

Blackboard: The Basics for Faculty

How to use basic tools of Blackboard

Overview

This Quick Guide covers the basic tools and layout of Blackboard. Blackboard provides an easy and efficient means of communication between faculty members and students. Some useful course tools which are briefly discussed include Build, Teach and Student tabs, the Course Menu, Learning Modules, and adding a file/folder.

Policy Changes

- Faculty must request that their courses be activated (creating a course shell) through HomerConnect prior to using Blackboard. See www.ithaca.edu/computing/support and click on the Blackboard CE 8 link for detailed instructions about this process.
- Once this has been done, HomerConnect loads the course and enrolls students in your Blackboard course.
- Faculty can easily copy course content from section to section each semester.
- Courses will be purged if not used in 2 years.
- Faculty can create content and view their course as soon as the “term” becomes available, typically 8 weeks before the start of the next semester i.e. early November for the spring term.
- Students will be able to view content during the “term” they are enrolled in the section. A term is roughly equal to the semester. The term is usually defined as starting one week prior to classes and ends when grades are due.

HomerConnect

- To create a course, you must use HomerConnect to activate a course in Blackboard.
- You do not have to go through ITS for this procedure.
- Unlike WebCT, you no longer need to import students into a course. HomerConnect will enroll students automatically for you.
- Add/Drop is also maintained by HomerConnect.
- You can add anyone as a designer, teaching assistant (TA), or auditor to your course in Blackboard. However, you do not have the ability to enroll students..

Login

To access Blackboard go to **courses.ithaca.edu**. You will see WebCT on the left and Blackboard on the right. Click on the Blackboard link to log in. Before you log in, under the Getting Started box, click on the Check Browser box. This browser check will ensure your browser is configured so the complete functionality of this application is available to you. For each area checked, mandatory or recommended changes are indicated.

Once you have checked your browser, log in using your Ithaca College Netpass username and password.

Pop Up Blockers

Make sure to turn the Internet browser pop-up blocker off. To turn off the pop-up blocker in **Internet Explorer 7**, go to Tools -> Internet Options -> Privacy. Under Privacy, there will be a heading that says Pop-up Blocker. Make sure that the Turn On Pop Up Blocker box is empty. To turn off the pop-up blocker in **Firefox** go to Tools -> Options ->Content and make sure the Block pop-up windows box is empty. To turn off the pop-up blocker in **Safari** go Safari ->Preferences -> Security and make sure the Block pop-up window box is empty

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Related Guides

[Blackboard for Students](#)

Quick Guide

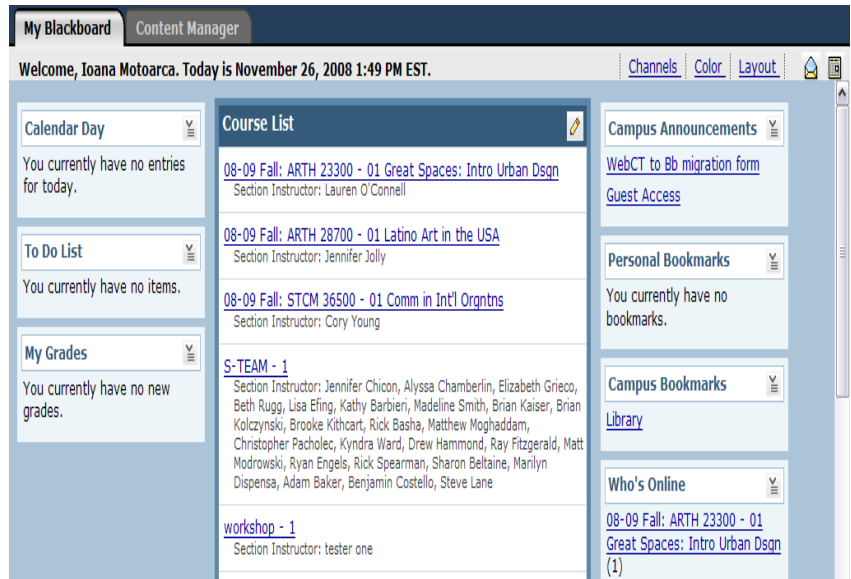
Welcome to Blackboard

After logging into Blackboard using your Ithaca Netpass username and password you will see a screen similar to the one to the left.

My Blackboard tab contains the Course List which lists your course(s).

Content Manager maintains the files used in each course.

By selecting Channels at the top right of the page, you can add different tools to your welcome page. A new feature includes Who's Online which shows how many people are currently online in each course.

