

THE ESSENTIALS: BUILDING A COURSE IN BLACKBOARD

What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is Loyola University's online course management system. Most instructors at Loyola use Blackboard as an electronic extension of their classrooms. They use it to post course materials online, to facilitate discussion between students via electronic message boards, and to administer tests and quizzes remotely. Some faculty use the Blackboard chat function to hold virtual office hours. With Blackboard, you can simply post your syllabus and class schedule on the Web, or you may develop an entire online course.

Loyola's instance of Blackboard resides at <http://blackboard.luc.edu>. Because Blackboard is available to faculty, staff, and students 24 hours a day, it allows Loyolans to complete their coursework when and where it is most convenient. You may develop your courses from home on any computer with an Internet connection. Students may upload their papers to you from home or from their residence hall room even after university computer centers are closed.

This document outlines the basic features of Blackboard. It is meant as a general introduction to the system, and can be used as a quick reference guide. It does not replace the Blackboard Instructor Manual, which provides a comprehensive survey of the entire course management system. You can find the Instructor Manual and more documentation at the [Blackboard @ Loyola help page](#).

Finding Your Courses in Blackboard

Course shells for all Loyola courses are now automatically generated in Blackboard. Instructors no longer need to send requests to blackboard@luc.edu to have the shells created. Generally your course shell(s) for the upcoming semester will be available approximately two weeks before the end of classes in the preceding semester or quarter. For instance, if you are teaching in the Spring 2006 semester your Spring 2006 course shells should appear by the end of November 2005 (two weeks before the last day of classes in the Fall 2005 semester) or if you are teaching during the Winter 2005-2006 quarter for the School of Business your course shells should appear during the first week of November 2005. Course shells for Fall will show up by mid-July (but in the worst case, they will be ready two weeks before the end of summer session).

At Loyola we continue to list the classes you were teaching in a previous semester or quarter for four weeks into the next semester/quarter. That allows students to continue to access the class materials in the case of incompletes, need for materials, etc.

Logging In

Your Blackboard ID and password are the same as your Loyola Universal ID and password (the credentials you use to log into LOCUS and your office computer).

1. Open **Internet Explorer**.
2. Type <http://blackboard.luc.edu> in the "Address:" field.
3. Click **Login**.
4. Type your Loyola Universal ID in the "USERNAME:" field.
5. Type your Loyola password in the "PASSWORD:" field.
6. Press **Enter** or click **Login**.

Forgot Your Password?

Don't worry; it happens to everyone at least once. To get a new password:

- If you have set up your personal identifiers in the Personal Account Manager (PAM), click here: [Reset Your Password after You've Set Your Questions](#).
- If you haven't set up personal identifiers in PAM, then contact the Call Center at 4-4444 (on campus) or 773-508-7190 (off campus). They will reset your password for you.

Because you use your Loyola Universal ID and password to log into Blackboard, resetting your Blackboard password also changes your Loyola password. Use this new password to log into Blackboard, LOCUS, and your office computer.

The My Institution Page

When you log into Blackboard, you immediately see your My Institution page. The My Institution page lists all the courses in which you are enrolled as an instructor or as a student, as well as direct links to announcements, tasks, and calendar events for those courses. Use the **Tools** box on the left side of the screen to send e-mail to your students or to edit your personal information. Enter a course by clicking on its title in the **My Courses** box. You can customize the My Institution page by clicking the links at the top right. Click **Content** to choose the areas you want to view. Click **Layout** to change their position on the page. Click the pencil in the upper right corner of the **My Courses** box to remove courses from the list (the courses are not removed from Blackboard, only from your display). No one else can view your My Institution page.

