USING BLACKBOARD AT DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY:
A FACULTY GUIDE
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*Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide*
OVERVIEW OF BLACKBOARD

Blackboard is a course management system that allows your students easy access to whatever course material you deem appropriate to place online. Whether you choose to place all course material (even tests) or just a few hyperlinks to appropriate Internet sources, you will find the Blackboard package very customizable and easy to use.

For you and your students to have access to Blackboard, you will need:

- An Internet connection
- A web browser. See the chart below for the minimum browser versions recommended by Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Microsoft Internet Explorer</th>
<th>Netscape Navigator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Windows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows 2000 and Windows 95, 98, and ME</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows XP</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Macintosh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mac OS 9.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mac OS X.1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mac OS X.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X = Certified configurations that have been tested by Blackboard
NS = NOT SUPPORTED. There are known issues with these configurations and Blackboard recommends that you avoid using these configurations.
n/a = Configuration combinations not supported by Apple, Microsoft, or Netscape.

All other configurations are compatible.

DO NOT USE AOL'S BUILT-IN BROWSER!!!

If there is one sure way to guarantee you will not be able to do everything Blackboard is capable of doing, it is by using AOL’s proprietary browser. Yes, you can continue to access the Internet using AOL, but DO NOT use their browser! Instead, minimize your AOL screen and launch a "real version" of Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.
REQUESTING A BLACKBOARD COURSE

To request a Blackboard course site, you must attend one of our extremely entertaining and informative Blackboard workshops, and then contact our campus Blackboard Administrator, Ken Black, Director of Teaching and Learning Technology, at ext. 6512 or via e-mail at: kblack@dom.edu. You should provide the following information:

- Course Number (such as English 250 or Biology 350) and section number
- Course Name
- Whether you want an existing Dominican Blackboard course copied into a new one. (All documents, handouts, etc., can be copied from an existing course into a new one, making your preparation much easier the second time around!) (See next section for additional details.)

Ken will notify you via e-mail when your course Web site is up.

Copying a Blackboard Course

Why reinvent the wheel? You can copy an existing Blackboard course you have already created into one to use for a later semester. When you request a course to be copied over from one semester to the next, you can pick and choose which parts to copy. The following is a listing of the parts you may choose from:

Content Area

- Course Information
- Course Documents
- Assignments
- External Links

Announcements
Tests Surveys, and Pools
Calendar
Collaboration Sessions
Course Settings
Discussion Board
Gradebook Items and Settings
Faculty Information
Enrollment  (Copy enrollments for all users in the course. Note that this option does not copy user records in the course, such as grades. User records are only copied if we make an exact copy of the entire course.)

Unless we are instructed otherwise, usually only Content Area will be copied over, since portions such as the Discussion Board and Gradebook have user-specific information, which our experience has shown most instructors do not want copied over from one semester to the next.
Do NOT Keep Using An "Old" Course
In order to keep course naming conventions consistent on the Blackboard server, we ask that you do NOT reuse the same course over and over, but rather request to have it copied from semester to semester. While the result is that you will see duplicate course names when you login, it does allow you to keep an "archive" of older courses on your own. This brings up another point....

Courses Are Deleted Only Upon Request From the Instructor
Courses that you alone created without any assistance or outside content are regarded by Dominican University as your intellectual property. We do not delete courses unless you request them to be deleted. However, to not overload our server, we request that you periodically request older courses be removed. These can be archived for you and given to you as a ZIP file, which can be reloaded later, if you wish. (Only another Blackboard administrator can reload a course onto a server.)

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS
As lengthy as this Guide is, it still only scratches the surface of Blackboard's features. You obviously do not have to use everything Blackboard has to offer, but can select certain elements that you believe are most appropriate for the type of class you teach. This Guide should be enough to provide you with a broad overview of what the system provides, and it provides some Dominican University-specific information that is important for you to know. We have divided this Guide to cover the five main areas of the Control Panel: Course Options (the part you are reading now), Content Areas, Course Tools, User Management, and Assessment. Additional help is available via the Control Panel in Blackboard by clicking on the Manual link in the Support section. In addition, there are some helpful tip sheets and Flash-animated tips from Blackboard's training site at http://support.blackboard.com, though you must create your own account at that site.

This Guide, along with other documents, is available on our Intranet at:

http://domin.dom.edu/documents/blackboardfac.htm

Student documentation is available at:

http://domin.dom.edu/documents/blackboardstu.htm

Student Help
Do not assume your students know how to use Blackboard! Please refer them to the web site above for documentation!

Version Information
Dominican University is using Blackboard Learning System 6.1, Basic Edition. When finding documentation via Blackboard's web site or with printed documentation, please keep this in mind.

Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide
LOGGING INTO BLACKBOARD

To access Blackboard from either on- or off-campus, go to the following Web address:

http://blackboard.dom.edu

You will then see the following screen:

Since you will already have an account, just click the Login button, and head to the next screen:

Since you will already have an account, just click the Login button, and head to the next screen:

Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide
GETTING TO YOUR COURSE

By default, Blackboard opens on the My Institution page. You may access the class(es) you have on Blackboard either on this page or by clicking the My Courses/Blackboard Course Catalog tab (described next):

Click the tabs on the upper left to switch between areas in Blackboard.

Click on this link to go directly to the class you are teaching.

By default, Blackboard displays information on course cartridge support for students. You can disable this message from appearing if you are not using a cartridge (and most of you will not be) by clicking the Contents button (circled) on top and then unchecking Course Cartridge Support for Students on the following screen.
Clicking on the **My Courses/Blackboard Course Catalog** tab shows a similar listing, along with the **Blackboard** course catalog:

Does your course say it's **Unavailable**? That is the default setting so that YOU have access to it to add material before the semester begins, but students will not. Once the semester begins, be sure to reset this or else your students will not be able to get to the course! Additional information is on page 21.

Isn't there an address I can just type directly into my browser to get around all these crazy screens?

No. Anyone using **Blackboard** must first login to the server's main page to gain access. You (and your students) must login directly to **blackboard.dom.edu** and just learn to cope with "Blackboard's way" to getting to your courses!
THE BLACKBOARD INTERFACE

Once you login and click on the link that leads to your course page, you will see a screen similar to the one below. By default, all logins to course sites go to the course Announcements page first, although this can be changed (as you will later see):

The Student View and the Instructor View

It is critical to understand that while most of what you see on this screen in also what your students will see, there is one small difference--and that difference is the link located at the very bottom of the Course Menu, called Control Panel. Below are the different navigation menus.
LOOK MA, NO MENUS!

That icon you see on the upper left of each menu collapses the menu to give users more screen "real estate." After it's collapsed, it is replaced by this:

- Brings back menu
- Course Map
- Control Panel (in Instructor's view only)

CONTROL PANEL

The Control Panel functions are absolutely critical for you to master as an instructor of a Blackboard course. It should be your first stop when you go into your course for the very first time, and it is how you control the content of your course. As the above screenshot points out, only YOU have a Control Panel link on the Course Menu. Once you click the Control Panel link, it will take you to the following screen:
**Important:** your path to the student's view. Whenever you want to get out of the Control Panel view and see your course how your students will see it, use the Navigation Path at the top of your screen; do NOT click the **Back** button on your browser--it may not always work.

All of the sections you see will lead to additional areas with more choices. The bulk of this *Guide* will discuss these various sections within the Control Panel, roughly in the order that you will likely want to use them.

**TOO MANY CHOICES??!!**

Do not be overly concerned about the seemingly endless number of choices in the Control Panel. You will be spending the vast majority of your time in the **Content Areas** and **Course Tools** areas once you set up your menu system using the **Course Options** area. Once you get used to "navigating" within the Control Panel you will find *Blackboard* very easy to use. The key to using any section within the Control Panel is to read the onscreen instructions carefully.
COURSE OPTIONS: "HOUSEKEEPING 101"

Before we discuss adding material to your course and getting the content up and running, it may be best to look at the general "housekeeping" section of the Control Panel first. This is the Course Options section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Options</th>
<th>Import Course Cartridge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manage Course Menu</td>
<td>Import Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Tools</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Copy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Manage Course Menu

The Manage Course Menu section will allow you to change the appearance of your Course Menu options. If you think there are too many choices in the default Course Menu or you do not like the wording, this should be your first stop. Here is the Manage Course Menu screen:

- Removing a Course Menu item is simple—just click the corresponding Remove button on the far right.
- If you don't like the order of your Course Menu items, click any of the drop-down menus to change it instantly!
- If you want to change the wording of an existing one, click the Modify button instead. Adding a Course Menu item forces you to make a decision as to the type of item you want to add: Content Area, Tool Area, Course Link, or External Link.

Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide
Modify a Course Menu Item

To change the wording of an existing item, click the **Modify** button. You will see a screen like the one shown below after, for example, clicking the **Modify** button for Assignments:

![Update Assignments Area](image)

1. **Set Area Properties**
   - **Area Type:** Content Area
   - **Area name:**
     - Assignments
     - Homework
   - **Allow guest access:**
   - **Make available for Student/Participant users:**

   Click this drop-down menu to select another name OR type your own name in the text box below. You do not want to exceed the recommended 18-character limit.

2. **Submit**
   - Get used to the idea of always clicking the **Submit** button after doing anything in Blackboard!

Click "Submit" to finish. Click "Cancel" to abort this process.

---

**Your Control Panel Will Change As You Change Menu Items**

Thankfully, your Control Panel links will change when you change the wording on your menu items. For example, if you change the **Course Documents** menu item to **Chaucer** and then add an item (described next) and name it **Shakespeare**, and change the **Assignments** item to **Homework**, your Control Panel will look like this:

![Control Panel](image)

ENGL200-SEC1-FA04: ENGL 200 - Historical Survey of Eng
Raymond Johnson (Instr)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Areas</th>
<th>Course Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Homework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaucer</td>
<td>External Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakespeare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Announcements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discussion Boards</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Calendar</strong></td>
<td><strong>Send E-mail</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Digital Drop Box</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note, however, that this only applies to the **Content Areas**. The **Course Tools** section sticks with Blackboard's default names—even if you rename them from the student's perspective. The **Faculty Information** section, for example, will always be called **Staff Information** in the Control Panel.
Adding a Course Menu Item

Adding a Course Menu Item means clicking one of these buttons first:

Adding a **Content Area** leads to a screen very similar to the one shown on the previous page, where you can select a drop-down menu item or type in your own choice. The **Tool Area** is a bit different, in that it refers specifically to other Blackboard-specific tools, such as what students see under their **Tools** menu or what you see in the **Manage Tools>>Enable Blackboard Tools** section of the Control Panel. The screenshot below shows the drop-down menu choices:

![Add New Area](image)

You **must** select an **Area Type**: first before assigning you own name, so you will have to be acquainted with what these tools actually do first. It will be best to test the Course Menu immediately after changing these options!

**Remember—the Course Tools Area of Your Control Panel Will Not Change!**

As we stated on the previous page, you can rename any course tool, but your Control Panel wording remains the same. For example, you may want to call your Discussion Board something like **Chat Central** on the Course Menu, but it will still be called **Discussion Board** in your Control Panel.

The choices are largely identical to the tools discussed in the next section of this *Guide*, the **Manage Tools** area of the Control Panel. Remember, check the student's view of the course menu after making any changes!
The **Course Link** button ( ) allows you to add a Course Menu item that, in turn, leads to specific area within your course. Think of it as creating a hyperlink to an area within your course. Here is what the screen looks like after clicking the **Course Link** button:

Click the **Browse** button (circled above) to navigate to the area of your course you wish to have the new Course Menu item link to. Note there are plus signs next to each folder, which, in turn, cascade to display each item you presently have within a course area. In this case, we select an already uploaded syllabus document that is in the **Course Information** area of the course:
After clicking the **Submit** button in the folder window, you will see the **Link location:** box on the preceding screen now filled in:

![Link location example]

Click the **Submit** button on *this* screen, and the new Course Menu item will be seen on your *Manage Course Menu* screen. As always, you should check the student's view by clicking on your course name in the Control Panel navigation path:

![Navigation path example]

You will have added a new Course Menu item immediately:

![Course Menu item example]

The final option for adding a Course Menu item, **External Link**, adds a Course Menu item that will itself be a hyperlink to another web site:

![Add options example]

Use your own judgment on this, as *Blackboard* has a specific course area for external links (called, oddly enough, **External Links**, as you can see on the course menu above). *Blackboard* also allows you to add external links anywhere within specific course areas (such as **Course Documents**, **Course Information**, etc.) So, do you *really* want a menu item for one, lousy hyperlink? Anyway, here is what the screen looks like:
For Target: type in the entire web address. Yes, you must include the http:// before it.

Launch in a new window: means checking this off will launch a separate web browser for the student when the menu item is clicked. This is a personal choice for you, but given the graphics-intensive web sites out there these days, our recommendation is that you check this option.