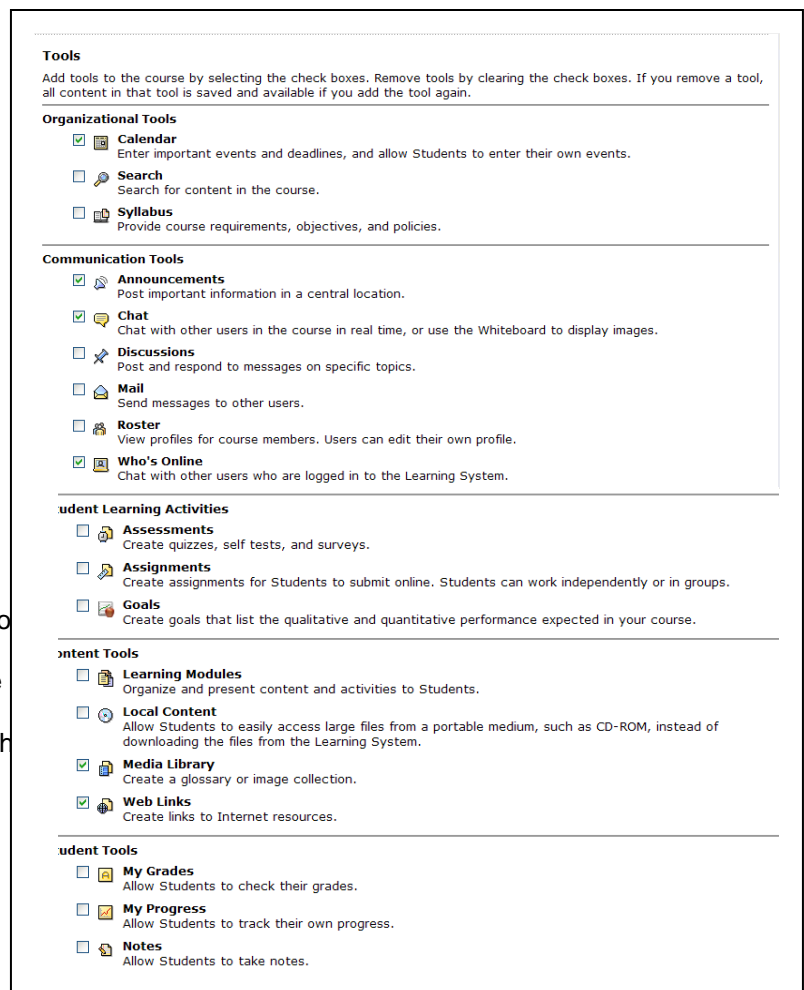


Tools

Blackboard provides a variety of useful tools to help organize your course. The tools are split into different categories: Organization Tools, Communication Tools, Student Learning Activities, Content Tools, and Student Tools. Look at the image below to view the possible tool options. If you are creating a blank course, this tool menu will appear when you click on your course.

To add or delete tools from your course follow the steps below:

1. From the homepage, on the left hand side, find the **Designer Tools** at the bottom.
2. Click on **Manage Course** link.
3. Select **Tools**.
4. Select or unselect the tools you want to appear or not appear on your homepage.
5. Click **Save**. Your course will be updated and the tools will be added to the Course Tools. If you change any of the Student tools, if you click on the **Student View** tab, you can see the change you made.



Tutorials

Be sure to complete the *Exploring the Interface* and *Design Basics* tutorials provided on the homepage of your course. These tutorials help familiarize you with the Blackboard interface and how to organize your course efficiently. Once you have completed the tutorials you can select "Do not show me this page again."

Course Tools
Course tools are all of the content, organizational, communication, and evaluation tools that you or another designer has added to the course menu. You use these tools to create content and learning activities. Section instructors use these tools to present content and learning activities to Students. Students use these tools to view content and perform learning activities.

Designer Tools
Designer tools allow you to build and customize the course, manage files, and control the availability of content.

To read information about getting started in the Learning System, click the **Help** link at the top of the screen.

Tutorials
To become familiar with the major areas of the Blackboard Learning System and how to navigate around them, see the [Exploring the Interface tutorial](#).
To learn the fundamentals of building a course in the Blackboard Learning System, see the [Design Basics tutorial](#).

Do not show me this page again.

Blackboard Interface

Blackboard interface consists of a simple layout to provide easy navigation and organization. Below is a look at the homepage of a course in Blackboard.