Tips for Instructors

Follow these guidelines to make building your course in Blackboard a little easier:

1. Plan the organization of your course in advance of building it in Blackboard. Knowing how you want to present your material to students ahead of time will save you the work of reorganizing files you have posted to Blackboard. Group your course materials into folders and group those folders into content areas.
2. DO NOT compose course materials in Blackboard text boxes. Always compose your materials in another application and then copy and paste or attach them into Blackboard. Editing material you have pasted into Blackboard works to customize it for that particular course, and does not endanger the source material. Creating course content wholesale in Blackboard leaves that material vulnerable to accidental deletion by you or by a system failure.
3. Blackboard 7.3 is optimized for use in Firefox 2.0 and Internet Explorer 7.0. Safari should not be used with Blackboard.
4. Pop-up blockers can interfere with external links you post in your course. If you choose to have external links open in new windows, then warn your students to [turn off the pop-up blocker](#) software they may have installed on their home computers.
5. Use internal Blackboard navigation to move through your course. While the **Back** and **Forward** buttons on your browser will frequently work to navigate through Blackboard, using them could break course content. Use the course menu (on the left side of the screen) and the navigation path (at the top of the screen) to navigate your course.
6. We recommend that you give each of your students a copy of the Blackboard Student Quickstart. The quickstart answers many questions students may have about accessing the course management system. You can find a .pdf version of the quickstart at <http://www.luc.edu/its/pdfs/bbstudentqs.pdf>.

7. Your course is not visible to students by default. You will always be able to see your course materials, but you must manually make it available to students. If you have not yet made your course available to students you will see **(unavailable)** listing beside it in your course listings. For instructions on how to make your course available, click [Blackboard Course Availability](#).
8. Tell your students to use only alphanumeric characters (A-Z,a-z,1-9), "-" dash and "_" underscore for names of files they submit on Blackboard. They should stay away from spaces, #, %,\$, and any other characters that are not alphanumeric, File names should be 60 characters or less.

The Course Menu

The course menu always appears on the left side of your course except when you are working in the **Control Panel**. The course menu consists of nine default course areas, listed below. These areas may be renamed, removed, or reorganized to suit your course. New course areas may also be added to the course menu. See “Customizing the Course Menu” on page 4 for specific instructions.

Announcements – Lists all announcements posted by you for this course. Students may view announcements by day, week, month, or entire course.

Syllabus – Provides space to post your syllabus and any other documents related to the course’s administration, including, but not limited to, instructor contact information, a reading list, a statement on academic integrity, and a schedule of your course semester.

Instructor Information – Provides space for you to post a personal profile, contact information, and a photo of yourself. You may also want to create profiles or offer contact information for your teaching assistant and other course personnel.

Course Documents – Holds the bulk of your course materials, including most files and folders.

Assignments – While assignments may be posted to any content area in Blackboard, you may choose to gather them here, creating a single list of assignments for students.

Discussion Board – Links to the course discussion forums where students may post discussion threads or reply to existing threads.

Communication – Provides entry to the full roster of communication features in Blackboard, including Announcements, Collaboration (chat), the Discussion Boards, and e-mail.

External Links – Lists links to external web pages that may be used as resources for your course.

Tools – Acts as a single point of access for student use of the Course Calendar, the Digital Drop Box, the Grade Book, the Task list, and the student’s personal Home Page for the course, among other features.

Customizing the Course Menu

Blackboard’s flexibility allows you to customize the course menu buttons that appear on the left side bar. You can rename, reorder, or remove any existing course area, or add a new area to the menu with the **Manage Course Menu** feature. It is good practice to remove any area that you do not plan to use. Empty course areas will clutter your course and possibly confuse your students.

Renaming a Course Menu Button

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Course Options” box, click **Manage Course Menu**.
3. Click **Modify** next to the course menu item you want to rename.
4. Type the new name into the “Area Name:” field.
5. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Reordering Course Menu Buttons

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Course Options” box, click **Manage Course Menu**.

3. Click the down arrow next to the course menu item you want to move.
4. Click the number of the position where you want the button to appear.

