Coastal Bend College

Learn Blackboard 9.1

Faculty Quick Start Guide

Distance Education

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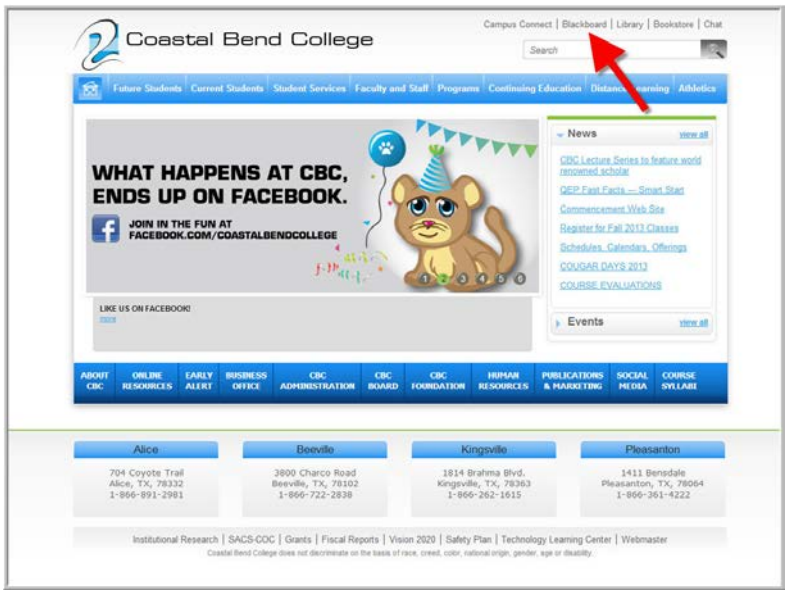
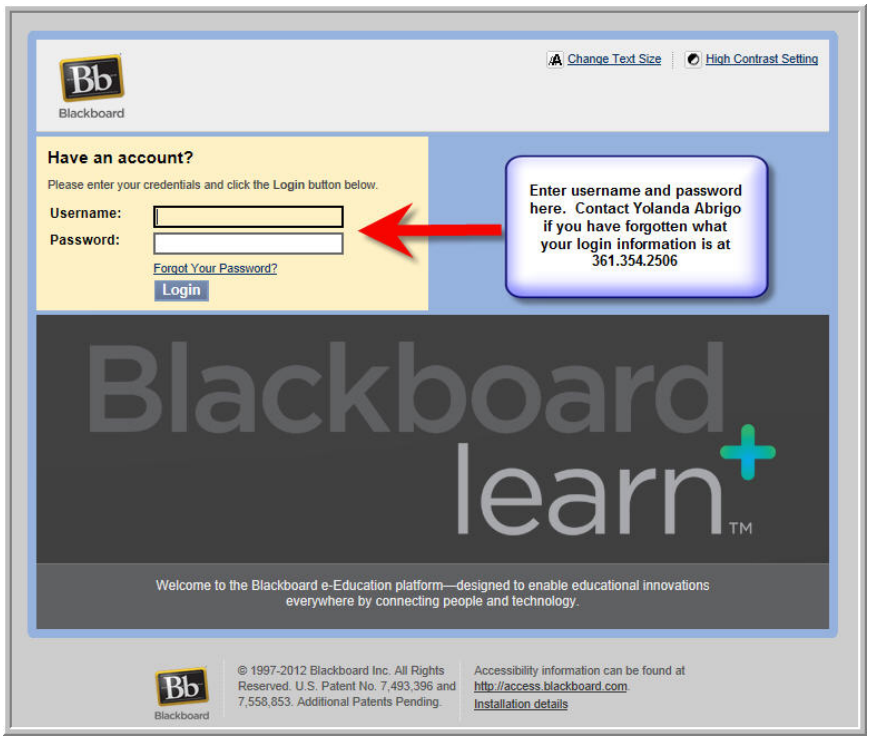
Logging Into Blackboard

- Go to our main Coastal Bend College website at www.coastalbend.edu
- Click on the Blackboard Login link located at the top right of the page.

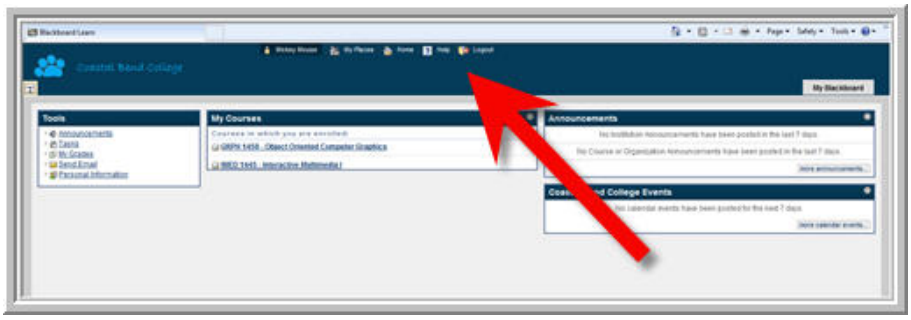


- The following screen appears. Enter your ***Username*** and ***Password*** as assigned to you by Coastal Bend College Distance Learning Department and click ***Login***.
    - If you have forgotten your username and/or password, please contact Yolanda Abrigo at 361.354.2506 or via email to ycharles@coastalbend.edu



Changing Your Password

Locate the My Places link within the top menu bar and click once on it.

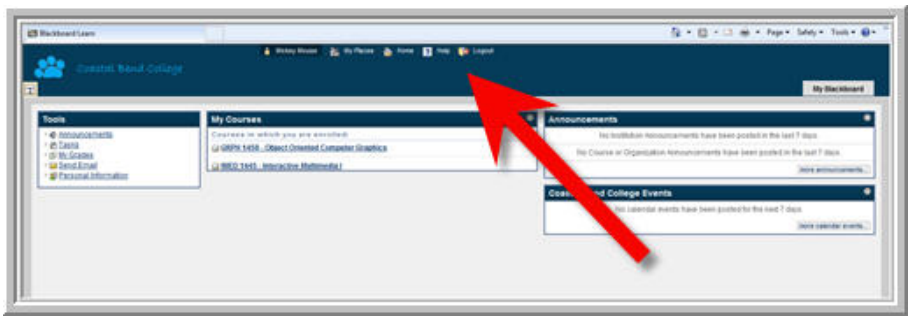


The following screen appears.

- ***Click on Personal Information*** – this allows you to edit your personal information, change your password, personalize ***My Places***, change personal settings, and set privacy options
    - ***To change your password click on Change Password and type your new password in the two boxes provided***

Changing Your Default Email

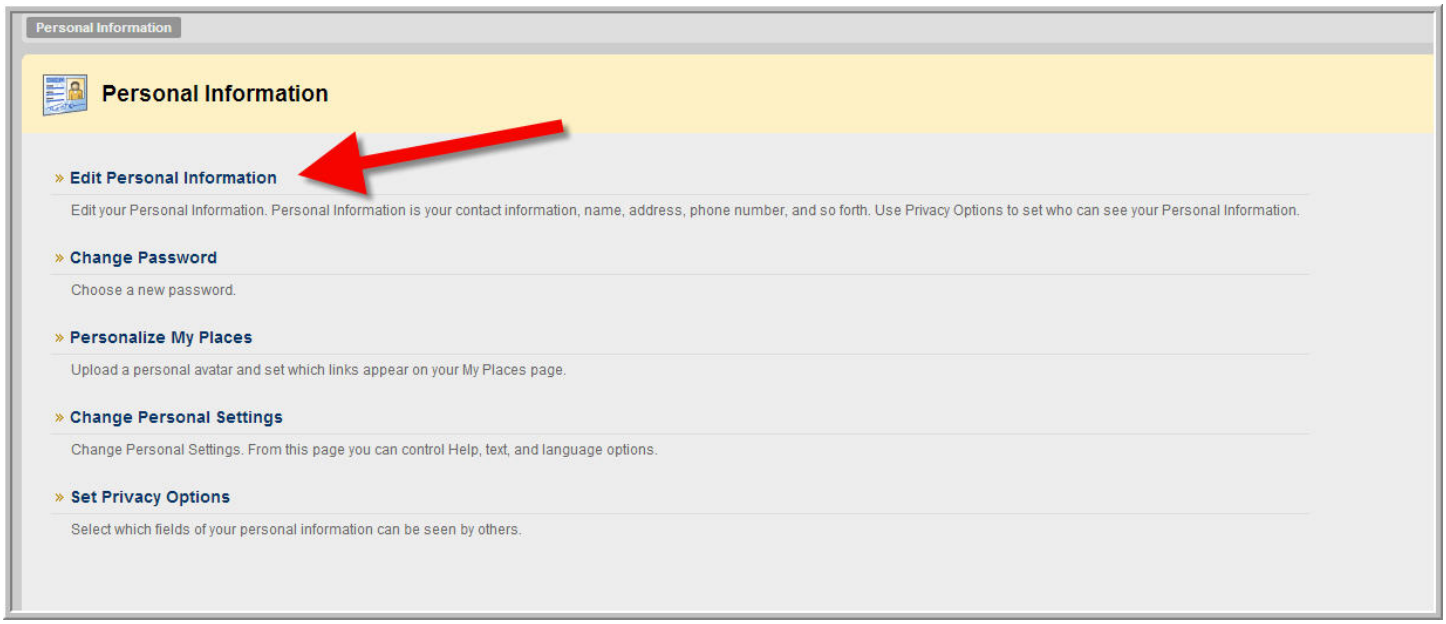
Locate the My Places link within the top menu bar and click once on it.



The following screen appears.

- ***Click on Personal Information*** –

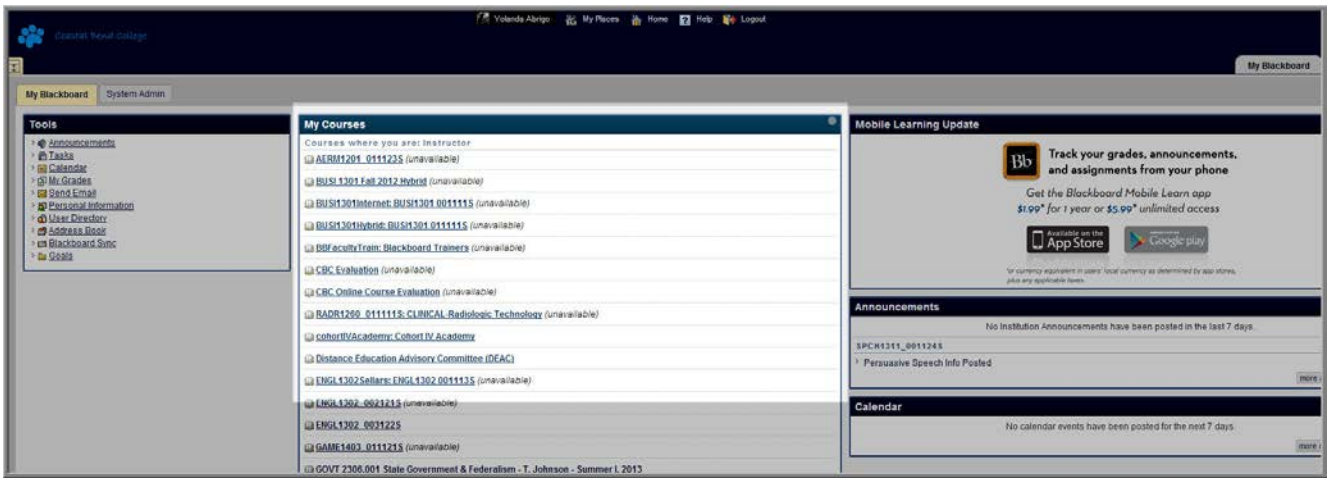
The following screen appears.



- Click on ***Edit Personal Information***. Remove the default email address and type in the email address of your choice and click ***Submit***.

Accessing Your Course(s)

My Courses – this module lists all the courses to which you have access. The list of courses should update based on the courses you are currently enrolled in. ***Simply click on the course title to gain access to your course.***

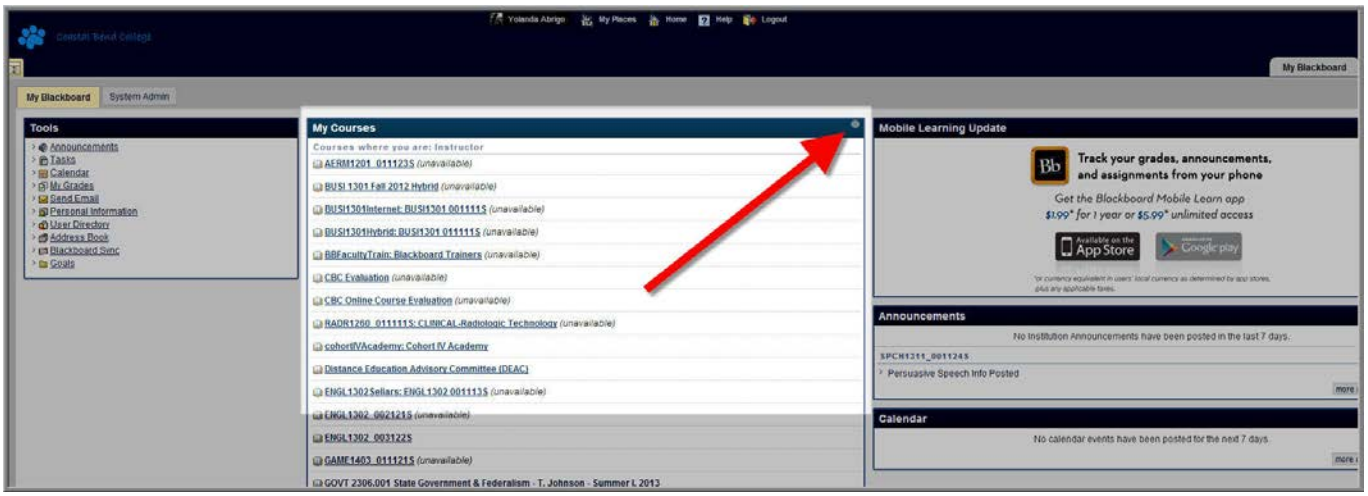


PLEASE NOTE: If the course reads "unavailable" this indicates that your students do not have access to the course. **However, you as the instructor will have access to it**. One way to look at it is that "unavailable" means your doors are closed and students cannot come in.

