



***Blackboard  
Handbook  
for University of  
Maine System  
Faculty***

*Version 9.5*

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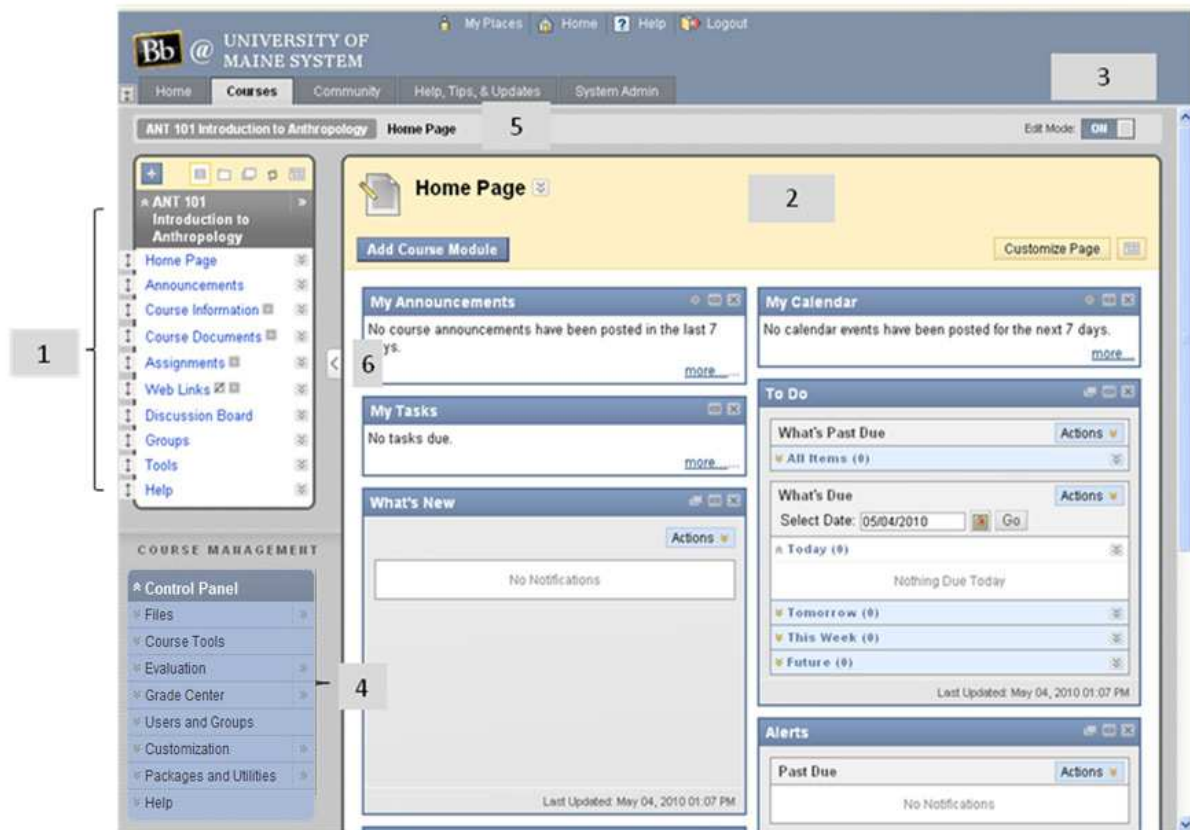
## **Logging into Blackboard and getting to your course**

1. Go to <http://www.courses.maine.edu>
2. Enter your username and password and click **Login**. (Contact Technical Support if you do not know your username and/or password. For all UMS employees, use your @maine.edu e-mail username as your Blackboard username and the password for this account as your Blackboard password.)
3. In the **My Courses** area, click on the link to the course.

*Inactive course sites are removed from Blackboard beginning one year after the end of the semester in which the courses were taught in order to clear server space.*

## Navigating the course home page

The course home page is where you and your students will start when you log into the course.



Here you'll see:

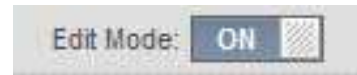
1. **The course menu** – used to navigate to the different sections of the site. The menu can be customized. Note that the course menu can be expanded or hidden from view by clicking on the up arrows to the left of the course name.
2. **Home Page module**, including, by default: My Announcements, My Calendar, Tasks, What's New, To Do, Alerts, and Needs Attention. Many of these options link to tools that you may or may not decide to use.
3. **Edit Mode toggle (ON/OFF)** used to activate the tools and other options that you will use to create your site.
4. **Control Panel** – where you'll go to access many of the tools used to set up and manage your course site. *Students do not see the Control Panel button.*
5. **Breadcrumb area** – a series of links that display your path through the site so you can navigate easily.
6. **Toggle button to hide the menu area and maximize screen space for content** – click < to show a view of the course without the course menu buttons (freeing up more screen space for content). Click > to show default view with menus.


## Managing the course menu

Be sure that the course menu is expanded. Click the left-hand arrows to expand and contract the menu.



To modify the course menu you must be in **Edit Mode**. Click the **Edit Mode** button (upper right) to turn Edit Mode **ON**. Menu links for areas that do not contain any content are, by



default, not visible to students. These links are indicated by  next to the link's name.

### Remove a menu link

Select **Delete** from the drop-down menu on the right of the link's name. Click **OK** to confirm.



### Add a menu link

Place your cursor on the + icon above the course menu and select the type of link that you want to add.



- **Content Areas** are where you place documents (in Blackboard 8, default Content Areas were Course Information / Syllabus, Assignments, and Course Documents). Select **Create Content Area** from the menu, enter your name for the link, make it available to users, and click **Submit**.
- **Tool Links** are links to functional areas of Blackboard (for example, Discussion Board, Groups, Announcements, Blogs). In the **Type:** field's drop-down menu, choose a tool

from the list (for example, *Groups*), enter a name for the link (for example, *Group Projects*), and click **Available to Users**, then **Submit**.

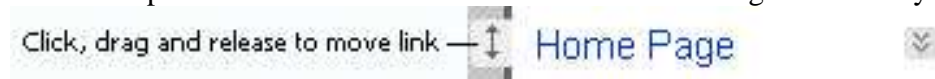
- A **Course Link** sets up a direct link from the course menu to any frequently-used part of your site. Click **Browse** to identify the target of the link.
- An **External Link** allows you to link directly from the course menu to an essential web site that you might use as a primary reference for the course. For example, if you are teaching a meteorology course, you might want to link to NOAA's web site to make it easily accessible.
- A **Module Page** lets you create and link to pages in your site which can be customized to include a variety of resources and tools. (For example: Calculator, Dictionary, To Do list, Alerts.) *You might find that the options here duplicate others already available.*

### Rename a menu link

Select **Rename Link** from the pull-down menu and enter a new name. Click the green check mark to Save the change or the red X to cancel.

### Rearrange menu links

Click the up-and-down arrow on the left of the link and drag it to where you want to move it.



### Hide / Show a menu link

Select **Hide Link** or **Show Link** from the drop-down menu on the right of the link's name.

Hidden links are indicated by  after the link name.

### Create dividers

Dividers allow you to better organize your course menu into distinct sections.

- Click the + icon above the course menu and select **Create Divider**.
- The divider is added at the bottom of the course menu.
- Drag the divider to where you want it by clicking the up-and-down arrow on the left.



## Create subheaders

Subheaders permit you to better clarify relationships between course menu items.

- Click the + icon above the course menu and select **Create Subheader**.
- Type in the name of the subheader and click **Submit**.
- The subheader is added at the bottom of the course menu.
- Drag the subheader to where you want it by clicking the up-and-down arrow on the left.
- Note that subheaders include a divider above the subheader name.

Home Page

Syllabus

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**Course Modules**

Module 1

Module 2

Module 3

**Course Modules** subheader is created with included divider on top

## Changing button / link style

You can change the style and color of the menu links. Two types of course menu links are available: **Text** and **Buttons**.

- Click **Customization** in the **Control Panel** and select **Style**.
- In the **Select Menu Style** section of the page, selecting **Text** displays the names of the links against a solid background color of your choice. Selecting **Buttons** places the text with the color that you select in buttons.
- When selecting text, background, and button colors, be sure to use color combinations with adequate contrast.
- Click **Submit** on the bottom of the page to save your changes.

## **Entering Your Contact Information (formerly Faculty / Staff Information)**

The **Contacts** area gives you a place to post faculty contact information, office hours, and a brief bio.

1. Select **Contacts** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Create Contact**.
3. Complete the form. If you wish to add a photo, use a JPEG with resolution between 72 and 100 pixels per inch. (Blackboard suggests using a file no larger than 150 x 150 pixels.)
4. Click **Submit**.
5. You can also create a folder with multiple profiles.

## **Making Your Course Site Available**

Blackboard sites are automatically created for all UMS courses. By default, courses are created as **Unavailable**.

Your course site will not be “populated” with your students until you make it **Available**. The process that adds student to your site runs every day, and once you make the site Available your students should appear in your site within 24 hours.

To make your site **Available**:

**Control Panel / Customization / Properties / Set Availability / Yes / Submit**

To confirm that your students have been added to site, you can check in either of two places:

- **Grade Center (Control Panel / Grade Center / Full Grade Center)**
- **Roster (Tools in the main course menu / Roster)**

## Transferring Course Material from Previous to New Blackboard Sites

### A. Get your new site ready

When you import material from your previous site to your new site, course menu links get imported along with course content. This can result in a confusing duplication of menu links in your new site -- some with content and some without.

As a first step, you can remove menu links in your **new (empty)** course site by selecting **Delete** from the drop-down menu to right of each link.

**Caution:** If you wish to remove the **Blackboard Support** link (located at the bottom of the menu), **do it before removing other links**. If you save this link until last Blackboard may lock you out of your course site.

If you decide not to remove these buttons now, you can do so after importing your content, but at that point you will have to distinguish between menu items with content and those without content.)

*Note about the **Home Page**:* The **Home Page** is the default entry point. If you prefer to remove it and use **Announcements** as the course entry point, select **Delete** from the drop-down menu on the right of the **Home Page** link. If you prefer using the **Home Page**, do not remove it.

### B. Copy the content from your previous course site...

1. Go to your old site, select **Packages and Utilities** from the **Control Panel** menu, and then click **Course Copy**.


2. Make sure that **Copy Course Materials to an Existing Course** is selected in the **Select Copy type** menu.

3. Click **Browse** to show a list of all of your courses. Click the radio button to the left of the course to which you want to copy your materials. Click **Submit**.

4. Select the content that you want to copy.

- Be sure to include **Settings** if you customized the course menu and other features of the course.
- If you are including assignments, assessments, and other graded items (discussion boards, etc.) linked to the Grade Center, be sure to click **Grade Center Columns and Settings**.
- Do not include Enrollments.

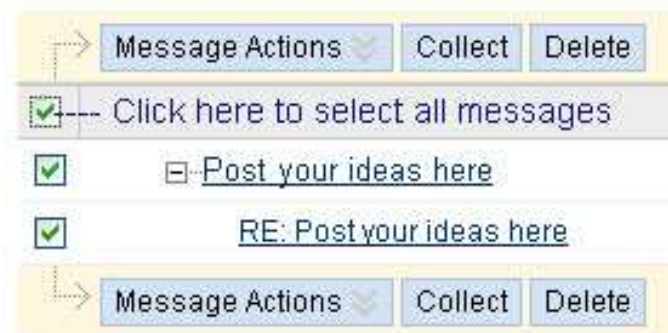
Click **Submit**. You'll see a confirmation. It may take some time for your content to be copied, depending on the size of your previous site.

5. Your content will appear in the new course site. Refresh the course menu by clicking on the  refresh tool above the course menu.

- You may have some duplicated course menu links which you can remove by selecting **Delete** from the drop-down menu to right of each link that you want to remove.
- If you removed the **Home Page**, the **Announcements** page should automatically become the default entry point.

If **Announcements** is *not* set automatically as the default entry point, go to the **Control Panel**, click **Style** in the **Customization** menu, then select **Announcements** in the drop-down menu for **Course Entry Point** (section 4 of the screen). Click **Submit**.

- If you copy your Discussion Board forums, all postings from your previous course will also be copied. You can delete these by opening each forum, clicking the check box as indicated below, then clicking **Delete**. If not all postings in a forum are displayed, go to **Edit Paging** at the bottom right to show all threads.



***Be sure to make your new site available to have your students added to the site.***

**Control Panel / Customization / Properties / Set Availability / Yes / Submit**

## Exporting Course Content to Use as an “Archive” / Backup

If you want to keep an off-line copy of your course site as an “archive” / backup (content only; no student data) to be imported at some future time to a new site, you can use the **Export / Archive Course** tool.