Here is the result from the student's perspective:

THIS is why you want to stick to the recommended 18-character limit while naming menu items! Your users will have to use the horizontal scroll bar (at the bottom) just to see the menu items!
Manage Tools

Clicking the Manage Tools section in Control Panel will bring you to this screen:

![Manage Tools](image)

**Enable Blackboard Tools**

The Enable Blackboard Tools link allows you to enable or disable the wide variety of tools the Blackboard system uses. These choices selected here are available to your students primarily via the Tools or Communication Course Menu items, although they can also be added as their own individual menu items using the Manage Course Menu option described earlier. Here is what the Enable Blackboard Tools screen looks like, followed by a brief description of what each does:
### Enable Blackboard Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Enabled</th>
<th>Allow Guest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address Book</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Area</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Area</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropbox</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Blackboard</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gradebook</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roster</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Information</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Home Page</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Gradebook</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools Area</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that even if you allow "guests" into your course (described on page 23), the **Allow Guest** column has several n/a's in it, indicating that guests cannot access that specific tool by default.
Most of these tools can safely be left on by default. Without going into a lot of detail about each option, here is a brief summary of what these choices mean. Some are explained in greater detail later in this guide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Address Book</strong></th>
<th>Gives student ability to maintain a &quot;contact list,&quot; though they must add people themselves. Not terribly useful, in our humble opinion, but no harm in leaving it enabled.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Announcements</strong></td>
<td>Your announcements page. There is already a Course Menu item for this enabled by default. (See page 10.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>The &quot;Virtual Classroom&quot; feature, as described on page 68.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications Area</strong></td>
<td>Enabled by default by within Communication Course Menu item (see page 10), this area, for students, leads to the Discussion Board, Collaboration, Groups Pages, and Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Area</strong></td>
<td>You REALLY do not want to disable this unless the ONLY thing you are doing in Blackboard is the Discussion Board and, perhaps, the online Gradebook. This is virtually everything in the first area of the Control Panel!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion Board</strong></td>
<td>This <em>asynchronous</em> communication tool is enabled by default by the Discussion Board Course Menu item (see page 10). This option is described in more detail on page 61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop Box</strong></td>
<td>The Digital Drop Box, as it is more formally called, allows private file transfer between yourself and a student. Additional information may be found beginning on page 71.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electric Blackboard</strong></td>
<td>Essentially an online &quot;notes&quot; area that allows students to jot down notes when logged in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
<td>Enabled by default within the Communication Course Menu item, this area is described in more detail on page 66.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glossary</strong></td>
<td>Allows you to create a glossary within your course. Explained in more detail on page 76.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gradebook</strong></td>
<td>Allows you to take advantage of Blackboard's online gradebook. Enabling this does NOT enable the student's ability to see their grades; that is done through the Student Gradebook option, below. All disabling this will do is remove the hyperlink to the Gradebook in Control Panel. Big deal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups</strong></td>
<td>Enabled by default within the Communication Course Menu item, this area is described in more detail on page 84. If you plan to have groups of students work on projects together, this is a nice feature. Otherwise, you can disable it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manual</strong></td>
<td>Allows a link to Blackboard's online Student Manual via the Tools Course Menu item. We strongly recommend you leave this enabled, for obvious reasons. Even though we produce our own Student Manual on the domin.dom.edu site, this is MUCH more comprehensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Information</strong></td>
<td>Displays any personal information the student filled in when filling out his/her User Information form page when a student account is first created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roster</strong></td>
<td>Allows students to see who else is in the class. This is enabled by default via the Communication Course Menu item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Information</strong></td>
<td>This is the Faculty Information Course Menu item in your course. It's easier just to remove the Course Menu item, frankly, while doing the other housekeeping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Home Page</strong></td>
<td>Allows students to have a &quot;homepage&quot; of information. This is enabled by default within the Tools Course Menu item. This is <em>not</em> the same as a student home page that students may have on our intranet server, however, as it consists mainly of boxes they are asked to fill in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Gradebook</strong></td>
<td>Allows students to keep track of their grades—assuming you are using Blackboard's online gradebook, which is covered beginning on page 102. Not the same as the Gradebook option, above, which reflects YOUR ability to use it. The is accessible by students via the Tools Course Menu item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasks</strong></td>
<td>You can set &quot;tasks&quot; for students that they can then check off on their Tasks page when they have completed them, as explained on page 60. This is part of the Tools Course Menu item from the student's view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools Area</strong></td>
<td>This disables the entire Tools Course Menu item from the student's perspective. If you're going to do this, you just wasted a lot of time reading about all of the other Tools above!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these items are also described in our student documentation, available at:

*Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide*
Difference Between Enabling Blackboard Tools and Managing the Course Menu

You may be understandably confused between the tools discussed above and managing the Course Menu, as discussed beginning on page 10. Many of these tools appear as their own choices on the Course Menu (such as Discussion Board, for example) as well as through either the Tools course menu item or the Communication course menu item. Be careful not to, for example, disable the Discussion Board from the Blackboard tools section described above while still leaving it enabled as an option while managing your Course Menu! The result will be that the Discussion Board choice will still appear on the Course Menu, but will be colored black without any ability for the student to click on it. Not a big deal, but not terribly good looking, either:

Enable Content Tools

This Control Panel option specifies the type of content that can be added. Our recommendation is just leave these enabled. In fact, we won't even waste the space showing you a screenshot of this screen!
Course Settings

The Course Settings area of the Control Panel is a very important area to get acquainted with. Although you will likely only need to venture into this area a couple of times while setting up your course, it contains some critical settings for student access. Here are the options:

Settings

- **Course Name and Description**
  Set the title, description and category for your course.

- **Course Availability**
  Set user availability for this course.

- **Guest Access**
  Set guest access for this course.

- **Course Duration**
  Set duration of the course.

- **Enrollment Options**
  Control the enrollment options in the course.

- **Categorize Course**
  Categorize this course in the course catalog.

- **Set Course Entry Point**
  Select the entry point for this course.

- **Course Design**
  Set course banner and design.

- **Observer Access**
  Set observer access for this course.

We will go over each of these the next few pages.

Course Name and Description

Parts of this screen will already be filled in for you by the Blackboard Administrator when your course is set up. You may, however, want to add a **Description** since this will be seen by students when going through the Blackboard Course Catalog:
Course Availability--A Critical Area!

This page simply contains a Yes/No radio button asking if you wish to make your course available:

**Course Availability**

1. **Set Course Availability**

   Do you want this course available to users?

   Make Course Available: Yes ☐ No ☐

**VERY IMPORTANT!**

By default, this is set to NO when your course is created, giving you sole access. Therefore, once you are ready to have students "enroll" in your Blackboard class, you must remember to set this to YES! If you get a complaint from students that they are unable to "enroll" in your course or that your course does not appear in Blackboard's Course Catalog, this is the likely reason!
Guest Access

By default, this page is set to NOT allow guests, so you will likely not want to change it. If, however, you wish to allow guests access to your class (in other words, they do not have to "enroll" in it via Blackboard and will be able to enter it directly via the Blackboard Course Catalog), you can reset this is Yes. Be aware that some areas within your class do not allow guest access by default.

Course Duration

Course Duration is set to Continuous by default. If you would like to set a start date and an end date for your students to have access to the course, you may do it here. Be careful when setting this, however. You do not want to accidentally set the wrong date and not allow access to your course two weeks before the final exam!

Enrollment Options--Yet Another Critical Area!

This is a critical area if you want to ensure that only your students get access to your Blackboard course. By default, all of our Blackboard courses are set to Self-Enrollment. This means students enroll themselves into your course. While this method places less of a burden on you as the instructor, you must bear in mind that all classes listed in the Blackboard Course Catalog can be accessed and that anyone can "enroll" in your Blackboard course by clicking the Enroll button (as shown below in the section on ).

Students Are NOT Automatically Enrolled in Your Blackboard Course!

Students are NOT enrolled in a Blackboard class simply because they registered for it. Our online registration system, Campus Web, is NOT tied into the Blackboard server in any way! Conversely, any of your students who enroll in your Blackboard course are not automatically enrolled in the course so far as the Office of the Registrar is concerned. Campus Web and Blackboard are two separate systems that do not "see" one another! This is by FAR the biggest point of confusion about Blackboard for students.
One way around not allowing unauthorized students into your Blackboard course is to set an Access Code for the course. If this is set, students will, after clicking the Enroll button, be prompted for an Access Code that YOU provide to them. (They only have to do this ONCE, by the way.) Here is a look at the Enrollment Options screen:

**Enrollment Options**

1. **Select Enrollment Options**

   - **Instructor / Admin:**
     - Check the box to Allow interested Students to e-mail requests to Instructor.
     - Check the box to set a Start Date.
     - Start Date: Dec 18, 2003

   - **Self Enrollment:**
     - Check the box to set an End Date.
     - End Date: Dec 18, 2003
     - Check the box to require Access code to enroll.
     - Access code: EgdonHeath

2. **Submit**

   Click the checkbox next to Require Access code to enroll and then type in any access code you choose to. Although you may not include spaces in the access code, you should indicate to your students that access codes are case-sensitive!

Note that in the Self Enrollment area above, you also have the option of setting a Start Date and an End Date for self-enrollment. While this is certainly one way to keep out unauthorized users, the best way is by setting the Access code. In the example above, we have set the access code to be EgdonHeath.

**How to Keep Out Unauthorized Users**

If you find yourself picking up a few unwanted students or simply want to remove some that have legitimately dropped your class, be aware that the User Management section in the Control Panel allows you to delete any unwanted students from your course (see page 82).

**Adding Users**

Some students may not quite figure out how to enroll on their own. Fortunately, so long as they at least have established their own Blackboard account, you can also choose Enroll User in the User Management section of Control Panel. Please DO NOT create users! This is how multiple users get created!

Remember--There is NO tie-in between the Campus Web online registration system and Blackboard! Students must "enroll" in your Blackboard course separately!
Student's Perspective of "Enrolling"

Based on the discipline assigned in the Categorize Course screen seen on the next page, students will "enroll" in your Blackboard course by going to the Blackboard Course Catalog, clicking on the appropriate discipline, and will see all Blackboard courses listed for that discipline. Unfortunately, they will likely be very tempted at this point to simply click on the hyperlink to go into your course. They should not! Instead, they must click on the Enroll button, which is located on the far right of the screen:

Current Location: English

CATEGORIES:

No Subcategories under English

COURSES:

ENGL 200 - Historical Survey of English Literature, sect. 1 - Fall 2004 (eng200-sect-1-fa04)
Instructor(s): Raymond Johnson
A course that covers the major works of English literature.

After doing this, they will be prompted for your Access code. Again, students only have to do this ONCE. Once "enrolled," your course will always be listed on their main My Institution screen.

You may want to check our student documentation for Blackboard located at:

http://domin.dom.edu/documents/blackboardstu.htm

for any overview of the student's perspective of enrolling. We also have a Flash-based "viewlet" posted on this page that guides students mouse-click by mouse-click on the Blackboard enrollment procedures.
Categorize Course

This page allows you to set the subject area(s) your course is listed under when using the Blackboard Course Catalog, as seen 'way back on page 5. When your course is set up, the Blackboard Administrator should have already filled this in for you. However, you are free to alter it in cases when, for example, your course is cross-listed with another discipline:

![Categorize Course](image)

**THIS area, not the Course Classification seen in the Course Name and Description described on page 19, corresponds to Dominican University disciplines and Schools.**

Set Course Entry Point

By default, when students enter your course, they are taking to the Announcements page first. You can reset this default to any area you desire by clicking the drop-down menu that is available on this screen.

Course Design

The final active link within the Settings screen in Control Panel is for Course Design. There are two options available on this page. The first, Course Design, allows you to set background colors for the Course Menu items, text color, and also to convert from the existing "look" of the Course Menu to buttons rather than text. (Any veterans of Blackboard's previous versions will know what we're talking about.) The second, Course Banner, allows you to set a different graphic image for your course Announcements page--or to get rid of the system default image.

Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide
**Import Course Cartridge**

A Course Cartridge is "pre-built" material supplied by a textbook publisher that is usually intended to supplement the textbook. Your students receive a special **access key** from the publisher in a shrink-wrapped textbook at the Bookstore to allow access to the course. The *Blackboard* Administrator is happy to do this for you once your publisher's sales representative supplies the access code. You will likely have to contact the Administrator, anyway, because some of these packages exceed Dominican's system quota of 25 MB for a course.

**Import Package**

This link allows you to import a "packaged" *Blackboard* file that you may have from another institution. Such files are called **export files**, and have the file extension of `.zip` (similar to a conventional "zipped" file type). Unlike other ZIP files, however, you do NOT want to alter these in any way! Feel free to contact our *Blackboard* Administrator, Ken Black, if you would like to import a packaged file from another institution. In fact, we generally recommend that you DO NOT try importing a package on your own!
CONTENT AREAS; WHERE YOU BUILD YOUR COURSE!

This part of the Guide will be devoted to looking at the Content Areas section of the Control Panel. After setting your course-wide preferences in the Course Options area in the Control Panel, you are ready to start adding content to your course. If you are already in your Control Panel, head back to the main Control Panel page by clicking the Control Panel link in the navigation path.

Here is the Content Areas section of the Control Panel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Areas</th>
<th>Books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Information</td>
<td>External Links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember, these areas correspond to the menu items that you set, as explained beginning on page 10., so if you altered your course menu at all, your choices may be different! Fortunately, all of these areas have the same "look" once you get into them. Let's look at Course Information as an example.

