

Using Blackboard as an Enhancement



Common Online Teaching Vocabulary:

Asynchronous - Communication in which interaction between participants takes place at different times. Examples in the Blackboard classroom of asynchronous communication are Email and Threaded Discussions.

Breadcrumbs - a term used in Blackboard to indicate navigational links used to track where a user is inside of the online environment. The breadcrumbs are located above the content frame.

Synchronous - Communication in which interaction between participants takes place in real time. Examples in the Blackboard classroom of synchronous communication is the Chat Room and "Who's Online".

Threaded Discussions - Threaded Discussions are online "asynchronous conversations" in which participants can ask questions, generate discussion, and share feedback and ideas. Threaded discussions allow you to create topics relevant to the course where users can post and reply to messages. Replies that are associated with the same post are grouped together, creating message threads that can be expanded and collapsed.

Upload - Uploading in an online class refers to transferring files from a home computer, to a host, such as your online class.

For a complete list of vocabulary words and concepts check out:

https://de_coordinator_sites.gocolumbia.edu/docs/common_online_terms.htm

Check Out - and take time to learn about the resources available to you and your students located on the Distance Learning Menu. <http://www.gocolumbia.edu/online/>.

Perform - A Browser Compatibility Check and encourage your students to do this as well to provide optimum functionality in the online environment. The link is located on the Blackboard login page.

<https://yccd.blackboard.com/webapps/login/>

Log in - with your last name, first initial and your initial password is your 6 digit birthdate. Your students log in with their student ID or "w" number Ex. W0123456 and their 6 digit birthdate, Ex. 041765. Passwords may be changed in My Places located on the top of the Blackboard entry page once you log in.



Explore - the LMS (Learning Management System) and all the options. Every empty Blackboard shell will come with a Welcome Dashboard. You can upload e-paks or course cartridges from your textbook publishers, copy content from previous created shells, create content areas to host electronic materials, images, links, documents, set up regular and effective communication tools and upload PowerPoint slides.

NOTE: Every semester you will be responsible for requesting an enhancement shell. This request link is located in the Distance Learning Menu>Faculty Resources. You will not be required to recreate content each time; there is a copy course procedure to copy over content from semester to semester.

<http://gocolumbia.edu/fcroster/logon.aspx?COL=CC&BB=ON>

Let's Get Started with the Basics

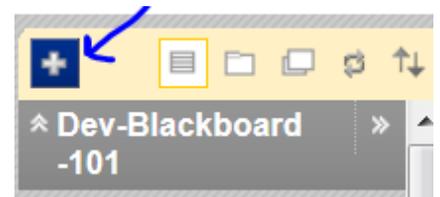
Edit Mode On/Off

When Edit Mode is ON you can edit and create. Edit Mode OFF provides a student view of the Blackboard Classroom content areas. The Edit Mode On/Off is located on the top right hand side of the Blackboard Classroom.



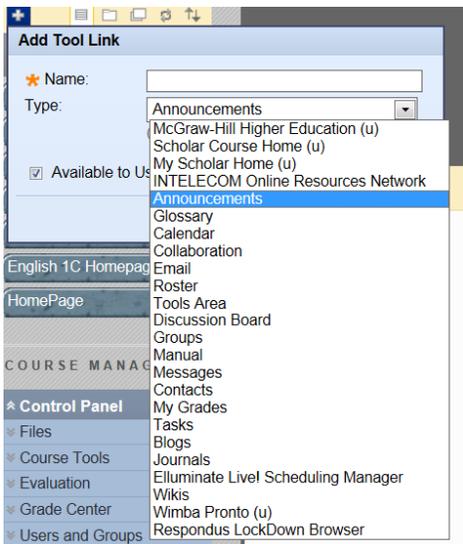
Create Content Areas

To create Content Areaa go the blue square with a white plus sign on the top left corner of your online shell to create a content area or the Add Tool Link. A context sensitive menu will drop-down. The item will display in the menu and you can move the item up or down with the **up and down** arrows located on the top menu area.



Communication Areas

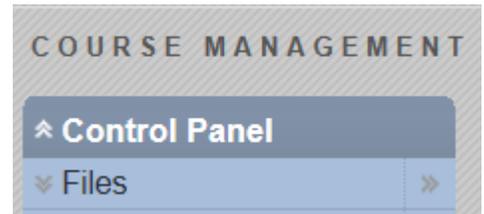
There are many different tools and ways to communicate in the Blackboard classroom. To add a Communication Tool use the Add Tool Link in after you click on the blue square with a white plus sign. Be sure to name the Tool and click the checkbox in order for the tool to be available/visible to your students.



- **Announcements**
- **Email – Two Types (internal/external)**
 - **Email goes to the student’s college email**
 - **Messages is an internal email center inside of the Blackboard class**
- **Threaded Discussions**
- **Chat**
- **Blogs**
- **Wikis**

Upload Files, Images and Power Points to the File Manager

The File Manager is located in the Course Management area/ Control Panel. This area is not available to students. There are many other options to learn about in the Control Panel. It is important to note that if you use images in your Blackboard classroom they should be in .jpg, .gif or .png format. I also recommend using RTF and PDF for documents because they are considered universal file formats; cross platform and multi-browser compatible.



