

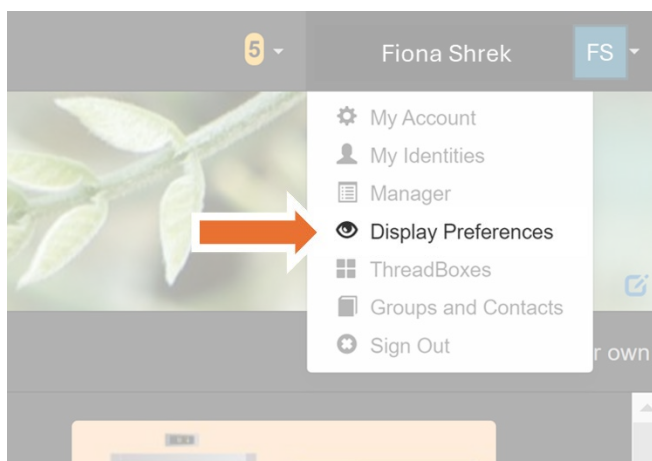
Getting to Know the New VoiceThread

[JHU's VoiceThread browser-based platform](#) will soon be transitioning to the New VoiceThread. (Non-enterprise – i.e., non-JHU – users can wait, but every account will automatically be switched by June 30, 2024.) This transition is a required update for all users, as the company announced the full rollout in their [2024 roadmap](#) and in this [September 2023 VoiceThread Blog post](#). Some of the improvements in the revitalized platform include:

- increased [accessibility](#), negating the separate “VoiceThread Universal” interface
- a new interface that is designed to enhance the user experience while also simplifying it
- the option to toggle a streamlined gallery view of the slides’ thumbnails (or other media, excluding comments), allowing the user to easily navigate the entire presentation similar to scrubbing a video
- the option for “One conversation” that, when selected, puts all of a VoiceThread presentation’s comments in a single pane that allows a different way to navigate the VoiceThread
- more possibilities for contributing to the conversation through commenting (focusing on a slide, jumping across slides in a single click, etc.)

Making the Switch

Everyone who logs in through the [university's instance of VoiceThread](#) will see the change to the interface beginning [Summer AY 2024-2025](#). If you would like to make the change before then, you can do so through your individual account settings. This is done through display preferences, reached in the original standard (i.e. legacy) interface using the drop-down menu found at the top right of [your home page](#). (Note that you cannot change the display preferences from Universal VoiceThread, which will no longer be available after June 2024.) Simply select “Use new VoiceThread” from the pop-up menu before selecting “Save”.



What's Staying the Same

While the interface is changing, the following items remain the same:

- Login (BSPH users will log-in with the Shibboleth sign-in method)
- All existing VoiceThreads, subscriptions, and [group memberships](#)
- Media [file types accepted](#) for the presentation
- [Permissions and other account features](#):

- sharing VoiceThreads
- ability to create groups based on your role's account type
- [ThreadBox](#), gallery, and [assignments](#) preferences
- media file size limits
- number of slides permitted in a presentation
- maximum duration of an audio/video recorded comment
- unlimited exports (.mov file type) for JH accounts

Note that the **mobile app** will become obsolete as the new browser version is fully supported on mobile devices. However, for now the mobile app will remain the same for students. The [2024 roadmap](#) shows a planned update for faculty to grade directly inside the app.

What's Different

These changes are **only for the browser-based version** of the VoiceThread application.

New Features, Including Accessibility Enhancements

Home (My Voice) Page

- Sort presentations by **activity** date (keeping the ability to sort by date created)
- Search by course, group, or ThreadBox in addition to searching by presentation title
- View a list of all VoiceThreads in an alternate, compact view in left-side navigation panel
- The **VoiceThread Learning Center** (case studies, research, blog, tutorials, etc.) can now be accessed in the horizontal, top navigation bar

Individual Presentations

- [Manage multiple comments at once](#)
- Use [“One conversation” \(threaded across all slides\) or the traditional comments view](#)
- Zoom, pan, and easily navigate (one-click) to any other slide while commenting
- Toggle a streamlined gallery view of the media slides' thumbnails while viewing an individual slide
- Copy a link to an individual comment
- Upload and edit captioning files

Changing What You Know

Discontinued Items

The following items are being discontinued:

