Setting up a Blackboard Course Site

This training manual covers the following topics:

- **Section 1 – Accessing Blackboard**
  - Accessing Blackboard
  - The Course Request Form
  - Student enrollments
  - Checking the student roster
  - Making a course available to students
  - Adding Users by Role

- **Section 2 – Modifying the course menu**
  - Default course menu
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- **Section 3 – Customizing your course**
  - Adding a banner
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- **Section 4 – Adding content to a Blackboard course site**
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**Section 1  Accessing Blackboard**

Blackboard is a Learning Management System. It is a web-based software system that allows users to post course content, communicate with students, set up quizzes or surveys, and manage grades online without any knowledge of HTML or programming.

**Blackboard 8.0 is now available via Stern Links:** [http://w4.stern.nyu.edu/sternlinks](http://w4.stern.nyu.edu/sternlinks)

Where can I find on-line tutorials about using Blackboard?

CITL has a very useful website, [http://w4.stern.nyu.edu/faculty/citl/](http://w4.stern.nyu.edu/faculty/citl/), in terms of Blackboard support. Our website contains tutorials on various aspects of Blackboard such as Adding/Managing Content, Communication and Assignments. There is also a Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Qs) section. If these sections do not provide you with the information you are looking for or you have further questions please feel free to send us an email at citl@stern.nyu.edu or call us at 212-998-0919.
Add Users by Role

As an instructor you can add other users such as additional instructors, a Teaching Assistant, or an auditing student via the Add Users by Role tool in the Control Panel of your Blackboard course site.

Go to the control panel of your course site and click on the Add Users by Role link in the Course Tools area.

In Section 1, you can choose the Role you want to provide to the user. The role options are as follows:

- Instructor: Full access to all course functionality
- Content Assistant: Limited access, can only add content but not add grades
- Grader: Limited access, can only add grades but not add content
- Teaching Assistant: Access to all course functionality, except the Add Users by Role tool
- Student: Regular student access (can not access the control panel)

In Section 2, you can type in the Username (Stern ID of the user(s) you want to add with the chosen role. You can add multiple users with the same role by separating usernames with a comma.

Click Submit to save your changes.

Tip:
If you do not know the Username for the person you are trying to add to your course, you can click on the Browse button and search for them using their first, last name etc.
Section 2 - Modifying the course menu

Once in Blackboard, you will be in the student view of your course site. Here you will see the Course Menu on the left hand side of your screen and the Announcements area on the right hand side of your screen.

Quick View

- Announcements
- Staff Information
- Course Information
- Course Documents
- Assignments
- External Links
- Discussion Board
- Library Research

Default Course Menu

Each newly created Blackboard course site has a default course menu. The buttons in this menu can be renamed, removed, new content areas or tools added by going to the Manage Course Menu option in the Control Panel.

Detail View

- Beta-test Faculty (beta_test_faculty)
- Announcements
- Staff Information
- Course Information
- Course Documents
- Assignments
- External Links
- Discussion Board
- Library Research

Tools
- Communication
- Course Tools
- Course Map

- Control Panel
- Refresh
- Detail View

What is the control panel?

In your Blackboard course site, only you and your TA (if applicable) have access to the Control Panel. From the control panel you have the ability to make all desired changes to your course from adding content, to changing the look and feel of your course, to grading student submissions. The control panel is accessed in one of two ways. Under the course menu instructors and TAs have a Control Panel button which students do not see. This button is located directly underneath the course menu. In addition, the control panel can be accessed through the Edit View button, again which is only displayed to instructors and TAs. This edit view button is located in the top right hand corner of your screen.
To re-order, rename or remove buttons from the Course Menu:

1. Go into the Control Panel for the course and click the **Manage Course Menu** under the **Course Options** section.
2. To the left of each button there is a number, this number is the order in which the buttons are displayed. To re-order the course menu adjust the numbers in these drop-down lists as desired.
3. To rename a specific button in the course menu, simply click on **Modify** to the left of the button and change the **Name** property.
4. To remove a button from the course menu, simply click on **Remove** to the left of the button.

**Tip:**
Remove any buttons you don’t suit your course design and therefore aren’t going to be used during the semester. Keeping the course menu clean and simple for students will avoid any confusion of ‘empty’ areas.

**Tip:**
Blackboard 8.0 allows you to add tools to a specific content area, not just the course menu. Deciding where to put tools depends on your situation:

- **Tools in the Course Menu**  
  Consider this method if you want to limit students’ access to certain tools only. Put these tools on the Course Menu and then hide the Tools Panel so students can’t access the other tools. You can also use this method if you want to put frequently-used tools in a more prominent location.

- **Tools in the Content Area**  
  Consider this method if students are required to use tools relevant to a Content Area. For example, a content area containing a reading on a topic and then a link to a discussion board to share thoughts with other students.
The other elements of the Course Menu can be amended by using the new Course Design option in the Control Panel:

Adding a Banner
To personalize your course further, one option is to add a banner to the announcements page. The banner can be a text phrase or an image but must be in .gif or .jpg format.

1. To add a banner, go into the control panel of your course and click Course Design link in the Course Options area.

2. Click on the Course Banner link

3. Browse to find your banner. Click Submit to save your changes.
Setting the course entry point

By default the entry point to a Blackboard course site is the Announcements page, however this can be amended. To set the entry point:

1. Go into the control panel of the course site, and click on the Settings option in the Course Options area.
2. Click on the Course Entry Point option.
3. From the Entry Point drop-down list, choose which content area or tool you would like to set as the new entry point. Click Submit to save your changes.

Tip:
The new course entry point may not take effect immediately. If this happens, clear your browser’s cache or close and re-open the browser to see your changes.
Section 4 - Adding content to a Blackboard course site.

The process of adding a file to your Blackboard course site is very similar to that of adding an attachment to an email. Numerous file types can be added to your course site such as Word documents, PDFs, images, etc.

Log into Blackboard, and go into the desired course. Once in the student view, click on the Control Panel Icon at the bottom of your course menu. In the control panel for your course, choose the Content Area you wish to add the file too. In this example we will use Course Documents.

Tip:
You can rename any of the default content areas. To learn how to do this, see our tutorial on Customizing the Course Menu.

Remove any buttons you don’t suit your course design and aren’t going to be used during the semester. Keeping the course menu clean and simple for students will avoid any confusion of ‘empty’ areas.

In the content area, click on the +Item icon in the top toolbar.

Part 1: Content Information

Type in the name of the item and any related text you want to provide to students.

The text box editor resembles a mini-word editor and contains similar functionality such as creating a text, bolding text, inserting images in line with text etc.

Part 2: Content

To add your file to your site, click on the Browse button in section 2.

Browse for the file on your computer you want to attach and then select Open.
Part 3: Options

You can choose whether you want to make this content available to students or not by amending the **Make the content available** option. This option can be changed at any time.

To track how many times a user on your Blackboard course site views a particular piece of content, you can amend the **Track number of views** option from *No* to *Yes*.

Lastly, Blackboard will optionally automatically ‘release’ a piece of content to students based on specific dates. To set this up, amend the **Display After** or **Display Until** options at the end of section 3.

When you have chosen your settings, click **Submit** at the bottom of your page to save your changes.

**Tip:**
To update a file once it has been added to your Blackboard course site, click **Modify** to the right of the file in the relevant content area. Scroll down to Section 2 and click on the **Remove** option. Once you have removed the file, repeat the steps above to **Browse** for the updated file to add it to your course site.
The Syllabus Tool

The Syllabus Tool in Blackboard allows instructors to upload a file as a syllabus or to build a syllabus directly into a content area of a course site.

Log into Blackboard, and go into the desired course. Once in the student view, click on the Control Panel Icon at the bottom of your course menu. In the control panel for your course, click on the content area you want to add the syllabus too. In this example, we will use the Course Information content area.

Tip: You can create a new content area entitled ‘Syllabus’ or re-name an existing content area title. For step-by-step instructions on how to do either option, please see our tutorial entitled “Manage Course Menu”.

In the Assignments content area, locate the Select drop-down menu on the right-hand side of your screen and choose the Syllabus option from this list and click Go.

Part 1: Add Syllabus

Here you can decide to:
• provide a name for your syllabus,
• create a new syllabus directly in the course site, or
• attach an existing syllabus document you have saved on your computer.

In this example, we will create a new syllabus. Click Submit to move to the next screen.

Part 2: Syllabus Builder

In the Syllabus builder screen, you can add class information under three headings. The default name for these headings is “Description”, “Learning Materials” and “Required Materials”, however these names can be amended to suit your class.

The syllabus can be built with one of 6 design templates such as ‘Document Image’, ‘Notepad’ or ‘Contemporary’. For each design, the color of headers, borders, text and background and frame (depending on the chosen design type).
Optional **Lesson shells** can be added to your syllabus. Lesson shells can refer to an individual class or a week of the course. When building your syllabus, choose the number of ‘lesson shells’ you would like to include in your syllabus.

**Tip:**
If you choose not to include lesson shells when creating your syllabus, it is important to note that they cannot be added later – you would have to create a new syllabus. However, the good news is that you can always remove lesson shells at a later stage so it is safer to add more than you need at this stage and modify later!

As with other pieces of content you can choose whether the syllabus should be available to students or not at this time, choose to track the number of views the syllabus gets and lastly to set any date restrictions (i.e. display after or display until) for this piece of content. When you are ready, click **Submit** to save your changes.
Part 3: Preview and Modify a Syllabus

Once you have created your syllabus, you will have a chance to view the chosen design template and colors. If you wish to amend any of the settings in section 2 (with the exception of adding lesson shells), click on Modify Syllabus in the top right-hand corner of your screen.

Below the syllabus, you will see the lesson shells outline. Here you can:

- Add Lesson
- Remove Lesson
- Modify

When you click on Modify to the right of any lesson, you can amend the title, a lesson date, time, start and end times and add a lesson description. When you have added all the desired information, click Submit to save your changes.
Part 4: Final Syllabus

To view the 'final' version of the syllabus, go back to the edit view of your content area.

If there are any changes you would like to make to the syllabus, click **Modify** to the left of syllabus.

Other options include:

- Manage – apply ‘Review Status’, ‘Adaptive Release’ or ‘Statistics Tracking’ to this item.
- Copy – copy the item to another content area in this course, or in a different course which you have instructor access to.
- Remove – remove the item.

**English 101**

**DESCRIPTION**

Here is the description of topics covered in this class.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Here are the learning objectives for this class.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Here is a list of required books and materials for this class.

**LESSONS**

**September 8, 2008**

Week 1

Here is the description for what we will cover in week 1 of this class.

**September 15, 2008**

Week 2

Here is the description for what we will cover in week 2 of this class.

**November 3, 2008**

Week 3

Here is the description for what we will cover in week 3 of this class.

**October 7, 2008**

Week 4

Here is the description for what we will cover in week 4 of this class.

**October 15, 2008**

Week 5

Here is the description for what we will cover in week 5 of this class.

**Tip:**

You can learn more about applying ‘Review Status’, ‘Adaptive Release’ or ‘Statistics Tracking’ to a piece of content by searching our tutorials [online](https://www.blackboard.com).