



**ALEKS<sup>®</sup>**

# **Topic Recommendation (TREC) Tool**

## User Guide

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## The TREC Tool

The Topic Recommendation (TREC) tool appears during course creation when instructors do not select the appropriate prerequisite topics in their course content to optimize student learning. This page provides instructors with a way to add prerequisite topics to their content.

The TREC may appear after the Objectives Editor when Objectives are used with the course. Please refer to the following documents for details on course creation and to see where the TREC appears in the set-up process.

[Setting Up a Course With Textbook Integration, and How to Create Custom Objectives and Modules.](#)

[Setting Up a Course Without Textbook Integration, and How to Create Custom Objectives and Modules.](#)

The TREC calculates if the content selected is optimal and contains the appropriate prerequisite topics. If the TREC has no recommendations, the page is simply skipped. Otherwise, the TREC will be displayed.

Below is an example of the TREC:

**Course Set-Up Wizard - Recommended Topics for Optimal Learning**

**!** Based on your course content, students will need the following prerequisite topics for optimal learning.

Continue with the Recommended column below, or select another column.

All checked topics will be added as prerequisites. To view additional information about why this topic is recommended, click on **Details**.

Number of topics to be added: 62. Total number of topics in class: 150. Previous Step Next Step

Prerequisite Topics 62 Topics	Recommended 62 Topics	Minimum 5 Topics	None 0 Topics
Acute, obtuse, and right angles <a href="#">Details</a>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adding a 2-digit number and a 1-digit number with carry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Addition of 3 or 4 one-digit numbers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Addition of large numbers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Annotations:**

- This column shows the prerequisite topics available.
- Up to 4 levels of recommendations can be shown: **Recommended**, **Moderate**, **Minimum**, and **None**. These are topics suggested by the TREC to select among the list of prerequisite topics.
- Notice that in the screenshot Moderate is not displayed. If the topics suggested by the Moderate and Minimum levels are similar, the Moderate level is not displayed. Likewise, if the Recommended and Minimum levels are similar, the Minimum level is not displayed.
- Clicking on **Select** under another level makes that column active.
- For levels that are not active, a checkmark is placed on the topics that are suggested simply for reference.
- Note that switching back and forth between different levels resets the form and will not keep any previously selected topics.
- Checkboxes appear allowing instructors to make their selection. The topics suggested by the level are checked by default.

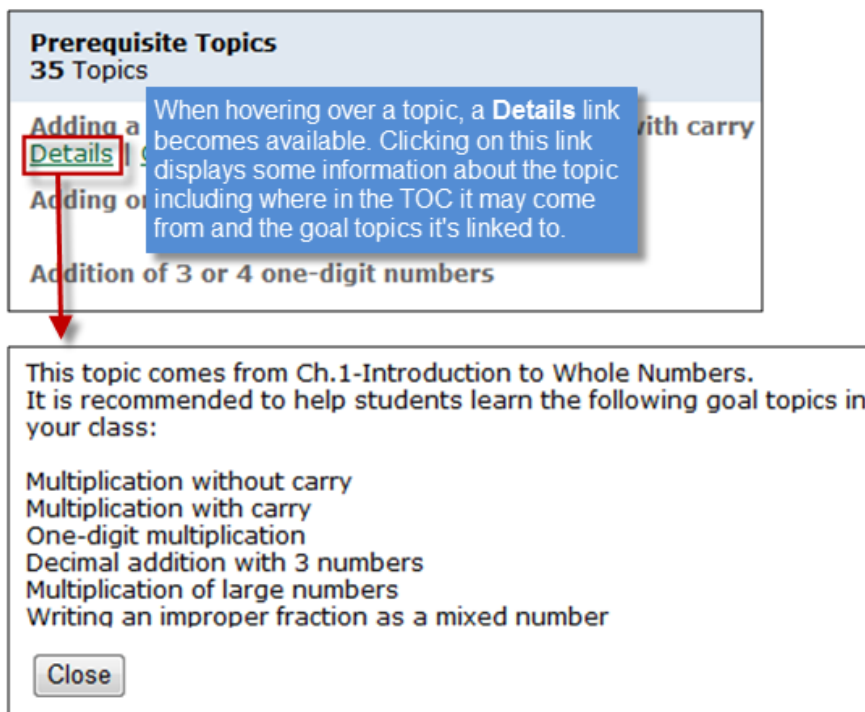
By default, the “Recommended” column is the active column. This column is highlighted with the recommended topics auto-checked for that level. Instructors can uncheck the topics to exclude if needed. If instructors want to switch to another level, they can click on the “Select” button under a column to make that level active instead.