1. Build

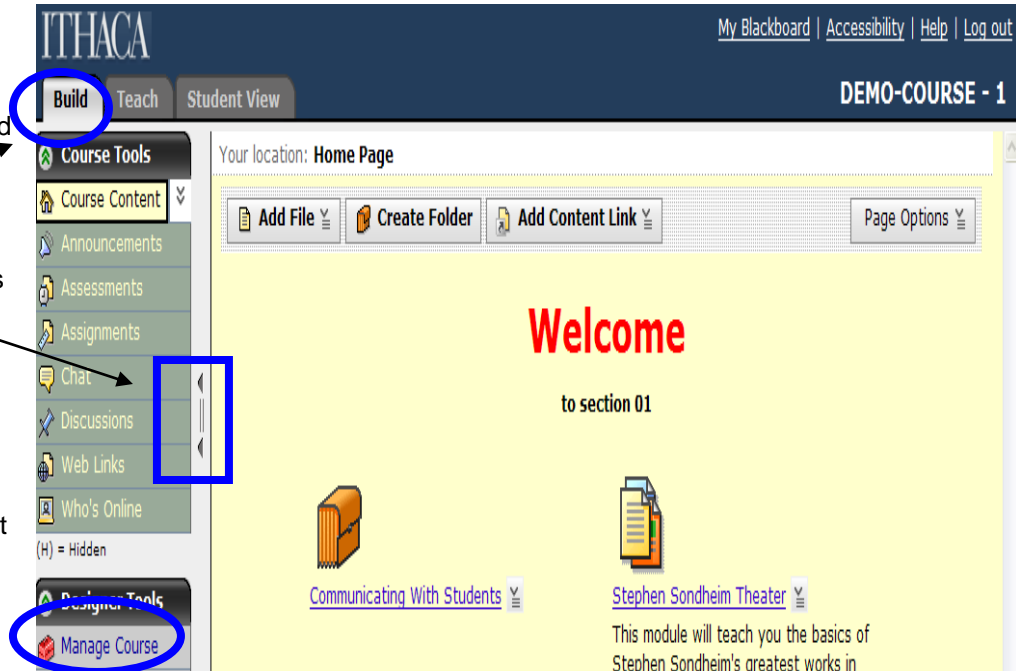
On the left hand side is where you can find your course tools. The Build tab allows you to create the contents of your course.

The Course Tools menu is collapsible by clicking on the arrows on the side.

The Designer Tools are used to manage the use of certain tools, files, and grading forms.

On the homepage you can add a file, create a folder, or add a content link.

The Page Options tab, in the upper right corner, allows you to customize the homepage, and edit both header and footer.



2. Teach

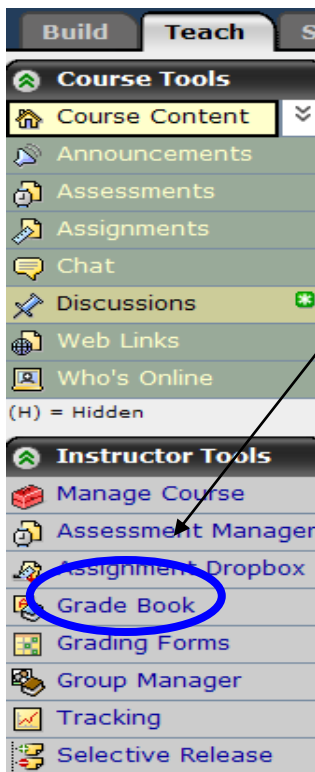
The Course Tools remain the same as those in the Build tab. Instead of Designer Tools, in the Teach tab there are instructor tools which deal with grades.

The Teach tab is used primarily for the grade book. This is the only place you can access the grade book.

You will mainly use the Grade Book feature. Grading forms can be used as a standardized rubric.

3. Student View

The Student View tab allows you to see your course from a student perspective. The tools you select will be available to the students. If you do not want the student to access to a certain tool or document you can make the item hidden. If you give them access to grades they will be able to keep track of their progress.



Creating a Course in Blackboard

After your course has been created through HomerConnect, login to Blackboard and click your course on the homepage.

You have three options:

- Set up a blank course – this option allows you to create a course from scratch.
- Copy content from another course – use this option to copy content from another course in which you have designer privileges.
- Import content from file – this option is for importing WebCT content file of your course (see Migration Quick Guide for further assistance on how to migrate your course content from WebCT to Blackboard).