Removing a Course Menu Button

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Course Options” box, click **Manage Course Menu**.
3. Click **Remove** next to the course menu item you want to remove.
4. Click **OK**.

Adding a Course Menu Button

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Course Options” box, click **Manage Course Menu**.
3. On the “Add” bar, click the type of button you want to create.
4. Select the name of the button from the drop-down list. **OR**
Type a name for the button in the “Area Name:” field.
5. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

The Control Panel

The Control Panel is where you will create and post the majority of the content for your course. Only you have access to the entire Control Panel, although other users may have access to portions of it if you give them permission (see [Enrolling Other Users in Your Course](#)). Always post new content to your course from the Control Panel, and only use **Edit View** (link in upper right corner of the page when you are in **Display View**) to make quick changes to previously posted content.

The Control Panel is organized as a series of boxes. Each box contains a set of related functions that allow you to manipulate a particular aspect of your course. For example, the **Assessment** box contains links to all the functions related to testing and the grade book; **Content Areas** collects all the course areas where you can post course content as files and folders. The remainder of this outline lists the Control Panel boxes and describe the functions available in each.

Content Areas

Content areas hold the bulk of the course material you post to Blackboard. Use the “Add” bar at the top of a content area to post course materials to that area.

Adding an Item

In Blackboard an “item” refers to a file or a set of files that are posted to a content area for students to download. You can add an item to any content area in Blackboard, but see [The Course Menu](#) for the suggested uses of each area. You can add an item to a content area in two ways:

1) You can copy text from an external file and paste it directly into a Blackboard text box. The text you copy and paste will be visible to your students as soon as they enter the content area, but they may have to scroll down to read the entire item. Adding more than one item this way can dramatically increase the length of the content area page and make finding specific information difficult for students.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where you want to add an item.
3. Click **Item** on the “Add” bar.
4. Choose the name of the item from the “Name:” drop-down list. **OR**
Type the name of the item in the “Name:” field.
5. Open the file you want to copy.
6. Highlight the text you want to copy.
7. Choose **Edit > Copy** from the menu bar. **OR**
Press **Ctrl + C** on the keyboard.
8. Click the cursor in the Blackboard text box.
9. Press **Ctrl + V** to paste the copied text.
10. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

2) Alternately, you can post a link to a file. Clicking on a link will open that file in its original program (e.g., Word, PowerPoint), giving students the opportunity to edit, make notes on, or configure printing options for the file as necessary. This method saves space on the content area page, but requires students to make multiple clicks before accessing the file, especially if it is embedded in multiple layers of folders.

If you choose to post a link to a file, you can use the text box to write descriptive notes about the item. It is best to use text box space to describe the content of the file, indicate the originating program of the file, and instruct students on the use of the file.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where you want to add an item.
3. Click **Item** on the “Add” bar.
4. Choose the name of the item from the “Name:” drop-down list. **OR**
Type the name of the item in the “Name:” field.
5. Click **Browse** next to the “Attach local file:” field.
6. Double-click the file you want to link to.
7. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

To keep track of student use of an item, click **Yes** next to “Track number of views” when you add an item. To display tracking statistics by student or for the entire class for the item, click the **Manage** button to the right of the item, and then click **Statistics Tracking**.

Using Text Boxes

With an application known as a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get, pronounced *whizzy-wig*), Blackboard text boxes automatically convert typed text into HTML content for publication on your course website. You do not need to know any HTML to use a text box; instead, use the text box button bar to perform functions like you would in a word processing program. The text box turns your text into HTML for you.


If you do know HTML, click the **<html>** button in the text box to view your text in HTML format. Compose and edit in HTML, then click the **Submit** to view the results of your work. If you copied and pasted text from a word processing program into a text box, the resulting HTML code will likely be cluttered with unnecessary tags.

You should be able to use both **Edit > Paste** and the right-click **Paste** command to paste content into a text box. However, if neither of those methods works, press **Ctrl + V** on your keyboard.