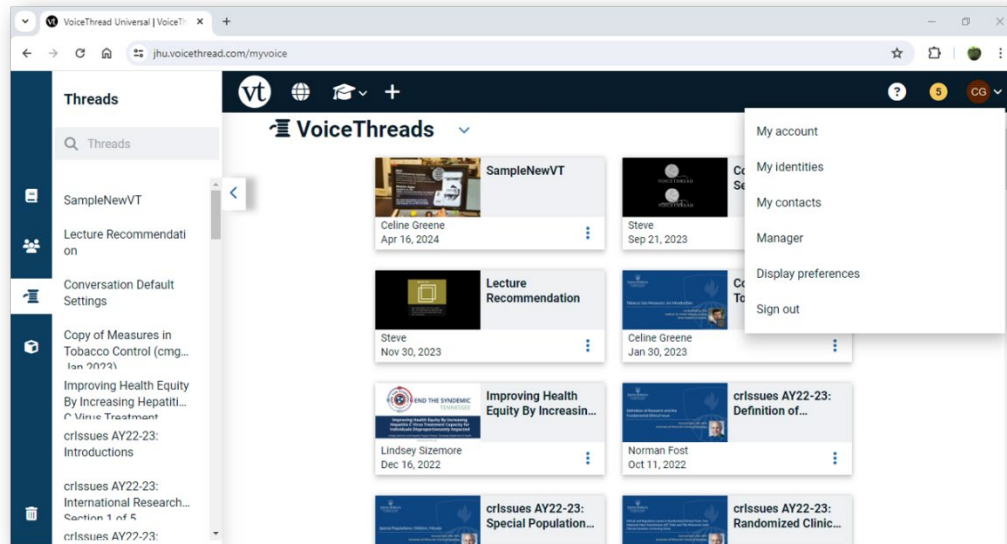
- The full-screen switch/button has been removed. (You can still use your [internet browser's full-screen, maximize option](#).)
- [VoiceThread Universal](#) is being retired. The new browser interface is fully accessible.

Home Page (My Voice) Appearance

Layout

The layout will be different across the site, but the redesign is aimed to make the transition intuitive. In making the changes, VoiceThread hoped to reduce the clutter and make a friendlier user experience.

- The search box is moved to the right-side of the home page.
- The horizontal menu bar along the top is now simply icons without words. (Even your login email address is no longer visible next to your identity’s initials – or image icon – at the top-right.)
- Full pages have been put in place of the pop-up, overlay content boxes for items such as your display preferences.



Menus

While the main navigation menus remain across the top and left-side panels, some of the navigation items have changed.

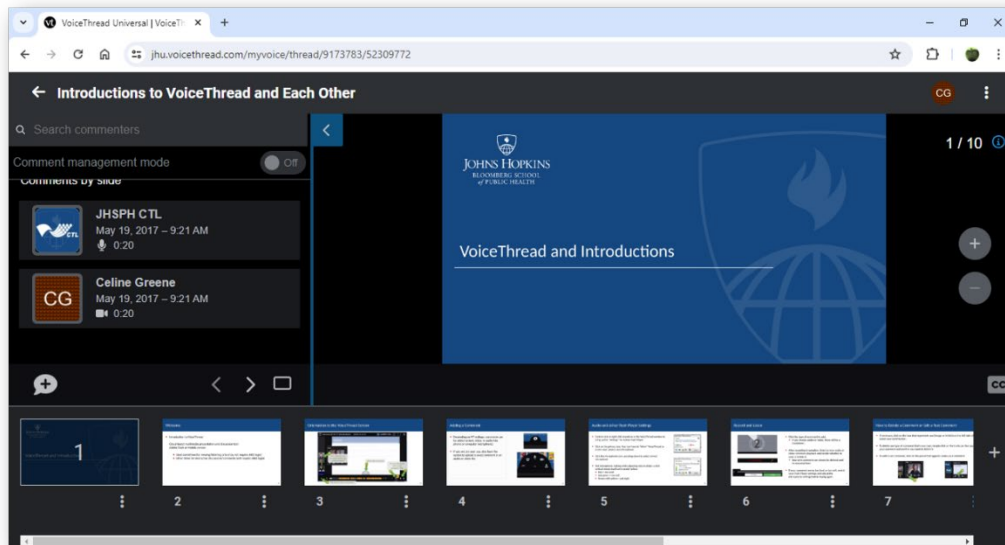
- The **top navigation menu** now includes a drop-down menu to the VoiceThread Learning Center (case studies, research, tutorials, etc.)
- The **left-side navigation menu** now has a link to access all VoiceThreads, previously only accessed by navigating back to the original home screen. Groups and courses are now only listed separately; there is no “All” option.
- The **drop-down menu** found at the top right (attached to your identity’s initials/image) now includes a link to your contacts but not your groups. Navigation links to ThreadBoxes and Groups have been removed, though both can still be accessed through the left-side navigation menu.

Icons

You will see some **new icons** including the 🍷 on your home page. (This thread “spool” icon indicates individual VoiceThread presentations, as each one serves as a potential threaded discussion.) You will also see some icons are being replaced, such as the **ThreadBoxes icon** which went from four aligned squares to more of a 3-D box icon.