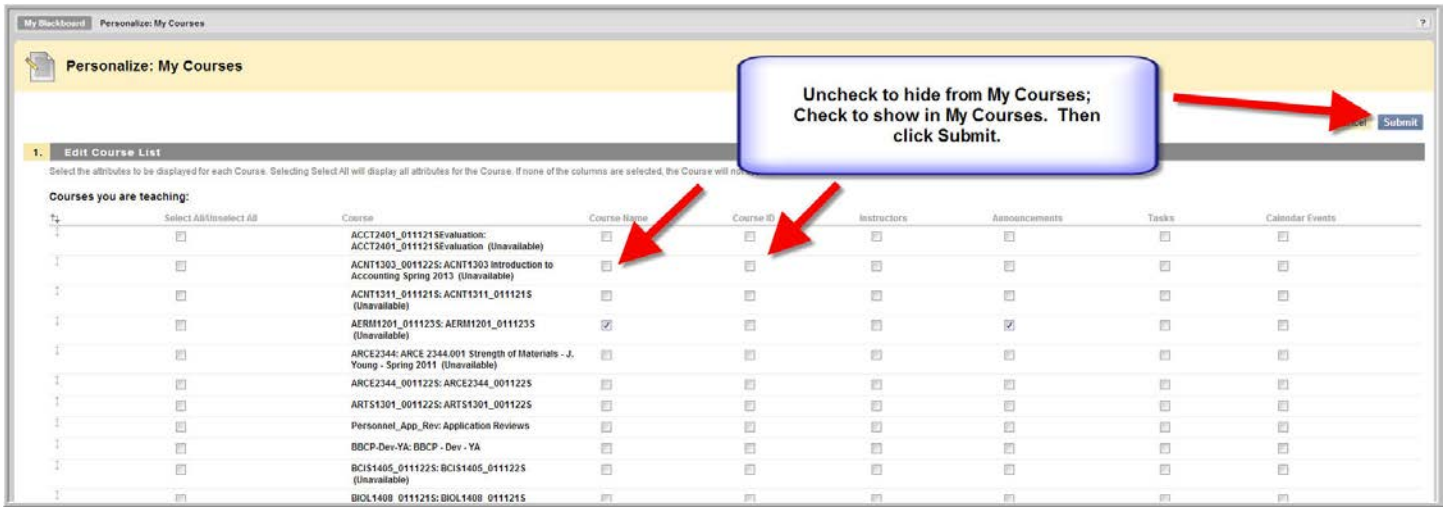
Managing Your Course List

Every semester instructors will be given a new course shell. You can manage your course list so that only the courses you are currently using will appear within your course list. Even though you "hide" them from your course list, you will still be able to retrieve them at a later date.

Locate the *pinwheel icon* on the ***My Courses*** module.



The following screen appears.



Locate the *Course Name* and *Course ID* and uncheck (or check) the boxes that appear next to the course you want to hide (or show) from your course list. Then click ***Submit***.

Exploring Course Tools

Let's explore the different tools that you might find within your course. ***NOTE: Instructors control which tools are available.***

The tools that you might find in your class include:

- **Announcements**
- **Calendar**
- **Collaboration**
- **Contacts**
- **Discussion Board**
- **Email**
- **Journals**
- **Messages**
- **My Grades**
- **Tasks**
- **Wikis**

Announcements

Announcements post timely information critical to course success. You can add, edit, and delete announcements from the Announcements page. This is an ideal place to post time-sensitive material including:

- When assignments are due
- Changes to the syllabus
- Corrections/clarifications of materials

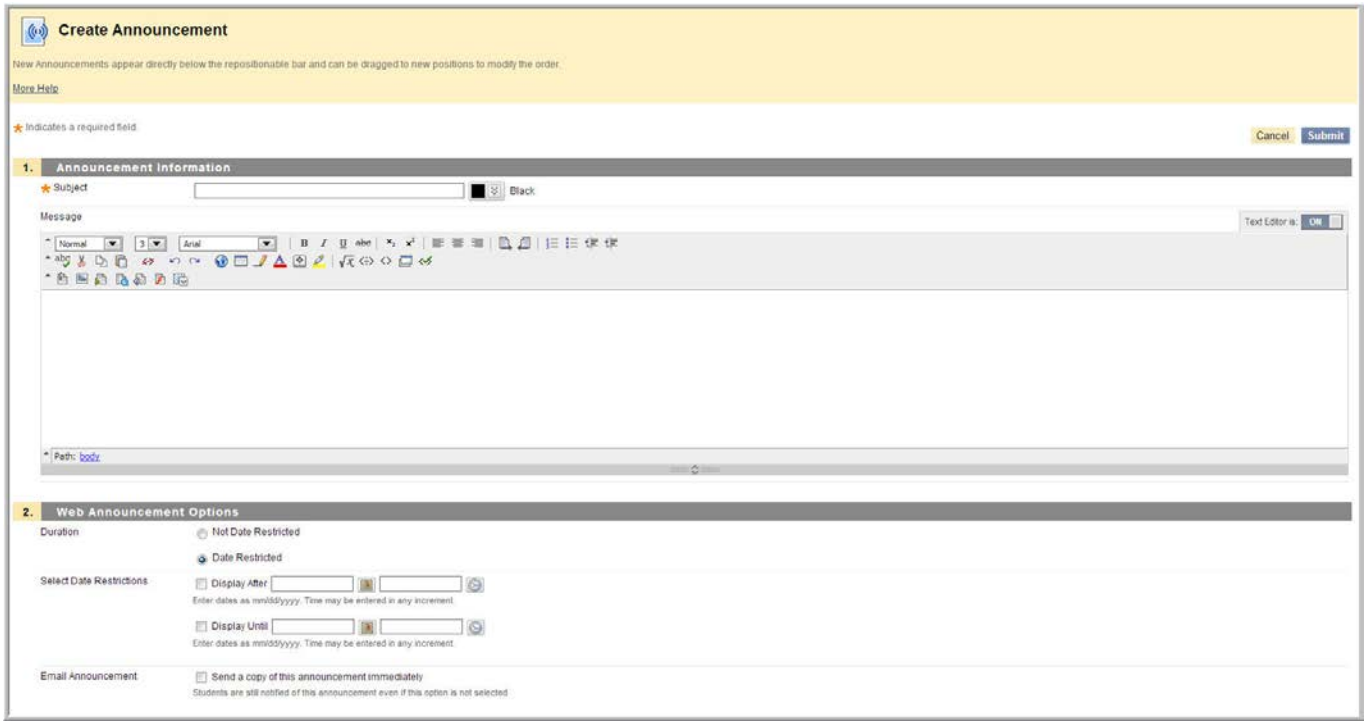
- Exam schedules

When adding an announcement, you can also send the announcement as an email to students in the course. This ensures that students receive the announcement even if they do not log in to the course.

Announcements are accessed from the **Control Panel** under **Course Tools**.

How to Create Announcements

- In the **Control Panel** expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Announcements**.
- From the Action Bar, click **Create Announcement**.
- Provide a **Subject** and **Message**.
- Set the **Duration**.
    - Select **Not Date Restricted** to keep the announcement visible until it is manually removed.
    - --OR--
    - Select **Date Restricted** to limit the announcement's visibility by date and time.
- If the announcement is **Date Restricted**, select the **Display After and/or Display Until** check boxes and type the dates and times. Alternatively, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times.
- Select the **Override User Notification Settings** check box to send students an email containing the announcement. The email will be sent to all students, even those who choose not to receive announcement notifications through email. This can be useful for very important or urgent announcements.
- Optionally, link to a course area, tool, or item using the **Browse** button.
- Click **Submit**.



Calendar

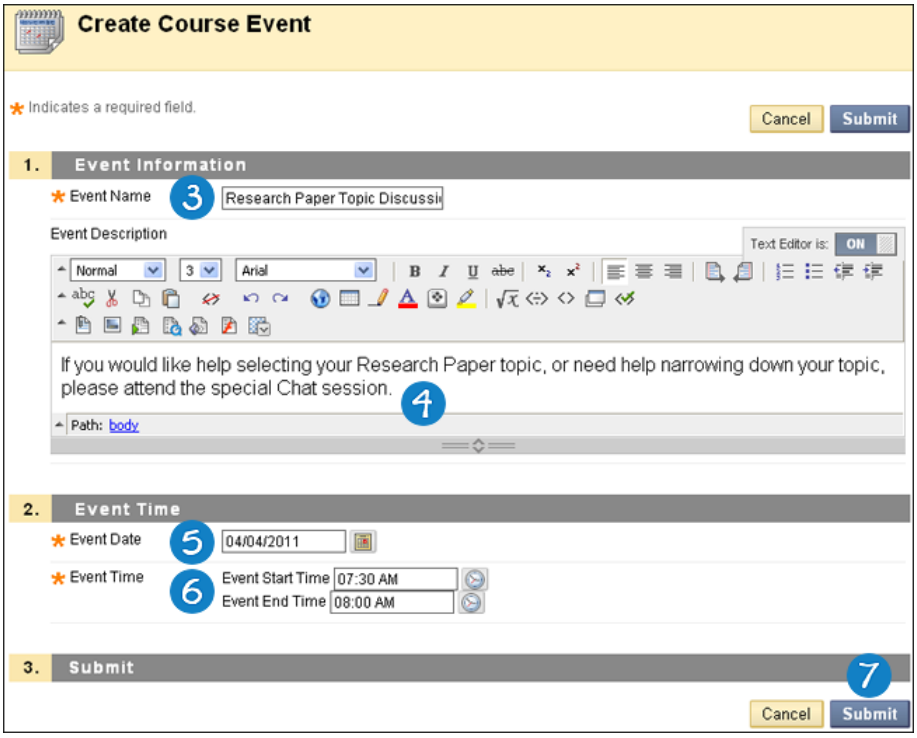
You can use the **Course Calendar** to provide students with dates for course related events. Course Calendar events appear to all members of the course.

Common entries you may include in the **Course Calendar** are:

- Assignment due dates
- Exams

How to Add a Course Entry to your Calendar

- In the **Control Panel** expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Course Calendar**.
- On the **Course Calendar** page, click **Create Course Event** on the Action Bar.
- On the **Create Course Event** page, type the **Event Name**.
- Type the **Event Description**.
    - ***Note***: There is a 4,000 character limit for event descriptions.
- Type the **Event Date**. Optionally, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** to select the date.
- Type the **Event Start Time** and **Event End Time**. Optionally, use the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select the times.
- Click **Submit**.



Discussion Board

Building a sense of community among students is crucial for a successful online experience. The **Discussion Board** is an important tool for interpersonal interaction and can replicate the robust discussions that take place in the traditional classroom. *Discussions* can serve a range of purposes, such as:

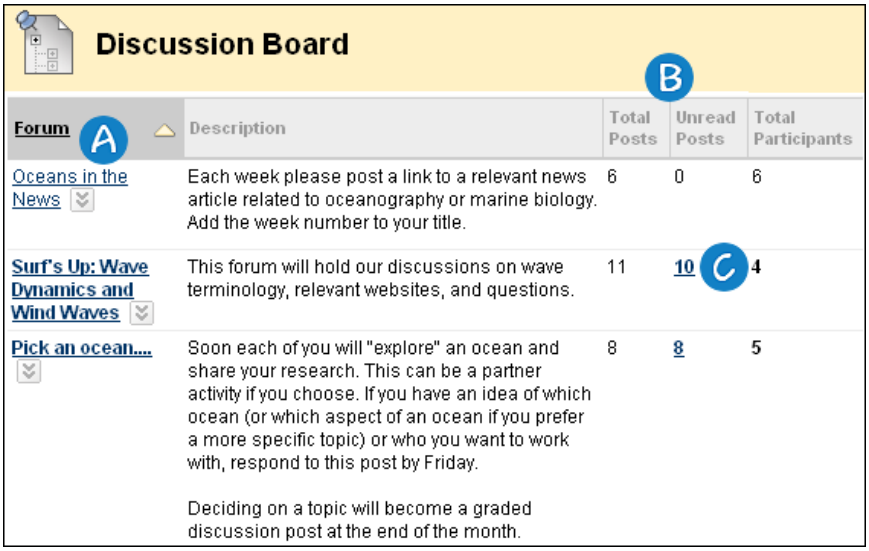
- An online meeting place for social interaction among peers.
- An additional medium for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- A medium to pose questions about homework assignments, readings, and course content.
- A way to demonstrate the understanding or application of course material.
- A record of discussion which can be reviewed at a later point.
- A graded activity that demonstrates understanding or application of course material.