Students may have trouble using text boxes, depending on the browser they are using and its settings. The recommended browser is Firefox 2.0. Safari will not work with Blackboard. If students are having trouble with Internet Explorer 7, they can be referred to [Configuring Blackboard's Visual Text Box Editor for IE7.pdf](#) . If they have trouble using Internet Explorer 7 with Windows Vista, they may need to [Disable the Visual Text Box Editor](#) .

Posting an Assignment Using the Assignment Tool

Assignments are graded items that students submit to you through the Blackboard system. They are automatically added to your Blackboard Grade Book. Do not confuse the Assignment Content area with assignments that are graded items -i.e., adding an Item to your Assignments Content Area is not equivalent to creating an Assignment via the Select button. Assignments created via the Select button are automatically added to your Gradebook.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where you want to post an assignment.
3. Choose **Assignment** from the  **Select:** bar drop-down menu.

4. Click **Go**.
5. Name the assignment and assign it a point value.
6. Type instructions on how to complete the assignment.

Note: If you require students to submit a file to you through Blackboard, post instructions on how to upload a file in the instructions on how to complete an assignment. (A student should click **Browse** to search for the file she wants to upload, then double-click that file.)

7. Click **Browse** to search for a file attachment.
8. Double-click the file you want to attach.
9. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

To view students' submitted assignments:

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the "Assessment" box, click **Gradebook**.
3. In the column for that assignment, click the exclamation point next to a student's name to access the file they submitted.
4. Click **View**.
5. Click the file they submitted. **OR**

Right-click the file and click **Save Target As...** to save the file to disk or to your hard drive.

Creating a Folder

Folders are intended to hold collections of items. For example, if you have three items that all relate to a particular class session (e.g., a reading, a PowerPoint presentation, and an assignment), you may want to post them all in a folder labeled with that session's date or number. To save yourself some work, create folders before you add items to them.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area in which you want to create a folder.
3. Click **Folder** on the "Add" bar.
4. Name the folder and type a description of its contents.
5. Click **Yes** to make the folder visible.
6. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Adding an Item to a Folder

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where the folder resides.
3. Click the folder's name.
4. Follow the directions for [Adding an Item](#) above.

Creating a Learning Unit

A learning unit is a collection of items, assignments, and assessments that focus on one learning outcome. For greater control over the learning process, you may structure a learning unit so that a student must proceed through the posted material in a sequential order. A learning unit may end with an assessment to gauge students' understanding of the unit.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where you want to create the learning unit.
3. Choose **Learning Unit** from the "Add" bar drop-down menu.
4. Click **Go**.
5. Name the learning unit and type a brief description of it.
6. Choose the learning unit options. To control the order in which students view learning unit materials, click **Yes** next to "Do you want to enforce sequential viewing of the Learning Unit?"
7. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Add items to the learning unit by clicking its name and following the instructions for [Adding an Item](#) above.

Copying an Item or a Folder

Blackboard allows you to copy any item or folder from a content area to: 1) any other content area in the same course, 2) any content area in another course, or 3) the same content area. To copy an item or a folder:

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click the content area where the item or folder resides.
3. Click **Copy** to the right of the item or folder.
4. Choose the course you want to copy it to from the "Destination Course:" drop-down menu.
5. Click **Browse** to display a list of available destination folders in the destination course.
6. Click the plus sign to any folder to view its contents.
7. Click the desired destination folder.
8. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Moving an Item or a Folder

In Blackboard, you must use the **Copy** function to move an item. Follow the directions for "Copying an Item or a Folder" above, but click **Yes** next to "Delete item after copy?" before submitting the copy command. This action will copy the item or folder to the destination folder and course, then delete the original item or folder.

