

Blackboard Course Setup Checklist

The following is a checklist of tasks that you will complete in the Blackboard course site as part of the final course setup. Each task below should be complete prior to making the course site available to students.

In addition to the instructions provided, there are short tutorial videos that you can view for each item by clicking the name of the setup task on the left.

Setup Task	Instructions
Getting Started Area	<p>When entering the course for the first time, students will be directed to the Getting Started area of the course, located in the left menu. This area provides students with instructions on how to get started in the course. A sample text message has been provided for you that contains three sections: Welcome, About This Course, and How to Begin. You should edit each of the three areas of sample text to make the message relevant to the specifics of your course. To do this, turn Edit Mode to On (upper right corner), and then use the dropdown menus to the right of each heading to select edit, then modify accordingly and submit. Note that you do not and should not need to completely rewrite the sample text; just make the appropriate edits to make the sample text relevant for your course.</p>
Discussion Forums	<p>You will need to set up the Discussions tool for the module discussions. Taking some time to consider the organization of the Discussions area is important. It is recommended that you create a separate discussion Forum for each module. If you have multiple questions per week, it is recommended that you then create these as threads under the weekly forums and ask the students to reply to your posted question. It is also recommended that you add forums for General Class Questions, Introductions and a Student Lounge. If you have a forum for introductions you should post a “starter” thread in that forum to introduce yourself and tell them to do the same. The students should be directed to this forum to introduce themselves in the Getting Started area of the course.</p> <p>Once in Discussions, create a new discussion Forum by selecting the Create Forum button located at the top left corner of the discussion screen. Use the dropdown menu located next to each forum to manage or edit the forum settings.</p>
Calendar	<p>At a minimum, module start dates, quiz due dates, and office hour dates should all be added to the Blackboard Calendar. By default, when you add due dates to assignments or tests and quizzes the due dates are automatically added to the Blackboard Calendar. To manually add items to the calendar:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Click the Calendar link in the left-hand navigation. Your course’s calendar displays.2. Click the  button in the upper right-hand corner of the calendar. The Create Event dialog box displays.

3. In the **Create Event** dialog box, provide an event title and set the event details as applicable. Click **Save**.

The manually created event will display on the specified date.

Announcements

Use the **Announcements** tool to make announcements to the class about upcoming due dates, any changes made to anything during the term, grades that are available, office hours, etc. To access the **Announcements** tool, Click **Course Tools** under **Course Management** on the lower left side of your course site. Once in the announcement tool, click **Create Announcements** to create and add a new announcement.

At the start of the semester, you will need to post the following announcement that directs the students to visit the **Getting Started** link in the left-hand navigation:

Subject: Welcome to XXX.XXX Course Name

Text: Welcome to XXX.XXX Course Name. Please click on Getting Started to begin.

It is important to create this announcement just prior to the start of the semester as only the most recent items posted to the Announcements will be visible to the student when they log in.

Assessments (Assignments)

The **Assessments** tool should be used for students to both download and submit assignments for grading. Each assignment that is to be submitted should have a corresponding assignment set up in the **Assignments** tool. **Assignments** are created in the individual module folders under **Course Modules** and are created by using the **Create Assessments** link in the top menu. As assignments are created, you will need to set assignment parameters (e.g., grading, due dates, etc.) To do this:

1. Ensure that the **Edit Mode** is **ON**.
2. Navigate to the assignment (Course Modules > Module Title > Assignments).
3. Click the  next to the assignment submission link (the Assignment title). Then click **Edit**.
4. Adjust the properties listed under the following headings: **3. Grading, 4. Availability, 5. Due Dates, and 6. Recipients**.
5. When you're finished, click **Submit**.

You will return graded assignments and feedback to the students and apply a grade by clicking the corresponding field in the **Grade Center**.

Grade Center

Each time you create an assignment or test/quiz in a content area, a corresponding column will be created in the **Grade Center**. This is also where you will go to download submitted assignments, view test grades, and additional grades available to students. To manage the **Grade Center** or create additional columns and categories:

1. Go to **Grade Center** found under **Course Management**.
2. Click **Manage** then **Categories** to add additional categories if necessary.
3. Click **Manage** then **Column Organization** to arrange and/or hide columns and assign categories to columns.
4. Create an additional column for class participation by clicking **Create Column**. Complete the name field, category, check the appropriate options, and then click **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

Course Modules should be made available to the students based on the start of the particular module week (unless you want students to have access to the entire course at once – which is not recommended).

To control the module time and date availability:

Course Modules

1. Ensure that the **Edit Mode** is **ON**.
2. Click the **Course Modules** link on the left hand menu.
3. Click the next to a folder link and then **Edit**.
4. Go to the bottom of the edit page under **Options**.
5. Check **Yes** next to **Permit Users to View This Content** and **Track Number of Views**.
6. Click the check box next to **Display After** and enter the date and time using the icon next to the empty box. There is normally no need to set the **Display Until** unless there is content that you only want the students to have access to for a specific period of time.
7. Click **Submit**.

When you log into Blackboard and see the link to your course, you will see **Unavailable** next to the course link. **Unavailable** means that students do not have access to the course. On the night before, or on the first day of the start of the semester (courses should go live by no later than 9:00 a.m. on the first day of the semester), you will need to make the course available to students.

Making the Course Available

1. Click the hammer and wrench () icon to the left of your course link. A group of drop-down tool icons displays.
2. Click the **Make Course Available** () icon (all the way on the left). The course is now “Available” (note the green Available status to the right of your course link)
3. The students will now be able to access the course site.