**General Content Areas Information**

When you click on, for example the Course Information link in the Control Panel, you will see the following screen:

The options you see circled above are fairly standard throughout the contents section of Blackboard. We will go into some detail on each of these except for Test, which will be dealt with in more detail in the section on Assessment, beginning on page 91. Over on the far right,
you will notice a drop-down menu, too. This drop-down menu leads to the following choices: Learning Unit, Survey, Assignment, and LRN Package. We will not go into great detail on these, but they are explained in Blackboard’s online manual, which you can check by clicking on the Manual link Control Panel. (We do discuss the Assignment option, however, on page 121.)

Adding an Item

After clicking the Item icon ( ), you will see a screen such as this:

Click this drop-down menu for choices for a Name, or simply type in your own text in the box below, as seen here.

Click here to select a color for your Name (not the entire text!!)

Type what you want in the text box. If overly long, you may want to consider cutting and pasting material from an existing Word document (discussed beginning on page 37 in the section on Course Documents.)

About the Text: Box

All those icons you see in the text box editor built into Blackboard should look familiar to most of you Word users out there. In fact, most of the same shortcut keys work, too. (For example, you can press Ctrl-B on your keyboard to toggle on bold faced font, and then press it again to turn it off.) However, you should note that the text box editor as shown above is only available to Windows Operating System users with Internet Explorer version 5.x or higher. Macintosh users and Netscape users will still have text box, but without the handy editing buttons shown above it. Here is the text box editor as seen from a Netscape browser:

Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide
The two equation editors and the spell checker are still accessible (circled above), but if you want to use italics or other text decorations, you must use HTML tags in *Netscape* or on a Macintosh rather than rely on the buttons shown on the previous page.

That said, the text box editor is a wonderful tool. It includes a spell checking button as well as various equation editors. You can also change the font color and size. Please note, however, that the **font size** is not by point size (as it is in *Word*), but rather **relative size**. By default, it is set to 3. This is in keeping with standard HTML font sizes, as font size is on a scale from 1 (smallest) to 7 (largest).

There are **two** equation editors included with *Blackboard 6*. Clicking the $\sqrt{x}$ icon will open the *Web EQ Equation Editor* that will allow you to insert math and scientific notations into the text box. Clicking the $\frac{}{}$ icon opens the *MathML Equation Editor*, which presumes you already know the requisite XML.

### Posting an Item

For now, skip past the Content and Options part of the **Add Content** screen and scroll to the bottom and click the **Submit** button. You will then see the following screen:

---

**Content Receipt**

**Content added**

**Course Overview**

This course provides an overview of literature from the age of Chaucer to the modern day. We will be reading sections of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, many of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native*, short stories from William Faulkner, and several others.

Students taking this class are expected to have successfully completed the Composition I and Composition II courses, as you will have to complete a term paper assignment as part of this course.
After clicking **OK**, you will be back at the main **Course Information** page within the Control Panel:

After adding anything in **Blackboard**, your Control Panel view will show a drop-down menu with a number. As you add more and more material, these will allow you to list your items in a specified **order** within a content area.

**Always Check the "Student View" After Posting!**

It's critical to constantly check the "student view" of your **Blackboard** course after posting something. It is very easy to forget that students will not always see everything you do! To see this view, click on the course name in the navigation path at the top of the screen:

You will then be back at the main screen in **Blackboard**, where you can click on the Course Menu item in the area (in our example, **Course Information**) where you just added content:
The "Edit View" Link

In case you spot an error in your posting, you will note that there is an Edit View link (circled in the previous screenshot) in the upper right-hand corner of every content area in Blackboard. This handy feature essentially allows you to return to a Control Panel view immediately while viewing a course this way. Clicking Edit View brings the following screen:

![Edit View Screen](image)

You can now click the Modify button and make changes, or even Remove it. This is very similar to the screen you would get in the Control Panel, though as you'll notice from the screenshot above, you have a little bit less space to work with.

To return back to the screen you were viewing before (i.e., the "student's view") click the Display View link in the upper right-hand corner, circled above.

Adding Attachments: Method One

In our next example, we will add something to the Course Documents section in our Blackboard course, only this time include an attachment. We start, as we did before, with clicking the Add Item icon, which brings us to this screen:
It's always a good idea to add a little explanatory text before adding an attachment.

There are actually two ways to add attachments in Blackboard. The first method is to continue scrolling down this screen, where you will see the following options:
The Name of Link to File: option towards the top is often overlooked, but is helpful to your students in that it creates a link for them to click on that is more explanatory than the default, which would otherwise just be your original file name (such as syllabus.doc). For Special Action just underneath that, you should leave it set to Create a link to this file (the default setting).

After clicking the Submit button, you will get the usual acknowledgement of receipt screen. After clicking OK on that screen, you will see this one:
The file size here should reflect what you uploaded. If this number looks "off" somehow, you may want to click the Modify button and re-upload the document.

As always, you should now check the student's view of things by clicking on the course name in the navigation path at the top of the screen, then clicking on Course Documents on your course menu so you can see what your students will see:

What happens when students click on that link above? It depends on the browser they are using. Internet Explorer users with Word on their machines will launch the document within the Blackboard window:
This can be a bit disorienting for some students, as there is seemingly no way to print, though so long as their cursor is in the *Word* document, printing through the browser works just fine. Most students will likely want to download the document, instead. We cover this ability on page 38.

**Adding Attachments: Method Two**

The other method for adding attachments is available only to Windows/Internet Explorer users, as it relies on one of the buttons available in the text box editor. Here is an example of posting an attachment using this method, again within the **Course Documents** section of our course after clicking the **Add Item** icon:

With this method, you can create a link to a file by clicking on the **Attach File** icon ( ). After clicking it, a separate browser window will open over your current browser window, prompting you for the file location:

Note this one very important difference from the previous method of adding an attachment. Here, *Blackboard* prompts you with whether or not you want the attachment to open in a separate browser window. The default choice is **No**, but here we selected **Yes**.
After clicking the **Submit** button, you will receive a confirmation message, also in a separate browser window:

![File Link Inserted](image)

You will finally be returned to Blackboard. Note that the link appears exactly wherever your cursor was when you clicked that **Attach File** icon. (You can always hit the ENTER key a few times to separate the text.)

![Content Information](image)

Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click the **Submit** button. As always, check things out in the student’s view. Here is what the **Course Documents** section now looks like:
When the **Assignment One** link is clicked upon, it opens in a separate browser window, just as we had specified when adding the attachment:

**Attachments: Useful or Not?**

As you have already seen, *Blackboard* makes it very easy to upload documents, all without any knowledge of HTML or any other web-based language. There are a few issues that are raised when using attachments, dealt with below.

**Why Use Attachments?**

The most common reason for *attaching* a document rather than entering the text into the text box in *Blackboard* is that is simply not feasible to type in the content manually. This is particularly true for non-text documents such as *PowerPoint* presentations or spreadsheets. This brings us to the next point, however......
Drawbacks of Using Attachments

When you attach a file, your students must have the appropriate software to open the files. If you attach a Word document, your students must have Word to view the attachment. This is one reason why all Blackboard courses at Dominican have links to viewers for Word, PowerPoint, and Excel in the External Links section (discussed on page 50), so students can download onto their home computers, if necessary, these viewers to see the attachments.

For maximum flexibility, you may want to consider copying and pasting your Word documents into Blackboard's text boxes. This works very well for all you Windows/Explorer users, but the text box editor's limitations for Macintosh/Netscape users may not make this as handy a solution. We discuss copying and pasting from existing text into Blackboard below.

Some Other Questions/Concerns Instructors May Have About Attachments

• Can my students save the file to their own disks if they want to?

  Yes. They can always right-click over the link, and then click Save Target As (in Internet Explorer) to save it to their own drive. (Netscape users are prompted with this choice by default.) In fact, we recommend that you include instructions such as this when attaching files, much as we did in the above example.

• Since it is a file, does that mean students can change my file on Blackboard?

  On Blackboard, no; on their own computers, yes. But remember, only YOU can add material to Blackboard. Students can not add anything to Blackboard that is viewable by others in the class, except for within the Discussion Board. Anything you post to Course Documents or any other content area in Blackboard cannot be modified by students. And don't forget, only you (the instructor) have a Control Panel link!

Copying and Pasting From Existing Text

To avoid the dilemma altogether of whether or not your students can open your attachments, the safest method of adding material to your course is to ONLY use the text box for all course material. This way, all a student needs is a browser to view all Blackboard material. The downside to this method is that it is really only practical for text-based documents (such as Word documents) and requires a bit more work from you as an instructor. Copying and pasting into one of Blackboard's Text: boxes whenever you want to add material will allow you take any existing word processing document you already have and add it to Blackboard.
Here are the steps to take:

1. In Blackboard, get to any screen with the Text: box, as seen in previous examples. For now, do not worry if you have the complete text box editor (Windows users) or not (Mac users).
2. Open Word or any word processor and open the document you want to copy from.
3. In Word, click and drag over the text you want to paste into Blackboard, or click the Edit drop-down menu, then click Select All (if you want to select all of the text). (Other word processor programs have similar commands.)
4. Click the Copy button (       ) or select Copy from the Edit drop-down menu in Word.
5. Switch back to your web browser with your Blackboard course. (Click on its icon in the Windows task bar if you are using Windows.)
6. Click in the Text: box in Blackboard. (Very important! This is where the text is going, and the next command will paste it there!) You should see the insertion point flashing in the box:

   ![Content Information]

   Make sure you've placed your cursor within the text box in Blackboard before pasting anything in!

7. From your browser's menu, click the Edit drop-down menu, and then click Paste. The text should appear in the Blackboard text box.
8. When finished, click the Submit button, making sure

**Notes on Formatting When Pasting Text**

Thanks to Blackboard's text box editor (as explained on page 28), formatting such as bold type, italics, and underlining from the original document are all retained in the text box IF you are in a Windows-based environment and used Word as your word processor. Otherwise, any formatting would have to be done using HTML tags inserted manually in the text box. Here is what our newly pasted text looks like from the student's view. Note that since it was pasted from a Word document using Internet Explorer, formatting was retained:

**Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide**
Bear in mind that this copying and pasting method does NOT work with any images embedded within your Word document; it will only copy and paste the text.

If you are not using Word, you will have to rely on HTML tags to insert any text formatting within your pasted text in the Text: box in Blackboard. Very basic HTML tags are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tag</th>
<th>Example of use</th>
<th>What it looks like afterwards</th>
<th>Basic tip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;b&gt;</td>
<td>This will create &lt;b&gt;bold-faced text&lt;/b&gt;.</td>
<td>This will create <strong>bold-faced text</strong>.</td>
<td>Whenever using HTML tags, you must enclose the text you want affected with an opening tag and a closing tag, with no spaces on either side of the text. All tags must be surrounded by brackets (&lt;&gt;), as shown to the left. The closing tag is the same as the opening, except that it is preceded by a slash: /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;i&gt;</td>
<td>Here is what you use for &lt;i&gt;italicized&lt;/i&gt; text.</td>
<td>Here is what you use for <em>italicized</em> text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;u&gt;</td>
<td>This will &lt;u&gt;underline your text&lt;/u&gt;, though this is not recommended much for web-based pages, as users may think it's a hyperlink.</td>
<td>This will underline your text, though this is not recommended much for web-based pages, as users may think it's a hyperlink.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is also a document produced by Blackboard posted on our Intranet called Using Basic HTML. We have posted this document on the faculty documentation page at:

http://domin.dom.edu/documents/blackboardfac.htm

Given the text box editor's limitation with only accepting formatting from Microsoft-based products in a Windows environment, does this mean students viewing text who use Netscape are affected?

No! These text formatting caveats with Blackboard's text box editor only applies to the person using it at the instructor's end (i.e., you!). If you have cut/pasted text from Word into Internet Explorer with text formatting intact, ALL students will be able to view the formatted text properly—even those using Netscape.
Adding Folders

Items added to the content areas of Blackboard can add up quickly. To help organize your class in a more efficient manner, you may want to consider adding folders to your various content areas. Organizing your areas by using folders will present a more ordered look. If you are using a textbook, for example, you could have your Course Documents area divided into folders called Chapter One, Chapter Two, etc. Or, you could simply name folders based on general course topics.

To create a folder, from the Control Panel first click the area where you would like to add one. In this example, we are again in the Course Documents area:

To create a folder in a content area, start by clicking this add folder icon.
After clicking the add folder icon, you will see the following screen:

It's not a bad idea to provide some explanation in the text box for what the folder contains.

Remember, this is a folder you are creating! That explains why there are no options here to add attachments. (Although, oddly enough, the text box editor still gives you the option to add them!) Much like the ubiquitous My Documents folder on Windows-based PCs, think of this as a "placeholder" for other material for your course.
After clicking the **Submit** button and receiving the usual content receipt screen, you will see this:

![Course Documents](image)

After clicking the **Submit** button and receiving the usual content receipt screen, you will see this:

Note the "folder" icon, rather than the "paper" icon for the documents previously uploaded.