*You will not be able to access anything in the offline archived site. To view the contents you must import the archive into a new Blackboard site.*

1. Go to your site, select **Packages and Utilities** from the **Control Panel** menu, and then click **Export / Archive Course**.
2. Click **Export** and select everything you want to export. Be sure to click **Settings** if you have customized anything in the menu, tools, etc. of the course site. **Do NOT click Enrollments**. Then click **Submit**.

NOTE: This may take a while, depending on how much material you have in your course site. If you see a message to the effect that “no packages exist for this course,” check back after waiting a while. Click **Export / Archive Course** again and you will see a link that looks something like this:

[ExportFile\\_W4567\\_A\\_081\\_20080424024157.zip](#)

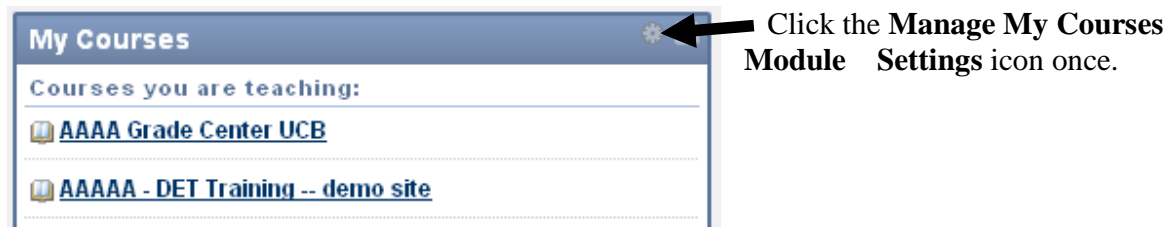
3. Click the link to save the resulting file to your computer. (It's a ZIP file with a name that will look something like this: ExportFile\_W4567\_A\_081) *Don't open this file or do anything with it.*

*To import the content into your new site...*

1. Go to your new site, select **Packages and Utilities** from the **Control Panel** menu, and then click **Import Package / View Logs**.
2. Click **Import Package**, then **Browse** and find the file you exported.
3. Select the content that you want to import and click **Submit**. You'll see a confirmation. It may take some time for your content to be imported, depending on the size of your export file.

## Organizing your Homepage: Cleaning up your My Courses list

If your homepage has a long list of courses that are from past semesters, or sections that you will not need to access on a regular basis, you can shorten that list in order to display only those courses you are currently teaching.



On the next screen:

Click once in the checkbox before the course that you wish to hide. If it places a checkmark in all the boxes to the right of the course information, click the box to the left a second time and those checks will go away. This will hide that course from your Blackboard Homepage but still allow you to access it from the Courses tab in Blackboard.

*Example:*

1 View when you first access the Personalize: My Courses:

**Courses you are teaching:**

↑↓	Select All/Unselect All Course	Course Name	Course ID	Instructors	Announcements	Tasks	Calendar	Events
↑↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_GCUCB: AAAA Grade Center UCB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
↑↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_DET6: AAAAA - DET Training -- demo site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 View after you've clicked once in the Select All/Unselect All Course checkbox:

**Courses you are teaching:**

↑↓	Select All/Unselect All Course	Course Name	Course ID	Instructors	Announcements	Tasks	Calendar	Events
↑↓	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_GCUCB: AAAA Grade Center UCB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
↑↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_DET6: AAAAA - DET Training -- demo site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 View after clicking a second time in the left-hand checkbox: *(this is what you want for all the courses that you wish to hide from your homepage)*

**Courses you are teaching:**

↑↓	Select All/Unselect All Course	Course Name	Course ID	Instructors	Announcements	Tasks	Calendar	Events
↑↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_GCUCB: AAAA Grade Center UCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
↑↓	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEV_A_DET6: AAAAA - DET Training -- demo site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When you have completed this process for all the courses that you wish to hide from your Homepage, click the Submit button.

**Submit**

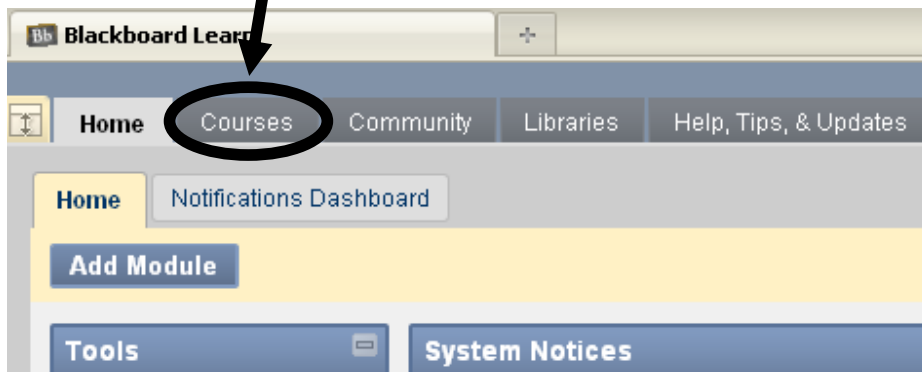
The Homepage will be displayed and across the top you will see the following message:

The module has been successfully updated.

*Result from the above example:*



You can still access any course that you have hidden from the My Courses module of the homepage. To do so, click the **Courses** tab and find your course in the **Course List**.



## **Posting announcements**

Course Announcements provide the opportunity to welcome students to the course site and help them through the important first steps in getting started. Posting an initial message a week or so before the course begins goes a long way to assure students – especially those taking exclusively online courses – that they really *aren't* on their own. Regular updates and reminders are useful in keeping students on task and current – and can be especially useful in getting the word out about course schedule changes and/or class cancellations due to illness and weather.

1. In **Edit Mode**, click **Announcements** in the main menu (or select **Announcements** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**) and click **Create Announcement**.
2. Enter a Subject and the Message.
3. By default, the announcement appears immediately after posting and remains indefinitely. New announcements go to the top of the list.
4. You can customize when the announcement is displayed in the **Web Announcements Options** section of the screen. Announcements remain displayed unless date and time restrictions are entered.
5. You can also add a link to another part of the course using the **Course Link** option. **Browse** to find the document or area to which you want to link. This is useful if calling students' attention to newly-available course material.
6. Click **Submit**.
7. You can rearrange the order of announcements by clicking and holding down the mouse button on the up-and-down arrow to the left of each announcement and dragging it to where you want it to appear in the list.

## Setting Up and Using Discussion Boards

Blackboard's Discussion Board is one of the most widely-used features because of its potential for connecting faculty and students asynchronously.

### Accessing Discussion Boards

You can access Discussion Boards in two ways:

- **From the main course menu**, click **Discussions**. You will be brought to the entire class Discussion Board.
- **Through the Control Panel**, click **Discussion Board** in the **Course Tools** menu. You will see a list of *all* Discussion Boards in your course site -- both the “**entire class**” Discussion Board, identified by the course ID (in the example below, W7890\_A\_072), and **group** Discussion Boards).

### Setting Up Discussion Board Forums

1. Click the **Discussions** link in the course menu, and then click **Create Forum**. (You can also create a forum within a content area by selecting **Discussion Board** under the **Add Interactive Tool** drop-down menu, and then clicking **Create New Forum**.)
2. Give the forum a name. Use the **Description** box to describe the discussion task to your students.
3. You can make the forum available immediately or create it and make it available within a specified window of time. Choose **Yes** or **No** for **Available**, then select date and time restrictions if desired. (You must have **Yes** checked for **Available** if setting date and time restrictions.)
4. Choose the settings in the **Forum Settings** menu. Suggestions for some of the major options are below:
  - **Allow Anonymous Posts**. Useful for sensitive topics or formative evaluation but many faculty prefer that students “own” their posts.
  - **Allow Author to Delete Own Posts**. *Recommended setting*: Only postings with no replies. (If you grade student participation, if a student removes replies to his/her own posting, the record of other students' participation is also removed.)
  - **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts**. May allow students to change a posting after you grade it.
  - **Allow Post Tagging** Allow students to add keywords to make topics more easily searchable.
  - **Allow Users to Reply with Quote**. Allows users to include (and edit) the text of the original message in any replies to that message. This is enabled by default.
  - **Allow File Attachments**. Useful, but remind students to scan documents for viruses before posting.
  - **Allow Members to Create New Threads**. If not selected, students can only post by replying to other postings.
  - **Allow Members to Rate Posts**. Allows students to review their peers' work and rate it.
  - **Force Moderation of Posts**. Moderated postings must first be reviewed by the faculty or an appointed moderator, who then decides whether or not to “publish” them. Useful if you first want to review students' work before making it available to the entire class.
  - **Grade**. Grading of forums or threads is linked to the Grade Center.

5. Click **Submit**. The forum appears as a link. You can re-order the forums using the up-and-down arrows to the left of each forum name.

### **Posting messages to a forum (as Threads)**

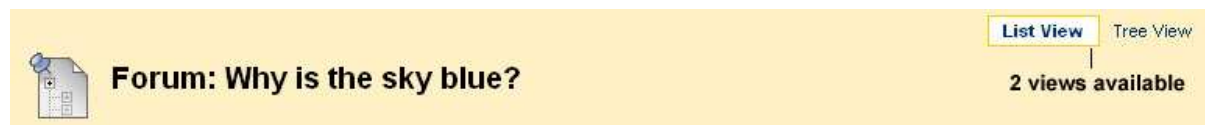
1. Click the name of the forum.
2. Click **Create Thread**.
3. Enter a **Subject** and your **message**.
4. Click **Submit**. (You can also use **Save a draft** if you want to come back and finish it later before posting it.)

### **Reading messages in a forum**

First be sure to click **Show All** or **Edit Paging** to show all available forums.

Displaying 1 to 1 of 3 items    [Show All](#) [Edit Paging...](#)

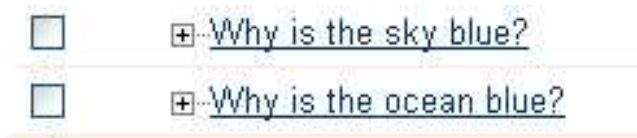
Click on the forum name to open the forum. There are two possible views of the forum: **Tree View** and **List View** (selected using buttons in the upper right of your screen).

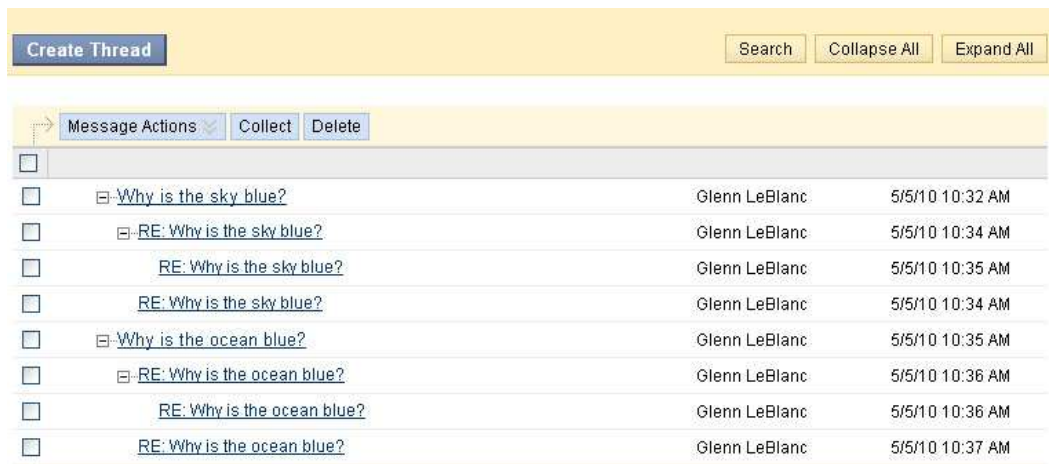


**List View** displays only the Threads (usually, the main topics of the discussion). To view replies to a thread, click the name of the thread.

		Thread Actions		Collect	Delete	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	Thread	Author	Status	Unread Posts	Total Posts
<input type="checkbox"/>	5/5/10 10:32 AM	<a href="#">Why is the sky blue?</a>	Glenn LeBlanc	Published	0	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	5/5/10 10:35 AM	<a href="#">Why is the ocean blue?</a>	Glenn LeBlanc	Published	0	4

**Tree View** allows you to get a “bird’s eye view” of the entire forum. Note the + sign to the left of each thread name. Click **Expand All** to display all replies to the thread, and **Collapse All** to return to the initial view.





When you click on the link for a message, a screen is displayed which shows the overview of the thread above and the text of the message below.

To read the messages in a Thread, click their individual links (above) or click the < (previous) or > (next) icons in the bottom panel to navigate through the messages. When you reach the end of the thread you will no longer see the **Next Message** (>) arrow. Click the **Move to Next Thread** arrow above the message to advance to the next thread.



**1** Note that no **Move to Next Message** arrow is available, indicating that you have reached the end of the Thread.

**2** Use the **Move to Next Thread** arrow to advance to the next Thread.

### Replying to messages

1. Click **Reply** in the message to which you are replying.
2. The original Subject appears in the Subject: line. Enter your message. (Do not click Save Draft.) To review the message you are replying to while composing your reply, click **View Original Post**.
3. Click **Submit**. The reply appears indented below the original message. (The original message and all replies are a **Thread**.)