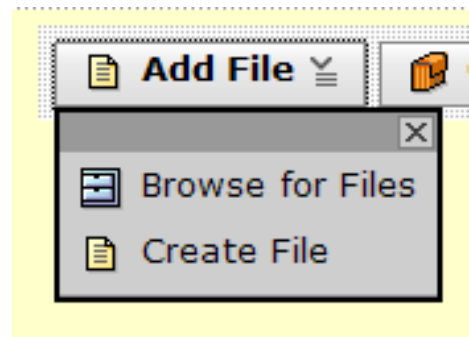
To set up a blank course:

1. Select the **Set up a blank course** option.
2. A page will appear with all the different tools you can use in your course. Underneath the Quick Start paragraph, select the **Select All Tools** checkbox. You can go back later and delete tools you do not want to use.
3. Click **Save**.
4. You will now see the homepage of your course. This is where you start building your course.

How to add a file

Adding a file to your course is quite simple.

- On your homepage you will see the **Add File** tab.
- Click on **Add File** tab and either select **Browse Files** or **Create File**.
- If you selected Browse Files, a window will appear with **My Files**, **Class Files**, and **My Computer**.
- Click on **My Computer** to browse for a file on your computer and find the appropriate file.
- Click Open, and your file is added to the homepage of your course.



How to add/delete a folder

Adding a folder to your homepage will help organize the content of your course.

On your homepage click on **Create Folder** button.

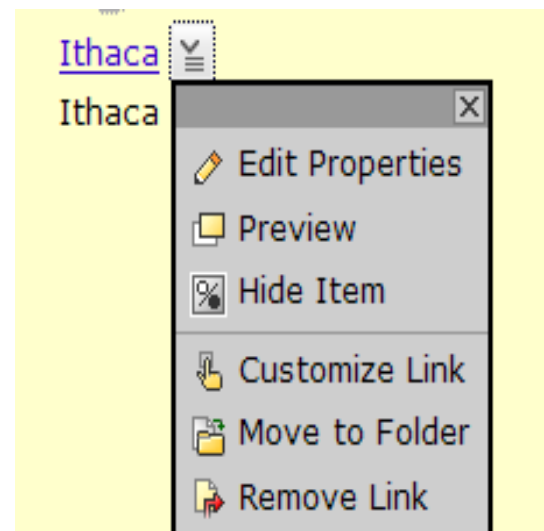
- Fill out the title and add a description (optional).
- If you want the folder to be visible, select **Show Item**.
- Click **Save**.

To add a file to a folder:

- Select the folder you want to add a file to.
- Click the **Add File** button and follow the steps above for adding a file to your course.

To move a file into a different folder:

- If you want to move a file from one folder into another, navigate your way to the file you want to move.
- Click the **ActionLinks** button on the side of the document, and select **Move to Folder**.
- A window will appear with a list of folders, select the appropriate folder and your file has now moved.



To delete a file or folder:

- Click the **ActionsLinks** button on the side of the document, and select **Remove Link**.

How to copy a Section from one semester to another

1. Log into Blackboard
2. Click on the new section you want to copy content to
3. You will have three options
 - a. Set up a blank course
 - b. Copy content from another course
 - c. Import content from file
4. Choose the **Copy content from another course** option

Assign Course Content

SPECIAL International Communication - 2

You can assign content to this course from another course or start designing this course without below and click Continue.

- Set up a blank course
Select this option to start designing this course without assigning content.
- Copy content from another course
Select from courses in which you are enrolled as a designer.
- Import content from file
Select this option to start importing course content from exported course file.

Continue

Cancel

5. A screen with all the courses you have designer privileges will appear.
6. Select the section from which you want to copy content.
7. Click **Continue**.
8. Wait a few moments until the content is copied.

Copy content from another course

Select from courses in which you are enrolled as a designer.

Course Title - Section Title ↑

- DEMO-COURSE-1
- Faculty Tutorials-Additional Handouts
- Faculty Tutorials-Assessments
- Faculty Tutorials-Communicating with Students
- SPECIAL International Communication-1
- SPECIAL Tips and Tricks for faculty-1

Continue

Cancel

For More Information

A variety of support services are available from ITS if you would like additional help:

Computer training on a variety of topics is available to faculty, staff, and students at no charge through the Technology Learning Center (TLC). Check out the current TLC training schedule online at <https://www.ithaca.edu/its/workshops>

Online documentation and tutorials on IC-supported computing software and systems are available at <https://www.ithaca.edu/its/traindoc>

Frontline computing support is available through the ITS Helpdesk in 104 Job Hall; send e-mail to helpdesk@ithaca.edu or call 607-274-1000.

Backline consulting support is available in the Technology Learning Center, room 101 Friends Hall.

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