The four levels of recommendations are the following:

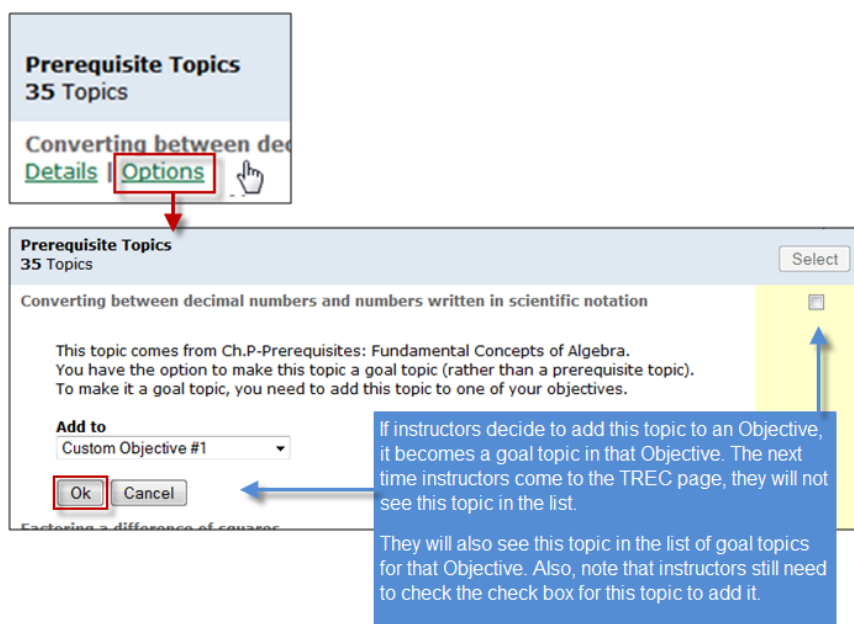
- **Recommended** - These topics are the maximum number of prerequisite topics, and should be used with most typical classes that have some students who need extensive review of prerequisite topics.
- **Moderate** - These topics are recommended for classes - that have students who need less review of prerequisite topics.

- **Minimum** - These topics are "steppingstone" topics between goal topics. No lower prerequisite topics are included. This selection should be used only for classes where all the students do NOT need some review of prerequisite topics.
- **None** – Instructors can choose not to add any topics by selecting this level.

Note: The details link becomes available when hovering over a prerequisite topic.



Note: When a course is set up with Objectives, the “Options” link becomes available when scrolling over a prerequisite topic. Clicking on “Options” displays some information with the option to add the prerequisite topic to a custom Objective that was created in the previous Objectives Editor page.




After selecting topics and clicking on the “Next Step” button at the bottom of the page, these topics are added to the course content. Instructors continue with the course setup.

## Editing the TREC

A **Current Selection** column may appear when returning to this page. This column displays the prerequisite topics that instructors previously added to the course content, but are not part of any particular Objective. Instructors can reference this column and compare it to the other columns to decide whether to keep these topics or add additional topics.

**Course Set-Up Wizard - Recommended Topics for Optimal Learning**

 **Based on your course content, students will need the following prerequisite topics for optimal learning.**

Continue with the **Current Selection**, or select another column.

All checked topics will be added as prerequisites. To view additional information about why this topic is recommended, click on **Details**.

Number of topics to be added: 62. Total number of topics in class: 212

Prerequisite Topics 62 Topics	Current Selection 62 Topics	Recommended 62 Topics	Minimum 2 Topics
Adding a 2-digit number and a 1-digit number with carry <a href="#">Details</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Addition of 3 or 4 one-digit numbers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Addition of large numbers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Addition with carry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



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