### Adding Material to Folders

Once you have created a folder, adding material to that folder is just like adding material to any other **Blackboard** section. The one thing you have to do is get **into** the folder. You do this by clicking on the folder name directly:

Once in the folder, you will see the usual array of options:

As always, keep an eye on the navigation path on top to keep track of where you are in your course!

You can now click the various icons to add material, just as we have been doing all along. (In case you are wondering, you can indeed create another folder **within** an existing folder.)

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Copying Material From One Folder to Another (or Elsewhere)

If you added material or uploaded a document to one area (or folder) of your course and later decide that it would be better placed in a different area, never fear! Blackboard provides the ability to copy or move material from one area or folder to another. While in the Control Panel, you will see a button labeled Copy next to every item you have added thus far.

For example, say we want to move the Shakespeare timeline currently in our Course Documents area to the Shakespeare folder we created that is within the Course Documents area. Looking at the "root" level of Course Documents, we see the screen below. First, click the Copy button next to the item to be moved:

This brings up the following screen. Here, it is safest to click the Browse button next to the Destination folder: box to select the destination. Note that the default setting in Blackboard will be to copy the item rather than move it:
45

Copy/Move Shakespeare Timeline

1 Content Information

Shakespeare Timeline
This timeline comes from the Absolute Shakespeare site, as cited in your list of sources.

2 Shakespeare Timeline

Shakespeare Timeline describes the many chapters in Shakespeare's colorful life. From humble beginnings in Stratford to his marriage to the older Anne Hathaway and popular acclaim for his works, Shakespeare Timeline follows the life of literature's most famous playwright.

1564. William Shakespeare is born in Stratford upon Avon to local farmer John and Mary Shakespeare. His actual birthday is unknown but assumed and celebrated today on April the 23rd, just three days before his baptism was recorded in the Parish register of the Holy Trinity Church on April the 26th.

2 Destination

Destination Folder: 

Delete item after copy? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Click the Browse button to bring up a listing of all content areas and folders in your Blackboard course.

Delete item after copy? may remain set to No if you want to COPY the item from one folder to another. If, however, you want to MOVE it, this should be set to Yes. (Or, you may want to play it safe and copy it first, and then come back to the original and delete it afterwards.)

After clicking Browse, a separate browser window will open with your content areas. Note that there are + signs next to the folders. Clicking on a plus sign will reveal contents of a specific folder. (You can also simply click on Open All):
Clicking **Browse** opens a separate browser window listing all your course content areas, click **Open All** and...

...the contents of all areas will be seen. Here, we click the folder destination we want to move the item to. In this case, we are moving it to the folder **Shakespeare Material**.
After clicking **Submit** in the window above, you will be returned to the **Copy/Move** screen with the correct path filled in. Click the **Submit** button on this screen, and *Blackboard* will give you a warning box if you chose to remove the file (no warning appears if you are simply moving it from one area to another), followed by a receipt screen. Your item has now been moved!

**Creating an External Link**

The **External Link** button seen in every content area allows you to create "ready-made" hyperlinks for your students. Like the **Item** and **Folder** buttons, this can be done directly in a content area or within a folder in a content area.

For example, say you want to direct your students to an article on the Internet. First, in Control Panel, go into the content area (and folder) where you want to place the link. In the example below, we are in the **Shakespeare Material** folder within **Course Documents**:

Clicking **External Link** brings up the following screen:

[Image of the screenshot]

- **Name**: box is for the actual wording of the hyperlinked text your students will be clicking upon.
- **URL**: Since you will be linking to an Internet site, it is obviously critical that you type in the **URL** correctly! A bit of explanatory text in the text box does not hurt, either. See the next page for what the rest of this screen looks like.

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As is the case with all items in content areas, you can even add attachments to your posting. More important, however, is the second decision under Options, below. **Launch item in external window** is set to **No** by default. This is ultimately up to you, but our recommendation is to set this to **Yes**. Not allowing an item to be opened in an external (i.e., separate) browser window can lead to a "cramped" looking page! We have an example on the next page.

After clicking **Submit** at the bottom of the screen, you will have created a hyperlink for students in the designated place. Here is what it will look like from the student's perspective:

**Sonnet 166 Article from The Atlantic**
A critique of Shakespeare’s Sonnet 166 appeared in *The Atlantic*. Please be sure to read this article for discussion in class.

Students need only click on the underlined hyperlink (what you typed in for **Name:** when creating the link) to launch the page. The ability to create these external links throughout *Blackboard* gives you the ability to add web sites anywhere in your course.

**Is Your Syllabus on the DOMIN Server?**
If you placed your syllabus on our intranet at **domin.dom.edu**, you can create a link to your own syllabus using one of *Blackboard*'s **External Links** rather than re-posting it in *Blackboard*.

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What About That *Launch Item in External Window* Choice?

Remember that when creating an **External Link** in a **Blackboard** content area, **Blackboard** asks you if you want to **Launch item in external window**, as shown on previous screenshots. We recommend setting this to **Yes**. Why? The screenshots below show the difference between answering **Yes** or **No** to this option:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Launch item in external window set to <strong>Yes</strong></th>
<th>Launch item in external window set to <strong>No</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Separate browser window opens for user. User must click Close (X) button on new browser or minimize it to return to your course." /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Web site opens within your Blackboard course. Users must click on browser's Back button to get back to previous screen in your course. The downside to this method is some web sites may not display properly if not given enough “space.”" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Point of Confusion: The External Links Content Area**

Given that you can create an **External Link** in any content area, it may be a bit confusing to some that **Blackboard** also has a content area that is, itself, called **External Links**, as seen in this Control Panel screenshot that we originally showed many, many pages ago:
This is mostly a holdover from previous versions of Blackboard, where it was easiest to create external links in its own area. With version 6 of Blackboard, this is no longer the case. In fact, the External Links content area looks like any other content area, as seen below:

You can add an Item, Folder, or—yes—add an External Link (imagine!) to the External Links area. Don't forget, by managing the course menu, as explained way back on page 10, you can eliminate this area altogether if you want to. Some instructors, however, prefer to keep all web site links separated like this rather than "integrated" with other course areas. Whether to have an External Links menu item or not is, obviously, entirely up to you.

Why You Already Have Some External Links

Assuming you are creating your own Blackboard course from scratch, you will find that your External Links content area already has four links:
Dominican's course template includes three links to Microsoft's web site for a *Word* viewer, *PowerPoint* viewer, and *Excel* viewer. They are posted here for your student's convenience. These viewers are free, downloadable programs that will allow your students to VIEW (but not edit or create!) documents created in these programs. This way, if you have (for example) an attachment done in *Word* (discussed beginning on page 31), even students without *Word* may still view the attachment after downloading the free viewer. A link to the *Adobe Acrobat Reader* is also included in case you have any PDF files in your course. You may feel free to click the Remove button for any or all of these if you prefer—or, of course, remove the External Links area altogether.

**Adding Images and Other Media to Your Course**

Many types of media work within *Blackboard*—images, audio clips, and even video. In fact, your main concern should be any copyright issues involved rather than how this can be accomplished, since the steps involved are similar to what we have seen already. In the next example, we will add an image of Henry James to a folder within the Course Documents content area.

Enter the content area via the Control Panel, as usual. Once in the correct area, click the Add Item icon, as you would for any other type of material. The screen will start out looking the same as it has previously:

![Add Content](image)

Whenever you add a hyperlink within a *Blackboard* text box, so long as you precede it with the "magic letters" *http://* *Blackboard* automatically converts it to a "live" hyperlink!

Just because *Blackboard* is "protected" by passwords is no reason to assume you are safe to violate copyright laws. The "fair use" provision applies as it does for everything else. Depending on the media involved, you may be able to use the material once, but not twice. Our library's web site has information on copyright at: *http://domweb.dom.edu/library/crown/Information/faculty.htm*

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Scrolling down, we now see a screen similar to when we created an attachment, discussed previously beginning on page 31. In this case, our "attachment" is a copy of a photograph we have already downloaded. One difference, however, is that in the space that states Special Action:, we select Display media file within the page instead of the default setting of Create a link to this file, which we used for attachments.

As is done when posting attachments, it is safest to click the Browse button to find the media file on your computer.

Setting Special Action: to Display media file within the page will display the photo you are adding right on your page. (Leaving this at the default setting of Create a link to this file would force your students to click on yet another link to display the photo.)

Another difference from when we did attachments can be seen in the box labeled Name of Link to File. For attachments, we typed text in the box so that our students could click upon the text to display the attachment. In this case, since we have specified under Special Action: to Display media file within the page, this is not necessary, since there will be nothing to click on. The image will appear within the page itself automatically.

After clicking the Submit button, another screen appears with additional options:

Why type in Alternate Text? Because if a user is viewing your Blackboard course in text-only mode (as some visually impaired users may be doing), this text will appear instead of the photo. In addition, many text-only browsers will read this text to the user. This is necessary for staying in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. (In addition, this text will appear whenever a user points to the image with the mouse.)

Why is there a box for a URL if you are placing an image on the page? By setting a URL, users who click on your image will go to a web site you specify here. Kind of neat!
Finally, you can click on Submit, and your image will be on the page! Here is what the top half of this rather large image will look like from the student's perspective:

Here is the alternate text typed, appearing when a mouse pointer is over the photo.

Other Media
Whenever you choose the Display media file within the page option (see previous page), Blackboard will identify for you what kind of file you are using and show the appropriate options screen. For example, if you choose an audio file in the WAV format, you will see the following for your Multimedia Options:

Multimedia Options

Please set parameters for the following multimedia item infamy.wav

Placement: [ ] Above Text: [ ] Below Text:

Auto-start: [ ] Yes [ ] No
Loop: [ ] Yes [ ] No
Show Controls: [ ] Yes [ ] No
Alignment: [ ] Left [ ] Center [ ] Right
Alternate Text: [ ]

Blackboard's default settings are probably the way to go here. Show Controls allows your students to play the file again.

A Note on Media Files
Blackboard accepts virtually all multimedia files you can think of: MPEG, AVI, and QuickTime video formats; WAV, AIF, and MP3 audio formats; JPG and GIF images (including animated GIF images). Be aware, however, that all take up disk space; and yes, you do have a space limit of 25MB for your Dominican Blackboard course. Contact Ken Black if you need more space allocated.
COURSE TOOLS: ADDITIONAL METHODS OF CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

The Course Tools section of the Control Panel has many interesting additional options you may want to use as an instructor, mostly related to methods of communication with your class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Tools</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>Send E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Calendar</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Information</td>
<td>Digital Drop Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Glossary Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>Messages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Announcements

By default, the Announcements screen is the first thing your students will see when they get into your course--unless you changed the Set Course Entry Point option, as explained on page 25. Suffice to say that Announcements is a good place to post things where you want to get students' attention right away--such as a class cancellation, an extra credit assignment, etc.

When you click on Announcements you will see the following screen:

Click the Add Announcement button (the only thing you can click upon on this screen!), and the screen shown on the following page will appear. You should type in your Subject and Message in the appropriate text boxes. (Don't forget, if you make a mistake, you can always get back in and click the Modify or Remove button!)
Setting the *Always show this announcement on the course's main page* option to Yes means this Announcement will *always* be on the main Announcements page. Setting it to No will set a date on it, and after a week's time it will move off the main page, as we will see on the screenshot.

As with many other postings in Blackboard, you can always set a specific date and time to start showing something.

After clicking the Submit button you will get the usual Blackboard receipt screen. Here is what the Announcements screen will look like from the student's perspective:

After 7 days, any posted announcement will move off this "main" screen over to the View Last 30 Days tab, unless you chose to *Always show this announcement on the course's main page*, as we did for this one. In this case, the announcement will always stay here.
Course Calendar

Blackboard has a Calendar feature available on everyone's My Institution page--including yours. It is in the Tools section at the far right when you first login to Blackboard, as well as via the area labeled My Calendar:

Welcome, Raymond

Any Blackboard user is able to add events to his/her own calendar once they click on the Calendar link in the Tools section. (The My Calendar link above only allows one to view events, but not add any.) With everyone on campus using Outlook, the stark reality is that rather unlikely you—or your students—will be using this too much, but it's there if you want it.

More importantly from the Blackboard perspective, each course also has its own calendar once a student enters the course. The calendar is accessible for students via the Tools link on the navigation menu:
As an instructor, you can add a calendar event for a course in Blackboard via the Control Panel. The listed event will not only show up within the course calendar, but all students in your class will also have the event added to their personal calendars, as well--assuming they bother checking it!

In the Control Panel, click on Course Calendar within the Course Tools section, and you will see the following:

After clicking the Add Event button, you can add an event for a specific date. (Using the Quick Jump button opens a window allowing you to view your calendar for a specific month or date):

Once you click the Submit button, it will be added to your course calendar as well as the student's calendars. This will be what your students see in their calendars for the date you specified in the Event Date field:
Additional information about the Calendar may be found in the online instructor's Manual, accessible by clicking the **Manual** link in the **Support** section of the Control Panel. The information is in Chapter Three—Course Tools in the contents.