Course Tools

The Course Tools box links to Blackboard's course communication features, including announcements, the course calendar, a student task list, e-mail options, and discussion boards. While all the course tools may be used to present original course material, many of them can also be utilized as an elaboration of the material you posted in the course content areas. For example, you may post the final paper assignment for your course in the **Assignments** area. Also listing it in the student **Tasks** list could act as a strong reminder for your students about the paper requirements and due date.

Posting an Announcement

When you post an announcement to your class, it appears on each student's **My Institution** page in the **My Announcements** box. It may also appear in the student's **My Courses** box under the name of your course, but individual students may disable that option. Announcements can also be accessed from the **Tools** button on the course menu.

You also have the option to broadcast announcements to all students' e-mail; that means the announcement appears on Blackboard, and also is sent immediately to students' e-mail inboxes. (There is a bug that creates an extra character if you leave any extra spaces – as in two spaces between sentences.)

You may post multiple announcements when building your course and time them to be released separately by choosing staggered future display dates. For example: You know now that you want to post an announcement about the midterm exam and another about the final. Write both announcements now, but set the midterm announcement to display the week before the midterm and the final exam announcement to display a week before the final. Students will not be able to view either announcement until their assigned display dates. Please note that the Announcements page has four tabs: View Today, View Last 7 Days, View Last 30 Days, and View All. You must click on the tab with the timing that fits your Announcement in order to view it.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Announcements**.
3. Click **Add Announcement**.
4. Type the subject of the announcement. The announcement will not post without a subject.
5. Type the text of the announcement.
6. Choose when to display the announcement:
Click **Yes** to display the announcement permanently.
Click **Display After** and choose a date to control the announcement's release.
7. Click **Browse** to link the announcement to a course area.
Linking to a course area allows a student to proceed directly to that area from the **Announcements** page.
8. Click the area you want to link to.
9. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Adding a Calendar Event

Blackboard provides a simple calendar feature for your course. When you add an event to the calendar, it appears on each student's **My Institution** page in the **My Calendar** box. Individual students may disable the **My Calendar** box, in which case they should access the calendar from the **Tools** button on the course menu. You could also add the Calendar as a separate button on the course menu.

Alternately, you could announce course events with the **Announcements** feature. Students are not allowed to disable the **My Announcements** box on their **My Institution** page.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Course Calendar**.
3. Click **Add Event**.
4. Type the title of the event.
5. Type a description of the event in the text box.
6. Choose the event date and time from the drop-down menus.
7. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Posting Your Profile

The **Staff Information** function allows you to post information about yourself, including a personal profile, contact information, and a photo. Anything you post in the **Staff Information** section will be displayed in the **Instructor Information** course area on the course menu. You may also want to post profiles of other course personnel such as your teaching assistant or course grader. If you include your contact information in your syllabus and do not want to expand upon it here, you can remove this area from the course menu with the **Manage Course Menu** feature.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the "Course Tools" box, click **Staff Information**.
3. On the "Add" bar, click **Profile**.
4. Fill out the requested information.
Note: You may want to use the "Notes:" field for a brief biography or note to students.
5. Click **Browse** to add an image.
Note: The image must be in .jpg or .gif format to display on the Web.
6. Double-click the image you want to add.
7. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Adding a Task

Tasks are a simple way to keep track of students' progress on class assignments. When you add a task to the Tasks list, it appears on each student's **My Institution** page in the **My Tasks** box. Students may disable the **My Tasks** box, in which case they should access their Tasks list from the **Tools** button on the course menu. You could also add Tasks as a separate button on the course menu. Students can indicate their progress on a task (*Not Started*, *In Progress*, or *Completed*), which you can track from the **Control Panel**.

1. Click **Control Panel**.

2. Click **Tasks**.
3. Click **Add Task**.
4. Type the title of the task.
5. Type a description of the task.
6. Choose the task due date from the drop-down menu.
Note: Students will be able to see all tasks in your course regardless of due date.
7. Choose the task priority from the drop-down menu.
8. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

To track an individual student's progress on a task, click **Tasks** in the **Control Panel**, then click the task you want to track.