Link Files and Resources into the Content Areas

Click on the menu item you created  and a Build Menu will appear as displayed below. Each of the buttons have more options to choose from when you click on them. It will take time to explore them all.



There are many ways to import and upload content to your content areas. Sometimes you will hear the words upload or attach. These words basically mean the same technique. I suggest uploading and organizing the materials in folders in the File Manager first and then linking into the content areas.

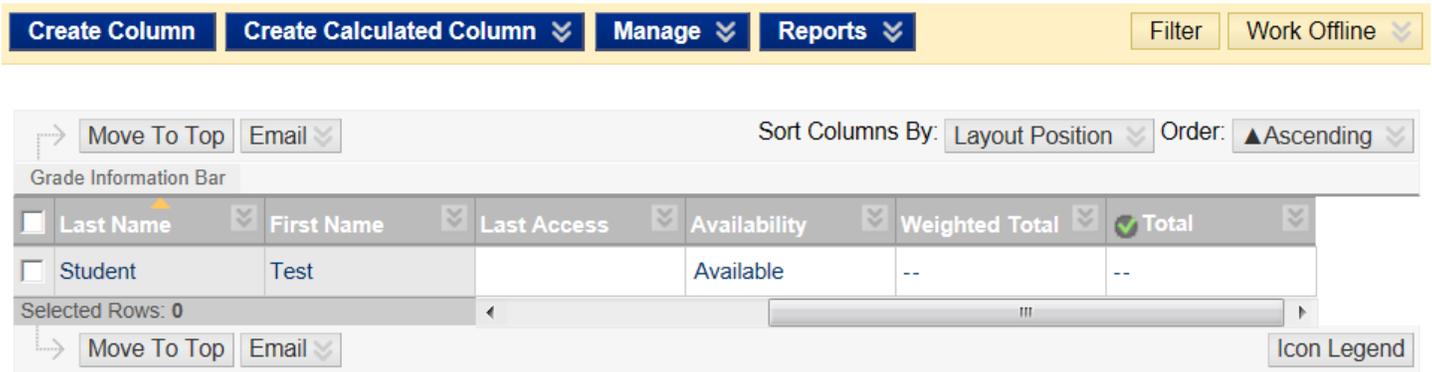
Files, images and electronic materials should go into the File Manager first then connect/link to your content area in the class. The only items that will not need to be uploaded to the File Manager first are Web links and Files for your Assignment areas. Web Link URLs must be highlighted, copied and then pasted into a Create URL Item area and Files used in the Assignment Tool area are uploaded directly from your computer or jump drive.

Setting up the Grade Center

Many instructors use the grade center tool. This helps students to be responsible and accountable for checking on their own grades. To set up a Grade Center you must first add it to the menu area by going to the

Add Tool Link and enabling My Grades. You may rename the original My Grade's Name. This will allow students to access and view their grade area only.

There are a few things to mention about the Grade Center located in the Control Panel>Grade Center. If you create Threaded Discussions, Blogs, Wikis, Assignments, and Assessments a grade column may be created **automatically** if you select the grading checkbox when setting these areas up. Otherwise, you will be going directly into the Grade Center and Adding Columns. The Grade Center comes with a Weighted Total and a Running Total Column.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports', along with 'Filter' and 'Work Offline' options. Below this is a 'Grade Information Bar' with 'Move To Top' and 'Email' buttons. The main area displays a table with columns: Last Name, First Name, Last Access, Availability, Weighted Total, and Total. The 'Sort Columns By' is set to 'Layout Position' and the 'Order' is 'Ascending'. A row is visible with 'Student' in the Last Name column and 'Test' in the First Name column. The 'Availability' column shows 'Available' and the 'Weighted Total' and 'Total' columns show '--'. At the bottom, there are 'Move To Top' and 'Email' buttons, and an 'Icon Legend' button.

Set Classroom Entry Point for Students

When you first entered the online Blackboard class environment you were most likely taken to the Dashboard/Welcome Area. You may want the students to enter and view Announcements first or another content area of your choice. I recommend you set up an area where you can write instructions for your students to understand what they need to do and where they need to go to find resources, assignments, assessments etc. One of the most popular ways to do this is with the Announcement tool.

To set the entry point go to the Control Panel>Customization>Style. You will see a Web page that has many options for you to choose from including the colors and design of your menu items. At the bottom of the page locate Select Course Entry Point. All your content areas will be listed; choose from the list you want students view upon entry in your online enhancement shell.

4. Select Course Entry Point

Select the first page users see when entering the Course from the list below.

Entry Point

Help Wanted

It is important to remember there is help available for your students. There's a wealth of instructions and information using Quick Guides, Blackboard and Technology Tutorials, MJC Help Desk, the Instructional Technology Center (ITC), Virtual & F2F Orientations, and additional Online Help Resources for students. Please make sure your students take advantage of all of them to have a successful online learning experience.

Congratulations on providing learning opportunities for your students 24/7!