**Staff Information**

This is the area that corresponds to what students see when they click on the **Faculty Information** link on the course menu. (This is the ONE Control Panel link that does not correspond exactly by word to what the items are called on the course menu.) Clicking on **Staff Information** in your Control Panel displays the following screen:

![Staff Information Screen](image)

Just click the **Add Profile** button to reach the following screen, which has been filled in:

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You can upload a photo of yourself in a manner similar to the way documents and other items are uploaded to Blackboard. Note, however, the caveat that the picture size should be about 150 x 150 pixels. This is not a hard and fast rule, but is intended to avoid having the picture dominate the entire page!

Microsoft Photo Editor--on every PC with the Office suite--can do this easily.

If you have a home page, here is where you should type in the entire address.
After clicking the **Submit** button, you will receive *Blackboard's* usual receipt screen. This is ONE page you definitely want to view from the student's perspective:

![Student View of Profile](image)

**Tasks**

Going into the **Tasks** section of **Course Tools** allows you to add tasks for a course. Students may view these tasks either via the **Tasks** link on the **My Institution** page when they first login (see screenshot on page 56--it is just below the **Calendar** link), or by clicking on the **Tools** menu item once entering your course. Students may then **Modify** the task so that it is either **In Progress** or **Completed**. Here is the student's view of a task list:

![Task List](image)
**Discussion Boards**

Blackboard’s **Discussion Boards** may well prove to be one of the main reasons you use Blackboard. This feature is what those in educational technology like to call an **asynchronous communication tool**. It is somewhat like an electronic bulletin board, in that students may post messages and responses to messages both to you and to each other. In fact, this is the first tool we have discussed so far where students—not just you, the instructor—have the ability to add something directly onto Blackboard. It is NOT online chat (though Blackboard has that, too, as we shall see), because users do not have to all be logged in at the same time in order to participate. Students get in, leave a message, then others read the message and, perhaps, respond to that message. Each message topic can form a "thread," with several students responding to the original message.

Your students have access to the course Discussion Board in one of two ways. One is to click on the Discussion Board link on the course menu—assuming you have left it enabled. (That would be via the Manage Course Menu link under the Course Options area of the Control Panel, as discussed beginning on page 10). The other way they have access is by clicking on the Communication link in the course menu, which brings up the window seen below.

---

*A point of confusion here is that you not only have to ensure you enable some items (such as Discussion Board) via the Manage Course Menu link in your Control Panel, but also via the Manage Tools link. For the latter, after clicking the Manage Tools link, you then click Enable Blackboard Tools—at least if you want your students to have access to them more than one way. The former determines what appears on the main course menu, while the latter determines what appears under the Communication and/or Tools links, as was explained beginning on page 16.*

---

So why is the Course Menu item called **Discussion Board** while the link via the Communication menu called **Discussion Boards** (plural)? We have NO idea—or ideas.
To add to the confusion, this is one of the very few tools in Blackboard where you, the instructor, can enter material either via the Control Panel or using the same course menu that your students use. We will stick with using the Control Panel method here. Once you click on the Discussion Boards link, you will see the following screen:

---

**Discussion Boards**

![Add Forum button]

This discussion board has no forums. To create a forum, use the Add Forum button above.

---

Your first step is to create a **Forum**. Think of a **Forum** as a "placeholder" for your discussions. You can name the Forum whatever you want, but the name should provide some sort of clue for what you view as appropriate topics within the Forum. You can have as many Forums as you want—but you MUST have at least one or else your students (or you!) will not be able to post a message. So, click the **Add Forum** button, and you will get the rather lengthy screen that we have depicted on the next page.

---

**REMEMBER--ONLY YOU CAN CREATE A FORUM!**

A frequent misunderstanding on the part of faculty is that only an instructor (that's you!) can create a Forum. No Forum = no postings! You must have a Forum before anyone can post anything in a Discussion Board!
Your description of the Forum should be just that—what the Forum should contain. It's not really intended as a place for you to write your first message for the Forum.

Check these Forum Settings closely! Note, for example, that Allow anonymous posts is enabled by default! You may want to uncheck this.

As for the others, the defaults are likely fine. You probably want to Allow new threads (i.e., topics) within a Forum. The alternative would be to force all students to reply to an original posting from you. You also likely want to Allow file attachments, particularly for anything involving peer review, though be aware these will count against your allocated space on the Blackboard server. Whether you allow the author (i.e., your students) to edit message after posting or remove own posted messages is up to you.

You can Block specific students from posting in a Forum by selecting a name and clicking the Block button. Also, you can give specific students Administrator privileges within this specific Forum here by clicking the Admin button.
After adding another Forum, this is what the Discussion Board will look like from the student's perspective:

Students may begin posting messages by clicking on a Forum name link once they have entered the Discussion Board. Once in a Forum, they can create a new thread. (Assuming you have enabled that capability. Otherwise, you as the instructor will have to create the thread.)

After clicking the Add New Thread button, your students will be able to type their message. Note that their text box looks very similar to yours (including the ability to check spelling!):
Here is what the same Discussion Board Forum looks like after another student replies to the original message and another posts a new thread:

What To Do If Students Report Difficulty Sending Attachments

On occasion, we have observed Blackboard not posting attachments in the Discussion Board. If this happens, it is safest to remove all characters other than letters, numbers, and underscores in the name, keep the file name to under 20 characters or so, avoid spaces in the file name, AND get rid of uppercase letters in the file name. This is not a constant problem, but it does happen, particularly when every student in the class is trying to post an attachment with the exact same name.
Discussion Board has many other facets that may be of interest. We have a separate handout, The Discussion Board Component of Blackboard: An Instructor's Guide, available from our intranet at: http://domin.dom.edu/documents/blackboardfac.htm. The student perspective on all this is available in our separate handout for students.

**Send E-Mail**

Blackboard allows you to send e-mail to all students in a class easily, and you don't even have to set up a distribution list in your own e-mail program. Here is what you will see when you click the Send E-Mail link in the Blackboard Control Panel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Send E-mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ All Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ All Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ All Teaching Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ All Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ All Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Single / Select Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Single / Select Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Single / Select Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you click All Users on the screen above, you will see the screen on the following page.

**You Still Need E-mail Software to Read Messages!**

You and your students must still use your own e-mail software to READ e-mail! Blackboard can SEND e-mail, but does not provide a facility for reading it!
All students are listed. The e-mail will be sent to whichever address they specified when creating their Blackboard account. Note that by default, you will receive a copy, too.

Sending an e-mail from within Blackboard is obviously a tremendous time-saver, since you do not have to set up separate distribution lists using Outlook. However, be aware of the issue below.

**Why your students may not be receiving e-mails sent in Blackboard**

We have received some complaints that not all e-mails sent by instructors in Blackboard are received by students. This happens somewhat unpredictably, and may often boil down to the e-mail address the student has in his/her Blackboard profile. The first step is to ensure that your students followed the instructions outlined in our separate handout, *Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Student Guide*. For their Dominican e-mail address, they must specify the *entire* e-mail address (such as `smitjill@dom.edu`). Most importantly, if they use an off-campus e-mail address they may have to change their "junk mail" or spam filters to allow e-mail from the domain of `dom.edu`. E-mail systems differ, but AOL, in particular, is notorious for filtering out what it thinks is spam.
Collaboration

The **Collaboration** link in the Control Panel allows you access to two "real time" (what the online education people like to call **synchronous**) chat functions. **Blackboard's** two tools for this function are called **Virtual Classroom** and **Lightweight Chat**. The former includes not only a chat feature, but also a whiteboard (for drawing and/or equations, for example) and group web browsing. The latter is just a conventional online chat tool. **Both** require students to have Java-enabled browsers. (Don't worry--if a student does not have it, they will be prompted for a download from within their browser.)

After clicking on the **Collaboration** link, you will see the following screen:

**Blackboard** has two sessions that one can **Join** straight away--one each for the **Virtual Classroom** and **Lightweight Chat**. If you prefer, though, you can click on the **Create Collaboration Session** button on the top to create your own:

1. **Name Your Session**
   - **Session Name**: engE90-sect1-e61463/18/04/15/7:49

2. **Schedule Availability**
   - **Select Date(s) of Availability**: Start After
     - **03**
     - **15**
     - **PM**
   - **Available**: Yes

3. **Collaboration Tool**
   - **Choose a collaboration tool for this session**: [Virtual Classroom] [Lightweight Chat]

4. **Submit**
   - Click "Submit" to finish. Click "Cancel" to abort this process.

**You may want to change Blackboard's default Session Name.**

**Choose here whether you want the feature-laden Virtual Classroom or "chat-only" Lightweight Chat.**

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Once you created it, you can **Join** it by clicking the appropriate button, seen on the first screenshot on the previous page.

Students may join the session via the **Communication** link on the course menu, then by clicking on **Collaboration**. They **Join** a session much as you do at that point:

With **Virtual Classroom**, you have the ability to draw something on the whiteboard, and compose a message to send to all students (assuming they are in the **Virtual Classroom**, too) at the bottom of the screen:

Instructors can "record" a session (archive it) using these controls.
Students can contribute to the "chat" session while viewing all your fancy artwork on the whiteboard:

**Shadwater Weir**

**Water**

Down here is where one types to compose a message.

---

**Disable Popup Blockers!**

If you plan on using the *Virtual Classroom*, be sure to disable popup blockers! These chat sessions open a separate Java window, which many popup blockers will block.

The *Lightweight Chat* is very similar, but opens a smaller window with just the chat functionality. If you are interested in the many abilities of *Virtual Classroom* or *Lightweight Chat* and the Instructor controls within them, consult the online documentation within your *Blackboard* course by clicking on the **Manual** link in the Control Panel (in the **Support** section), and going to Chapter 3.
**Digital Drop Box**

The Digital Drop Box allows your students to turn in files to you *privately*, and allows you—as the instructor—to retrieve those files and, if necessary, return them (via the Digital Drop Box) to your students. You can also choose to send files to a specific student or group of students, or even to the entire class. (Of course, sending something to the entire class through the Digital Drop Box is rather pointless, since you might as well just place the file in a content area in Blackboard!)

The Digital Drop Box is the only place in Blackboard—other than posting an attachment in the Discussion Board—where students can actually upload something to the system. Unlike adding an attachment to a Discussion Board topic, however, uploading a file to the Drop Box is a *private*, one-to-one (i.e., student-to-instructor) posting from the student's perspective.

Let's look at this first from the perspective of the student—in this case, a student who is submitting a paper to you, the instructor, via the Digital Drop Box.

Students access their drop box via the **Tools** menu on the Blackboard course menu. There will be a link from the ensuing screen for **Digital Drop Box**. After clicking this link, students will see the screen below:

**Sending a File**

The **Add File** button is at first rather confusing here. Frankly, most students do not have to bother with the **Add File** button at all. To send a file to the instructor, they should click on **Send File**. After clicking **Send File** they will see the following screen:
Consider Telling Your Students to Use Specific Files Names in the Digital Drop Box

Now is a good time to mention that if you plan to have your students submit assignments via the Drop Box, you may want to have them name the files uniquely—such as by their last name. Note in the above example, the student uploaded a file named *dahltermpaper* (Dahl being the student's last name). This keeps you from having to rename them yourself every time you download a file from the Drop Box. (Do you really want to receive 25 files all named *termpaper*?)

Students upload their document clicking the **Browse** button. After clicking the **Submit** button, they will receive an acknowledgement screen:

After clicking **OK**, *Blackboard* will return them to the Digital Drop Box screen:
Blackboard will automatically store a copy of the sent file in the student's Drop Box. (Which is why the Add File button is hardly ever needed.) Unfortunately, this DOES count against your course size quota on the server, so you may want to remind your students from time to time to remove copies of items from the Drop Box--particularly those already graded.

Retrieving Files From the Digital Drop Box as an Instructor

To retrieve files your students sent to you, you must enter the Digital Drop Box via the link in the Control Panel. You will see a screen like this once you get there, assuming at least one student has sent you a file:
Now, you have two choices to retrieve the file sent:

- You will more than likely want to save the file to your own computer. To do this, right-click over the link name, then click Save Target As (assuming you are using Internet Explorer):

You can now save the file to the directory of your choice on your own computer.

- Alternatively, if you click directly on the name, you will open the file within Blackboard, just as you would if you clicked on an attachment name. This is not too useful, however, unless you just want to read the file without saving it.

**Your anti-virus software IS updated, isn't it????**

Although the Blackboard server scans for viruses, it is worth pointing out that anytime you download a file from the Internet, it is worthwhile having an up to date virus scanner on your own system.

**Remove Your Drop Box Files!**

As mentioned previously, all Drop Box files DO count against your quota so far as server space is concerned. To confuse matters, BOTH the copy sent to you as well as the student's copy added to his/her Drop Box after sending it must be removed in order to purge the file from the server completely. Unfortunately, your students do not have a Remove button like you do until YOU have removed your copy from the Drop Box! So if you want to keep your server quota down to a reasonable level, it starts with you removing the files from the Drop Box first and then asking your students to do likewise.
Sending Files to Students' Digital Drop Boxes

Sending files from the Digital Drop Box to your students works in much the same way as outlined above from the student perspective, though with a few additional features.

