (SEM) and Search Engine Optimization(SEO).
Tuesday March 30, 2010	4.0	**Read** week5 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week5 online references: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_performance_indicators http://tools.seobook.com/firefox/seo-for-firefox.html http://www.robotstxt.org/robotstxt.html http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Feeds http://www.woopra.com/ **Learned** how to use the *Web CEO* Software by watching 16 different Video Tutorials.
Wednesday March 31, 2010	2.5	**Working** on week5 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class.
Thursday April 1, 2010	3.75	**Finished** week5 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/
Saturday April 3, 2010	0.75	**Documented** week4 materials for the **Intro to WordPress** class.
Monday April 5, 2010	4.25	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 7 [pages 121 - 132]; Chapter 8 [pages 133 - 143]; Chapter 9 [pages 144 - 156]; Chapter 10 [pages 157 - 170]; Chapter 12 [pages 197 - 212].
Tuesday April 6, 2010	0.75	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 11 [pages 171 - 173].
Wednesday April 7, 2010	3.75	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 11 [pages 174 - 181].

		Read Week6 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/Theme_Development http://www.wordpress28vqs.com/reference/
Thursday April 8, 2010	7.0	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 11 [pages 182 - 191]. **Read** Week6 online references: http://www.wordpress28vqs.com/reference/wordpress-templates/ http://codex.wordpress.org/Template_Tags http://codex.wordpress.org/Include_Tags http://codex.wordpress.org/Conditional_Tags
Friday April 9, 2010	0.5	**Book:** WordPress: Visual QuickStart Guide; by Beck Chapter 11 [pages 192 - 196].
Saturday April 10, 2010	3.5	**Reading** week6 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week6 online references: http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/WD-xhtml-role-20080407/ http://codex.wordpress.org/Function_Reference/
Sunday April 11, 2010	1.5	**Reading** week6 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Finished** week5 homework for **Intro to WordPress** class. Submitted it online at: http://bacsoftwareconsulting.com/blog/
Monday April 12, 2010	0.5	**Working on** Adding a new Blog about WordPress plugin.
Tuesday April 13, 2010	3.0	**Read** week6 Teacher's Lecture for **Intro to WordPress** class. **Read** Week6 online references: http://codex.wordpress.org/The_Loop http://codex.wordpress.org/The_Loop_in_Action http://codex.wordpress.org/Widgetizing_Themes Added a new Blog about WP plugin.
Wednesday April 14, 2010	1.75	**Documented** Weeks 5 and 6. Added a new Blog + others

Total = 100.5 hrs

*****End of Introduction to WordPress****
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