Once you have determined your precise needs, you can create forums and threads to organize discussions into units or topics relevant to your course.

The **Discussion Board** tool allows for asynchronous interactions occurring over extended periods of time. This allows for more flexibility, as well as reflective communication.

Asynchronous communication offers convenience and flexibility to all participants. Some benefits include:

- Participants do not need to be in the same location or time zone.
- Participants can carefully consider and reflect on the initial message before responding and, hopefully, more thoughtful conversations can occur.
- Different learning styles are accommodated. For example, students who are shy about speaking in class may feel more comfortable responding to discussion threads.

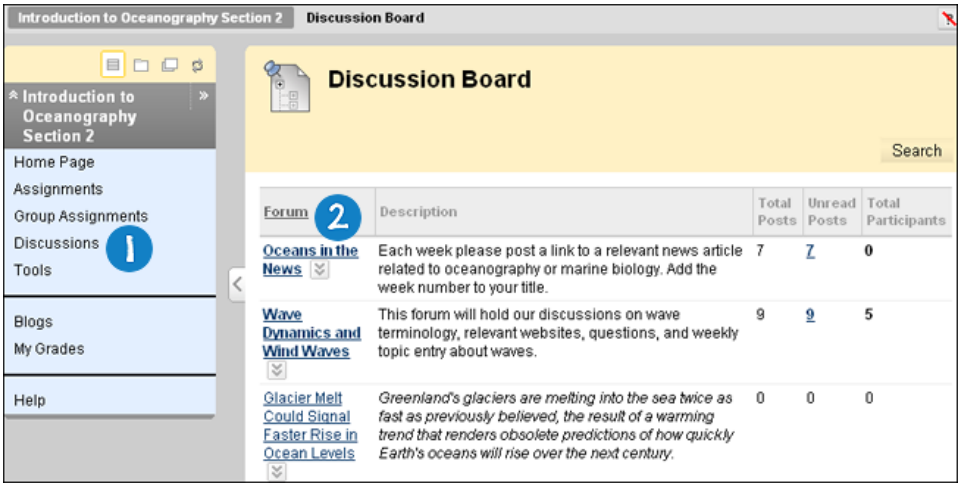


A. ***Forum Title –*** click the forum title to view the messages. Forums containing unread posts appear in bold.
B. ***Total Posts/Total Participants –*** view data on the number of posts and participants.
C. ***Unread Posts –*** provides a one-click access to the forum's unread messages.

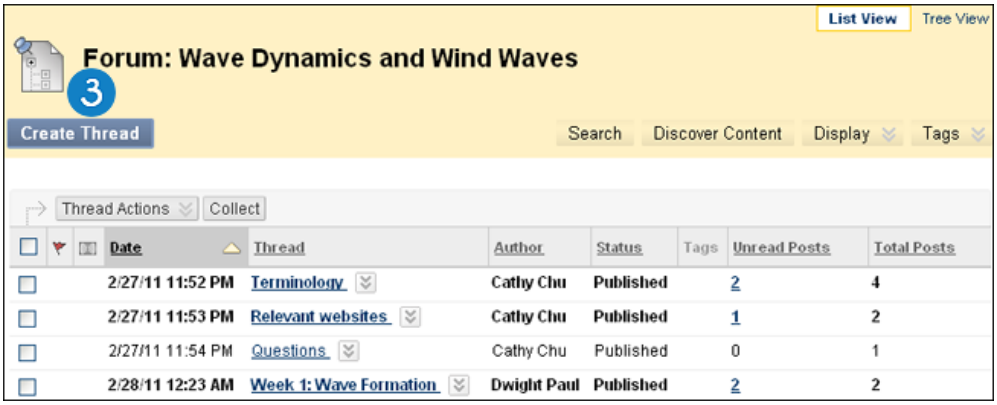
Within each forum, users can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and any replies to it. When creating a forum, your instructor has the option of allowing or not allowing you to start threads. Generally, the purpose of the forum will dictate whether or not you can start threads. A moderated, grades forum used to evaluate student performance will be tightly controlled, and you cannot create threads. Other forums are designed for users to share opinions and thoughts on tangential or unrelated topics.

Creating Threads in a Discussion Forum

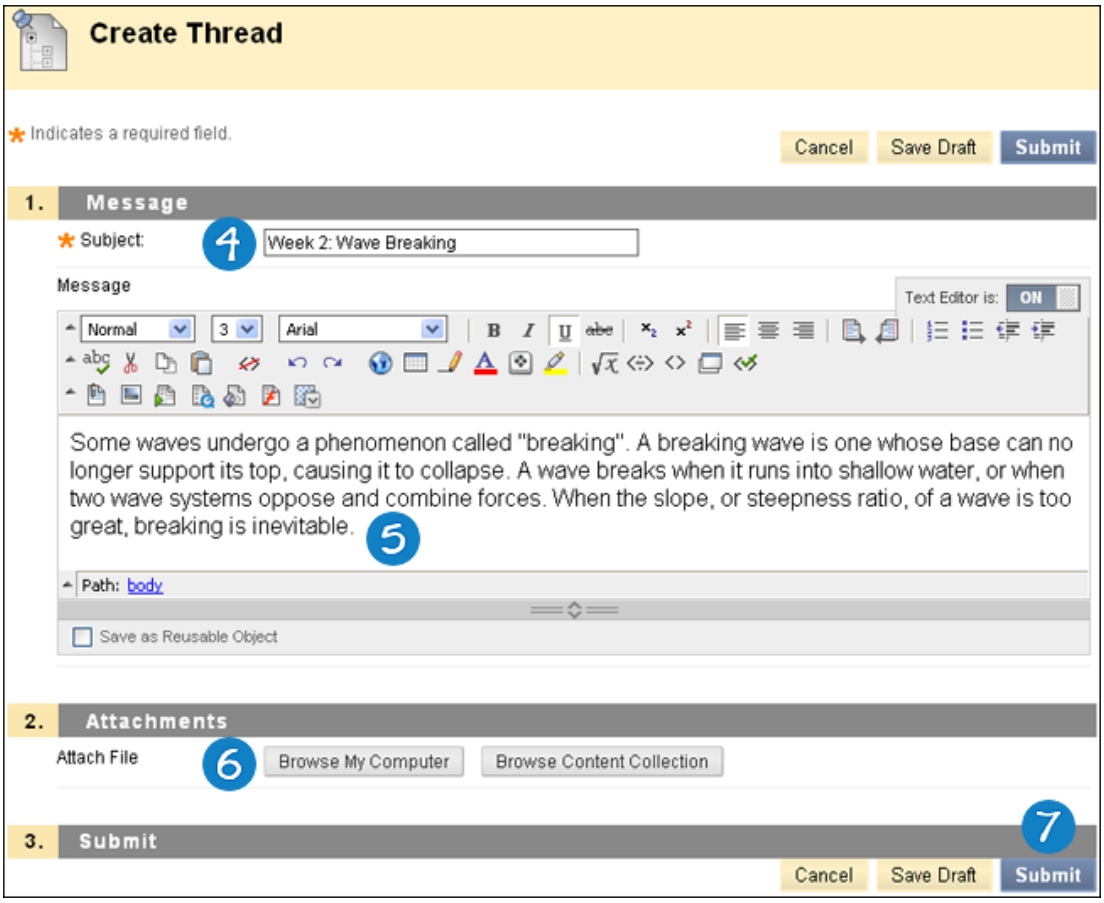
- Forums have many settings that control who can post, and what other types of actions you can take, such as editing your own threads, posting anonymously, or rating posts. Depending on which forum settings your instructor has selected, you may be allowed to create a new thread.
    - On the Course Menu, click ***Discussions***
    - On the ***Discussion Board*** page, click the name of the forum



- On the **Forum** page, click **Create Thread**



- On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**
- In the **Message** text box, type your reply. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, web links, and multimedia.
- Alternatively, under ***Attachments***, attach a file using one of the following options:
    - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**
    - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**
- Click **Submit** to create the thread



Send Email

The ***Email*** tool allows you to send email to other people in your course from within Blackboard Learn without launching an external email client, such as Gmail or Yahoo. Emails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users. A copy of this email is sent to the sender by default.

> ***IMPORTANT!*** Blackboard Learn keeps no record of sent or received emails. When you receive or send an email, the email will appear in the Inbox of your external email client. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date.

You can send email to the following people in a course:

- **All Users**: Sends email to all users in the course.
- **All Groups**: Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course.
- **All Teaching Assistant Users**: Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.
- **All Student Users**: Sends an email to all students in the course.
- **All Instructor Users**: Sends email to all of the instructors for a specified course.
- **Select Users**: Sends email to select users.
- **Select Groups**: Sends email to select groups.

Note: Recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

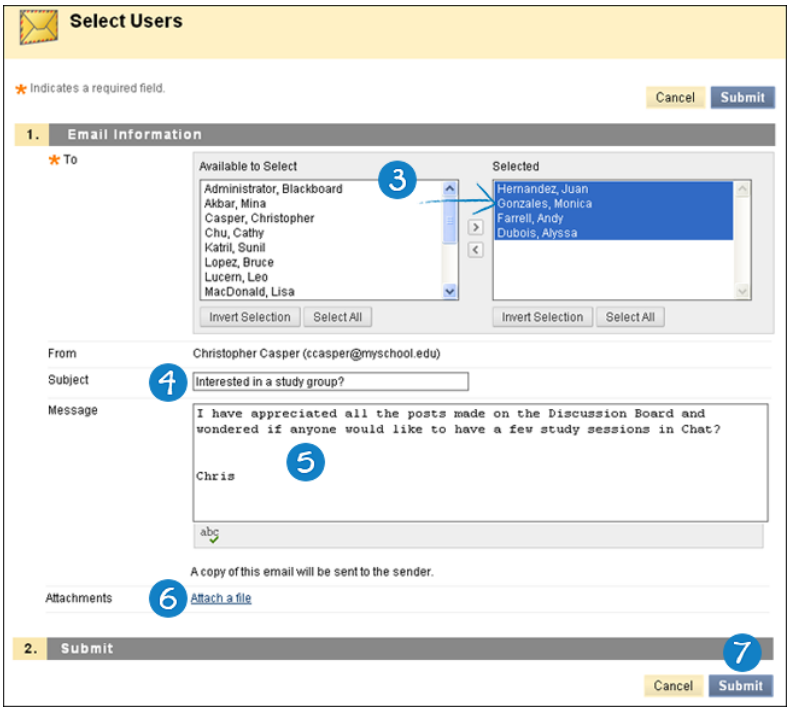
> ***Before You Begin!*** Blackboard Learn will NOT recognize files or email addresses with spaces or special characters, such as #, &, %, and $. In general, use only alphanumeric file names and addresses in Blackboard Learn. Do not send email through Blackboard Learn without content in the subject line. Leaving the subject line blank can prevent the message from being delivered.

How to Send Email

- On the Course Menu, Click ***Tools***
- On the Tools page, click ***Send Email***
- From the **Select Users** or **Select Groups** page, select the recipients in the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the **Selected** box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the recipient list. Click **Invert Selection** and the selected users are no longer highlighted and those users that were not selected will be highlighted.

  Tip: For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each user needed. For Macs, use the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key. You can also use the **Select All** function to send an email to all users.

- Type your ***Subject***
- Type your ***Message***. A copy of the message is sent to the sender. A receipt page appears after the message is sent listing all recipients. The receipt page does not confirm that users received the message. It only confirms that the message was sent.
- Click ***Attach a File*** to browse for files from your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.
- Click ***Submit***

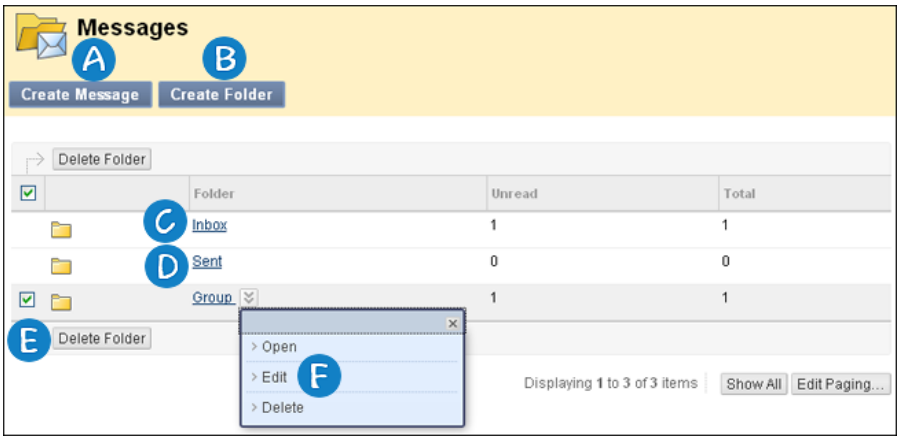


Messages

The ***Messages*** tool provides you with a familiar, email-like environment that you can use for course communication. Accounts are automatically created for each member of the course, and messages are sent and received using that account. This provides additional privacy because external email addresses are not used, so external factors will not affect course communication.

You cannot receive messages outside your course and you are not notified if you receive a new message, so make routine checks for new messages.