Again, remember to enter the Drop Box from the Control Panel. Once there and you click the Send File button, you will see the following:

You select the student(s) to send this file to in the To: field. If you want to send the file to more than one student (such as for cooperative projects), hold down the Ctrl button on your keyboard while clicking on the other names.

Note: Group names will appear here, too, if you have placed students into Groups (discussed beginning on page 84).

If you have other files in your Drop Box (such as files that other students have sent to you that have not yet been removed) they will appear here in the Select file: drop-down menu. Any files you added to your Drop Box separately will also appear here. Be careful! Do not accidentally resend the same file back to the student!

Click the Browse button to find the file you want to send from your hard drive (or wherever else you have it). Note that we have re-named the student's original file name after adding comments. We do NOT want to click the Select file: drop-down menu, as that would only send the student's original file in the Digital Drop Box back to the student!

After clicking Submit, Blackboard will acknowledge receipt and a copy of your sent file will also be placed within your Digital Drop Box.

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Did You Know . . .

. . . that you can add Comments to a student's *Word* document? This way, your students can have their original documents sent back to them with your comments included. Comments appear in yellow, highlighted text on the screen. Your students can hover their mouse over it to read your comments.

You can insert comments in *Word* by highlighting the text you want to comment on, then click on the **Insert** drop-down menu, then **Comment**. You type your comment into a box that looks very much like a footnote box in *Word*:

```
Therefore, I agree with those scholars who state that the Venn character in *Return of the Native* symbolizes an almost devil-like character, given that he is described as being covered in the red-colored dye of his trade and appears and disappears with almost supernatural abilities.
```

From the student's perspective, here is what they will see when they open the *Word* document and hover their mouse over the highlighted text:

```
Therefore, I agree with those scholars who state that the Venn character in *Return of the Native* symbolizes an almost devil-like character, given that he is described as being covered in the red-colored dye of his trade and appears and disappears with almost supernatural abilities.
```

An Alternative to the Digital Drop Box

You can use *Blackboard*’s ability to add an **Assignment** as another way to exchange files with at student. This feature is discussed on page 121, when dealing with the Gradebook, since while using this feature you access the file through the Gradebook rather than through the Drop Box.

**Glossary Manager**

The final choice in the **Course Tools** area of the Control Panel is **Glossary Manager**. Clicking on the **Glossary Manager** link in the Control Panel leads to the following screen:

*Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide*
You can create a glossary either within the Blackboard interface or by importing a comma delimited text file (such as from an Excel spreadsheet, if saved as a CSV file rather than as an Excel workbook). If you want to do the latter method, clicking the **Upload Glossary** button will walk you through the procedure. Since it is likely most of our readers will opt for the former method, however, we will walk through this method instead. Clicking the **Add Term** button will bring you to this screen shown below, which we have filled in:

Unfortunately, note that Blackboard’s usual text box editor is **not** present. That means any hyperlinks (such as what we have above) will NOT become a "live" hyperlink automatically when posted. (See the next page for a way around this.)

Upon clicking the **Submit** button, you will receive an acknowledgement screen with the option to continue adding terms, if you want to. When posted, students may access your Glossary by clicking on the **Tools** link on your course menu, and then Glossary from the ensuing screen. It will appear something like this:
For True "Webheads" Only: Using HTML Tags in Blackboard

With the lack of Blackboard's usual text box editing screen in the Glossary Manager, if you would like to use italics or actual hyperlinks, you will have to resort to using HTML tags. Here is an example below, italicizing the title (*Return of the Native*), and using anchor tags to create a "live" hyperlink. Needless to say, don't try this at home if you are unacquainted with using HTML tags.

Modify Glossary Term

Define Term

Please provide the term and the definition in the areas below. Modifying a term by changing the term to one which already exists in the Glossary, in upper, lower, or mixed case, will erase the previous term and substitute the term and definition provided here.

*Term:* Egdon Heath

*Definition:* Locale of Return of the Native. The name was made up by Hardy, but Hardy himself stated that it is actually comprised of the real-life locations of Fuddlestone Heath, Moreton Heath, and several others located between Dorchester and Bournemouth. There is a site devoted to present attempts to preserve the locale at a website called "Tomorrow's Heathland Heritage," located at: [http://www.english-nature.org.uk/thh/](http://www.english-nature.org.uk/thh/) hav.
USER MANAGEMENT

This section of our Guide is critical for you to learn how to keep track of the students who are in your Blackboard course. It is worth repeating an extremely important point that we brought up way back in the first section on enrollment options, back on page 22.

Students Are NOT Automatically Enrolled in Your Blackboard Course!

Students are NOT enrolled in a Blackboard class simply because they registered for it. Our online registration system, Campus Web, is NOT tied into the Blackboard server in any way! Conversely, any of your students who enroll in your Blackboard course are not automatically enrolled in the course so far as the Office of the Registrar is concerned. Campus Web and Blackboard are two separate systems that do not "see" one another! This is by FAR the biggest point of confusion about Blackboard for students.

That being said (again), the User Management section of the Blackboard Control Panel allows you to add or delete students from your Blackboard course. In fact, the first four choices in User Management are fairly self-explanatory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User Management</th>
<th>Remove Users from the Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List/Modify Users</td>
<td>Create User</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enroll User</td>
<td>Manage Groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List/Modify Users

The List/Modify Users link should be used primarily for obtaining a listing of all students who have enrolled in your Blackboard course. Clicking on the link brings you to the following screen, which you will be seeing quite often in the User Management area:

Since you want a complete listing of all of your students, simply click the LIST ALL tab. The Blackboard server will fret a bit about this idea, giving you the following screen:
Assuming you do not have a class of hundreds of students, this warning screen is really more of an annoyance than anything else. You can safely click the **List All** button, which will give you a screen such as the following:

![List / Modify Users](image)

Even though there are buttons for changing a student's **Password** and **Properties**, these are not enabled and cannot be used. If you want to change a student's role in your course, contact the *Blackboard Administrator*. 

*Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide*
What's a Role?

A user in a Blackboard course can have one of six roles. Listed roughly in order of how much access the role has to the course material, the roles are: Instructor (that's you!), Teacher's Assistant, Course Builder, Grader, Student, and Guest. Consult the online Manual in your Blackboard Control Panel under Chapter 5 (User Management), under the subheading List/Modify Users and then Modify User Properties for additional information.

Create User

The only time you should use the Create User choice in the Control Panel is if:

- You closed enrollment to your course (see section on Enrollment Options beginning on page 22), AND
- You are absolutely, positively certain the student does NOT have an existing Blackboard account at Dominican.

If a student is already enrolled in any Dominican University Blackboard course (not just one of yours), you should select Enroll User from the Control Panel, as described below in the next section.

Clicking the Create User link will lead you to a screen to fill out information including the student's first and last name, e-mail address (which is mandatory for Blackboard), and a user name and password. For the user name, our preference is to use the same naming convention used when establishing network user names at Dominican: first four letters of the student's last name followed by the first four letters of the student's first name. Student Jill Smith, therefore, would have the user name of: smitjill.

Enroll User

Use this option if you have closed enrollment to your course and a student wants to "get in," or if a student--for whatever reason--simply cannot get into your course through self-enrollment procedures. Click this link and you will see the following screen:

You do NOT want to click the LIST ALL tab in this case, since that would retrieve every user in the Blackboard system NOT enrolled in your course! Instead, type in the student's last name who you wish to enroll, then click the Search button.
Type in a student's last name and click the **Search** button. As explained in the screenshot above, you do NOT want to click the **List All** tab in this case, as **Blackboard** will assume you are trying to enroll any given student not already enrolled in your course! After typing in a name, you will see a screen similar to the following:

Assuming you see the student you want to enroll in your course listed, click the box under the **ADD** column to place a checkmark in it, then click the **Submit** button. Your student will now be enrolled in the course.

**I Don't See My Student Listed! Now What?!?**

If you do not see a student listed as a result of your search, there may be a few possibilities:

- The student may already be enrolled in your course. Double-check by clicking the **List/Modify Users** link and click the **LIST ALL** tab.

- The student may not have created an account on their own yet. We prefer students create their own accounts on the system by clicking the **Create Account** button at the main **Blackboard** screen. Remember, students only have to create an account **ONCE**.

- The student may have been **deleted** from the system. Dominican will routinely clean out **Blackboard** accounts that have not logged into the system for **one year**. In this case, the student will have to create a new account.

**Remove Users**

As its name implies, the **Remove Users from the Course** link leads to a screen allowing you to remove a user from **your course only**. (In other words, it will not delete a user from the
When choosing this link in the Control Panel, you will see a very familiar-looking screen:

![Remove Users from the Course](image)

Blackboard will respond with a listing of all matching names in your course, as shown below:

![Remove Users from the Course](image)

To remove a student, place a check mark next to the student's name in the REMOVE column. In addition, you must type in the word Yes in the box to the right. (It is case-sensitive!) After clicking Submit, Blackboard give you one warning screen, and then delete the student.

It is worth remembering that if you have an online gradebook, all records for this student will be removed from there, too!
Manage Groups

This section is very useful for courses you teach where you routinely divide students into groups, perhaps for group projects or presentations. You can use these groups to not only send e-mail messages solely to members of a group (rather than the entire class or a single user), but you can also give them their own Discussion Board, Digital Drop Box, and other features.

To begin creating student groups, click on the Manage Groups link in the Control Panel. You will see the following screen:

You have only one obvious choice here, and that's to click the Add Group button, which brings you here:

The Group Options here correspond to course-wide features very similar to other Blackboard tools already discussed, with the exception that they are restricted solely to members of this Group. Even the names are the same, with the exception of Group File Exchange, which is the same as the course-wide Digital Drop Box. HOWEVER, one weakness of the Group File Exchange is that any student member of the Group can delete a file! It is basically a file-sharing utility, and where there's file sharing there is also the ability to damage the file!
Once you have added the group after clicking the **Submit** button, your **Manage Groups** screen will look like this:

### Manage Groups

[Faulkner Study Group](#)

Students belonging to the Faulkner Study Group may use this area to exchange files, ideas, etc., in preparation for their oral report on *Old Man* and any other Faulkner works they find significant.

- Group File Exchange
- Group Discussion Board
- Group Email

---

**Adding Users to a Group**

The next step after creating a group is determining which students should belong to it. From the **Manage Groups** screen, click the **Modify** button to bring up the following screen:

### Manage Group - Faulkner Study Group

- **Group Properties**
  - Set options for this group.
- **Add Users To Group**
  - Enroll users in this group.
- **List Users In Group**
  - List all the users in this group.
- **Remove Users From Group**
  - Un-enroll users from this group.

These options are pretty self-explanatory. Clicking **Add Users to Group** brings up the ever-familiar user screen that you've seen before. You should click the **LIST ALL** tab to bring up a list of all the students in your class. From the ensuing screen, you can check off the student names you wish to add to this specific group by clicking in the **ADD** column.
Click each checkbox in the ADD column for every student you want to add to this specific group, then click Submit.

**Additional Group Creating Chores If You Enabled a Group Discussion Board**

If you did *not* enable separate Group Discussion Boards for the Groups you created, you may safely skip this section. If, however, you clicked the checkbox for a Group Discussion Board in the Add Group screen (see screenshot on page 79) or in the Group Properties screen, you have the additional task of having to create at least one Forum in each Group Discussion Board you enabled.

To add to any confusion you may already be feeling, to get *into* a Group in Blackboard in order to observe it or do anything within it, you do NOT enter it via the Control Panel, but rather by entering it the same way a student would: by clicking the Groups link in the course menu or by clicking the Communication link in the course menu, then Group Pages. Here is what the screen will look like after doing either of the above:
You Did Enable Groups Within the Course Menu, Right??!

Consider this a gentle reminder that your students will not be able to see anything unless you left Groups enabled in the Manage Course Menu area of the Control Panel (as explained beginning on page 10) and/or within the Enable Blackboard Tools area (starting on page 16).

Next, click on the Group Name, and you will see a screen like this:

### Group Pages - Faulkner Study Group

- **Group Discussion Board**
  
  Use your group discussion board for course-related debates and conversations.

- **File Exchange**
  
  Exchange files with your group members.

- **Send E-mail**
  
  Send e-mail messages to one or all of your group members.

- **Group Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badenov, Boris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Charlie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dahl, Barbie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Click on the Group Discussion Board link, and you will see the following:
At this point, the process is very similar to creating a Forum in a "regular" Discussion Board, as described beginning on page 61. Clicking the **Add Forum** button brings up a screen to add a forum, which we have filled in below:

You may recall from our earlier coverage on Discussion Boards that you could create a Forum Administrator. This is definitely a good idea for a Group Discussion Board, and can be accomplished by clicking on a student's name, then clicking the **ADMIN** button. Note that this student will have administrative privileges ONLY within this specific Group Discussion Board Forum!
Note that the Forum Administrator does NOT have the ability to create any new Forums within the Group Discussion Board. He or she can only delete messages or threads. Only YOU can create a Forum.