Individual Presentations' Appearance

Open Presentation Layout

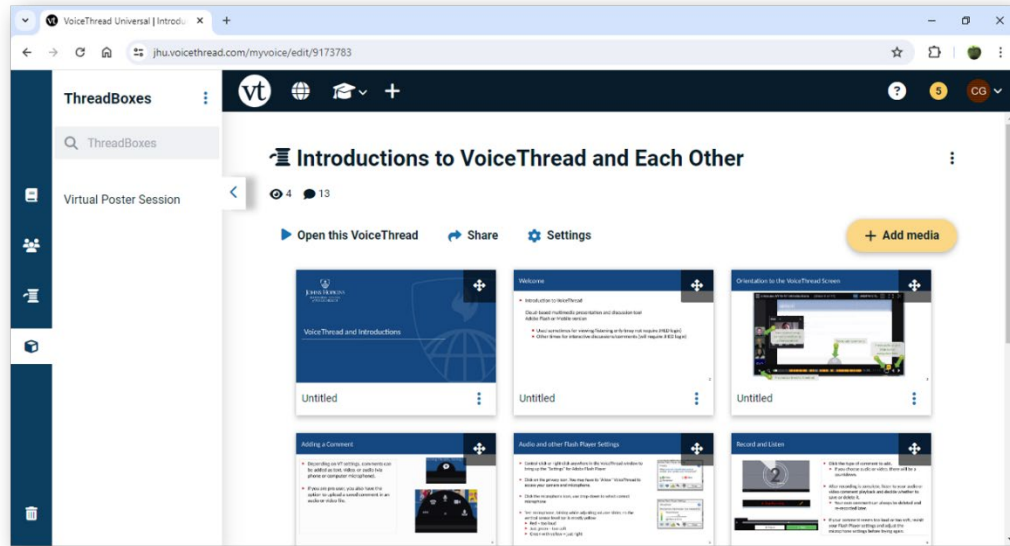


- The **main presentation menu** (to share, edit, change settings, etc.) has been moved from the top-left to the top-right of the presentation. (It is a drop-down from the three dots next to your initials or chosen image icon)
- You can now toggle the display of a streamlined **gallery view of the media slides' thumbnails** at the bottom of the presentation view.
- The **closed captions icon** has been moved to the bottom right of the presentation.
- The **“make a comment” feature** has been moved to the bottom left of the presentation.
- **Navigate slides on the left side** of the presentation (moved from the bottom right).
- **Closed captions** now have increased visibility. (Customization is a planned development.)
- The **comments timeline** (that displays only while a recorded comment is playing) appears inside the comment window, instead of at the bottom of the slide.
- When **“One Conversation”** is turned on (controlled by the presentation's owner in its settings), the comments for the entire VoiceThread appear on every slide.

Open Presentation Menus

- Instead of closing a VoiceThread and returning home by clicking on the X at the top right of a presentation, you now close it by clicking on the arrow at the top left next to the presentation's title.

Create/Editing Layout



- When you create or edit a presentation, you will now **see both the familiar horizontal and side navigation menus of the home (My Voice) page.**
- You can **open the presentation by clicking on any individual slide thumbnail**, similar to a table of contents hyperlink.
- **“Settings”** is now a menu item in the main editing view, alongside “Open this VoiceThread” and “Share”.
- A single **“Add media”** button is now always at the top right of the editing view, instead of at the end of the thumbnails of uploaded media slides.
- **The menu items to quickly link to “Edit” the presentation title and “add cover art”** have been removed. (The options are still available; detailed in the “Create/Editing Menus” section, below.)

Create/Editing Menus

- **“Open this VoiceThread”** replaces “Comment” as a menu item.
- While “Add Media” and “Share” remain in the main editing view, **all other editing menu items are found by expanding the drop-down menu** (expand the three dots) at the top right.
 - **Within “Thread details”, edit the presentation’s title and cover image** (previously referred to as “cover art”). Thread settings used to include title and description, playback options, and cover art.
 - **“Playback settings”** is now its own menu item and pop-up window.
 - Still available through the Share pop-up window, the drop-down menu includes the embed and export options.

Resources to Learn More

VoiceThread Support:

- [The New VoiceThread](#)
- [Upcoming VoiceThread Workshops](#)
- [Archived VoiceThread Workshop Recordings \(including the New VoiceThread introduction\)](#)

VoiceThread Blog:

- [VoiceThread Roadmap 2024](#) (March 2024)
- [The New VoiceThread: simpler, more accessible, and more powerful](#) (Sept 2023)
- [New Features Category](#)

JHU Support:

- [VoiceThread Overview](#) (IT@JH University Information Systems)
- [BSPH CTL Support](#)