You may also create tasks for yourself. Students will not be able to see your personal tasks.

1. Click **Tasks** in the **Tools** box on the **My Institution** page.
2. Choose **My Tasks** from the drop-down menu on the top right of the page.
3. Click **Add Task**.
4. Follow the instructions under "Adding a Task" above.

Sending E-mail

Blackboard provides a number of e-mailing options. You may e-mail an individual student, a select group of students, or your entire class. If you created student groups with the **Manage Groups** features (see [Creating a Student Group](#)), you may also e-mail a single group or a selection of groups. Any e-mail you send from Blackboard appears as if it came from the e-mail address associated with your Blackboard account. For most faculty, that means e-mail will be sent from their GroupWise account. You receive a copy of any message you send.

Students receive Blackboard e-mail at their official Loyola e-mail address. If a student wishes to receive mail at a different address, she can forward all her Loyola mail to her preferred account with the Personal Account Manager (at [Using PAM to Reroute Your Loyola E-Mail](#)).

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the "Course Tools" box, click **Send E-mail**.
3. Click the group of users you want to send an e-mail message.
4. Type a subject line and message.
5. Click **Add** to attach a file to the message.
6. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Creating a Discussion Forum

The Discussion Board area is basically an online message board; it allows you and your students to have extended written conversations over a long period of time. The discussion section is broken down into forums; each forum represents a particular broad subject of discussion, week of class, or group of users. Forums are further broken down into threads. Each thread is a collection of posted messages constituting a conversation about a more particular subject. For instance, a forum about the United States Constitution may contain a thread about the pursuit of happiness, another thread about the First Amendment, and a third thread about current proposed Constitutional amendments.

Some suggestions for good Discussion Board use:

- Quantify the amount of Discussion Board participation you expect from students. For example, require them to begin one thread per forum or to contribute two substantive replies to existing threads per week.
- Moderate online discussions or have a student administrator moderate them for you. Online discussions could devolve into arguments or stray from the subject at hand. Be prepared to discipline posters or to bring them back on topic.
- Giving a student administrative rights allows her to remove other students' posts. Only give administrative rights to those students whom you have designated as discussion moderators.
- Do not allow students to post anonymously. Everyone on the discussion board should be clearly associated with his own posts.
- Create a forum for general questions about your course, or for specific problems students are having with Blackboard. The Discussion Board area is a good resource for clarifying the use of your online course.

You may create a new discussion board forum from the Control Panel or from the student view of your course. Only you can create a new forum. Any student can create a thread in any forum, as long as you have enabled that feature. A Discussion Forum can be enabled on Groups pages without the necessity for the instructor to create it.

1. Click **Discussion Board** from the course menu on the left side of the screen **OR**
Click **Control Panel > Discussion Board** to see all of your discussion boards, and click on the discussion board where you want to add a forum.
2. Click **Add Forum**.
3. Type the title of the forum and a brief description of the forum's contents.
4. Uncheck the "Allow anonymous posts" option.
5. Make your choices for allowing students to subscribe to a thread or forum (notice of new posts is sent to the subscriber via e-mail).
6. Make your choice for a graded or ungraded forum, or for graded or ungraded threads within the forum.
7. Designate a student moderator for the forum (optional):
Click the student's name in the user list and click the **Admin** button.
9. Click **Submit**.

User Management

The User Management box contains functions related to the enrollment and group affiliation of the students and other Blackboard users in your course. You can use this area to print out the class roster and create student groups. Students are enrolled in your Blackboard course by the beginning of the academic term in which the course will be taught. You do not have to enroll students yourself. In fact, the **Enroll Users** function has been turned off for instructors. If you want a new user enrolled in or removed from your course, please contact the Blackboard @ Loyola Support Team at blackboard@luc.edu.