How Students See Group Pages

From a student's perspective, once they login to your Blackboard course and click on the Groups link in the course menu, they can see all of the Groups you have created in the course, but they will only be able to click on those Groups that they are members of. Here is a sample screen of our course after we have created some additional groups:

Once a student clicks on their Group name, they will see the following screen:

*Group Pages - Faulkner Study Group*

- **Group Discussion Board**
  Use your group discussion board for course-related debates and conversations.

- **File Exchange**
  Exchange files with your group members.

- **Send E-mail**
  Send e-mail messages to one or all of your group members.

**Group Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badony, Boris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Charlie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dahl, Barbie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Any Group-specific options that you enabled when setting up the Group are also listed on
the above screen. The File Exchange is essentially the same as a Digital Box, but note the
following!

**Group Tools Are the Same--With ONE Difference!**
All of the Group-specific tools (such as the Discussion Board) function the same as their course-
wide equivalents, with ONE exception. The File Exchange feature is for all practical purposes
the same as the Digital Drop Box (discussed on page 71), but any Group member can Add or
Remove a file! In that regard, it's like any other "shared" file: all it takes is one person to screw
up (i.e., delete) something!

**Modifying or Removing Groups**

You can always change the Group tools used within a Group or add members to an
existing group by clicking the Modify button after clicking on Manage Groups in the Control
Panel:

![Manage Groups](image)

The Modify button will lead to the same screen we saw on page 85 when we wanted to begin
adding users to a Group. Obviously, the Remove button deletes everything--including all Group
Discussion Board postings. If you would like to keep a Group page up but prevent student
access to the Group, you can Modify it, then click the Group Properties link, and then set the
Make group visible now option to No. This is better than deleting the Group altogether,
particularly if you want to later grade Group activities at the end of a term.

Remember, to monitor Group activities, you must enter a Group by clicking on the Groups link
in the course menu or by clicking the Communication link, then Group Pages. You are NOT
able to view Group activities via the Control Panel!
The Assessment area of the Blackboard Control Panel is where you can not only create online tests and surveys, but also record student grades—even for items that are not online. In fact, the online Gradebook feature of Blackboard has proven to be extremely popular for faculty and students alike at Dominican. Faculty can keep input grades at any time, and (if faculty allow the grades to be seen) students can view their grades on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. The Assessment area features six choices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Gradebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Manager</td>
<td>Gradebook Views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Manager</td>
<td>Course Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interested Only in an Online Gradebook?
If you only want information on the online Gradebook, skip ahead to page 102. The next few sections deal with creating purely online tests and surveys. You can indeed use Blackboard's online Gradebook feature without using ANY online tests at all.

Test Manager and Survey Manager

Both of these functions work in a similar manner, which is why we have grouped them together here. So far as Blackboard is concerned, a test is a graded exercise that will be automatically placed into the online Gradebook upon completion. A survey can look much like a test, but is not graded. Once a test or survey is created, they may be posted in any content area of Blackboard that you choose.

Clicking on the Test Manager link within the Assessment area of the Control Panel will bring you the following screen:

![Test Manager Screen](image)

Obviously, the only choice here is Add Test, where you are prompted to select a name for the test and give instructions to students:
After clicking the **Submit** button, you will be brought to the **Test Canvas** screen, where you can begin creating your questions. Note that **Blackboard** has seven types of questions that can be posted. Only one of them (**Essay**) will require grading on your part. The others will all be graded automatically by **Blackboard** based on the correct responses that you provide during the creation process:

---

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The **Creation Settings** button (circled above) provide additional options that you can set while creating questions on a test. The **Random Block** and **From a Question Pool or Assessment** choices are dependent upon you having existing pools (of questions) on Blackboard. All other choices have fairly similar options.

After setting any of these and clicking **Submit**, you are back at the preceding screen. Click a question type (such as **Multiple Choice**) and click the **Go** button. The resulting screen is too long to show here, but the method of filling in the text boxes is fairly self-explanatory.

**Hey, Where's My Text Box Buttons—and the Ability to Create Equations??**

For whatever reason, by default the text box editor in the test creation area of Blackboard does not display all toolbars possible. To "enable" them, simply click the down arrow to the left of the uppermost toolbar:

Whenever you can't see all the toolbars in the text box editor that you've seen before, click this little down arrow over here to display them.
Here is an example of a completed multiple choice question where we checked the option to **Provide feedback** and **Add images** in the Test Creation Settings:

![Test Canvas](image)

An example of using the option to add images from the Test Creation Settings screen shown on the previous page.

For a multiple choice question, *Blackboard* allows you to create anywhere from 4 to 20 answers. Here, we stuck with the default of 4. The checkmark indicates which one we've flagged as the correct choice.

Providing feedback is up to you, and an option you can set in the Test Creation Settings screen shown on the previous page. You *probably* only want to employ it for practice quizzes unless everyone in the class is taking the quiz at the same time.
Posting a Test in a Content Area

One thing not evident from the screen above is what you want to do when you are finished creating a test. "Posting" a test, interestingly, is not done from the Test Management area of Blackboard, but rather than within a Content Area. You may recall that there were four buttons available in each Content Area. Here, for example, is our view within the Control Panel area for Assignments:

You may recall we covered all of the buttons in the Add category except one: the one marked Test (circled above). Clicking the Test button in the Content Area of your choice will retrieve a screen listing all of the tests you have created thus far:

Simply click on the test name and click Submit button. Unlike other Blackboard acknowledgement screens, you do not simply click OK and move on with your life. In this case, you will get another screen giving you two choices:
The **Modify the test** option is self-explanatory. But in order to ensure your students will be able to see and take the test, you *must* click **Modify the test options**. This brings up an extremely long list of choices on the screen shown on the following page. Most of these options are self-explanatory, but a few are detailed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you want to make the link visible?</td>
<td>Assuming you want your students to take the test, you absolutely must change this from the default setting of No to Yes. However, leaving this set to No does give you the ability to create several tests and one time, without making all of them available yet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you want to create an announcement for this Quiz?</td>
<td>Setting this to Yes automatically generates a message on the Announcements page. The Announcement typically takes the following form:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow multiple attempts</td>
<td>Good for &quot;practice&quot; quizzes, but probably not for the mid-term!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force completion</td>
<td>Students must complete it once the test is launched. When students take a test, there is a Save button available that allows them to save their progress in a test up to the point they click it. When you have force completion enabled, the Save button basically returns them to the page with a message that the test must be completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display After/Display Until</td>
<td>For whatever reason, our experience has shown that the Display Until checkbox is enabled by default, with a date and time set that equals the date you are posting the test! In other words, students would have exactly one minute after you post the test to take it! This is likely NOT a good idea. Set it to a reasonable date, or (in the case of practice quizzes) just uncheck this box altogether.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you need assistance on the other options, an explanation is available in the online Manual (in the Support section of the Control Panel) in **Chapter 2 (Content Areas)** in the section called Add Test.
If you have the test launch in an external window, **BE SURE** to tell your students to disable any pop-up blockers they may have!

**Careful!** The **Display Until** setting is enabled by default, and usually has a time and date that matches the date of posting! Look carefully at this date— or simply uncheck the box.

---

**Using Blackboard at Dominican University: A Faculty Guide**
Create First, Then Post
In this version of Blackboard, you can create a test almost everywhere. In addition to the Control Panel link Test Manager as we demonstrated here, you can add a test to any content area by clicking the Add Test button within that area. You will notice from the screenshot on page 95 there is a Create button available even when you want to modify an existing test. In fact, adding it from the content area is probably the preferred method for test creation.

What we find not always intuitive, however, is posting the test so your students can take it. That's where modifying the test options come into play, as outlined above. To post it, you must modify the test by going into the Content Area where you created it. Clicking the Modify button while in Test Manager accomplishes nothing so far as posting it is concerned--it only allows you to modify the test itself! You must instead click the Modify button within the Content Area where the test was created in order to post it!

No Copying of Tests!
No, we don't mean your students copying from tests--we mean you! Remember when we demonstrated how you can copy material from one folder or content area to another back on page 44? This does NOT apply to tests. Tests and surveys can not be copied, though if you are interested in using the same questions in different tests, that's where the Pool Manager comes into play.

Pool Manager

This feature allows you to store questions for repeated use or to simply have a large number of questions ready to add to tests in the future. You can also add questions to a Pool that you have already created for tests or even add questions from other Pools! Creating a Pool is a bit like creating a test in that you first create the Pool and name it, and then add questions to the Pool.

Pool Management 101
Managing Pools can truly be a sink or swim affair. (Ha! . . . had to get that one in there.) It is a bit trickier than managing tests, because once students have started taking a test that draws questions from a created Pool, you should NOT modify that Pool--other than for minor typographical errors in a question.

The Pool Management link brings up a familiar looking screen, this time with an option we have not seen before, namely Import:
You can Import an existing pool that you've saved from another course using a special export function.

To start working on a new Pool, click the Add Pool button:

We have NO idea why there are instructions here! Pools are a management tool for the instructor to ADD questions to tests; students do NOT see pool questions until they are included on a test. So, in theory, these instructions are to yourself!
Once done, a Pool Canvas is created. For all practical purposes, it is the same as a test canvas. You can add questions to the Pool just as you would for a test:

The main caveats to remember with Pools are the following:

- You can not add a Random Block-type of question to a Pool. (To make a Random Block question on a test, you use a random selection of questions from a Pool. This is a lot more confusing to read about that actually trying!)
- You do not assign point values to questions in a Pool. These are assigned during the test creation process.
- Students are not even aware of the existence of Pools. Test questions that students see can be created from a Pool.

Once a Pool has been created, you will see it listed the next time you create a test. If you select From a Question Pool or Assessment for a test question, as shown below . . .

. . . after clicking the GO button, a new screen will appear, giving you a list of your current tests and pools. From here, you can select the type of question you want to search, and Blackboard will retrieve the listing, allowing you to insert them in the test you are working on:
The test creation and Pool Canvas process *sounds* a lot more confusing than it actually is. Try creating a sample test or two, and you will see how easy it can be. This is definitely one area of *Blackboard* where there is a lot of explicit on-screen help!
Gradebook

A popular feature in Blackboard for faculty and students alike, the online Gradebook allows the instructor to keep track of all grading in a course while at the same time allowing students the ability to check their progress. We should make clear that you do not have to use online tests or quizzes in order to use the Gradebook. Although any online tests you create do indeed get added automatically to the Gradebook, you can add anything you want to the Gradebook manually, and input scores manually.

The Blackboard Gradebook has NOTHING to do with the grades you turn in to the Registrar!!!

With all the automation around, it is easy to get the technologies confused. As we mentioned at the beginning of this Guide, there is NO "communication" between Blackboard and our Campus Web server. Campus Web gives you the ability to submit your grades via the Web to the Office of the Registrar. Blackboard does not.

The first time you click on Gradebook, assuming you have not already administered any purely online tests or surveys (which will populate the Gradebook automatically), you will get a listing of all students who enrolled themselves into your Blackboard course:
For the sake of example, let’s assume you just graded a term paper worth 100 points. To add this to the Blackboard Gradebook, click the **Add Item** button (circled above). You will get the screen shown below.

It is critical to understand what some of these options mean, explained in the table below.
| Display as: | This drop-down menu gives you five choices:  
| Complete/Incomplete  
| Letter  
| Percentage  
| Score  
| Text  
| This is how *Blackboard* will display the grade to your students and in the Gradebook. You still must INPUT the score as POINTS. Here is what each option means.  
| **Complete/Incomplete**  
| The default option for Surveys, and usually used only for Surveys rather than other items.  
| **Letter**  
| A grade that equals a specific range of percentages. In *Blackboard*, a 97% to 100% is an "A+," a 94% to 97% is an "A," and so on. Fortunately, these can be altered. We demonstrate how to do this in the section on Letter Grades, beginning on page 106.  
| **Percentage**  
| The grade is shown as a percentage, and is calculated by the following:  
| \( \text{Percentage} = \left( \frac{\text{Raw Score}}{\text{Points Possible}} \right) \times 100 \)  
| **Score**  
| The raw score earned.  
| **Text**  
| You may enter any text string for a grade. As you can imagine, however, this will NOT have a calculable value and cannot be set to a numeric range.  
| Make item visible to students: | Self-explanatory, but if you plan on using the Gradebook only as a bookkeeping device for yourself, it's easier to just turn off the Gradebook option in the [Manage Tools](#) section of the Control Panel rather than do this for each item.  
| Include item in gradebook score calculations: | Good for when you have "prep" tests and you do not want the final score to affect the final grade. But this is also good to avoid possible student confusion for items in your Gradebook that they have not yet completed. If you chose to No to this, when students check their grades the points for this will NOT be included in the total points possible for the course in their Gradebook. We explain this further in the section beginning on page 110.  

After setting these options and clicking the **Submit** button, you will get the usual acknowledgement screen. The screen after the acknowledgement screen will return you to the Gradebook view. You can enter grades at any time through this Gradebook screen by clicking directly on the item name:
To input grades, first click directly on the item name.