Messages are usually accessed through the tools area of a course. However, your instructor can restrict access or create a link on the ***Course Menu*** so that messages are directly accessible.

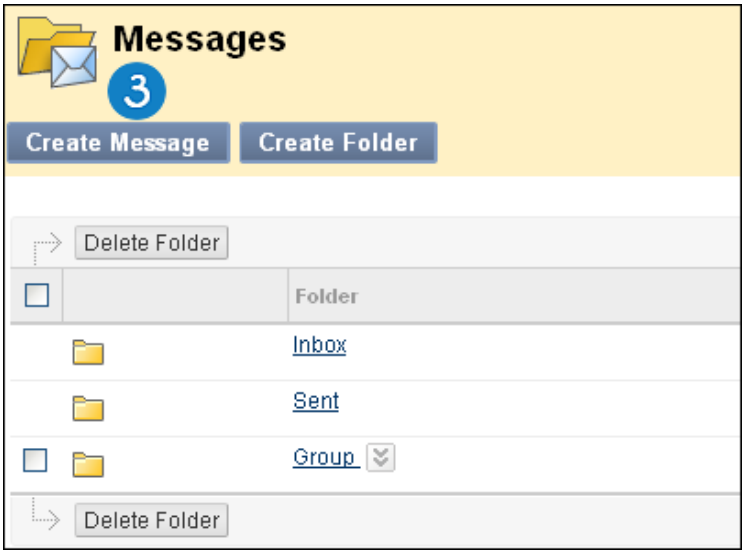


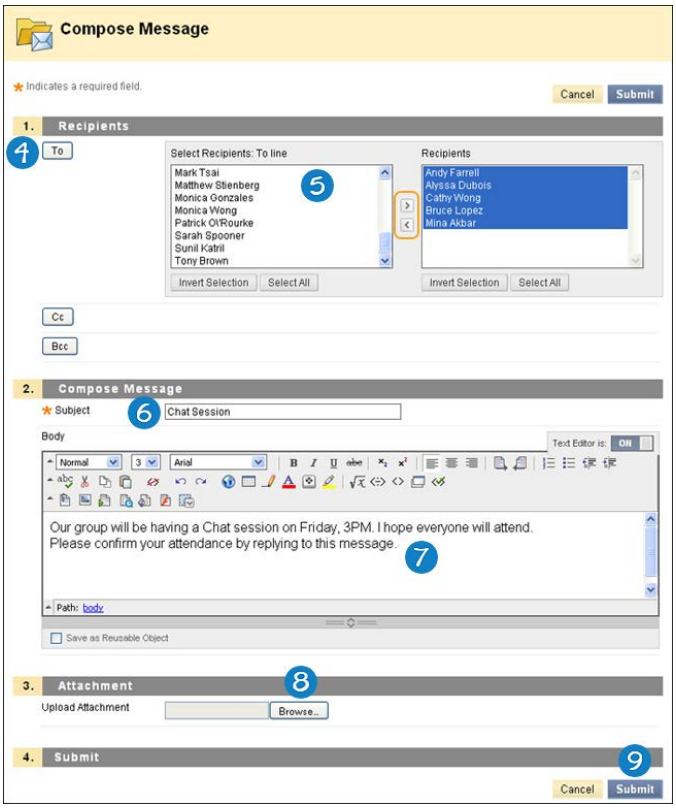
A. ***Create Message --*** Use the ***Create Message*** function to create new messages.
B. ***Create Folder --*** Use the ***Create Folder*** function to add a new folder. You can use folders to organize messages.
C. ***Inbox*** – The ***Inbox*** folder opens with a list of messages received.
D. ***Sent –*** The ***Sent*** folder opens with a list of messages that you sent.
E. ***Delete Folder/Delete –*** The ***Delete Folder*** or ***Delete*** function in the folder contextual menu removes the folder. To delete personal folders, select the check box next to each folder to delete. Then, click ***Delete Folder*** on the Action Bar. The folders, and any messages in the folders, are deleted.
F. ***Edit –*** The ***Edit*** function changes the name of a personal folder. It is not possible to modify the name of the ***Inbox*** folder or ***Sent*** folder.

How to Create a Message

- On the **Course Menu**, click **Tools**
- On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**
- On the **Messages** page, click **Create Message**
- On the **Compose Message** page, click **To**, and a list of course members appears.
- In the **Select Recipients: To** line box, select the recipients and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the Recipients box. You can use the **Cc**, and **Bcc** functions to send the message to those users that may be interested in the message, but are not the primary recipients. When using **Bcc**, other recipients do not know that the users listed in the **Bcc** field are receiving the message.
- Type a **Subject**
- Type a message. Optionally, you can use the *Text Editor* to format the *Body* text.

- Click **Browse** to select a file to attach to the message. If the message is a reply or a forward, you have the option of including the original attachment.
- Click **Submit**



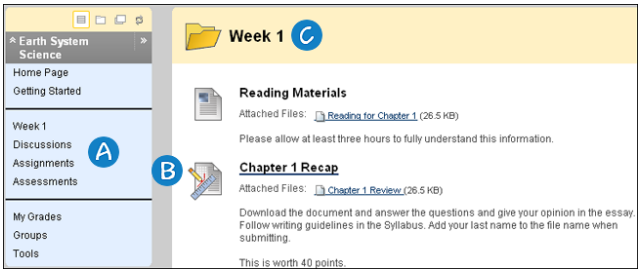


My Grades

The ***My Grades*** page shows students the status of gradable items, such as tests, assignments, journal and blog entries, and discussion posts.

Course Menu and Control Panel

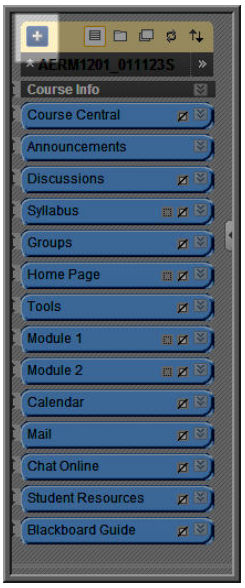
Courses contain content and tools for the students learning experience. Instructors manage the course through the ***Course Menu*** and ***Control Panel***. A course consists of the ***Course Menu*** and a content frame. The ***Course Menu*** links to content and tools and the content frame will display the feature you select.



A. ***Course Menu*** – The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course and contains links to materials and tools within the course.
B. ***Content Frame*** – The content frame occupies most of the screen to display the current view. You will interact with content from this screen.
C. ***Content Area*** – Content Areas are top-level containers that organize and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. The content appears in the content frame.

How to Edit your Course Menu

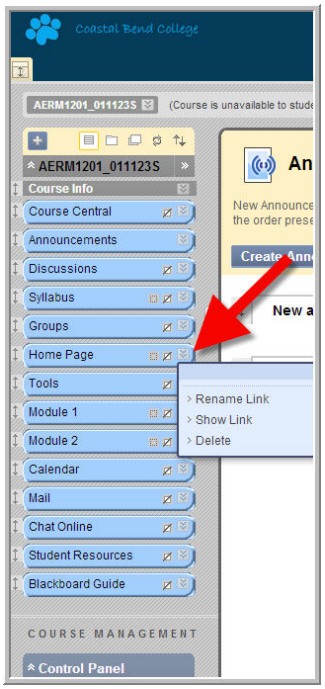
- On the **Course Menu**, click the blue plus sign at the top left of the menu



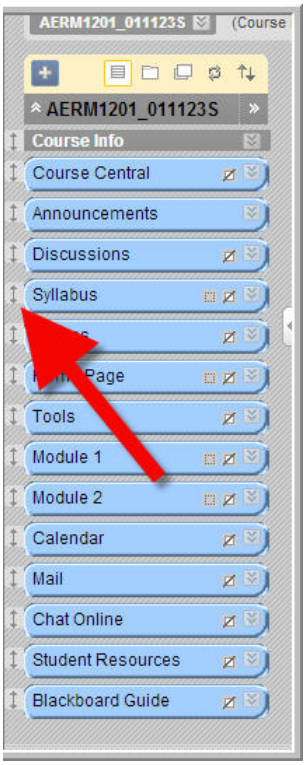
This allows you to add various items to your **Course Menu** such as a *Content Area, Tool Link, Web Link, etc.*

By default, CBC has provided a template **Course Menu** for faculty to use in their course. All items in the **Course Menu** are hidden which makes the links unavailable to students.

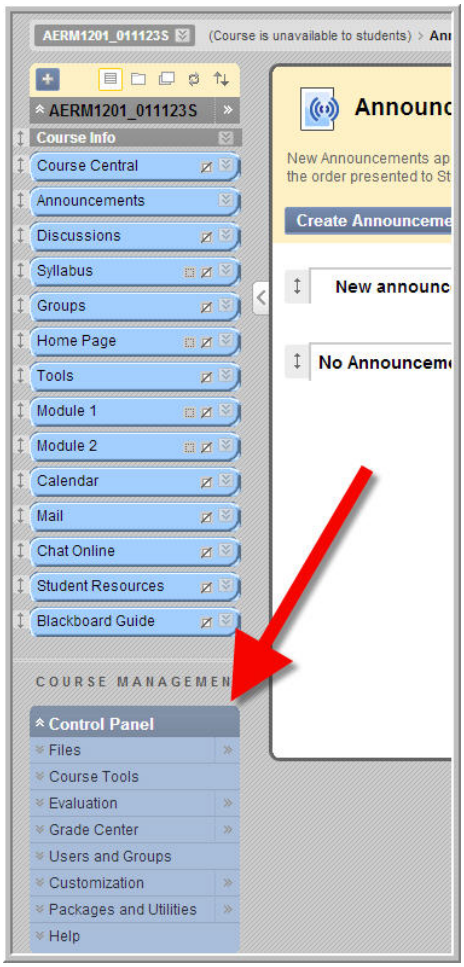
To show a link to a student, click on the chevron and select *Show Link.* This works the same to hide a link to a student, to rename a link, or to delete a link.



You can also rearrange your **Course Menu** items by clicking and dragging on the double headed arrows to move items up or down.



Instructors also have access to a **Control Panel.** The **Control Panel** will be where the instructor will go to make the course available or unavailable to students. The **Control Panel** also is home to the **Grade Center** (also known as the Grade Book).

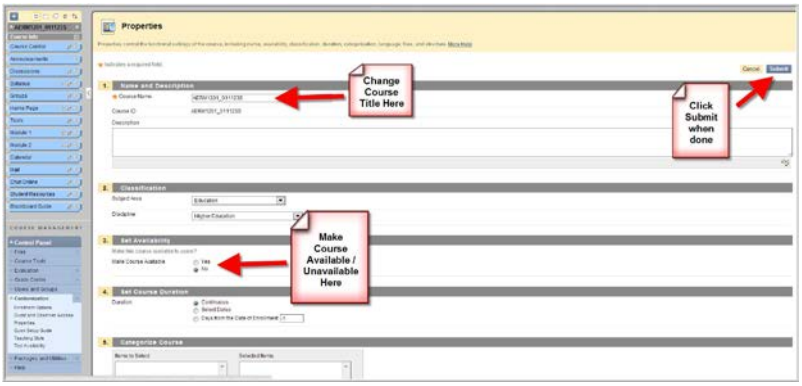


- ***Files*** – this is your file manager area. Any file, image, video, etc. that has been uploaded into your course will automatically be placed in the file manager area. You will want to keep only current files and delete any unused files.
- ***Course Tools*** – this area allows instructors access to the course tools used in their course. It gives them direct access to tools such as *Tests, Surveys, and Pools* (**See *Tests, Surveys, and Pools***).
- ***Evaluation*** – contains Course Reports so instructors can see activity for students in their course. This area also contains the *Early Warning System* so instructors can create rules that will notify them if a student has not logged in for a certain period of time and even if a student's grade falls below a specified grade, etc.
- ***Grade Center*** – this is where you can access your grade book.
    - ***Needs Grading*** – shows any assignments, tests, discussions, etc. that need to be graded by the instructor
    - ***Full Grade Center*** – displays the full grade book and grades that have been posted (**See *Grade Center***)
    - ***Assignments*** – a smart view that only shows *Assignments*
    - ***Tests*** – a smart view that only shows *Tests*
- ***Users and Groups –*** shows you students who are enrolled in your course. This is where instructors can go to remove students from their course (if the student drops or gets dropped and is no longer attending class)
- ***Customization –*** allows instructors to customize their course such as changing the course title. One important thing here is making your course available and unavailable to your students (**See *How To Make Your Course Available***).

- ***Packages and Utilities –*** instructors will use this area to copy their course from one course shell to a new course shell in preparation for the upcoming semester.
- ***Help –*** provides instructors assistance via the web

How to Make Your Course Available

- In the **Control Panel**, click **Customization**
- Click **Properties**
- On the **Properties** page, locate section 3: *Set Course Availability*
- By default the course availability is set to NO. Click **Yes**
- Click **Submit**

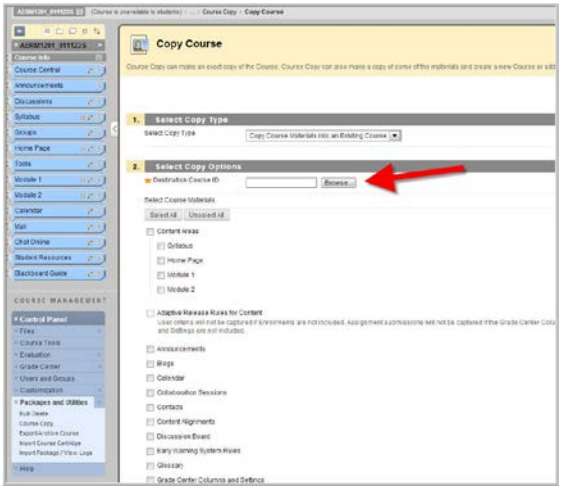


Please Note: This works the same for making the course unavailable. So at the beginning of the semester you will have to make your course available (open the classroom doors) and at the end of the semester, you will have to make your course unavailable (close the classroom doors).

How to Copy Your Course from One Shell to Another

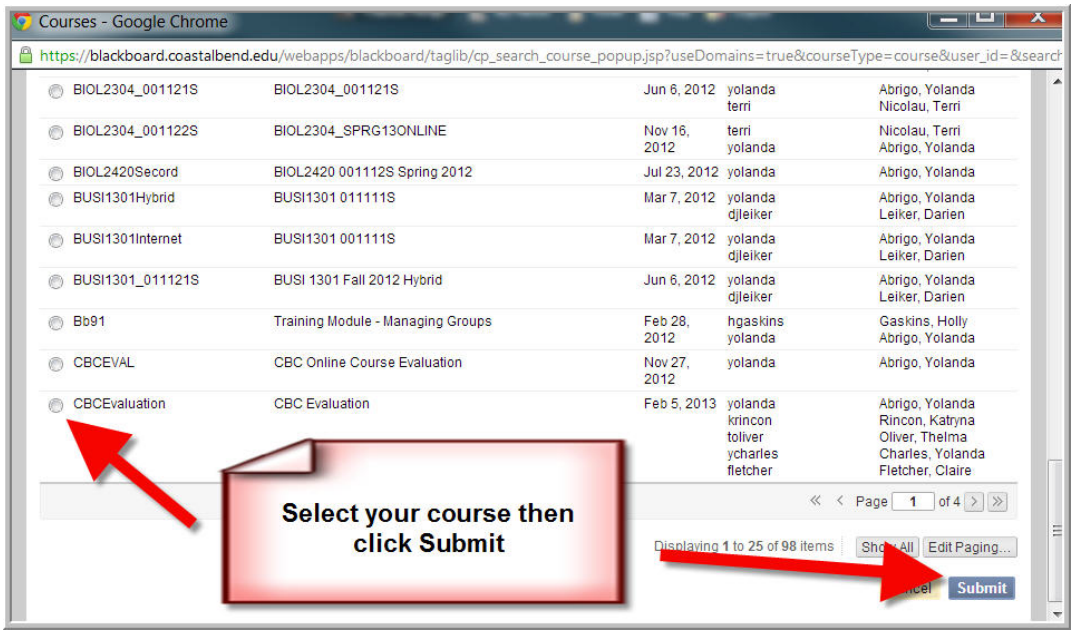
Every semester instructors will get a new course shell for the new semester.

- In the **Control Panel**, click **Packages and Utilities**
- Click **Course Copy**
- On the **Copy Course** page, locate section 2: *Select Copy Options*
- Click **Browse**

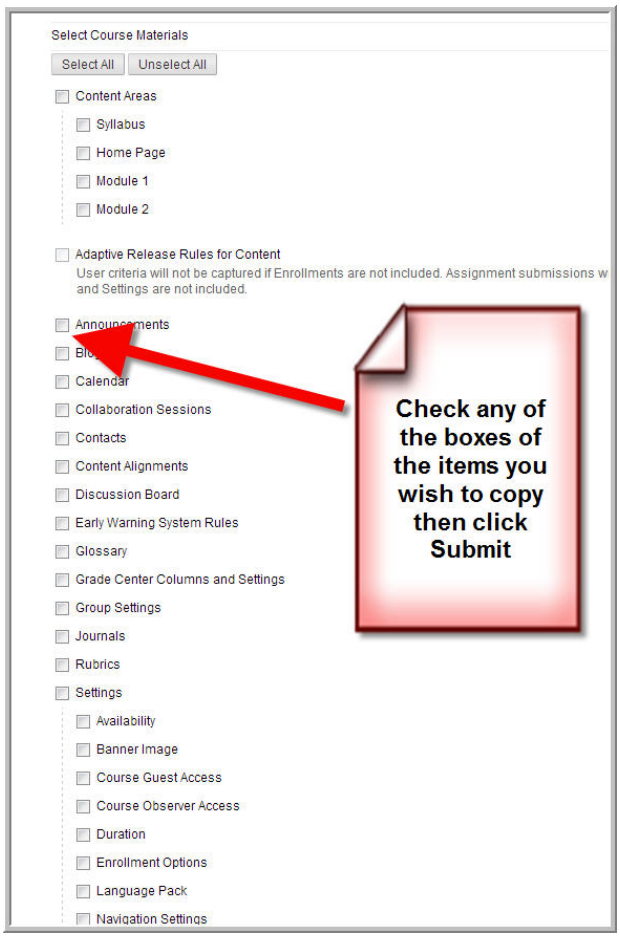


- Select the course you want to copy into

- Click **Submit**



- Select the course materials you wish to copy
- Click **Submit**



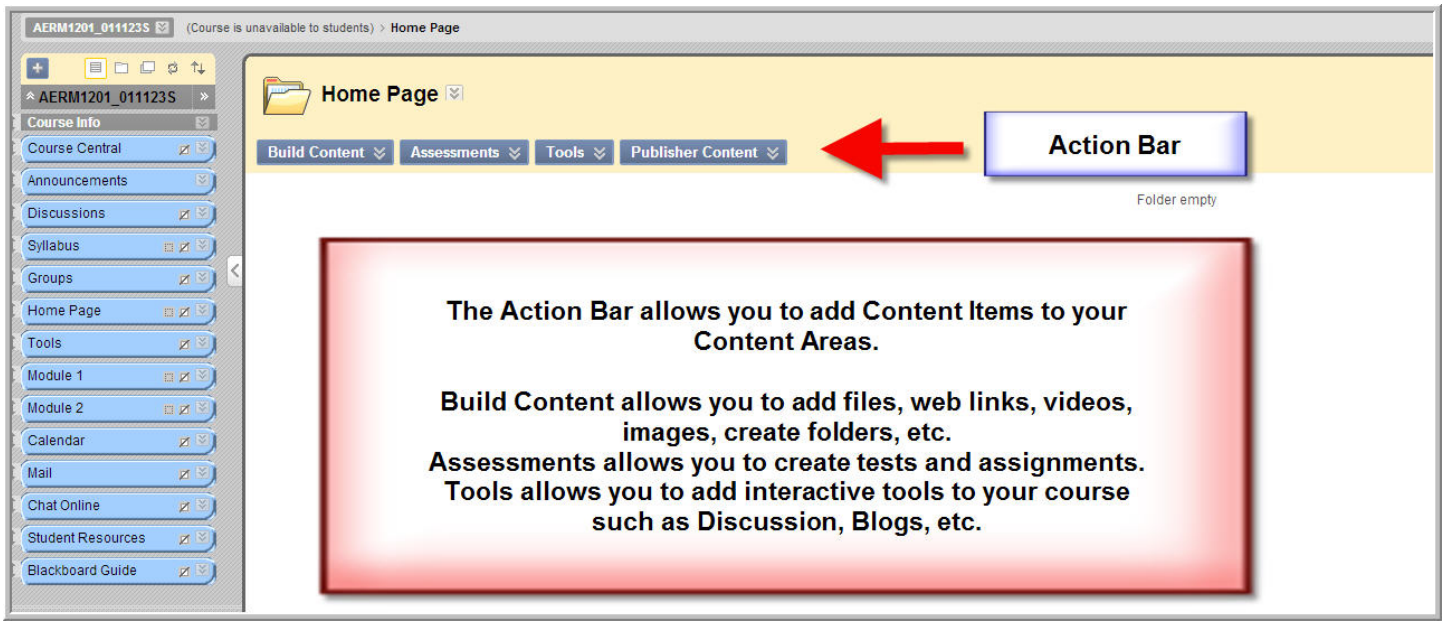
Adding Content Items

A ***Content Item*** is any type of file, text, image, or link that appears to users in a *Content Area*, *Learning Module*, *Lesson Plan*, or *folder*.

You can view different types of content in a ***Content Area*** (such as your homepage, etc). All content shares a few similarities. Each piece of content has a name and description. Many types of content allow your instructor to set options, such as availability and date restrictions.

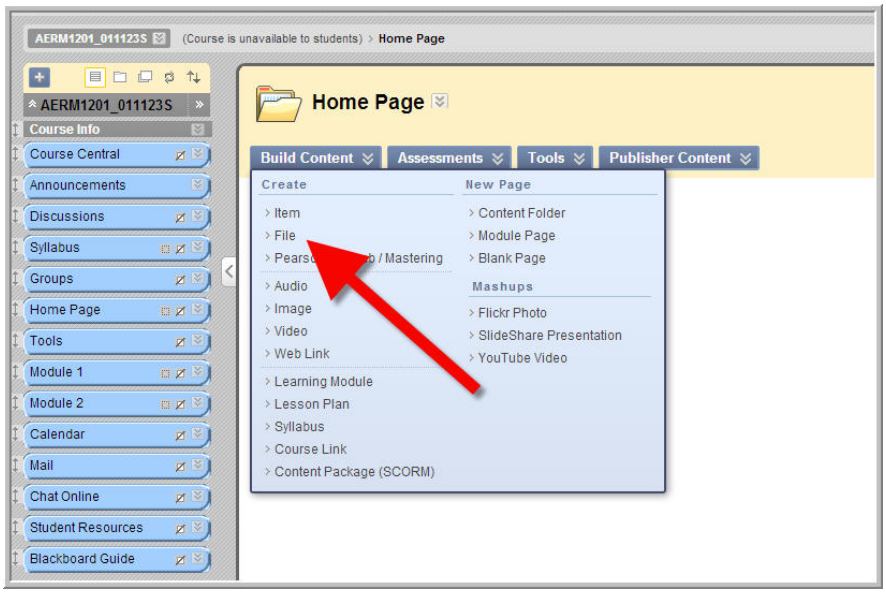
Icon	Content Type	Description
	Item	A general piece of content, such as a file, image, text, or link. A description and other items may be attached.
	File	An HTML file to be used in the course. These files can be viewed as a page within the course or as a separate piece of content in a separate browser window.
	Audio	Audio file that can be played in a page. If **Autostart** and **Loop** are both set to **Yes**, the audio file plays when you open the page and continues to play until you stop it or navigate away from the page.
	Image	Image file that can be shown on the page.
	Video	Video file that you can view. The video player appears directly on the page.
	URL	Link to a website or resource to provide a quick access point to relevant materials.
	Learning Module	A set of content that focuses on a specific subject that you can navigate at your own pace. Instructors can set the path so students must view content in a specific order, or permit users to view the content in any order. All types of content, including items, assignments, and tests can be viewed in a Learning Module.
	Lesson Plan	A Lesson Plan is a special type of content that combines information about the lesson itself with the curriculum resources used to teach it.
	Syllabus	An outline of a course of study. It can contain course information, objectives, instructor contact information, assignments, class meeting dates, and textbook information.
	Course Link	A shortcut to an item, tool, or area in a course. A Course Link provides a quick access point to relevant materials and tools.
	Content Folder	A Content Folder is a way of organizing content items. Content folders and subfolders set up a hierarchy to group related material together. Content folders can be used to group material based on a theme, such as media clips. Content folders can also be used to group material based on a schedule, for example, placing all items for "week 1" together. Using folders to organize content items can make materials easier to find and reduce the length of a Content Area page.
	Blank Page	A Blank Page can be added and customized based on the needs of the course..
	Module Page	Module Pages are specialized content pages that present content in a module box. The modules that appear on this page can be arranged in any order. Module Pages can be personalized by students if the instructor permits it.
	Tool	A shortcut to a specific tool in the course, such as the Discussion Board or Blogs. The link brings students to that tool and away from the content they are viewing. Instructors can also link to the Tools page, which provides links to all available tools.
	Flickr® Photo	A link to a site for viewing and sharing photos and images.
	SlideShare Presentation	A link to a site for viewing and sharing Microsoft® PowerPoint®, Microsoft® OpenOffice, or Adobe® PDF presentations.
	YouTube™ Video	A link to a site for viewing and sharing online videos.

Every **Content Area** contains an *action bar* that performs multiple functions. The following diagram shows the action bar.

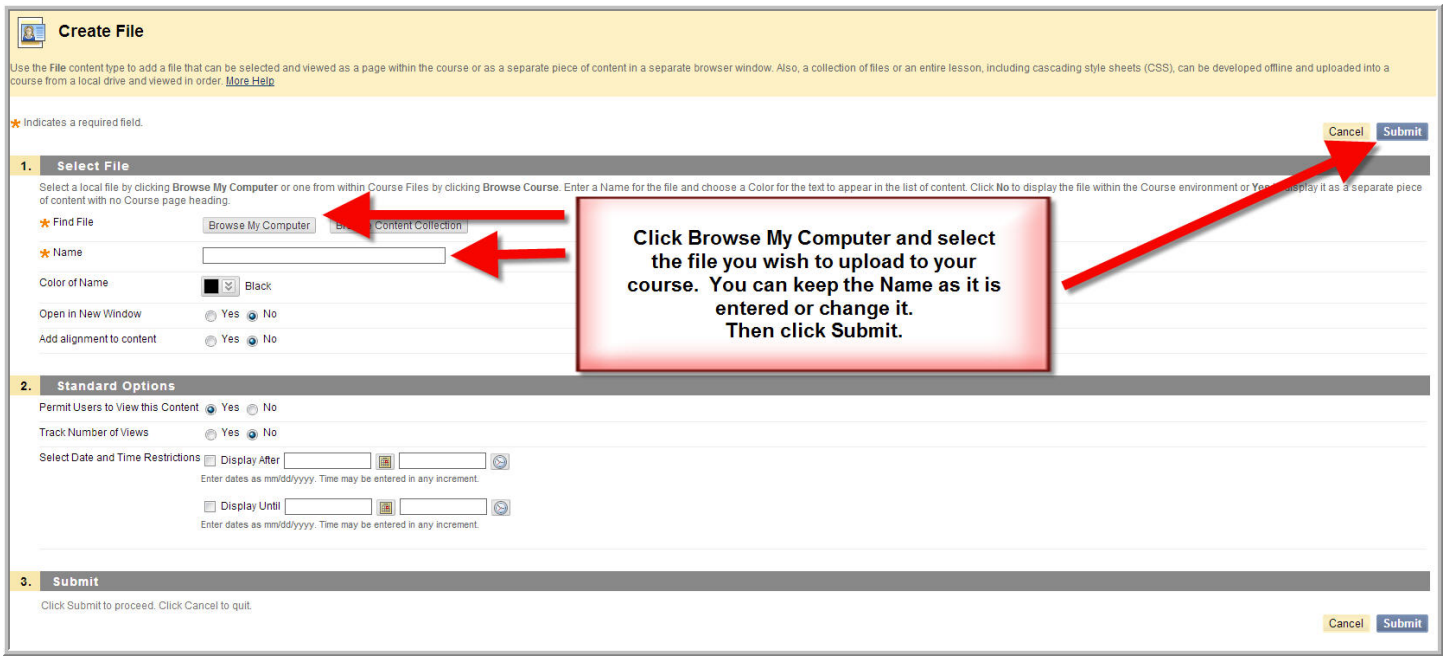


How to Upload a File to Your Course

- In the **Content Area** of your choice, locate the *Action Bar*
- Click **Build Content**
- Click **File**



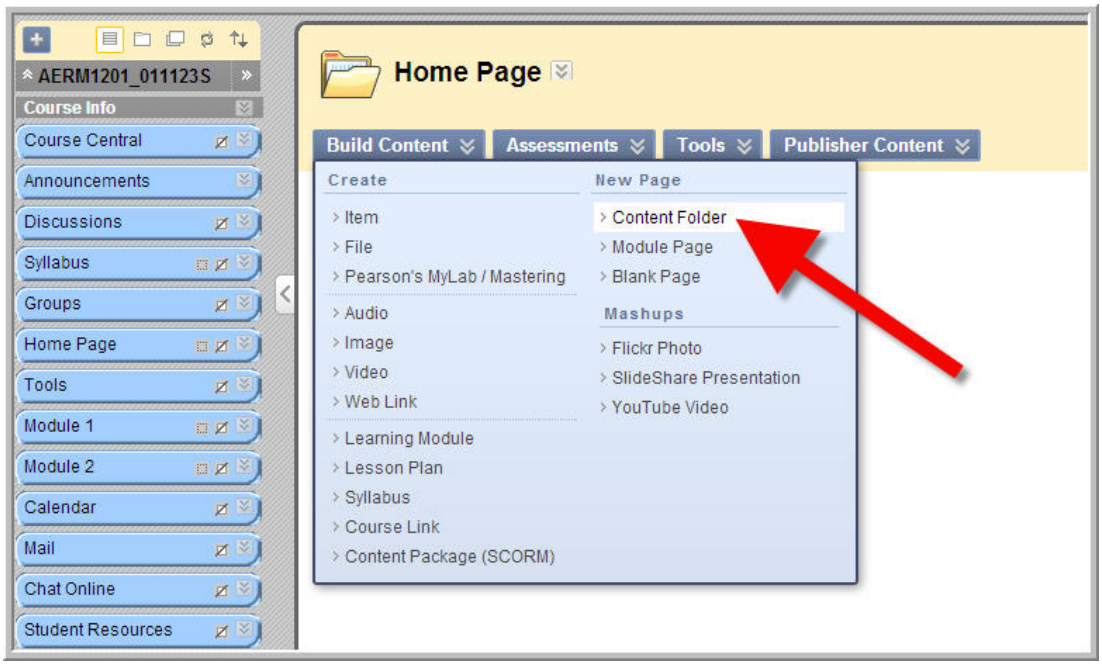
- Click **Browse My Computer** and select the file you wish to upload
- Change the **Name** if you wish
- Click **Submit**



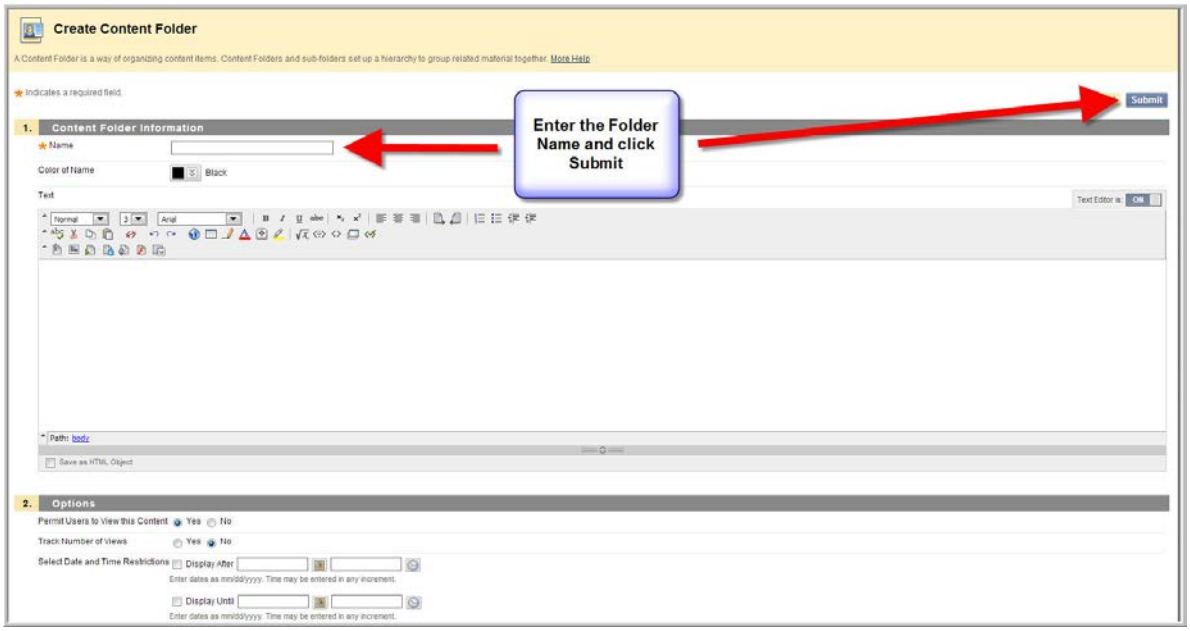
Please Note: This works the same for adding images, videos, word documents, .pdf files, etc.

How to Create a Content Folder

- In the **Content Area** of your choice, locate the *Action Bar*
- Click **Build Content**
- Click **Content Folder**

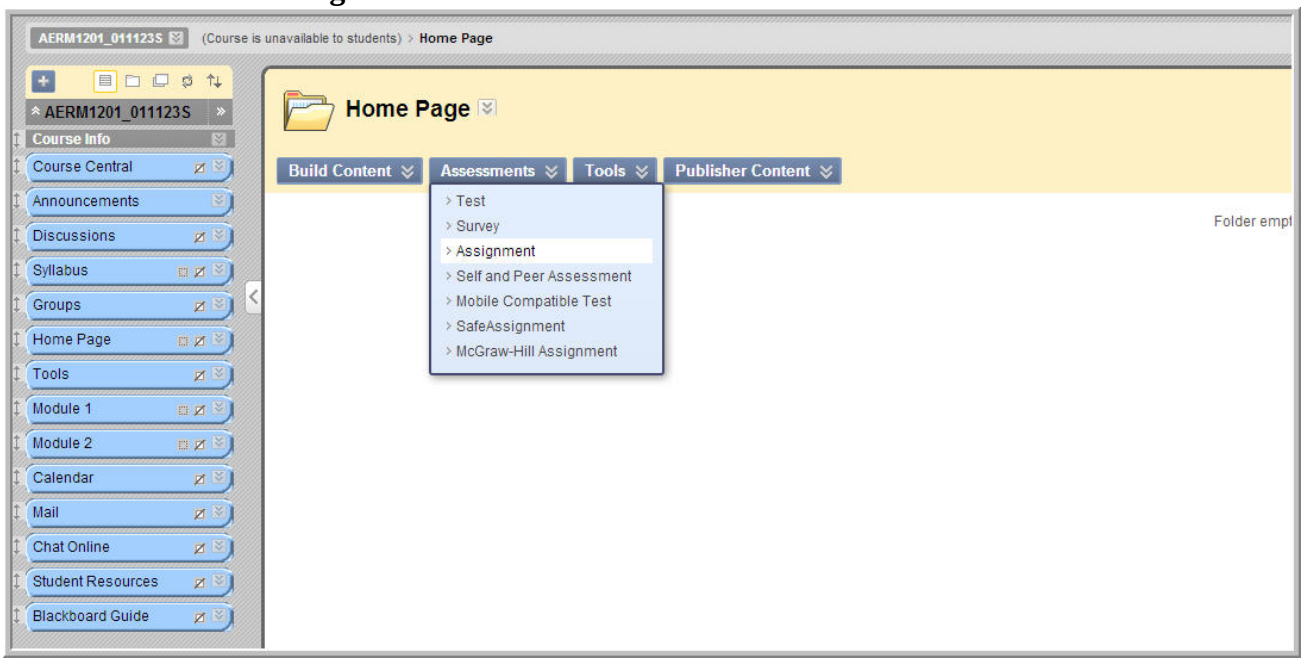


- Type the **Name**
- Click **Submit**

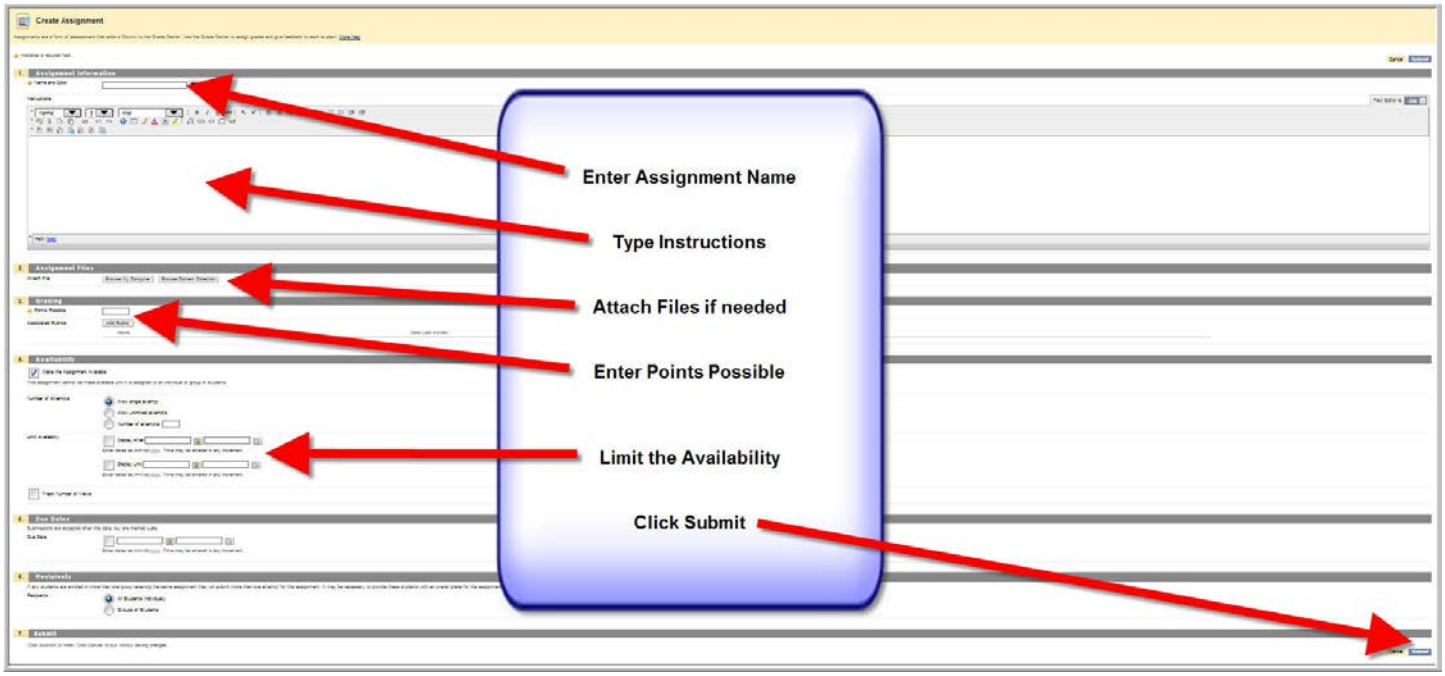


How to Create an Assignment

- In the **Content Area** of your choice, locate the *Action Bar*
- Click **Assessments**
- Click **Assignment**



- Type the **Name** for the **Assignment**
- Type **Instructions** in the Instruction box
- Attach any files needed (if any) to complete the assignment by clicking on **Browse My Computer**
- Enter the **Points Possible** (normally 100 points)
- Set **Availability** by entering dates and times that the assignment is available to students
- Click **Submit**



Exploring Tests and Surveys

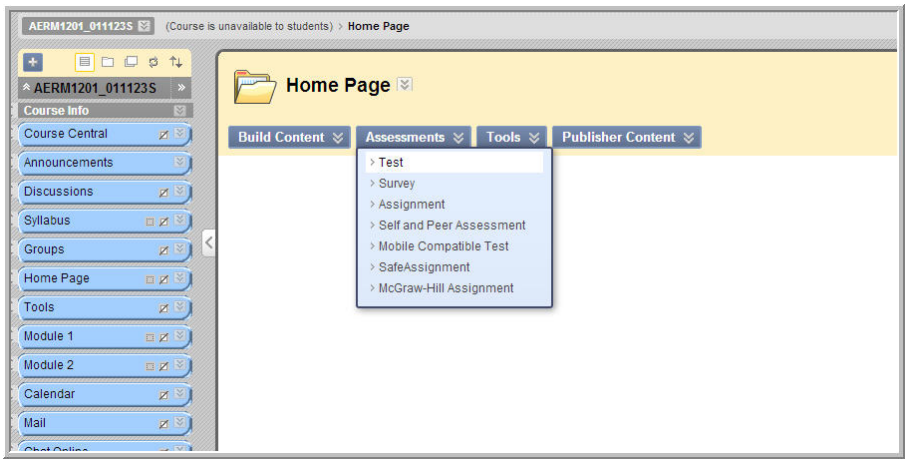
You can find tests and surveys (referred to collectively as assessments) in any **Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder**

Tests are used to assess your knowledge. Answers are submitted for grading and the results are recorded in the ***Grade Center***.

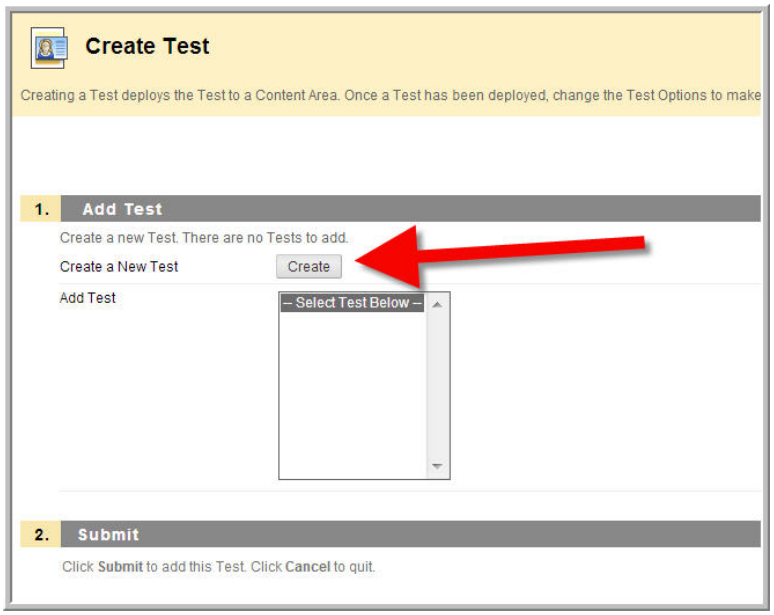
Surveys can be used for polling purposes and evaluations. This type of assessment is not graded.

How to Create a New Test or Survey

- Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
- On the Action Bar, point to **Create Assessment** to access the drop-down list.
- Select **Test** or **Survey**.

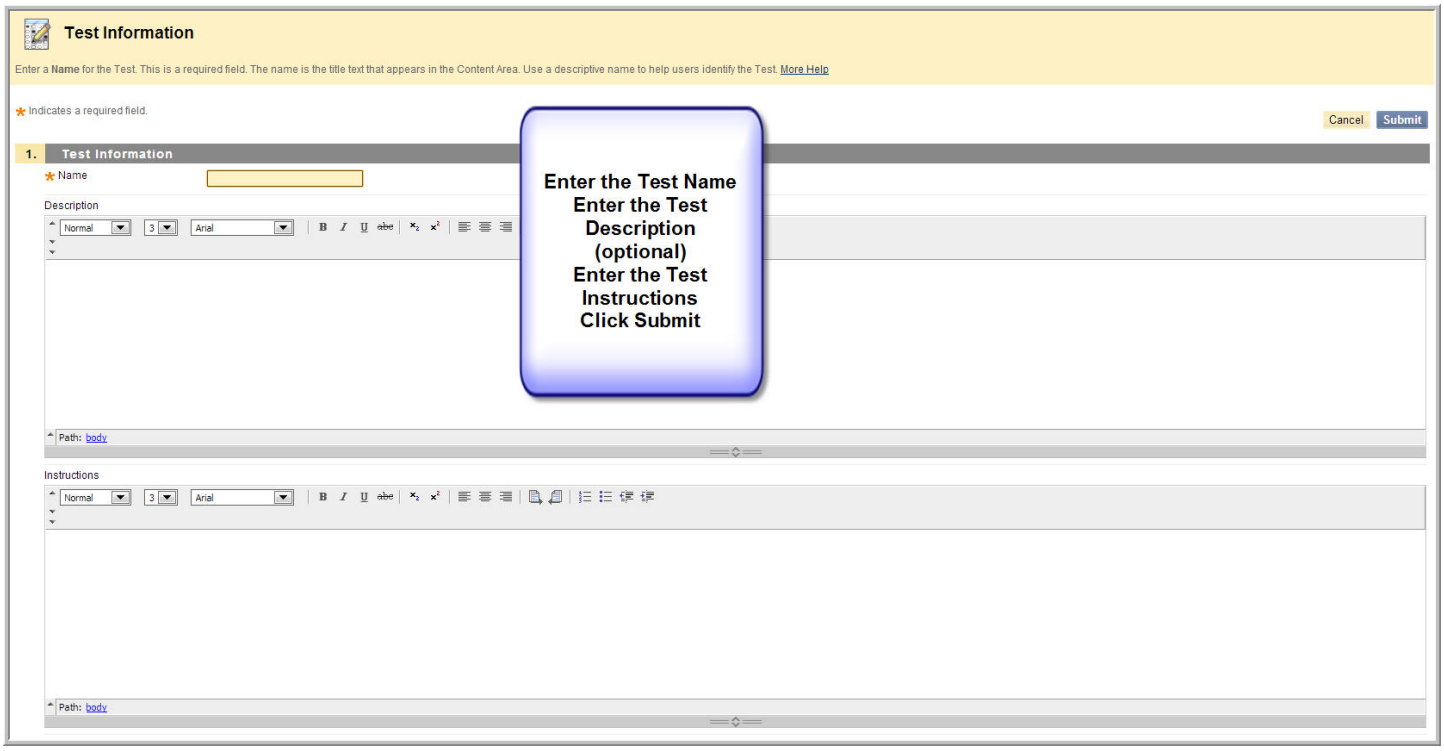


- On the **Create Test** or **Create Survey** page, click **Create** to build a new test or survey.

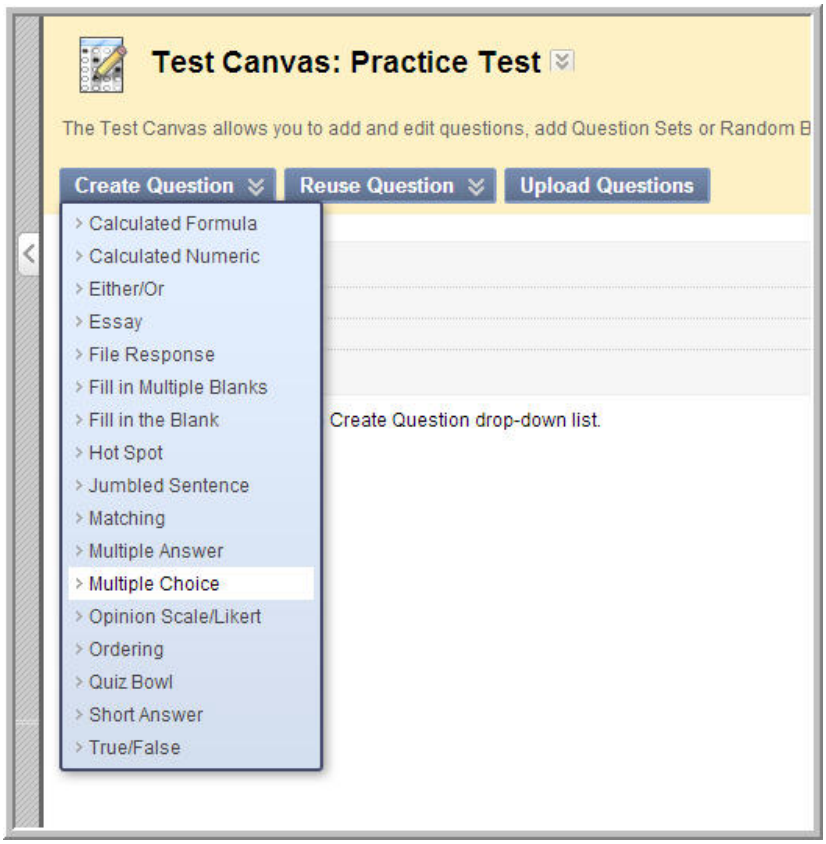


- On the **Test Information** or **Survey** page, provide a name

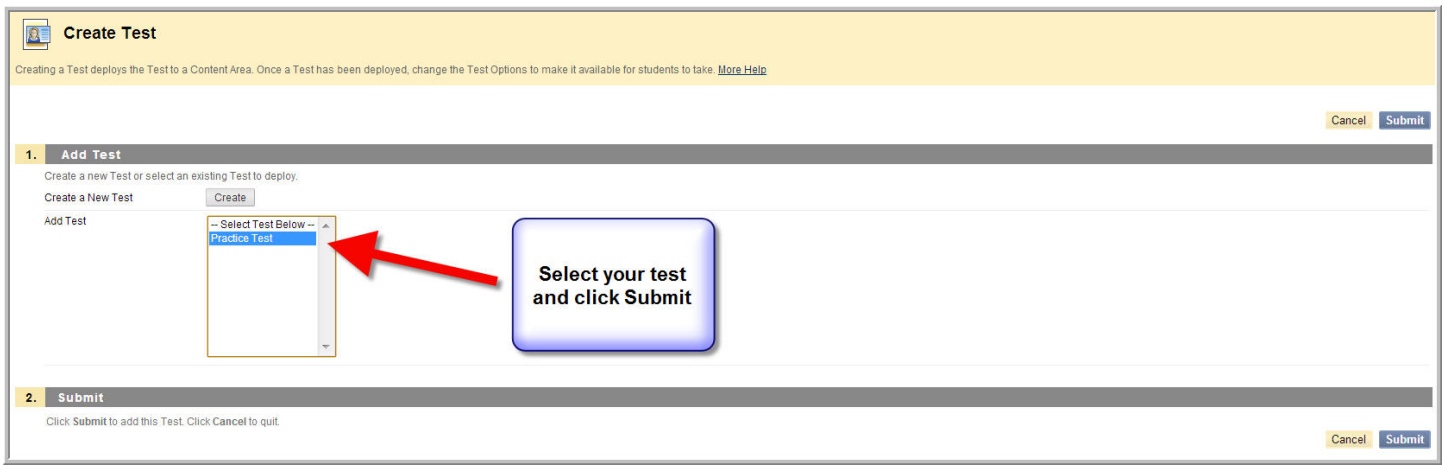
- Optionally, type a Description and the Instructions
- Click Submit



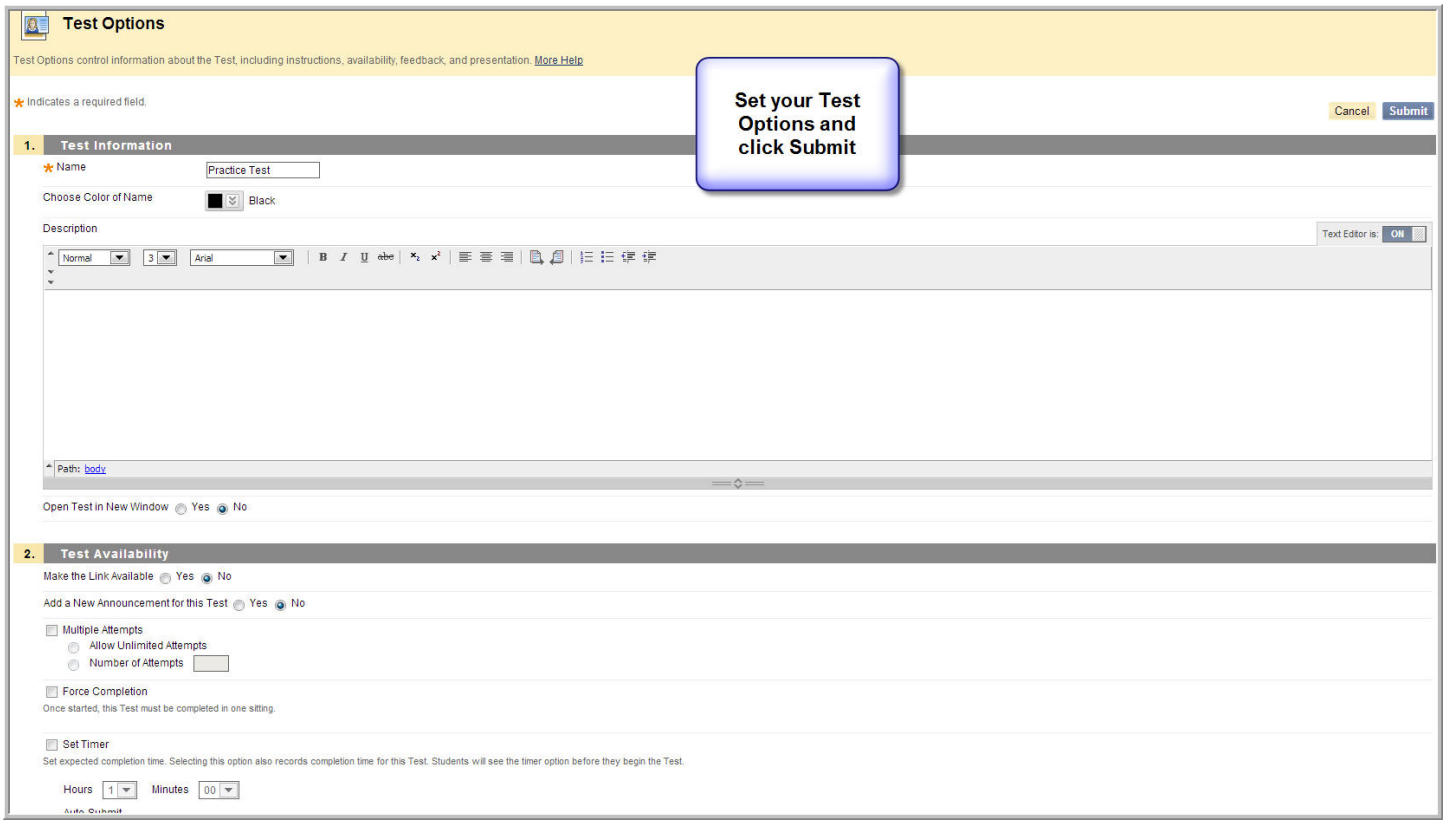
- On the **Test Canvas** or **Survey Canvas** page, click **Create Question**. Select the type of question you wish to create (*the most common choice is Multiple Choice*).



- Once you have created your questions, click **OK**.
- On the **Create Test** or **Create Survey** page, select your newly created test or survey from the list.
- Click **Submit**.



- On the **Test Options** or **Survey Options** page, you can change the **Name** and provide a **Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files.
- The test is unavailable by default, but you can deploy the test to students by selecting **Yes** for **Make the Link Available**.
- Set other test and survey options as needed.
- Click **Submit**. A link to the test or survey appears in the course area.



Grade Center

About the Grade Center

The Grade Center in Blackboard Learn is more than just a way to record students' grades. It is a dynamic and interactive tool, allowing you to record data, calculate grades, and monitor student progress. You can generate reports to communicate information to parents, administrators, and other stakeholders. You can determine which assigned grades to show to your students on their **My Grades** pages, including columns displaying performance results.

In the Grade Center, you can provide and manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis, and for ungraded items, such as surveys or self tests. You can also create grade columns for any activities or requirements you want to grade, such as special projects, participation, or attendance.

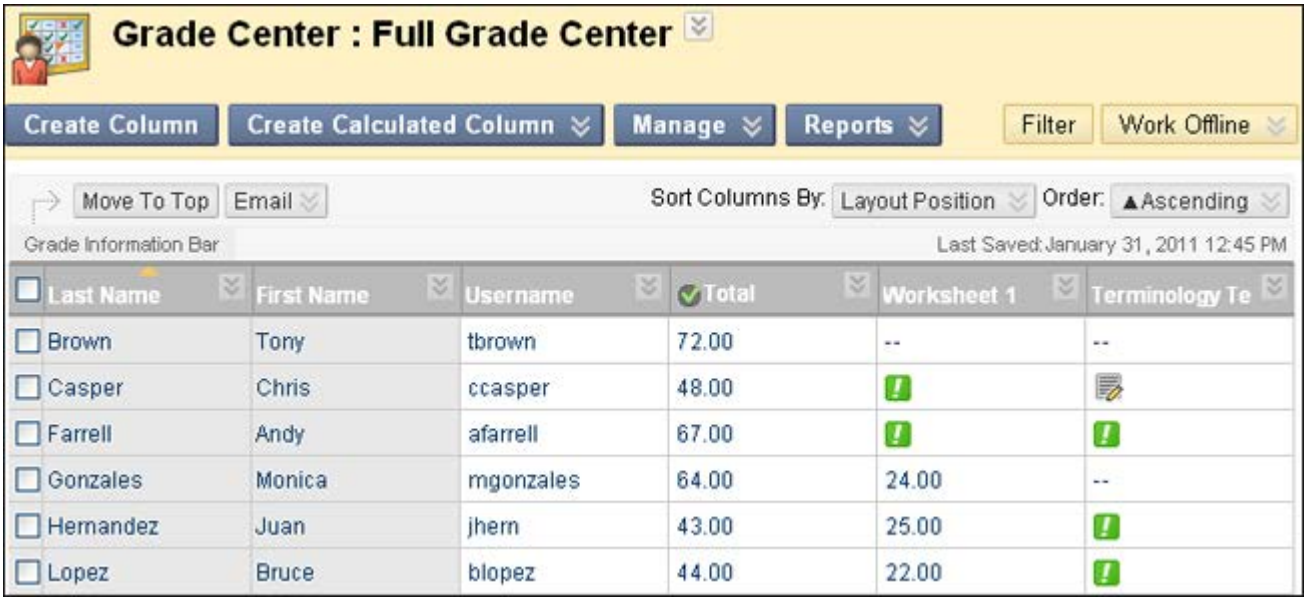
Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

Note: If the Grade Center is not loading or you are receiving error messages, please contact your school's computing help desk. They can help you determine the cause of the issue, including making sure you are using a compatible browser for your school's version of Blackboard Learn and checking to see if Javascript is enabled.

The Grade Center Interface

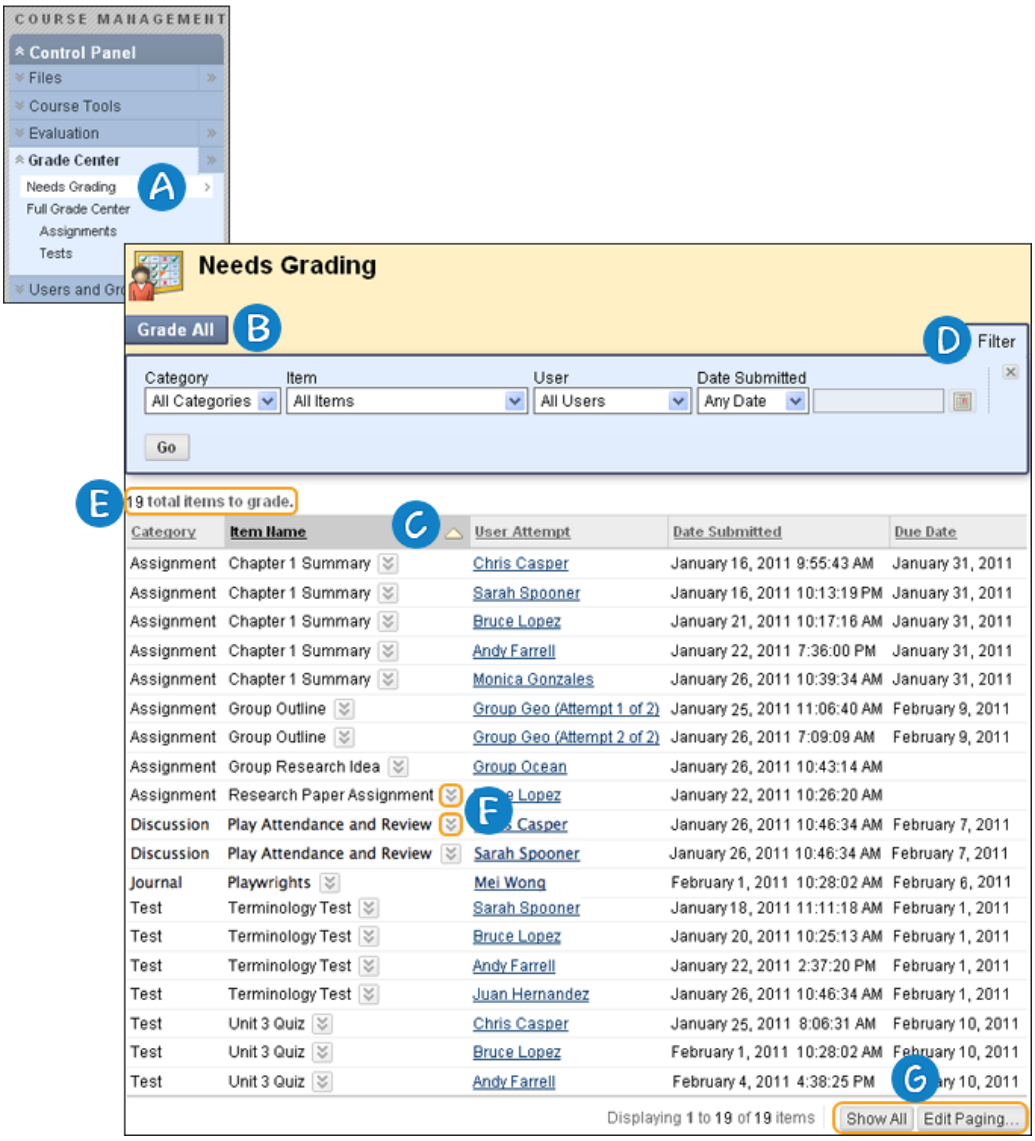
The Grade Center resembles a spreadsheet. Each row is populated by a user in your course and each column includes information for an item, such as an assignment, test, graded blog entry, or survey. You can also use columns to calculate grades. You can provide grades and comments directly on the Grade Center page, on the **Grade Details** page, and from a tool, such as the Discussion Board.

You are able to customize your view of the Grade Center and create grading schemas, Grading Periods, categories, and columns to present and gather the information you need.



The Needs Grading Page

If you have a heavy grading load, the **Needs Grading** page can help you determine what needs attention first and allows you to access it quickly. You can view all items ready for grading or review on the **Needs Grading** page, where you can begin grading and reviewing or sort and filter columns to narrow the list. Attempts are placed in a queue for easy navigation among items.



A Access the **Needs Grading** page in the **Grade Center** section of the Control Panel.

B Click **Grade All** on the Action Bar to begin grading and reviewing immediately. The **Grade All** function places all attempts in a queue for easy navigation among items. The items in the queue appear in the order they appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

Note: Tests with a grading status of **Attempt in Progress** do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

C Sort columns to organize your list. To sort a column, click the column heading or caret. The sorted list remains in effect until you change it or log out. The following columns appear on the **Needs Grading** page:

- **Category**: Sort attempts to group all assignments or tests together.
- **Item Name**: Sort attempts by alphabetical order or reverse alphabetical order.

- **User Attempt**: Sort attempts by a student's name. The number of attempts for the item is listed in parentheses. For example: "Mary Johnson (Attempt 1 of 2)." Click a user's name to go directly to the attempt.
- **Date Submitted**: Sort attempts by the date and time students submitted the attempts. You may find this useful when a large number of attempts must be graded by a specific deadline.
- **Due Date**: If you provided a due date when the item was created, sort attempts by due date and grade items that are due first.

D Apply filters to narrow the list by **Category**, **Item**, **User**, and **Date Submitted**. If a filter is applied, only the filtered items appear in the list and in the queue. For example, make selections in both the **Category** and **User** drop-down lists to display tests submitted by a particular user. Click **Go** to display the filtered items on the **Needs Grading** page. The filtered list remains in effect until you edit the filter choices or log out. Click the **X** to collapse the **Filter** field.

E The total number of items to grade appears above the list of items. Once attempts have been graded, they do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page and the number of items updates to reflect the current number that needs to be graded. If the list is filtered, the number reflects how many items match the current filter settings. For example, "12 of 17 total items match current filter."

F Click an item's Action Link ( ) to access the contextual menu and make a selection. For assignments, you can select **Grade All Users** or **Grade Anonymously**. For tests, you can also select **Grade by Question** and **View Attempts**. Interactive items such as blogs, journals, wikis, and discussion posts, which can be set to go into Needs Grading status after a certain number of activities, also have the option to **Reset All**, which clears that activity counter and moves the item out of Needs Grading status. A total number of attempts for the selected item is listed in parentheses.

G Click **Show All** to display up to 1,000 items on one page. Click **Edit Paging** to change the number of items to view per page.

Blackboard Administrator Contact Information

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