Enrolling a User in Your Course

Each user enrolled in a Blackboard course is designated by a role. Blackboard roles include varying degrees of access to the course Control Panel. For instance, the course **Instructor** has full access to the Control Panel; users enrolled in the course as **Students** have no access to it. Three other roles exist between Instructor and Student; each of these roles has access to some of the course Control Panel.

Teacher's Assistant: has access to nearly all functions in the *Control Panel*, including the *Gradebook*.
Course Builder: can use most areas of the *Control Panel*, but does not have access to student grades.
Grader: has access to all functions in the *Assessment* area, as well as course *Announcements*, the *Course Calendar*, and the *Digital Drop Box*.

If you wish to add a Teacher's Assistant, a Course Grader, or another Instructor to your course, contact the Blackboard support team at blackboard@luc.edu with that user's name, the specific course you want them added to, and their role in that course. A Blackboard administrator will add the user to your course and assign them the appropriate role. Students are automatically added or removed from your Blackboard course based on information Blackboard receives from LOCUS. Student registration changes (adds/change/drops) in LOCUS are usually reflected in Blackboard 24 hours later.

IMPORTANT: Since Blackboard Teacher's Assistants have access to the course Gradebook, we do not recommend giving a student in your class the role of Teacher's Assistant.

Printing Your Class Roster

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the "User Management" box, click **List/Modify Users**.
3. Click **Search**. Blackboard lists all the users associated with your course, including teaching assistants and instructors.
4. To print the roster, click **Print** on your browser's toolbar.

If your class is large, the user list may take up more than one page. To view additional pages of user information, click the numbers next to **Results** at the bottom of the page.

Creating a Student Group

Many instructors split their class into groups to work on class projects or to discuss class material. Assigning students to a group in Blackboard gives that group space in your course to collaborate online. You may enable a discussion board, a chat room, a file sharing feature, and e-mail for each group to facilitate their work in your course.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “User Management” box, click **Manage Groups**.
3. Click **Add Group**.
4. Type the group name and description.
5. Enable the collaborative functions you want to give the group.
6. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

To add students to the group:

7. Click **Modify** next to the group name.
8. Click **Add Users to Group**.
9. Type the last name of the student you want to add to the group and click **Search**. **OR**
Click **Search** to view all potential group members.
10. Click the boxes next to the students you want to add.
11. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Students can find the course space for their group by clicking **Communication > Group Pages**.

Assessment

The Assessment box contains all the functions related to student assessments and the Gradebook. There are two types of assessments:

Tests – Tests are graded assessments in which questions have assigned point values. When a student completes a test it is submitted to the Gradebook for grading and the score may be displayed as a percentage or letter grade.

Surveys – Surveys are used mainly for polling purposes, evaluations, and random checks of knowledge. Surveys are not graded, and survey questions are not assigned point values. When a student completes a survey it is submitted to the Gradebook which displays it as completed (a check mark) or not completed (a dash). Surveys are anonymous and their results may only be viewed in aggregate.

You can create test or survey questions directly in the **Test Manager** or the **Survey Manager**. If you would rather have a permanent pool of questions from which to draw for all your tests and surveys, create questions in the **Pool Manager**. Questions in the Pool Manager can be added to multiple tests or surveys; a test or survey may include questions from multiple question pools. This outline leads you through the creation of a test in the Test Manger. Creating questions in the Survey Manager or the Pool Manger is very similar, so use the instructions under [Adding Questions to a Test](#) to add questions in those areas as well.

The Test, Survey, and Pool Managers simply hold questions and assessments; students cannot view these areas. Tests and surveys do not become available to students until you deploy them to a content area. At that point, you may set the options for the assessment.

Creating a New Test

You must create a new test in the Control Panel before making it available for students in a course content area. A new test cannot be made visible to students until it is posted in a content area.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Assessment” box, click **Test Manager**.
3. Click **Add Test**.
4. Type the name of the test.
5. Type a description of the test and testing instructions.
6. Click **Submit**.