After clicking on the item name, you will get the following screen:

Finally, you can click on Item Grade List, and start typing in grades on the ensuing screen:
Once you click submit, the Gradebook will look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name (Last, First)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Weighted Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One thing worth pointing out is if you choose to display an item as a letter grade, Blackboard dutifully interprets a numeric score you input as a letter grade, as shown below:

Never fear if you want to see the actual points assigned, however. You can always check this by clicking on the item name and then Item Grade List, as shown on the previous page.
While you may not choose to use a fixed grade scale, be aware that Blackboard allows you to customize the letter grade scale used. To do this, click the **Gradebook Settings** button on the top of the spreadsheet view of the Gradebook. You will get the following screen:

![Gradebook Settings](image)

Next, click on **Manage Display Options**, which will get you the following screen:

![Manage Display Options](image)

From here, click the **Modify** button (circled above) in the **Letter** row, and you will finally get to the screen where you can set Blackboard's letter grades, shown on the next page. Be aware what you set here affects EVERY letter grade in your Gradebook. You can not make separate settings for each individual assessment. Note that there are **Add** and **Remove** buttons allowing you to add/remove rows. For example, Dominican University does not officially have an "A+" grade. You can remove this plus any other grades that you would like to remove.

**Check the "will be calculated as" settings!**

It is worth noting that if you are relying on Blackboard's Gradebook to actually calculate your final grades and/or grade weights and you are using letter grades, Blackboard will take your letter grades and "convert" them to specific percentage scores. For example, in the screenshot on the next page, anyone receiving a B+ will be given a score of 88.5%, though their actual score may have been anywhere from 87% to 90%.

Also, take care with the letter grades. These are case-sensitive! There is a difference between a "b" and a "B" when typing in grades.
Weight Grades

Are you among those who have difficulty figuring out how a term paper worth 100 points in a gradebook can be worth 15% of the grade and a PowerPoint presentation worth 50 points can be worth 20% of the grade? If so, Blackboard's ability to weight grades is for you! To use this feature, click the Weight Grades button at the top of the Gradebook:
This brings you to the screen below. For the sake of simplicity, let's say we have four total items in the Gradebook: a term paper, a PowerPoint presentation, a mid-term exam, and a final exam. We want them to be worth, respectively, 15%, 20%, 30%, and 35% of the grade. The first step (already completed) is to add the items to the Gradebook. Afterwards, clicking on the **Weight Grades** button will show the following:

---

**Weight Grades**

---

**The following error(s) have occurred:**

- Total of all weights must equal 100%. Current total is 0.0

---

After clicking **Submit**, the spreadsheet view of your Gradebook will look something like this:
Note that after adding the weight to the Mid-Term and Final Exam, Blackboard will not calculate a student's weighted total based on items completed thus far, but rather based on all items in the Gradebook. It takes into account the full 100% and weighs each item accordingly.

Student View of Gradebook

Assuming you enabled the ability for students to view the online Gradebook, students may access it by clicking the Tools menu item, and then clicking View Grades from the ensuing screen (which they will have to scroll down a bit to see!). An alternative—and one which students will likely appreciate—is to make a separate menu item for the Gradebook. To do this, go into the Control Panel, click on Manage Course Menu (under the Course Options section), and from the ensuing screen click on the Add Tool Area button. (Since the online Gradebook is considered a "tool," you want to click this rather than the Add Content Area button.) Finally, in the Area Type drop-down menu from the following screen, click on Student Gradebook. This will add the item to the menu:
Once students get into their Gradebook, they will be able to see all grades you have entered. Here is where that option to include item in gradebook score calculations seen on the Add/Modify Gradebook Item screen (see page 98) comes into play. If you selected No for this option for, let's say, the Mid-Term and the Final, here is what students will see:

### View Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Class Average</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>4/12/04 3:40 PM</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82.12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>4/12/04 3:46 PM</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>44.12</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>2/26/04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>4/29/04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, if you selected the default of Yes for all items in the Gradebook, note the slight difference:

### View Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Class Average</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>4/12/04 3:40 PM</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82.12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>4/12/04 3:46 PM</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44.12</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>2/26/04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>4/29/04</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See the difference? Leaving at the default Yes adds in everything to the Total row in the Points Possible column. Saying No to the two they have not completed yet does not. (Of course, one alternative is to simply not add the items not completed yet to the Gradebook at all, but student may appreciate knowing what's ahead!)

Unfortunately, the Weighted Total may throw students off a bit, because it takes into account everything in the Gradebook, and does not reflect the weighted total taking into account only those things they've completed so far.

### Class Average a Necessary Evil

One thing some instructors have complained about in the student view of the online Gradebook is that students can see the class average. There is NOT any way to suppress this information from the student view.

Needless to say, students can view only their own grades!
Downloading/Uploading Grades

Blackboard gives you the ability to download and upload grades from a spreadsheet application—sort of. While uploading something directly from an Excel workbook sounds good in theory, odds are it will not work properly in Blackboard. For best results, you should FIRST download a Gradebook from Blackboard and use that Gradebook in Excel. That way, everything will be formatted the way Blackboard expects it to be formatted when you decide to re-upload it.

This feature allows you to avoid "double-entry": entering your grades in both Excel and Blackboard. Once you download a Gradebook from Blackboard and start using it in Excel, you can then enter your grades in Excel, and upload them to Blackboard. And yes, you can even add a new item in Excel. Here's the process.

Download First!

First, get to your Gradebook going in Blackboard. Here is what we have so far in our Gradebook:

![Gradebook screenshot]

We click the Download Grades button (circled above) and get the following:

Download Gradebook

Instructions:
The gradebook has been saved to a file. To download this file to your computer, follow the instructions below.

1. After saving the file, open Microsoft Excel or a similar program, and go to the File menu. Select Open. On a Macintosh, this may be the only way to open the file, as the system may not automatically associate the saved file with Excel.
2. Locate the directory where the file is saved and double-click the filename (the file is named gb_export.csv by default).

Download Tip: When downloading the gradebook, you may want to save it to a more permanent location, rather than the default location. This will help you locate the gradebook more easily once downloaded is complete.

After reading the instructions, click the Download button and you will get file download dialog similar to what you may have seen in the past when downloading files from the Internet:

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At this point, you should click the **Save** button and specify the file location from the ensuing dialog box:

Note that the file type is a **csv** file, which some of you spreadsheet veterans are likely used to seeing. Go ahead and click the **Save** button (you can obviously rename the file if you want to), and you are done with this part.
Open Your Saved File in Your Spreadsheet Application

Next, we will open the saved file in our spreadsheet application of choice here at Dominican: Excel. In Excel, click File...Open. Remember, however, that since it was downloaded as a .csv file, you must remember to set the Files of type: drop-down menu at the bottom either to Text Files or to All Files:

On the next page is what the spreadsheet will look like:
Note that the Total column (one score has been selected, below) has a value "typed in" and is NOT a formula. This is normal, because it (and the Weighted Total column) will not be uploaded.

It is important to note the following.

The Total and Weighted Total Columns Are Text, Not Formulas!
Although the Total and Weighted Total (if you used weighted grades) columns are included, they are plain numeric values and not formulas, as seen on the formula bar in the above screenshot. This is because these values are generated by Blackboard within the Gradebook feature. When your file is later uploaded to Blackboard (should you choose to do this), it is important to remember that these columns ARE NOT UPLOADED. Therefore, don't bother changing any values in these columns.
Uploading a Gradebook Back Into Blackboard

Uploading back to Blackboard is fairly simple, but let's throw a new wrinkle in. Say you decide to add a Gradebook item to your spreadsheet in Excel. What then? Fortunately, it's a fairly simple process. As seen in the screenshot below, we've added a column called Oral Presentation and typed in the scores:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Last Name, First Name (User Name)</td>
<td>Student Id</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Badenov, E.</td>
<td>76 D-</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>23.40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Brown, Chi</td>
<td>45 A+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>24.75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dahl, Barb</td>
<td>100 A+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Doe, John</td>
<td>93 A</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>33.15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rabbit, Jess</td>
<td>88 C+</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Student, Ji</td>
<td>95 B</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>31.05%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Student, Ji</td>
<td>65 A+</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>29.75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yader, Ella</td>
<td>95 A+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>33.85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

DO NOT ADD OR MODIFY USERS!
Any Gradebook upload that contains user data for any user name that is not enrolled in Blackboard will not be processed. Also, do not modify the user names. If you plan on uploading a Gradebook to Blackboard, this is not the place to start getting fancy with the user names, such as adding preferred nicknames, etc. (As we will see, Blackboard's Upload Gradebook screen will reiterate this.)
Next, click **File...Save As**. We will not do a "regular" save, because it's not a bad idea to rename it to a different file name (just in case something bad happens!). Note that the file type should be set to type **csv**, which it should be by default, but we type in a new name:

![Save As dialog box](image)

Excel will give you a warning that some thing may be incompatible. This is normal for a CSV file type. Go ahead and click **Yes** in this dialog box and will save it.

![Microsoft Excel warning](image)

Close *Excel* and go back into *Blackboard*. Click the **Upload Grades** button from the spreadsheet view of the Gradebook:

![Upload Grades button](image)
You will get a screen like the one below. By now, you are pretty familiar with using the **Browse** button next to a file name, which we have already done. (Note the statement that students cannot be added in this upload file):

When you click the **Submit** button, **Blackboard** will ask you *which specific column you wish to upload*. This is one way **Blackboard** helps ensure you will not accidentally overwrite an existing column with new grades you may have put in the **Excel** spreadsheet:

Suffice to say that if you DID create a new column in the spreadsheet (as we did in our example), you should make sure you **Create New Gradebook Item**!
Click **Submit**, you will immediately get the following **Add/Modify Gradebook Item** screen. Treat this as you would for any item you add to the Gradebook. Note that the **Item Name** is already filled in for you. The main thing you want to do fill in the **Points Possible** and, if you want, change the **Category**:

![Add/Modify Gradebook Item](image)

Click **Submit**, and you'll get an acknowledgement screen, where you should click **OK** . . .

![Gradebook Item successfully updated.](image)

. . . after which, you will get a screen asking you to choose the rows to import. The "rows" are the students, and assuming you recorded a grade for all students in your new item (which we did in our example), it's quickest to simply click the **Select All** column to place a checkmark next to everyone's name:

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Click **Select All** to place a check next to all names. (The are NOT checked by default.)

Click the **Submit** button after checking all names, and you will receive yet another **Gradebook Item successfully updated** screen like we have already seen. Click **OK** at that screen, and you will FINALLY be returned to the spreadsheet view of your Gradebook, with your new column added!

Note that **Blackboard** added the column at the end. Fortunately, you can simply click on the **Manage Items** button at the top to get a screen that will allow you to place these items in any order you want.
Gradebook View and Course Statistics

The Gradebook Views link in the Control Panel simply gives you the option to View Grades by Item or View Grades by User and allows you to change any grades from following screens.

Course Statistics allows you to view course-wide statistics such as the number of times specific users have logged in and the times they have viewed the material. You can also view the number of times they have accessed specific areas (such as content areas). This is different from when you had the option to track number of views when adding an item in a Content Area (as discussed in our section on Content Areas, beginning on page 27). That option added a Tracking button in that area of the Control Panel. These course statistics are less specific.

Adding an Assignment That Automatically Gets Included in Gradebook

Blackboard has a way of adding an assignment so that it automatically gets included in the Gradebook, has a grade posted in the Gradebook, and allows you to exchange the file with the student using a method other than the Digital Drop Box. This is available within any Content Area of Blackboard, via the menu at the far right:

Click GO, not the OK button when doing this.

The screen that follows (shown on the next page) will allow you to post instructions for the assignment and add an attachment. This is similar to any other file upload you have done in Blackboard, but note that you also input the total points for the assignment. Doing this will automatically add the entry to your Gradebook.
Next time you check your Gradebook, you will see that this assignment has been added.

**Student's View of Assignment**

Once posted, students will see the assignment in the content area you placed it within. See the following page for the student's view:
Upon clicking the link, they will see the file you have uploaded and see a dialog box where they, in turn, can submit the assignment back to you:
What You Do Next

To access what the student submitted, go into the Gradebook, and click directly on the exclamation point icon:

![Click here!]

That will bring you to the Modify Grade screen, where you will later be able to enter your grade, but for now be able to download what the student submitted by clicking on the View button:

![Modify Grade]

This, in turn, leads you to the screen shown on the next page where you can download the assignment, and add your own comments. (You can even upload yet another file specifically to that student):

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The student will be able to view your comments (or additional file) by going back to the content area where it was originally posted.
Support

This section of the Control Panel contains three links:

- Manual
- Contact System Administrator

We have discussed the second one, Manual, several times throughout this Handbook. This will open a separate screen that contains Blackboard's entire Instructor Manual is the best place to go for an overview of something that is unfamiliar to you or that this Handbook does not cover.

The Support link will take you to Blackboard's official support site at http://support.blackboard.com. In order to use this site, however, you will have to create your own account by scrolling all the way to the bottom of their screen, and clicking the following link:

Once in, we find the so-called Training Center link most useful, after clicking on Self-Study Materials. This leads to several HTML and Flash documents demonstrating key concepts in Blackboard course creation.

Finally, Contact System Administrator will generate an e-mail to Ken Black, our current administrator. His e-mail address is: kblack@dom.edu