### Managing messages

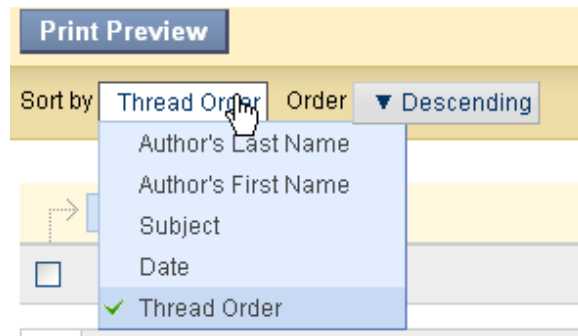
In **List View**, you can sort the messages in the default view of the forum by **Author**, **Date**, or **Thread** by clicking on the appropriate column heading. Toggling switches the sort order (most recent/oldest, A-Z/ Z-A, etc.)

You can use the **Collect** feature to show all of the messages on a single scrollable screen.

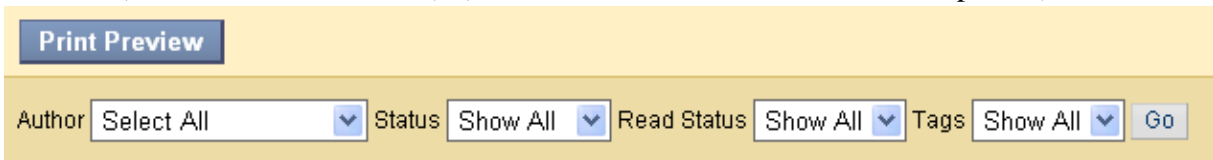
Start by individually selecting the messages you want to read, or click the box on top of the screen to select all postings at a single click (or Select **All** when viewing an individual thread). Click **Collect**.



You can sort the messages in the **Collect** view of the forum by **thread order, author's first/last name, date, and subject**, and in **either ascending or descending order** by selecting the appropriate sort type from the **Sort by:** pull-down menu.



You can filter by **Author, Status** (whether or not the posting has been published), and **Read Status** (Show All, Read, Unread). (Click the **Filter** button to show Filter options.)



## **Sending Email**

E-mail is the best choice for private communication. You and your students can use Blackboard's **Send Email** tool to send e-mail messages from a course site.

- Although you can send e-mail from Blackboard, there is no place in Blackboard to check e-mail. Check e-mail in your regular e-mail account. You can check your University (@maine.edu) e-mail using a Web browser by going to <http://mail.maine.edu/>, clicking on the appropriate option under Web Access to Mail (UMS Webmail or gmail), and logging in with your e-mail username and password.
- All e-mail addresses listed in Blackboard are @maine.edu accounts. If you wish to receive your e-mail at another address (roadrunner.com, etc.), forward mail from your "@maine.edu" account to the account you want to use by selecting "[Change the destination of email sent to your @Maine.edu address](#)" at <http://mail.maine.edu/>. *Be sure to have your students do this, too.*

### ***Sending E-mail from Blackboard***

1. To send e-mail, click **Tools**, then **Send Email** (or click **Send Email** in the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**).  
You'll have to decide to whom you want to send the message. Most commonly-used options are:
  - **All Users** – all students, faculty, and teaching assistants
  - **Single / Select Users** – allows you to select individual names (click the name in the left-hand Items to Select column, then click the > to move the name to Selected Items column. (To select multiple names, click the names while holding down the **Control** key.)
2. Enter a subject and your message.
3. If you want to add attachments, click **Attach a file**, then **Browse**, and find the file you want to attach.
4. Click **Submit** to send the message. A copy is automatically sent to your own e-mail address.  
The subject of the e-mail message will contain the course ID of your course site, enabling you to identify the source of the e-mail.

## Working with Groups

The Groups tool allows more focused small group discussion among a smaller number of participants, helping to reduce some of the concerns in using the public (whole-class) Discussion Board. This option is useful for team projects requiring private communication, as the group's work is visible only to members of that group. (For example, a faculty member teaching a management class used small groups for competing teams developing business plans.)

The Group creation process has been streamlined in version 9. In version 9 you can create *single groups* or *group sets*. **Group sets** allow you to set up multiple groups for a project all at the same time. So, say you wanted six groups for your "Developing a Business Plan" or "Reacting to Jane Eyre" project. In Blackboard 8 you had to create these six groups one at a time. In Blackboard 9 you create a Group Set – all six at once!

Group enrollment has also been streamlined. You can manually enroll students in groups as in Blackboard 8, or you can allow students to self enroll, or you can add students to groups randomly.

There are also options to allow students to create their own groups and edit student-created groups.

### Creating a Single Group

1. Click **Groups** in the main course menu or select **Groups** from the **Users and Groups** menu in the **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Create Single Group**. Select either **Self-Enroll** or **Manual Enroll**.
3. Enter a Name and Description for the group.
4. Set the group's availability: **No**, **Yes**, **Sign-up Sheet Only** (allows students to sign up for the group even if it is not available if you selected the Self-Enroll option.)
5. Click the Tools that you want the students to be able to access in their group. As in Blackboard 8, if you select **Discussion Board**, one forum will automatically be created in each group.
6. Steps for enrolling students are different depending on whether you selected **Self-Enroll** or **Manual Enroll**.
  - **Self-Enroll groups**. Students will sign themselves up for the group using a sign-up sheet that they access when they click on the **Groups** link in the course menu. Enter a name and instructions for the Sign-up Sheet. Enter a maximum number of members and decide if you want to check **Show Members** (making it possible for students to see other group members before they sign up.) Leave **Allow students to sign-up from the Groups Area** checked. Click **Submit** when you're finished.

- **Manual Enroll groups.** In the **Membership** area, click on the students' names in the **Items to Select** box, then click the right arrow in the middle to put the students into the group. (Hold down the **Control** key and click multiple names to add more than one student at a time.) Click **Submit** when you're finished.

### **Creating a Group Set**

1. Click **Create Group Set**. Select either **Self-Enroll, Manual Enroll, or Random Enroll**.
2. Enter a Name and Description for the group set. (Each group in the set will be numbered sequentially.)
3. Set the group's availability: **No, Yes, Sign-up Sheet Only** (allows students to sign up for the group even if it is not available if you selected the Self-Enroll option.)
4. Click the Tools that you want the students to be able to access in their group.
5. Steps for enrolling students are different depending on whether you selected **Self-Enroll, Manual Enroll, or Random Enroll**.
  - **Self-Enroll group sets.** Students will sign themselves up for the group using a sign-up sheet. Enter a name and instructions for the Sign-up Sheet. Enter a maximum number of members and decide if you want to check **Show Members** (making it possible for students to see other group members before they sign up.) Leave **Allow students to sign up from the Groups Area** checked. In the **Group Set Options** area, enter the number of groups that you want to create. Click **Submit** when you're finished.
  - **Manual Enroll group sets.** After entering the name and the number of groups you want to create, click **Submit**. Filter available group members by clicking one or both options. (Clicking **Remove Members already in a Group from the Available Members List** will prevent assigning a student to multiple groups.) In the **Group Set Enrollments** area, click **Expand All / Collapse All** to show / hide details for all groups. To assign students to groups, click on the students' names in the **Items to Select** box, and then click the right arrow in the middle to put the students into the group. (Hold down the **Control** key and click multiple names to add more than one student at a time.) You can delete a group or add additional groups here. Click **Submit**.
  - **Random Enroll group sets.** In the **Membership** area, decide how the number of groups should be determined (**Number of Students per Group or Number of Groups**) and how to enroll any remaining members. If you select **Manually add the remaining members to groups**, you will see a screen where you can add students manually by clicking on the students' names in

the **Items to Select** box, and then clicking the right arrow in the middle to put the students into the group.

### ***Allowing Student-Created Groups***

You have the option of giving students the capability to create their own groups, making it easy for them to work with peers.

- Click **Groups** in the main course menu or select **Groups** from the **Users and Groups** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Group Settings** to allow students to create their own Self-Enrollment Groups from the **Groups** page and to allow students to edit the name, description, and maximum number of students able to join their groups.
- Students can create their own groups by clicking **Tools** in the course menu, then **Groups**, or by clicking any **Groups** link set up by the faculty (**Small groups, Group projects, etc.**), then clicking **Create Group**, naming the group and adding an optional description, a sign-up sheet name, and the maximum number of members.

### ***Accessing groups***

- Click **Groups** in the main course menu or select **Groups** from the **Users and Groups** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click the link to the group.
- The group page appears, including a list of available tools and group members.
- Students access their groups from the **My Groups** menu below the course menu.

## **Journals**

**Journals** are a self-reflective tool for students. Only the student and the Instructor are able to Comment on individual Journal Entries. However, Journals can be made public by the Instructor to allow other enrolled users to read the entries.

If a Journal is set up as one of the available tools in a Group, Group Journals can be viewed and edited only by members of the group.

Instructors can remove journal entries and comments posted by any user.

If a student is removed from the course, the student's Journal will be deleted. All Journal entries and Comments are deleted.

A Journal consists of:

- **Journal Entries:** Text, images, links and attachments posted by individual students.
- **Comments:** Remarks or responses to Journal Entry made by the Instructor.

### **Accessing the Journals page**

Click the **Tools** link in the main course menu, then click **Journals**. (Or select **Journals** from the **Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.)

The **Journals** page lists all Journals, their visibility, last date modified, and the number of entries. Adjust the number of listings on a page with either **Show All** or **Edit Paging...**

- You can control the availability of a Journal with the **Availability** menu.
- To delete a **Journal**, click the box next to its name and click **Delete**.
- To edit or delete a **Journal**, use the drop-down menu to the right of the Journal's name.

### **Creating a Journal**

- Click **Create Journal** on the Journals page (accessed from **Course Tools** in the **Control Panel**) or select **Journal** from the drop-down menu of the **Add Interactive Tool** button in a course content area.
- Enter a name and instructions for using the Journal.
- Click **Yes** for **Journal Availability** to make the Journal available. You can set **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times.
- Determine how to index the journal entries (Monthly or Weekly).

- Set deletion / viewing policies.
  - **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** allows individual students to edit and delete entries in their own journals and to edit and delete only their own entries in group journals.
  - **Allow Users to Delete Comments** allows individual students to delete comments in their own journals and to delete only their own comments in group journals.
  - **Permit Course Users to View Journal** allows all students and others with access to the course site (Teaching Assistants, Graders) to view the journal.
- Click **Submit**.

### **Group Journals**

Group Journals allow students in groups to reflect collaboratively and comment on their fellow group members' entries. To maintain privacy, group members may add journal entries anonymously.

### **Posting to a Journal**

- Click **Create Journal Entry** to compose your entry.
- Click **Post Entry** to add your entry to the journal.
- To post a journal entry comment, click **Comment** on the bottom right-hand side of the entry, compose your comment, then click **Add**.

### **Finding Journals or Journal Entries**

- For Individual Journals, use the **More Journals** option on the right to view a particular person's Journal. For Group Journals, use the **View Entries by:** option to find entries by All or particular group members.
- Use the **Index** option to select entries by date posted (either week or month, depending on how the Journal was configured).

## **Blogs**

**Blogs** are an open communications tool for students to share their thoughts. (The term “blog” is a contraction of “web log.”)

A Blog consists of:

- **Blog Entries:** Text, images, links and attachments posted by students and open for comments.
- **Comments:** Remarks or responses to Blog Entries made by others.

There are three different types of Blogs:

- **Course Blogs:** All enrolled users are able to post Blog Entries. All enrolled users can post Comments to Blog Entries. The Instructor can edit and delete Blog Entries. The Instructor can delete Comments.
- **Individual Blogs:** Only the owner of the Blog is able to post Blog Entries. All other users enrolled in the Course are able to view and add Comments. When you create an individual blog, a blog with the name you assign it will be created for each student in the class.
- **Group Blogs:** All members enrolled in the Group are able to post Blog Entries or make Comments on Blog Entries.

Users removed from the course will not have access to any Blogs. If users are removed from the course after Individual Blogs have been created, all their posts and comments will be deleted. If users are removed from a Course after Course Blogs have been created, all their posts and comments will be retained, but the name of the poster or commenter will be changed to "Anonymous."

### **Creating Course and Individual Blogs**

There are two different ways to create Course and Individual Blogs:

- **On the Blogs page.** Go to the Blogs page by selecting **Blogs** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** (or by clicking **Tools** menu on the main course menu and clicking **Blogs**).
- **From a content area.** Select **Blog** from the **Add Interactive Tool** drop-down menu. Click **Blog**.

### **Setting up the blogs:**

- Enter a name and instructions for using the Blog.
- Click **Yes** for **Blog Availability** to make the Blog available. You can **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times.

- Select the **Blog Type** and whether or not to allow Anonymous posts.
  - **Individual to All Students**
  - **Course**
- Determine how to index the blog entries (Monthly or Weekly)
- Set the edit and delete options.
  - **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** allows individual students to edit and delete entries in their own blogs and to edit and delete only their own entries in course and group blogs.
  - **Allow Users to Delete Comments** allows individual students to delete only their own comments in any blog.
- Click **Submit**.

### Creating Group Blogs

When creating a group, if you select **Blogs** under **Tool Availability**, a group blog will automatically be created with the Group name as the Blog name.

### Getting to a Blog

You can access blogs in more than one way:

- **From a content area** in which you created the blog.
- **From the main course menu** (**Tools / Blogs** / click on the blog name)
- **From the Control Panel** (**Course Tools / Blogs** / click on the blog name)
- **From a Group** (access to that group's blog only). Click **Groups** in main course menu, click the group name, and select **Group Blog** in the **Group Tools** area.

### Posting to a Blog

- Click **Create Blog Entry** to compose your entry.
- Click **Post Entry** to add your entry to the blog.
- To post a blog entry comment, click **Comment** on the bottom right-hand side of the entry, compose your comment, then click **Add**.

## Finding Blogs or Blog Entries

- In Individual Blogs, use the **More Blogs** option on the right to select Blogs by a particular person. In Course and Group Blogs, use **View Entries by:** to select entries by All or particular individuals / group members.
- Use the **Index** to select entries by date posted (either week or month, depending on how the blog was set up).

## Managing the Blogs Page

The **Blogs page** is the central place where you can access all three types of blogs and edit settings of and delete Individual and Course Blogs.

Click the **Tools** link in the main course menu, then click **Blogs**. (Or select **Blogs** from the **Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** or, if you have set up a link to a Blog in a content area.)

The **Blogs** page lists all Blogs, their types, last date modified, and the number of entries. Adjust the number of entries on a page with either **Show All** or **Edit Paging...**

- You can select which types of Blogs are displayed with the **Display Blogs** menu: **All Blogs, My Blogs, Course Blogs, Blogs Permitting Comments Only**.
- You can control the availability of a **Course** or **Individual Blog** by checking the box to the left of the name and selecting either **Make Available** or **Make Unavailable** from the **Availability** drop-down menu.
- To edit or delete a **Course** or **Individual Blog**, use the drop-down menu to the right of the Blog's name.

## **Wikis**

**Wikis** are used to create a collaborative space within the course where all students can view, contribute, and edit content. Wikis are different than blogs and journals because multiple participants can edit the same page(s) in the wiki. The Wiki maintains an ongoing log of all participation and a history of each page.

### **Creating Wikis**

There are two different ways to create Wikis:

- **On the Wikis page.** Go to the Wikis page by selecting **Wiki** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** (or by clicking **Tools** menu on the main course menu and clicking **Wikis**). Click the **Create Wiki** button.
- **From a content area.** Select **Wiki** from the **Add Interactive Tool** drop-down menu. Click **Create New Wiki**. The wiki will then appear highlighted in the list of wikis to select. Click **Next**, then use the text box for optional instructions. Finally, set availability options for the link.

### **Setting up the Wiki**

- Enter a name and optional instructions for using the Wiki.
- Click **Yes** for **Wiki Availability** to make the Wiki available. You can change the **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times.
- Select the **Wiki Participation** type (**Open** or **Closed to Editing**).
- Select a grading option and add points possible if grading the Wiki.
- Click **Submit**.

### **Getting to a Wiki**

You can access wikis in more than one way:

- **From a content area** in which you created the Wiki.
- **From the main course menu (Tools / Wikis / (click on the name of then wiki)**

- **From a group** if Wiki was selected as a tool option when the group was created. Only group members can access the group wiki.

**Posting to a Wiki** (Adding Wiki Pages, Adding and Editing Content, and adding Comments)

- Any course member can add new wiki pages. The first person to enter the wiki space will have to add the first page. Click **Create Wiki Page** to add a new page.
- Click **Edit Wiki Content** to compose your entry. Edit the original content and click **Submit**. Blackboard maintains a record of every edit made.
- To post a comment, click **Comment** on the bottom right-hand side of the entry, compose your comment, then click **Add**.

Use the navigation area (list of page names) on the right-hand side to access the different pages of the wiki. By selecting **History** from the pull-down menu to the right of each page name you can view the edit history of the page.

Click the **Participation Summary** button to review participation records for the entire class. Here you can view contributions by individual students.

## ***Using the Collaboration tools***

The **Collaboration** tools can be an effective way to conduct "live," real-time conversations ("virtual chats" / "instant messaging"). Online chats have been used for office hours, small group project work, tutoring sessions, and exam reviews.

Two options are available:

- **Chat** – online chat (text-based messaging)
- **Virtual Classroom** – an online chat with additional tools for drawing, opening web pages, and presentations.

## ***Creating Collaboration Sessions***

You can post a link for a Collaboration session in advance by creating a link which includes the date and time of the session.

1. Select **Collaboration** from the **Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Create Collaboration Session**.
3. Give the session a name (replace the default course ID) and enter start and end dates and times. Be sure to make the session available by clicking **Yes**.
4. Select the tool you wish to use: **Chat** or **Virtual Classroom**.
5. Click **Submit**.
6. You can use the drop-down menu to the right of the Session name to Edit or delete the session.

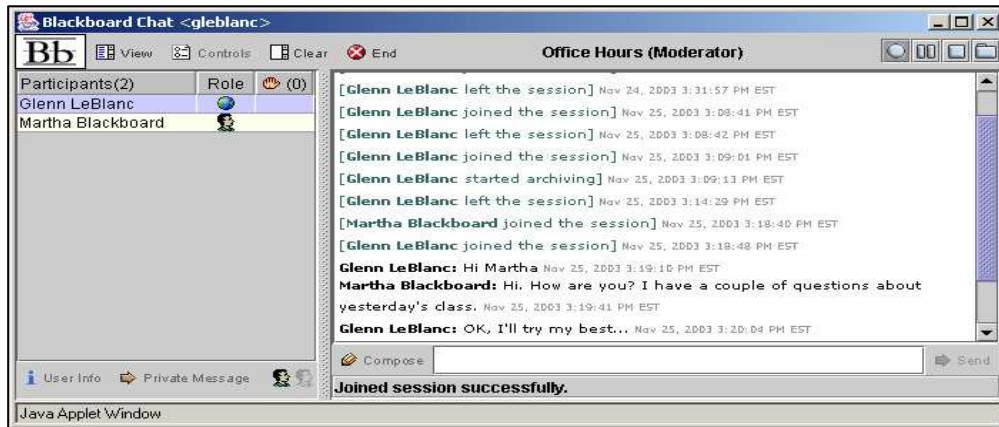
## ***Using Chat***

Most faculty who use the Collaboration tools use only the most basic text-based tools of the **Chat**. (As UMS gradually adopts GoogleMail as the standard for staff and students, GoogleTalk might be a better option for synchronous chat.)

1. To access a **Chat** session, click **Tools** in the course menu, and then click **Collaboration**.
2. To enter a session, click the session name, which is an active link. You'll be prompted to download and install a Java plug-in the first time you launch the **Chat**. Follow the

instructions and prompts on the screen. (If you use Safari on a Macintosh computer, be sure to disable Pop-Up Window Blocking.)

3. You'll see this screen when you enter a session.



4. Type your message into the *Compose* field and click Send. The discussion appears in the window.

The *Virtual Classroom* option adds additional capability to a chat session:

- **Course Map** – allows participants to view a document in the course; click on any part of the course map to show it in the shared window
- **Whiteboard** – allows use of tools for drawing and creating simple graphics
- **Group browser** – allows participants to view a web site in the shared window
- **Ask Question / Question Inbox** – allows participants to ask questions either publicly or privately; questions are cued in the Inbox.

## Course Files

**Course Files** provides central file storage for a course. Instructors can link to any of these items when creating content for the course. When an instructor changes an item, all links to the item in the course reflect those changes.

### *Getting to the Course Files Area*

Click **Files** in the **Control Panel**. Click the course ID link. (It will look something like 12345\_A\_111.)

### *Uploading Files and Folders of Files*

- You can upload files individually, multiple files at one time, or folders containing multiple files. Uploading multiple files and folders requires the Java plugin, version 1.5 or later. If the plugin is not available, use the single file option to add files one at a time.
- Click the **Upload** button. Select **Upload Files** from the menu.
- You can either click **Browse** to locate and upload the file(s), or you can simply drag and drop the file(s) into the box where indicated.
- After adding files to the list, click **Submit** to upload the files.
- If an upload fails, click **Undo** to remove all uploaded files and return to the parent folder.
- The files are now available to be added to a content area or attached to discussion board postings, emails, etc.
- The list of uploaded files may extend beyond what is viewable on the default screen. Use the **Show All / Edit Paging** buttons to modify the number of files visible.

### *Uploading a Package*

Select **Upload Package** from the **Upload** menu to upload *and unpackage* a ZIP file.

### *Creating a Reusable HTML Object*

You can create a document using Blackboard's text editor and additional tools to incorporate media, and then save the file for use in one or more places in your course site.

- Click **Create HTML Object**.
- Provide a name for the file, compose your text, and then click **Submit**.

### *Creating a Folder*

- You can create and use folders to help organize your content area.
- Click **Create Folder**. Provide a name for the folder and click **Submit**.
- *Be sure to click on the folder name or icon to open the folder in order to upload documents to the folder.*

### *Viewing Files and Folders*

Two options are available for viewing the Course files and folders:

- **View List**
- **View Thumbnails**
- Any action that can be performed on a file or folder in the List view can also be performed in the Thumbnails view.
- The default view is the **List** view, which has standard small icons in the File Type column. To view larger thumbnail icons of each item, click **View Thumbnails** at the top of the screen. Use the slider to change the size of the thumbnails. The selected view will remain in effect until the user changes the view.
- To view more information about a file, click its thumbnail.
- To view the contents of a folder, click its thumbnail or name.

### *Item Actions*

One or more items can be selected for copying, moving, or deleting at the same time. Each item has a contextual menu (click the pull-down menu to the right of the item's name) that provides access to the following actions:

- **Open**: Preview the content in the browser.
- **360 degree View**: Display detailed information about an item.
- **Edit**: Change the name of the item.
- **Overwrite File** or **Overwrite Reusable Object Content**: Upload a different file to replace the current file or edit the reusable object data to replace the current content. For files, the new file will be assigned the same name as the one that it is replacing.
- **Download Package**: Compress the items into a ZIP package that can be saved to a local drive.
- **Copy**: Copy the item to another location.
- **Move**: Move the item to another location.
- **Delete**: Permanently remove the item. Any links to the item in the Course will be broken.
- **Permissions**: View and manage permissions assigned to the item.

*Attaching Files in the Course Files Area to Content Areas of Your Course Site*

- Once you have uploaded your files, you will want to attach them to documents in content areas such as Information, Content, Assignments, etc.
- Go to the content area from which you want to link to the file.
- Click **Build Content** and choose the appropriate content type (Item, File, Audio, Image or Video).
- To attach a file, click **Browse Course**. Click the document(s) that you wish to attach and then click **Submit**.

## ***Posting Content***

You can post different types of content to Blackboard's content areas:

- **Item.** Usually text that you type directly into Blackboard as the primary content or as a explanatory text to accompany a file that you can attach from either your computer or your course's Course Files area.
- **File.** A link to a file that you upload from either your computer or your course's Course Files area. There is no option to add explanatory text. You can choose to open the file in a separate window.
- **Audio.** Files in various formats (aiff, .asf, .moov, .mov, .mp, .wav, .wma, .wmv) with the option to add a transcript for people who cannot hear the audio.
- **Image.** JPEG and GIFF files.
- **Video.** Files in MPEG/AVI, QuickTime, or Flash/Shockwave formats.
- **URL.** External links to sites on the web.
- **Course Link.** A link to another part of your course site.
- **Lesson Plan and Syllabus.** Templates for creating a lesson plan and syllabus directly in Blackboard.
- **Learning Module.** Template for combining a variety of content types into a module, with the option of requiring students to complete the module in a linear, step-by-step fashion.

## ***Posting an Item***

1. While in **Edit Mode**, click the menu button for the area to which you want to add the content.
2. Click **Build Content**, then select **Item** from the **Create** menu.
3. Enter a name for the document.
4. In the Text box, enter a description of the document (optional). Some faculty use this area for the actual document text. *If you do this, be sure to save an electronic version of whatever you enter here.* Other faculty use this area for explanatory text to accompany an attached document.

5. In the **Attachments** area, click **Browse My Computer** to upload your file from your computer or **Browse Course** to upload your file from your course's **Course Files** area if you have previously uploaded your file.
6. Set **Options**:
  - To make the content available immediately, click **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*.
  - *Track Number of Views* allows you to find out who is accessing or not accessing your documents.
  - In the *Select Date and time Restrictions* area, you can set a “window” of time within which the document will be visible (useful if posting problem solutions or take-home exams.) If you use this area you *must* check **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*. If you do not want to use date restrictions, leave the *Display After* and *Display Until* boxes unchecked.
7. Click **Submit**.
8. As a final check, you can view your document the way students will see it by clicking on the course menu link for the content area to which you posted the document or clicking **Edit Mode** (top right) to **OFF**. Click the link to the document to view it.

### ***Posting a File***

1. While in **Edit Mode**, click the menu button for the area to which you want to add the content.
2. Click **Build Content**, then select **File** from the **Create** menu.
3. Click **Browse My Computer** to upload your file from your computer or **Browse Course** to upload your file from your course's **Course Files** area if you have previously uploaded your file.
4. Enter a name for the file (required).
5. Select a color for the name (be sure to use colors that contrast with the background).
6. Determine whether or not to open the file in a New Window.
7. Set **Options**:
  - To make the content available immediately, click **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*.
  - *Track Number of Views* allows you to find out who is accessing or not accessing your documents.

- In the *Select Date and time Restrictions* area, you can set a “window” of time within which the document will be visible (useful if posting problem solutions or take-home exams.) If you use this area you *must* check **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*. If you do not want to use date restrictions, leave the *Display After* and *Display Until* boxes unchecked.
8. Click **Submit**.
  9. As a final check, you can view your file the way students will see it by clicking on the course menu link for the content area to which you posted the document or clicking **Edit Mode** (top right) to **OFF**. Click the link to the document to view it.

### ***Posting Audio Files***

[Note: Uploading the file(s) to a streaming server may be a better option if file sizes are large in order to avoid quickly reaching your course disk space quota.]

1. While in **Edit Mode**, click the menu button for the area to which you want to add the audio content.
2. Click **Build Content**, then select **Audio** from the **Create** menu.
3. Click **Browse My Computer** to upload your audio file from your computer or **Browse Course** to upload your file from your course’s **Course Files** area if you have previously uploaded your file.
4. Enter a name for the file (required).
5. Select a color for the name (be sure to use colors that contrast with the background).
6. You can upload a transcript of the audio file for people who cannot hear the audio.
7. Select options for **Autostart** and **Loop**. (If you are not putting the audio file in a folder, set **Autostart** to **No** to prevent the audio from playing when the page is opened.)
8. Set **Options**:
  - To make the audio content available immediately, click **Yes** for *Permit Users to View this Content Item*.
  - *Track Number of Views* allows you to find out who is accessing or not accessing your documents.
  - In the *Select Date and time Restrictions* area, you can set a “window” of time within which the document will be visible (useful if posting problem solutions or take-home exams.) If you use this area you *must* check **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*. If you do not want to use date restrictions, leave the *Display After* and *Display Until* boxes unchecked.

9. Click **Submit**.
10. As a final check, you can view your file the way students will see it by clicking on the course menu link for the content area to which you posted the document or clicking **Edit Mode** (top right) to **OFF**. Click the link to the document to view it.

### ***Posting Video Files***

[Note: Uploading the file(s) to a streaming server may be a better option if file sizes are large in order to avoid quickly reaching your course disk space quota.]

1. While in **Edit Mode**, click the menu button for the area to which you want to add the audio content.
2. Click **Build Content**, then select **Video** from the **Create** menu.
3. Click **Browse My Computer** to upload your audio file from your computer or **Browse Course** to upload your file from your course's **Course Files** area if you have previously uploaded your file. Select **Browse Mashups** to add YouTube video.
4. Enter a name for the file (required).
5. Select a color for the name (be sure to use colors that contrast with the background).
6. Select options for **Dimensions**, **Autostart** and **Loop**. (If you are not putting the audio file in a folder, set **Autostart** to **No** to prevent the audio from playing when the page is opened.)
7. Set **Options**:
  - To make the audio content available immediately, click **Yes** for *Permit Users to View this Content Item*.
  - *Track Number of Views* allows you to find out who is accessing or not accessing your documents.
  - In the *Select Date and time Restrictions* area, you can set a “window” of time within which the document will be visible (useful if posting problem solutions or take-home exams.) If you use this area you *must* check **Yes** for *Permit Users to View the Content Item*. If you do not want to use date restrictions, leave the *Display After* and *Display Until* boxes unchecked.
8. Click **Submit**.
9. As a final check, you can view your file the way students will see it by clicking on the course menu link for the content area to which you posted the document or clicking **Edit Mode** (top right) to **OFF**. Click the link to the document to view it.

## ***Posting External Links (URLs)***

Being able to post direct links to web sites not only provides ready access to Web-based resources, but it is a convenient way to comply with copyright restrictions that might limit how you can make a document available.

Depending on how you use them in the course, you can post External links in different places:

- Post links of a general nature that might be useful throughout the course in a Web Links area in the main course menu.
- Post links specific to a weekly unit / module within the folder for that unit.

The procedure for adding external links is the same for both places:

1. Click the menu item to which you want to add external links.
2. From the **Build Content** menu, select **URL**.
3. Enter a Name for the link, the complete URL (for example, <http://www.myschool.edu>), and a description. (Suggestion: Copy the URL from the address field of your browser and paste it into the URL field in Blackboard. This saves typing and minimizes mistakes.)
4. You can use the Text box for explanatory material.
5. You can add additional documents and set options for how students will view the link.
  - If you launch the link in a new window, it's possible for students to view the link and your Blackboard site in separate windows. This is helpful if they are completing an assignment posted in Blackboard.) The trade-off is an accessibility issue. Launching a new window loses the history and back button functionality which is a challenge for screen readers.
  - You can also set a time period within which to make the link and any associated content available, as with posting documents.
6. Click **Submit**.

## ***Adding a Folder and Posting Documents in the Folder***

1. While in **Edit Mode**, click the menu button for the area to which you want to add the content.
2. Click **Build Content** and select **Content Folder** from the **New Page** menu.

3. Give the folder a name and an optional description. You can set date and time restrictions for a folder as you can for a single document. Click **Submit**.

Access to all documents in the folder is controlled by the time and date restrictions for the folder itself, so you do not have to set access for every document individually. This is useful if you want to easily make an entire “Weekly Unit” folder or similar collection of documents available only at a specified time.)

4. Click on the link to the folder and continue to add content to the folder, starting with **Build Content**, as above.

## Using the Grade Center

The Grade Center provides a secure way to inform students of their progress. The Grade Center can contain grades for assessments you create and administer in Blackboard (such as tests and quizzes), and for other assessments such as research papers, projects, etc.

### Accessing the Grade Center

1. Under **Grade Center** in the **Control Panel** select **Full Grade Center**. *(Note options to display Full Grade Center, Assignments only, or Tests only.)*
2. Notice a new feature in Blackboard 9: **Edit Rows Displayed** (bottom right). Click to adjust how many rows of students you want to show on the screen. (Maximum is 50.)

### Adding Grade Columns

1. Click **Create Column**. *(Note: The Grade Center columns are automatically added for tests, quizzes, and surveys created through the Test or Survey manager, and for assignments using the Assignment tool.)*
2. Enter a name for the item, select a display type in the menu, and enter the possible points.
3. Set the options:
  - Include this column in Grade Center calculations (if you want the item to “count” toward the course grade)
  - Show this column to Students
  - Show Statistics (allows students to see how they performed in relation to the rest of the class by showing the mean, median, etc.)
4. Click **Submit**. The item appears as a column in the spreadsheet.

### Organizing the Grade Center

Click **Manage**, then select **Column Organization** from the pull-down menu.

- **Show/Hide Columns.** Click in the box that appears before the name of the item that you want to show or hide. Select either **Hide Selected Columns** or **Show Selected Columns** from the **Show/Hide** pull-down menu. Hidden columns are indicated by grayed-out names.
- **Move / Rearrange Columns.** Place the cursor on the four-way arrow at the beginning of the row you want to move. Hold the mouse button down, drag the row to a new destination, and release the mouse button.

- **Frozen Columns.** You can “freeze” columns to prevent them from moving off-screen when you scroll to the right. For example, to make sure that your students’ names always remain in view, even when the column you wish to work on is at the right-hand side of the spreadsheet, freeze the **Last Name** and **First Name** columns. Note the “Everything above this bar is a frozen column. Drag this bar to change which columns are frozen” indicator. Drag the bar itself or drag any columns you wish to freeze above the bar and they will remain in place even when scrolling to the right. Frozen columns are shown in the spreadsheet with a light gray background.

### ***Entering/Modifying Grades***

1. Click in the cell where you want to add a grade.
2. Enter the grade, and then hit the **Enter** key. The cursor moves down one cell in the column. Continue in this manner for as many grades as you want to enter. For additional options, place the cursor over a grade and use the pull-down menu in the cell. Click **View Grade Details** to view students’ work, edit grades, and clear attempts; **Quick Comment** to send feedback to the student, and **Exempt Grade** to remove the item from the grade calculation.

Note: If you entered a grade by clicking in a cell, be sure that there is no dash before the grade. The dash will be interpreted by Blackboard as a negative sign, resulting in a very low grade.

3. To modify a grade, click to highlight the current grade. Type in the new grade and hit **Enter**. You will see an orange flag in the upper left side of the cell, indicating that the grade has been edited manually. You can clear this flag by clicking the arrows on the right-hand side of the cell and selecting **Clear Cell Modified Icon**.

### ***Calculated Columns***

You can add Calculated Columns to aid grade calculations. Options are: Average, Minimum/Maximum, Total Column, Weighted Column.

Notice that a **Weighted Total** column is included in the Grade Center spreadsheet by default. You can use this column as the Final Course Grade column, so there is no need to add an additional Weighted Column.

You can use calculated columns to perform calculations using the grades in selected columns. Results are stored in Calculated Columns and can be used for subsequent calculations. For example, say you want to add extra credit points to the final course grade. Once you have created both the **Extra Credit** column and the **Final Grade** column, create a **Total** Calculated Column named **Final Grade with Extra Credit** and select both the **Extra Credit** and **Final Grade** columns as the columns to include in the total.

## **Weighting Grades / Dropping (Lowest) Grades**

You can use the existing Weighted Total column or add your own column for the calculation of the course grade.

- If adding your own column, click **Create Calculated Column** and select **Weighted Column**. Give the column a name, such as **Final Grade**.
- If using an existing column, select **Edit Column Information** from the drop-down menu you will see when placing the cursor over the double “down” arrows in the column heading.

You can have Blackboard calculate weighted grades using either **Columns** (individual items) or **Categories** (groupings of related items) or a combination of the two options..

- Certain Categories are included by default and certain item types are placed in specific categories by default. You can add your own **Categories** if the ones provided do not meet your needs. Click **Manage**, then **Categories**, then **Create Category**.
  - **Category** is a good choice if you are not yet sure how many assessments of a certain type you will have by the end of the semester. (For example, if you weight the **Quiz** category at 25%, all quizzes together will account for 25% of the course grade, regardless of how many quizzes you finally give.)
  - **Category is also the best choice** if you want to drop some of a student’s grades (usually a defined number of lowest grades) or use the highest or lowest grade to calculate. Enter the number of grades you wish to drop. Select **Weight Columns Equally** if all items in the category are based on the same number of possible points; **Weight Columns Proportionally** if some of the items in the category are based on a different number of possible points than others.
  - Weighting **Columns** is the best choice if you have items not assigned to categories.
- To place an item into a category for the first time, or to edit a default category placement, select **Edit Column Information** from the drop-down menu to the right of the item’s name in the column header, and then select the appropriate category from the **Category** menu. Click **Submit**.

Click Columns and/or Categories on the left (**Control**-click to select multiple items), then click the arrow to move your selections into the **Selected Columns** area.

Enter percentages for each category or column. After entering the weight for the final item in the list, hit the **Tab** key instead of **Enter**. (The total must be 100 percent.)

Click **Yes** for **Calculate as Running Total**.

Set the options:

- Include this column in Grade Center calculations (if you want the item to “count” toward the course grade)
- Show this column to Students
- Show Statistics (allows students to see how they performed in relation to the rest of the class by showing the mean, median, etc.)

Click **Submit**. To review your weightings, find the weighted column you added in the spreadsheet, click the arrow on the right, and select **Edit Column Information**.

### Example:

The final grade in the course illustrated below was comprised of:

- **5 Labs**, 4 of which counted toward the final grade (lowest grade was dropped by setting up a **Lab** category, assigning a weight of 60%, and using the Drop Grades option)
- **2 Exams** (each 10%, not placed into a category)
- **A research paper** (20%, not placed into a category)

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Selected Columns:" with the instruction "Enter the weight percentage for each item. Percentages should add up to 100%." It contains a list of columns with their respective weights and options:

- 60%** Category: Lab (Weighted column, marked with an asterisk). Options: Weight Columns:  Equally  Proportionally; Drop Grades:  Drop  highest grades  lowest grades; OR Use only the:  Lowest value to calculate  Highest value to calculate.
- 10%** Column: Exam 1 (Weighted column, marked with an asterisk).
- 10%** Column: Exam 2 (Weighted column, marked with an asterisk).
- 20%** Column: Research (Weighted column, marked with an asterisk).

Total Weight: 100%

### Using Letter Grades

To change the numerical ranges for letter grades (for example, from 93-100 is an “A”, etc.), click **Manage**, then **Grading Schemas**, then select **Edit** from the pull-down menu to the right of **Letter**. To avoid any omissions, the upper limit of a range must be equal to the lower limit of the range directly above. Thus, a range of 80 to 90 includes all grades *up to, but not including* 90. The highest range does, however, include 100%.

To use letter grades, select **Letter** in the Primary Display pull-down menu when first adding a Grade Column or modifying an existing Grade Column.

### **Smart Views**

Smart Views of the Grade Center data are customized views which match criteria that you define.

1. Select **Smart Views** from the **Manage** menu.
2. Click **Create Smart View**.
3. Define the criteria and click **Submit**.
4. To view the Smart Views you have created, select **Smart Views** from the **Manage** menu or click **Filter** and select the Smart View that you wish to use from the **Current View:** menu.

### **Downloading Your Blackboard Grade Center for Backup and Printing**

You can save a copy of your Blackboard Grade Center in a format that can be opened and printed with Excel.. *(We strongly recommend doing this every time you add grades to your Grade Center. Not only does this give you a backup during the semester, but you also have a copy of your Grade Center for the course when the old course site is removed from the Blackboard server a year after the end of the semester in which you taught the course.)*

1. Select Download from the **Work Offline** pull down menu.
2. Select the data to download and choose the type of “delimiter” (usually Tab, the default, is a good choice) and click **Submit**.
3. Click **Submit**, then **Download**, then save the file to your computer.
4. You will now be able to open (and print) the file with Excel. (If you click on the file’s icon it will open automatically in Excel.)

## Using the Assignment tool

With the Assignment tool, you can receive and grade students' assignments and send students feedback. The students find the assignment in a content area, read the instructions and any files that you have attached with the assignment, and respond by either typing their responses in a text box or uploading their work. When the students' assignments arrive, you access them in the Grade Center in the appropriate column and row for each student.

*Blackboard 9.1 includes two major changes to the Assignment tool. You can allow multiple assignment submissions and you can make assignments to groups of students in addition to just individual students.*

### Instructor – Post the assignment for students

1. Decide to which content area you will post the assignment and click on its link in the Course menu. (**Assignments**, one of the default course menu links, is commonly used, but you might prefer to post assignments within weekly units or another area.)
2. While some faculty include instructions and necessary documents within the assignment itself, doing so can complicate the submission process for you and your students. *We strongly recommend dividing assignments into two parts* that you might post in the same folder:
  - Use **Item** in the **Build Content** menu to post instructions and any documents required for the assignment.
  - Select **Assignment** from the pull-down **Create Assessment** menu to create the link that students will use to submit their work.

*By keeping these two functions separate you can avoid unintended submissions and the need to clear attempts for confused students.*

3. In the next window, enter a name and the instructions for submitting the assignment.

In Blackboard 9.1, students will no longer see the >> [View/Complete Assignment:](#) link. Instead, they will have to click on the name of the assignment (the only available link) to submit their work. You might want to include this text in the Instructions area: **Click the name of the assignment (above) to submit your work.**

4. Be sure to enter the **Points Possible**.
5. Make the assignment available to students by clicking **Make the Assignment Available**.
6. You can allow a single attempt, unlimited attempts, or a specified number of multiple attempts.

If you allow multiple attempts, you will have to determine which grade you will use for grade calculations. In the **Grade Center**, select Edit Column Information from the drop-down menu next to the column name in the header. Select the appropriate option from the **Score attempts using** menu: *Last Attempt, Highest Grade, Lowest Grade, First Attempt, or Average of Attempt Grades.*

7. Limit the availability of the assignment by specifying **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times. Use the calendar and clock icons.
8. You have the option of tracking the number of views for the assignment.
9. Enter a due date. Submissions received after the due date are marked as **Late**. (The due date is also used for **Early Warning System** notifications if you use these.)
10. You can make the assignment to **All Students Individually** (as in past versions of Blackboard) or to **Groups of Students**. If you check Groups of Students you will be asked to select the groups that you wish to include. Click the group name(s) in the **Items to Select** box and click the right arrow to select the group(s).
11. Note that when you create an assignment, a column is automatically set up for it in the Grade Center. This is where you will receive, grade, and comment on the students' work.

By default, assignments created using **Create Assignment** are placed into a category called **Assignment**. If you decide to change the default category, go to the Grade Center (**Control Panel / Evaluation / Grade Center**), find the column for the assignment, select **Edit Column Information** from the drop-down menu next to the column name in the header, and select the new category from the drop-down **Category** menu.

### Student – View and submit the assignment

1. The student finds the assignment in the appropriate content area and clicks on its name.
2. In the next window, the student views any attached files by clicking on their names.
3. To complete the assignment, the student either enters a response in the **Submission** area or uploads a response by clicking **Browse for Local File**.
4. Optionally, the student can add comments on the assignment.
5. Finally, the student clicks **Submit** to send the file to the instructor.

**Save as Draft** allows the student to upload their assignment and store their work on the Blackboard server without submitting it. To submit at a later time, the student should click the name of the assignment and make any desired changes. If they wish to replace an attached document or draft with a revised version, they click **Mark for removal** next to the draft, and then

**Browse for Local File** to upload the replacement. Finally, the student clicks **Submit**. You will receive only the latest attachment in the Grade Center.

### Instructor – Review and evaluate the student's work

1. In the **Grade Center**, you will see a green exclamation mark icon -- **!** -- indicating a student's submission. If you made the assignment to a group of students you will see the **!** for all students in the group. From the drop-down menu to the right of this icon, select **View Grade Details**.
2. **Grade Details** lists every attempt submitted by the student. Click **Open Attempt** (or **View Group Attempt**) to view the submission, record a grade, add comments, attach files to return to the student, and add Instructor notes (reminders to yourself that the student does not see). Click **Submit** to record the grade.
3. You can allow the student an additional attempt (beyond the originally specified number of attempts allowed) by clicking the **Allow Additional Attempt** button. This can be useful if the student has submitted a draft for your review and you are letting the student make revisions.
4. Click **Edit Grade** to change a grade or to leave feedback for the user regarding the attempt.
5. **Clear Attempt** will remove the student's current attempt, or, if the student had a technical problem submitting their work, will make it possible for the student to submit again if you originally set up the assignment allowing a single attempt.

When multiple attempts are allowed, **Clear Attempt** clears the student's current attempt. Blackboard uses the results of the previous attempt as the grade for the item, *unless the grade has been overridden. Overriding a grade supersedes all attempts.*

6. You can use the **Jump to User:** or **Jump to Column:** drop-down menus or the < and > arrows to select other students or assignments to grade.

### **Downloading all Assignment submissions at the same time**

You can also download all assignment submissions for the entire class or for many students at one time and record grades all at once rather than on a student-by-student basis.

1. In the **Grade Center**, select **Assignment File Download** from the drop-down menu in the column heading for the assignment.
2. Clicking **Select Ungraded** will select *only* the ungraded assignments in the list. Click the box under **Select Users** to select *all* students' assignments (graded or not). If you want to

select either ungraded or graded assignments for particular students, click the boxes next to their names while holding down the **Control** key.

1. Select Users		
<input type="checkbox"/> -click to select all students	Name	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phillips, Michael	Wednesday, April 28, 2010 10:42:30 AM EDT

3. Click **Submit**, and then click the **Download assignments now** link. Save the file to your local computer. The default file name is the name of the assignment.
4. Unzipping (extracting) the file will create a folder containing all students' assignments with unique file names for each student. Start by double-clicking on the downloaded folder. You should see all of the Word documents or other files that students submitted along with text files of any comments they included with their work. Depending on your operating system and version and the software you have for "unzipping" ("extracting") these files, you can unzip the folder.

#### How students view their assignment grades

1. The student clicks on **Tools**, then **My Grades**, then on the grade for the assignment.
2. The results and comments on the assignment appear in the student's view. If multiple attempts were allowed, grades and comments on all attempts are listed.

## Creating and Administering Tests and Quizzes

Blackboard allows you to create both individual tests and pools of questions that you can import into tests. Using question pools, you can create tests by randomly selecting questions from a pool.

### Getting Started

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Tests**. This area is the equivalent of the Blackboard 8 **Test Manager**. Here you will see a list of all of your tests, date last edited, and whether or not the test is deployed. Be sure to click the Edit Paging button (bottom right) or **Show All** to show additional screens if your course contains a lot of tests.
- To create a new test, start by clicking **Build Test**. Enter a name, description, and instructions. (To modify an existing test, select **Edit** from the drop-down menu to the right of the test's name.) Click **Submit**.
- Click **Question Settings** for options. **Question Settings** is where you can set default options that will show up when you're creating individual questions; for example, the ability to add feedback for individual answers, include images, external links, etc. (Most other options are "on" by default.) You can also specify a default point value that gets entered for each question automatically.

In Blackboard 9.1 you can enter feedback or all possible answers. (Blackboard 8 allowed only one feedback message for all "wrong" answers. To enable this feature, select **Provide feedback for individual answers** in **Creation Settings**.)

### Adding questions

You can add questions in different ways:

- Add **new questions** by selecting the question type from the **Create Question** menu.
- To add questions from your **question pools and other assessments**, select **Find Questions** from the **Reuse Question** menu. Browse for questions using the available criteria.

- **Random Blocks.** To add a **Random Block** of questions from your Pools, select **Create Random Block** from the **Reuse Question** menu. Select the pool from which to add the questions and specify the question types, the number of questions to import, and the point value of each question. You can create any number of random blocks in a single test, drawing questions from a different pool for each random block.

For example, if you had a pool of 100 multiple choice questions and wanted to create a 100-point quiz with 10 questions, you could create the quiz so each student gets 10 questions randomly selected, each worth 10 points.

- Another option is to add a **Question Set**, a group of questions that you select individually and which can be presented in random order. (This differs from random blocks because random blocks typically are drawn from larger question pools with no instructor selection of the actual questions.)

### ***Entering the questions***

- Follow the screen prompts to enter questions, point values (if you did not add a default point value in *Creation Settings* or specified a point value when adding a Random Block), and feedback. Be sure to indicate the correct answer on objective-type questions. You can enter a model answer on short answer and essay questions. Click **Submit**.

Note that you have the option of adding extra credit questions (their point value is not included in the total point value for the test). (To make a question extra credit, click in the **Extra credit only** box.)

- The drop-down menu to the right of the question type for each question includes four options: **Edit** (the question), **Delete**, (the question), **Create Question Above**, and **Create Question Below**.
- To re-order questions, click and drag the up-and-down arrow on the left of the question and release it in the new question position.
- Continue until you have added all of your questions. Finally, click **OK** and the test will be saved in the **Tests** area.

### ***Deploying a Test (making it available for students to take)***

1. Click on the course menu link for the content area to which you want to add the test.

2. Make sure **Edit Mode** is clicked **ON**. Select **Test** from the **Create Assessment** menu.
3. Select the test from the **Add Test** menu (only tests that you have not yet deployed will be listed). Click **Submit**. This opens the **Test Options** menu.

### **Setting test availability and testing options**

1. Make the test available in the **Test Availability** area. Clicking **Yes** for **Make the Link available** creates an active link to the test in this content area. (Clicking **No** removes the link and makes the test unavailable.) You can also create an announcement to alert students to the availability of this assessment.
2. Follow screen prompts for other options:
  - If you *allow multiple attempts*, you can decide which grade should be recorded. *After completing all settings on this page and submitting, you will need to:*
    - Go to the **Grade Center**.
    - Select **Edit Column Information** from the pull-down menu to the right of the column name for this test.
    - Select an option from the **Score attempts using** pull-down menu. (Options are: lowest, highest, average, last attempt, or first attempt)
  - *By forcing completion*, you are turning off the option to take a test in multiple “sittings”. Students will not be able to save their work and continue at a later time. *However, forcing completion prohibits students from accessing the test again should they experience technical glitches such as a lost internet connection and increases the chances that you will have to clear their attempt.*
  - You might want to set a *time limit* if you are concerned that students will look up answers using books and notes. The elapsed time appears on the student’s screen and a warning appears as the time limit approaches. (The student is not “cut off” if the time limit is exceeded; rather, the elapsed time is recorded with the student’s submission and the test will not be graded.)
3. Set the **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times using the calendar and clock icons. (Be sure that you also click **Yes** for **Make the Link Available**, as above.)
4. Setting a Password is an additional way to limit access to a test.
5. Finally, set **Self-Assessment**, **Feedback**, and **Presentation** options. Presenting the test **All at Once** is recommended over presenting questions **One at a Time**. **Randomize**

**Questions** presents the same test questions in random order for each student. (This is different than a **Random Block**, in which each student receives a random sample of items from a pool.)

6. Click **Submit**. The test appears in the content area where you posted it. The student will go to this area and click on the link to take the test. *Remind students to click **Submit** to send their completed test to you, not **Save**.*

### ***Editing the content of a test***

1. In the course menu, click on the content area where the test is located and find the test in the list of items in this area.
2. Select **Edit the Test** from the drop-down menu to the right of the test's name.

### ***Editing test options (how the test is deployed)***

1. In the course menu, click on the content area where the test is located and find the test in the list of items in this area.
2. Select **Edit the Test Options** from the drop-down menu to the right of the test's name.

### ***Viewing students' test results***

Either a grade or a green exclamation mark icon appears in the **Grade Center** when a student submits a test. (A grade appears if all questions are graded automatically, as in the case of multiple choice, etc. A green ! icon appears if the test includes short answers and essays, requiring you to grade the responses manually.)

Pull down the menu next to the icon and select **View Grade Details**. Click **Open Attempt**.

You will be able to see all of the students' responses, the amount of time it took the student to complete the test (if you set a timer), and the points automatically entered for questions that Blackboard grades. You can change the points given by Blackboard in this screen for ambiguous questions or when the student makes a good case for an alternative answer.

For essay and short answer questions, the student's response is given. Read the response and enter feedback in the **Response Feedback** box. Enter the number of points earned.

When finished, click **Submit**.

### ***Clearing a student's attempt***

Online testing is subject to technical glitches. Common problems include Internet connections timing out or otherwise disconnecting and tests not submitting properly when students click the **Save and Submit** button. You may have to “clear” students’ attempts, allowing them to re-take and re-submit the test.

- An icon appears when a student is locked out of a test. Pull down the menu next to the icon and select **View Grade Details**. *Do not clear attempts unless you hear from the student that he/she had difficulty.*
- Click the **Clear Attempt** button.

### ***Copying tests from one site to another***

You can copy all of your tests from one Blackboard site to another by using the **Course Copy** option in the **Control Panel**. Refer to instructions for Transferring Course Material from Previous to New Blackboard Sites and follow the instructions for the appropriate version(s) of Blackboard. When selecting the content to copy, check only **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**. *You will have to deploy the tests by adding them to content areas.*

### ***Exporting and importing tests***

You can export individual tests from one course site and import them into another course site.

#### **Exporting a test**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Tests**.
- Select **Export** from the drop-down menu to the right of the test that you want to export.
- When prompted, **Save** the .zip file to your local disk. The file name will be in this format:

**Test\_ExportFile\_45489\_P\_111\_test1.zip**

- Do not unzip or otherwise modify this file or it will not import correctly.

#### **Importing a test**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Tests**.
- Click **Import Test** and then **Browse for Local File** and select the test export file (.zip file).
- Click **Submit**.

- The import is confirmed with the message “The package has been processed...” Click **OK**. The imported test appears as the last item in the **Tests** list.

### **Creating Question Pools**

Creating Question Pools allows you to maintain a test bank from which you can select questions at random. You can create the questions in Blackboard yourself or import them from a publisher’s proprietary test software (such as TestGen or EZTest.) Question pools are often included in course cartridges specific to your textbook that you can install using a download key that you get from your publisher representative.

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Pools**. This area is the equivalent of the Blackboard **Pool Manager**. Here you will see a list of all of your pools and date last edited. Be sure to click the **Edit Paging** button (bottom right) to show additional screens if your course contains a lot of pools.
- To create a new pool, start by clicking **Build Pool**. Enter a name, description, and instructions. (To modify an existing pool, select **Edit** from the drop-down menu to the right of the pool’s name.) Click **Submit**.
- Click **Question Settings** for options. **Question Settings** is where you can set default options that will show up when you're creating individual questions; for example, the ability to add feedback for individual answers, include images, external links, etc. (Most other options are "on" by default.)
- You can add questions in different ways:
  - Add **new questions** by selecting the question type from the **Create Question** menu.
  - To add questions from your **question pools and other assessments**, click **Find Questions** and browse to find the questions you wish to add.
- Follow the screen prompts to enter questions, correct answers, and feedback. Click **Submit** after entering all necessary information for each question.
- To re-order questions, click and drag the up-and-down arrow on the left of the question and release it in the new question position.
- Continue until you have added all of your questions. Finally, click **OK** and the test will be saved in the **Pools** area.

### ***Copying pools from one site to another***

You can copy all of your pools from one Blackboard site to another by using the **Course Copy** option in the **Control Panel**. Refer to instructions for Transferring Course Material from Previous to New Blackboard Sites and follow the instructions for the appropriate version(s) of Blackboard. When selecting the content to copy, check only **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.

### ***Exporting and importing pools***

You can export individual pools from one course site and import them into another course site.

#### **Exporting a pool**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Pools**.
- Select **Export** from the drop-down menu to the right of the pool that you want to export.
- When prompted, **Save** the .zip file to your local disk. The file name will be in this format:

**Pool\_ExportFile\_12376\_A\_111\_pool1.zip**

- Do not unzip or otherwise modify this file or it will not import correctly.

#### **Importing a pool**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Pools**.
- Click **Import Pool** and then **Browse for Local File** and select the pool export file (.zip file).
- Click **Submit**.

## Using SafeAssign

Safe Assignments can deter plagiarism by creating opportunities to educate students on proper citation and attribution, while providing a powerful tool to detect blatant plagiarism in student papers.

### How Does SafeAssign Work?

Using unique text-matching algorithms capable of detecting exact and inexact matching, Safe Assignments are compared against the following sources:

- The Internet
- Proquest/ABI Inform, a database with over 1,100 publication titles and over 2.6 million articles, updated weekly
- Institutional database, containing all papers submitted by students in the University of Maine System
- Global Reference Database, to which students can voluntarily submit their papers

### What Does SafeAssign Tell Me?

Once a paper is submitted and processed by SafeAssign, a report is provided that details the percentage of the paper that matches existing original sources. It also provides links to the sources that returned the matching text. Because of the nature of the report, it is imperative to read and interpret each SafeAssign report carefully. The report, in and of itself, does not prove plagiarism occurred. SafeAssign provides a sentence-matching score displayed as a percentage. This score is an indicator of what percentage of the submitted paper matches existing works, and should be treated only as a warning.

### Make Sure SafeAssign is “ON”

You will need to do this in each course in which you want to use SafeAssign.

- **Control Panel > Customization > Tool Availability** and check the box to make **SafeAssign Available**.
- **Control Panel > Customization > Tool Availability** and check the box to make **SafeAssignment Available in a Content Area** .

**Add a Safe Assignment to Your Course** Adding a **Safe Assignment** is similar to adding an assignment with Blackboard’s **Create Assignment** tool. Creating the Safe Assignment sets up a link that students use to submit their work in a content area and a column in the **Grade Center**. The main difference is that the Safe Assignment is checked for plagiarism.

**NOTE: SafeAssign accepts files in Microsoft Word (doc and docx)/ OpenOffice (odt)/ TXT / RTF / HTML / PDF formats only. Please DO NOT upload files in any other formats, including JPEG / ZIP. Files must be less than 10 MB.**

1. Select a content area into which you will add a Safe Assignment.
2. Select **Create Safe Assignment** from the drop-down **Evaluate** menu.
3. Provide a name for the assignment. If the assignment is a *draft*, indicate that in the assignment name (e.g. Paper One: Draft). Keep in mind that you will have to create a separate Safe Assignment for the final submission (e.g. Paper One: Final Submission).
4. Enter the points possible for the assignment.
5. Provide instructions for the assignment.
6. Select the availability option. Selecting "yes" provides student access to the assignment.
7. Set assignment availability dates. You may wish to set some assignment restrictions here.
8. Select the appropriate draft settings for the assignment. Setting the assignment in draft mode allows students to validate their papers without submitting them to the institutional database. As a result, final papers will not be compared to submitted drafts, which will result in more accurate SafeAssign reports.
9. Set Urgent Checking to "no".
10. Choose whether or not you want students to have access to the SafeAssign report.
11. Create an Optional Announcement if you wish.
12. Click **Submit**.
13. A column for your Safe Assignment will automatically be created in the course **Grade Center**.
14. A piece of text will be added to your assignment with the legal release statement:

*I understand that my instructor has elected to have this assignment checked against several databases for original content. Furthermore, I understand that SafeAssign will create an originality report for my instructor which shows how my paper compares against documents available on the Internet, in many print journals, as well as a database of other papers submitted by University of Maine System students. I understand that my paper will be added to this institutional database for comparison of future papers against my work.*

*I also understand that if I select 'Upload to Global Database' below, I am agreeing that papers from students at other universities using SafeAssign can be compared against my work. I understand that once I grant the right for this paper to be added to the SafeAssign Global Database that I may not retract that right. I maintain ownership of the original intellectual property created, but this document must remain a part of the SafeAssign Global Database. I understand that submitting my paper to the Global Database is completely voluntary.*

## **Submitting Papers Via Direct Submit**

Submitting Papers Via Direct Submit allows you to generate SafeAssign reports on papers submitted outside of a Safe Assignment

**PLEASE NOTE:** Papers uploaded through **DirectSubmit** are only added to the Institutional Database - there is no option to add them to the Global Reference Database since students have to opt-in on a paper-by-paper basis. Additionally, there is no Grade Center integration with papers submitted through Direct Submit. So because Direct Submit does not offer access to the Global Reference Database or integration with Grade Center, faculty members should set up and use [SafeAssignments](#) to collect submissions whenever possible.

To submit papers with **DirectSubmit**, select **SafeAssign** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel** and click **DirectSubmit**.

**Direct Submit** allows faculty members to submit papers one at a time or several at once by including them in a .ZIP file. **PLEASE NOTE:** .ZIP packages should contain no more than 100 papers and submitting more than 300 papers in a session is not recommended. Additionally, papers with over 5000 sentences or that are more than 10 MB in size cannot be submitted.

## Accessing SafeAssign Reports

Student submissions and associated SafeAssign reports can be viewed in two ways:

- from the **SafeAssign** link in the **Tools** menu of the course **Control Panel** (use the drop-down menu for each assignment to select **View Submissions**)
- via the course **Grade Center** (click the drop-down menu for the assignment for an individual student, select **View Grade Details**, then click **Open Attempt**)

## What Does the Report Screen Tell Me?

When you access the main report screen by selecting the View link, the following columns appear for each student:

1. Text - Select this option to view the student's submission online.
2. File - Select this option to download the student submission to your computer.  
Establishing logical file name conventions with students can help to identify which student submitted the file
3. Matching - The percentage listed is the percentage of the paper that matches other sources.
4. SA Report - Select this option to view the full SafeAssign report.
5. Clear Attempt - Select this option to remove the submission.

### Example:

The screenshot shows the SafeAssign interface. At the top, there are navigation links: SAFEASSIGN PROJECT > CONTROL PANEL > SAFEASSIGN > SAFEASSIGNMENTS. Below this are buttons for SAFE ASSIGNMENTS and DIRECT SUBMIT. The main heading is SafeAssignments. A 'View SafeAssignment' link is highlighted with a green checkmark. Below this, there is a section for 'Paper 1' with instructions: 'Do not upload Office 2007 files (.docx). If you are using Word 2003, save your file as Word 2003 file (.doc) before uploading this assignment. Name your file LASTNAME\_paper1.' There is a 'Download' button for the paper. Below the paper information, there is a table with columns: Text, File, Matching, SA Report, Submitted, and Clear Attempt. The table shows one user, 'Student01, Good', with a matching percentage of 100% and a submission date of 'Sun Feb 24 19:42:20 EST 2008'. The 'Clear Attempt' button is visible. Red callouts with numbers 1 through 6 point to the following elements: 1: View the submitted text (Text column), 2: Download the submitted paper (File column), 3: Percentage of the paper that matches other sources (Matching column), 4: SafeAssign detail report (SA Report column), 5: Date and time SafeAssignment was submitted by student (Submitted column), and 6: Remove submission (Clear Attempt button).

You will be able to quickly scan the Matching column to determine if further analysis of the SafeAssign Report is warranted. Here are some good guidelines to remember:

1. **Scores below 15%** - These papers typically include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other sources. They typically don't require further analysis, as there is little or no evidence of possible plagiarism.
2. **Scores between 15% and 40%** - These papers include extensive quoted and/or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism. They should be reviewed to determine if the matching content is properly attributed.
3. **Scores over 40%** - There is a high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. It should be reviewed for plagiarism.

SafeAssign Reports provide very detailed and comprehensive information about the matches found between the submitted paper and other sources used by SafeAssign. The report identifies all matching blocks of text, and provides a link to each source of the match. Each SafeAssign Report is divided into three sections:

- **Paper Information**- Provides data about the paper, such as author, percent matching, and when (date, time) the paper was submitted. It also provides options for downloading the report, emailing the report, and for viewing a printable version of the report.
- **Suspected Sources** - Lists the sources that contain text that matches the text found in the submitted paper. From this view, you may select sources to exclude them from the review. This can be helpful if a source is a previous work from the same student for the same class, or if there is a reason for lengthy sections of a particular source to appear in the paper.
- **Paper Text** - Shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified. Clicking a matching block of text displays information about the original source and the probability that the text was copied from the source.

Below is an example of a standard SafeAssign Report.

The screenshot shows the SafeAssign report interface. At the top left is the SafeAssign logo. The main report area is divided into several sections:

- Paper Information:** Shows author (Todd Moe C1), assignment (Demo Assignment 1), submission date (2006-04-04 16:58:12 EST), and paper ID (41429). A 'Matching' bar shows 100%.
- Suspected Sources:** Lists seven potential sources with checkboxes and magnifying glass icons. Source 6 is highlighted in red.
- Paper Text:** Displays the actual text from the submitted paper, with numbered callouts (1-7) indicating matching segments.
- Source Comparison:** A table at the bottom compares the uploaded manuscript with the internet source.

Callout boxes provide additional information:

- Matching Index:** Shows the percentage of the paper that matched other sources.
- Print Version:** A text-only formatted version that is accessible and optimized for printing.
- Suspected Sources:** Clicking on a source shows the original or highlights it in the text below. Clicking on a magnifying glass icon highlights the Paper Text material that matched to that particular source.
- Reprocess:** Use the Reprocess icon to rerun the report without checking against those sources indicated by the check boxes.
- Paper Text:** Paper Text is the actual text from the submitted paper.
- Highlighted Text:** Highlighted text indicates what portions of the Paper Text corresponds to which source.
- Numbers:** Numbers indicate which Suspected Source this text matched with.
- Source Comparison:** Click on a particular matching sentence in the Paper Text to view the Source Comparison window. It shows the URL of the matching source document, the percentage of similarity and a direct comparison of each sentence.

URL:	<a href="http://www.dchem.co.kr/english/product/p_basic/p_basic03.htm">http://www.dchem.co.kr/english/product/p_basic/p_basic03.htm</a>
Matching:	100%
Uploaded Manuscript:	The beneficial effects of calcium chloride will be even more pronounced at lower temperatures
Internet Source:	The beneficial effects of calcium chloride will be even more pronounced at lower temperatures

## **Creating and Administering Surveys**

Blackboard's Survey tool allows faculty to conduct class surveys for a variety of purposes – housekeeping, course planning, and content issues. Both objective- and essay-type questions are possible. Survey results in Blackboard are recorded anonymously. You will get a confirmation of which students have completed a survey but will not be able to link responses with names.

Faculty have used surveys for the following applications:

- Surveying students about what they know about a topic before addressing the topic in class.
- Solicit students' opinions about exam dates and assignment options.
- Conducting content-related surveys and polls to explore opinions and attitudes (for example, exploring myths related to ageing.)
- Conducting formative evaluations of the course, instructional materials, or a particular teaching and/or learning strategy.

### **Getting Started**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Surveys**. This area is the equivalent of the Blackboard 8 **Survey Manager**. Here you will see a list of all of your surveys, date last edited, and whether or not the survey is deployed. Be sure to click the Edit Paging button (bottom right) to show additional screens if your course contains a lot of surveys.
- To create a new survey, start by clicking **Build Survey**. Enter a name, description, and instructions. (To modify an existing survey, select **Edit** from the drop-down menu to the right of the survey's name.) Click **Submit**.
- Check the **Question Settings** for options. **Question Settings** is where you can set default options that will show up when you're creating individual questions; for example, the ability to include images, external links, etc. (Most other options are "on" by default.)

### **Adding questions to your survey in the Survey Canvas**

You can add questions in different ways:

- Add **new questions** by selecting the question type from the **Create Question** menu.
- To add questions from your **question pools and other assessments**, click **Find Questions** and browse to select the questions you wish to add.

### ***Entering the questions***

1. Follow the screen prompts to enter questions. Click **Submit** after entering all information for the question.
2. To re-order questions, click and drag the up-and-down arrow on the left of the question and release it in the new question position.
3. Continue until you have added all of your questions. Finally, click **OK** and the test will be saved in the **Surveys** area.

### ***Deploying a Survey (making it available to students)***

1. Click on the course menu link for the content area to which you want to add the survey.
2. Make sure **Edit Mode** is clicked **ON**. Select **Survey** from the **Create Assessment** menu.
3. Select the survey from the **Add Survey** menu (only surveys that you have not yet deployed will be listed). Click **Submit**. This opens the **Survey Options** menu.

### ***Setting survey availability and survey options***

1. Make the survey available in the **Survey Availability** area. Clicking **Yes** for **Make the Link Available** creates an active link to the survey in this content area. (Clicking **No** removes the link and makes the survey unavailable.) You can also create an announcement to alert students to the availability of the survey.
2. Follow screen prompts for other options:
  - Multiple attempts
  - By *forcing completion*, you are turning off the option to complete a survey in multiple “sittings.” Students will not be able to save their work and continue at a later time. *However, forcing completion prohibits students from accessing the survey again should they experience technical glitches such as a lost internet connection and increases the chances that you will have to clear their attempt.*
  - You may or may not want to set a *time limit*.
  - Set the **Display After** and **Display Until** dates and times using the calendar and clock icons. (Be sure that you also click **Yes** for **Make the Link Available**, as above.)
  - Setting a Password is an additional way to limit access to a survey.

- Finally, set **Self-Assessment**, **Feedback**, and **Presentation** options. Presenting the survey **All at Once** is recommended over presenting questions **One at a Time**. **Randomize Questions** presents the same questions in random order for each student.
3. Click **Submit**. The survey appears in the content area where you posted it. The student will go to this area and click on the link to complete the survey. *Remind students to click **Save and Submit** to send their completed survey to you, not **Save all Answers**.*

### ***Editing the content of a survey***

1. In the course menu, click on the content area where the survey is located and find the survey in the list of items in this area.
2. Select **Edit the Survey** from the drop-down menu to the right of the survey's name.

### ***Editing survey options (how the survey is deployed)***

1. In the course menu, click on the content area where the survey is located and find the survey in the list of items in this area.
2. Select **Edit the Survey Options** from the drop-down menu to the right of the survey's name.

### ***Viewing the results of a survey***

1. Select **Grade Center / Full Grade Center** from the **Evaluation** menu in the **Control Panel**. Find the column for the survey.
2. You will see a check mark next to a student's name in the **Grade Center** if he/she has completed the survey.
3. To view responses, click on the double "down" arrows to the right of the name of the survey in the column header.
4. Click **Attempts Statistics** to see the results.

### ***Clearing a student's attempt***

Online surveys are subject to technical glitches. Common problems include Internet connections timing out or otherwise disconnecting and surveys not submitting properly when students click

the **Save and Submit** button. You may have to “clear” students’ attempts, allowing them to re-take and re-submit the survey.

- An icon appears when a student is locked out of a survey. Pull down the menu next to the icon and select **View Grade Details**. *Do not clear attempts unless you hear from the student that he/she had difficulty submitting.*
- Click the **Clear Attempt** button.

### ***Copying surveys from one site to another***

You can copy all of your surveys from one Blackboard site to another by using the **Course Copy** option in the **Control Panel**. Refer to instructions for Transferring Course Material from Previous to New Blackboard Sites and follow the instructions for the appropriate version(s) of Blackboard. When selecting the content to copy, check only **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**. *You will have to deploy the surveys by adding them to content areas.*

### ***Exporting and importing surveys***

You can export individual surveys from one course site and import them into another course site.

#### **Exporting a survey**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Surveys**.
- Select **Export** from the drop-down menu to the right of the survey that you want to export.
- When prompted, **Save** the .zip file to your local disk. The file name will be in this format:

**Survey\_ExportFile\_45489\_P\_111\_survey1.zip**

- Do not unzip or otherwise modify this file or it will not import correctly.

#### **Importing a survey**

- Select **Tests, Surveys and Pools** from the **Course Tools** menu in the **Control Panel**.
- Click **Surveys**.
- Click **Import Survey** and then **Browse for Local File** and select the survey export file (.zip file).
- Click **Submit**.
- The import is confirmed with the message “The package has been processed...” Click **OK**. The imported survey appears as the last item in the **Surveys** list.

## **Monitoring Student Activity in Your Course: Performance Dashboard, Statistics Tracking, Course Reports, and Review Status**

Four tools allow the instructor to monitor student activity in Blackboard courses: the **Performance Dashboard, Review Status, Tracking Reports, and Statistics Tracking**.

Keep in mind that these tools rely on counts of “hits” to different areas of your course site and self-report item review status. The fact that a student has clicked on a document or marked it as “Reviewed” does not mean that he/she has actually *read* it. Nevertheless, these tools can be a useful first step in identifying students for possible follow-up action.

### **Performance Dashboard**

The **Performance Dashboard** tool allows the instructor to view a summary of student activity. To view the Performance Dashboard, select **Performance Dashboard** from the **Evaluation** menu in the **Control Panel**. The following information is displayed:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Username
- Role
- Last Course Access
- Days since Last Course Access
- Review Status - Displays which items have been viewed by a student if this tool is enabled. A detailed view of items may be opened in a new window by clicking the item count.
- Adaptive Release – Click the folder icon to display a list of all items in the course, whether or not items are visible to the student, and whether or not the student has reviewed the item.
- Discussion Board participation data and grades, with access to Email to contact the student.
- Early Warning System – displays any Early Warning notifications sent to the student
- View Grades - Only displayed if the Grade Center is enabled. Provides links to the Grade Center: User Grade List page for that user.

You can click the **Print** icon to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format.

All columns can be sorted by clicking the column header to toggle between ascending and descending order.

## Statistics Tracking (“Track Number of Views” in Blackboard 8)

You can also enable tracking for an individual item in a content area.

### Enabling Tracking

1. Select **Tracking** from the drop-down menu to the right of the item. (This is the equivalent of selecting Track Number of Views in Blackboard 8.)
2. Click **Enable**, and then **Submit**.
3. The item is tagged with an **Enabled: Statistics Tracking**.

### Viewing Tracking Statistics

- Select **View Statistics** from the drop-down menu next to the item.
- Select **Run** from the drop-down **Content Usage** menu
- Select the format for the report (PDF, HTML, Word, Excel)
- Then select the names of the student(s) to track and the timeframe for the tracking report.

To select...

**the entire class...** Click on the first name in the list, and while hold down the **Shift** key, click on the last name in the list.

**selected students...** Click on the first name, then, while holding down the **Control** key, click each of the other names.

## Course Reports (“Course Statistics” in Blackboard 8)

The **Course Reports** tool provides information about student activity in your course site.

Access **Course Reports** from the **Evaluation** menu in the **Control Panel**. Activity can be viewed as a whole or for Content areas, Groups, or Discussion Forums separately.

Use the drop-down menus to the right of each option to select **Run**.

- Select the format for the report (PDF, HTML, Word, Excel)
- Then select the names of the student(s) to track and the timeframe for the tracking report.

To select...

**the entire class...** Click on the first name in the list, and, while hold down the **Shift** key, click on the last name in the list.

**selected students...** Click on the first name, then, while holding down the **Control** key, click each of the other names.

Click **Submit**.

When viewing reports that include hit or access statistics, a hit is tracked every time a request is sent to Blackboard. For example, when tracking use of the Communication Area: a Student accesses the Communication area (1 hit), clicks Discussion Boards (2 hits), clicks a forum (3 hits), and clicks a message to read (4 hits).

If a user is unenrolled and then re-enrolled, only statistics since the re-enrollment are kept.

### **Review Status**

Finally, the **Review Status** tool allows you to track *self-reported* student review of specific content items. Once you enable the tool for an item, each student tracks their own progress. A **Mark Reviewed** radio button appears on the item. After viewing the item, the student selects this button to mark it “Reviewed.”

### **Enable Review Status for an item**

1. Open the Content Area that includes the item by clicking on its link in the course menu.
2. Select **Set Review Status** from the drop-down menu next to the content item. (The default state, indicated in the menu, is Disabled.)
3. Select **Enable** and click **Submit**. The new status (Enabled) appears in the menu.

### **View the status of student reviews**

Once Review Status is enabled for an item, you can check the status of student reviews in two places.

- By selecting **User Progress** from the drop-down menu next to the content item.
- In the **Performance Dashboard**.