Adding Questions to a Test

Once you create a new test, you will immediately be taken to the Test Canvas where you can create test questions. If you have previously set up questions in the Pool Manager, this is where you can access them for a specific test.

1. Choose the type of question you want to create from the “Add Question:” drop-down list.
2. Click **Go**.
3. Select the number of possible answers from the “Number of Answers” drop-down menu. **OR** Click **Remove** next to an answer box to decrease the number of possible answers.

Note: Always select the number of answers before you type the test question. If you type the test question, and then change the number of answers, the test question may disappear.

4. Type the test question.
5. Assign a point value to the question.
6. List the possible answers to the question and indicate the correct response(s).
7. In the “Feedback” section, type responses to correct and incorrect answers.
8. Click **Submit**.
9. Repeat this process until you have added all the test questions, then click **OK**.

Posting a Test to a Content Area

Once you have created a test, post it to a content area for students to view and submit.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Content Area” box, click the content area where you want to post the test.
3. Click **Test**.
4. Click the test you want to post from the “Select an existing test:” field.
5. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.
6. Click **Modify Test** to add, remove, or reorder test questions on the Test Canvas.
7. Click **Modify Test Options** to control how and when students take the test.
8. Once you set the test options, click **Submit**, then click **OK**.
9. Click **OK**.

Gradebook Items

Tests, surveys, and assignments are automatically added to the Gradebook. Tests are automatically graded unless they include essay questions; those questions must be graded individually by the instructor. Surveys are anonymous and cannot be graded; they appear as completed or not completed in the Gradebook. Assignments are created in content areas (see “Posting an Assignment” on page 6) and may be graded in the Gradebook. To remove a test, survey, or assignment from the Gradebook, you must delete it from the content area where it has been created or deployed. It cannot be deleted from the Gradebook area. Other Gradebook items may be added manually.

Grading a Test

Tests results are automatically added to the Gradebook, unless the test includes essay questions. Those questions must be graded individually by the instructor. To view the results of a test:

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Assessment” box, click **Gradebook**.
3. Items are listed in columns. Students are listed in rows. Locate the intersection of a student and an item to view the student’s grade for that item.
4. Click the student’s grade to view more information about that student’s test.
5. Click **View** to view and grade the student’s test.
6. Once you’ve graded the test, click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Adding an Item to the Gradebook

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Assessment” box, click **Gradebook**.
3. Click **Add Item**.
4. Type the name of the item.
5. Choose a category for the item from the “Category:” drop-down menu.
6. Type a description of the item.
7. Select the date associated with that item.
8. Type the number points the item is worth in the “Points Possible:” field.
9. Choose how you want the grade to be displayed.
10. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Making Your Course Available

A new course is invisible to students by default. You must make the course available for students to see it on their **My Institution** page. That way, students may only view the course when it is ready to be seen.

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. In the “Course Options” area, click **Settings**.
3. Click **Course Availability**
4. Click **Yes** to make the course available.
5. Click **Submit**, then click **OK**.

Getting Help

- If you forget your Blackboard password, contact the Technology Support Center at 4-4444 (on campus) or 773-508-7190 (off campus).
- All other questions, problems, concerns, or suggestions should be directed to blackboard@luc.edu.
- The **Help** link at the top of every Blackboard page takes you to http://www.luc.edu/its/help_blackboard_doc.shtml Click that link for more Blackboard documentation. For training dates, visit our Training Central page at http://www.luc.edu/its/training_central.shtml. For important Blackboard system information and announcements, go to the Blackboard login page at <https://blackboard.luc.edu/webapps/login/> .
- Every faculty member using Blackboard is also enrolled in the **Faculty Forum** course on Blackboard. That course is an opportunity for instructors to ask questions of and share information with peers. Log into Blackboard and click **Faculty Forum** in your **My Courses** box to join the conversation.

Revised on 11/30/2007
ITS Academic Technology Services



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives