



The Graduate School
TEACHING ONLINE
All-University TA Orientation Program

SU

2020

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Contents

1 Blackboard	4
1.1 What is Blackboard?	4
1.2 Essential Blackboard Resources	4
1.3 Blackboard Quick Start	4
1.4 Logging into Blackboard	4
1.5 Making the Course Available	4
1.6 Taking Attendance	5
1.7 Creating Online Discussions	6
1.8 Copying Your Course	8
1.9 Create Content	8
1.10 Creating Assignments/Surveys	9
1.11 Creating Tests	12
1.12 Gradebook	12
1.13 Customization	14
1.14 Creating Emails/Announcements	15
1.15 Feedback for Students	16
1.16 Feedback from Students	18
1.17 Student Preview Mode	19
1.18 Blackboard Collaborate	19
2 Syracuse University Expressions	21
2.1 What is Expressions	21
2.2 Signing Up	21
2.3 How to Use Expressions	21
3 Twitter	23
3.1 What is Twitter	23
3.2 Why Twitter?	23
3.3 Signing Up for Twitter	23
3.4 Tweeting & Hashtags	24
3.5 Twitter Concerns	24
4 Other Resources	26
4.1 MIT Open Courseware	26
4.2 Symbolab & WolframAlpha	27
4.3 Classroom Polling	28
4.4 Jeopardy!	29

1 Blackboard

1.1 What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is an online website for instructors. It can be used for in-person or (synchronous or asynchronous) online teaching. Using Blackboard, you can send individual, group, or course emails, record grades, create or link to course content, administer quizzes and exams, and more. Note that all images in this section were taken from the Blackboard Instructor help pages.

1.2 Essential Blackboard Resources

- Blackboard Learn Help for Instructors: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor>
- Blackboard Learn—For Instructors YouTube Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLontYaReEU1tzu1T5gfiX-JQAA5nBc3isN>
- Syracuse University IT Help: <https://its.syr.edu/get-help/>

1.3 Blackboard Quick Start

The ‘Blackboard Learn—For Instructors YouTube Videos’ link above is a great place to start learning how to do things in Blackboard. However, Blackboard has a ‘Quick Start’ page for starting on Blackboard that is also worth examining. This page is found at https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Quick_Start.

1.4 Logging into Blackboard

You can login to Blackboard using <https://blackboard.syr.edu/>. You can also access Blackboard while logged into MySlice using the *Blackboard SU* link under the *MySlice Applications → Academic Applications*. If you have trouble finding this, use the *Find* feature of your browser using Cntrl + F (PC) or Cmmd + F (Mac).

1.5 Making the Course Available

Making the course available to students is the last and most important step in setting up your Blackboard course. We present this first because it is easily missed or forgotten.

1. *Control Panel → Customization → Properties → Set Availability.*
2. Set the *Make Course Available* under the *Set Availability* to Yes.
3. Click *Submit*.

Note you can choose when the course becomes available/unavailable using the *Set Course Duration* options. You can always make a course unavailable and re-available. You can find more at https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/FAQ/Course_FAQs.

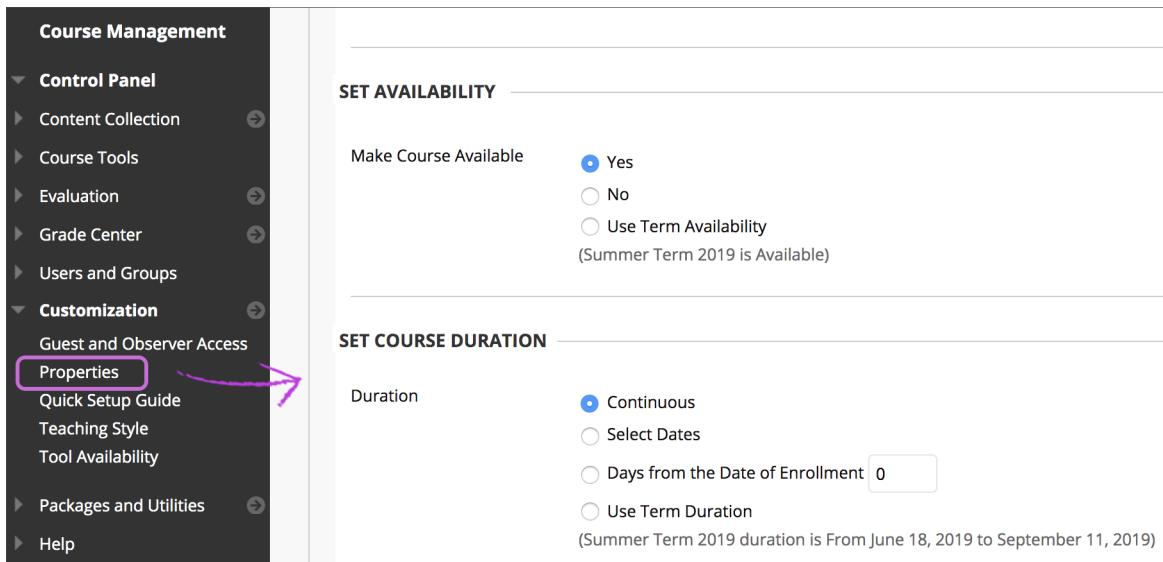


Figure 1: Making a Blackboard course available.

1.6 Taking Attendance

You can take attendance using Blackboard, and you can include it in your grade book. To access attendance:

1. *Control Panel* → *Course Tools* → *Attendance*.
2. Select *Add Attendance*.

You mark attendance using *Control Panel* → *Course Tools* → *Attendance*. You can select the way that the attendance grade is displayed and what the point/percentage values are for *Present*, *Late*, and *Absent* are. Although, you may not be able to when you initially add taking attendance. But these settings can be changed in the *Settings* panel. Be sure to save your changes.

You can also record students attendance for meetings as well as virtual classes via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. In the *Overall* view, you can mark attendance, view your students attendance history and class statistics, and create meetings. Students can be exempted from classes or meetings. Note that if you alter an individual students attendance grade cell, the entered grade becomes the fixed percentage. It is better to alter individual class/meeting grade. Finally, you can export

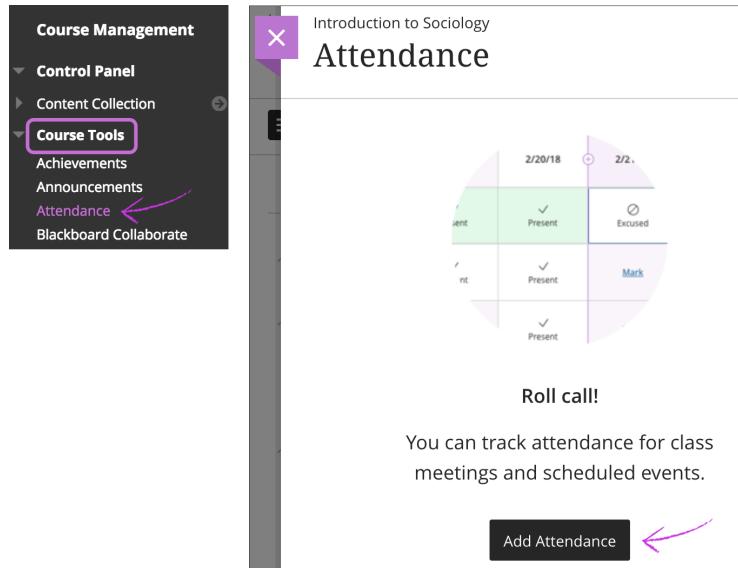


Figure 2: Adding attendance on Blackboard.

and import attendance records as well. More on all the attendance features as well as a brief overview for setting it up can be found below:

- Blackboard Attendance: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Attendance>
- Marking Attendance in Blackboard—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9FCxq1hfUY>

1.7 Creating Online Discussions

You can use Blackboard to allow students to discuss their coursework and interact with other students about the content. As the instructor, you can also add to the discussion. However, creating an environment that encourages students to actively participate, establishing discussion guidelines and standards, and moderating these discussions is entirely different issue, and the reader is encouraged to participate in other sessions and seek other resources on how to succeed in these areas.

You can view the discussion boards using the side *Discussions* tab (if it has not been deleted) or using *Control Panel* → *Course Tools* → *Discussion Board*. To create a discussion forum:

1. *Control Panel* → *Discussions*.
2. Click *Create Forum*.

Figure 3: Accessing Blackboard discussions.

3. Add your content, and choose your options based on the assignment and click *Submit*.

Creating discussion sections, forums, and threads is not technically difficult but has lots of possible variation based on the type of assignment and the level of control/interaction the instructor/teaching assistant wants the students to possess. You can find more about all these issues at the following links:

- Blackboard Create Discussions: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Discussions/Create_Discussions
- Blackboard Create Forums: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Discussions/Create_Discussions/Create_Forum
- Blackboard Create Threads: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Discussions/Create_Discussions/Create_Threads
- Blackboard Using Discussions in the Original View—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNMO-4I7uBI>
- Blackboard Create a Discussion—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4HDNzZeFqE>

1.8 Copying Your Course

You can copy an old course to a new course. This is especially useful when you are teaching the same or a similar course and you will be using much of the same setup or material. To copy a course, do the following:

1. Open the course you wish to copy.
2. *Control Panel* → *Packages and Utilities* → *Course Copy*
3. Under *Select Copy Type*, select “Copy Course Materials into an Existing Course.”
4. In the *File Attachments* section, select the content you would like to copy.
5. Click *Submit*.

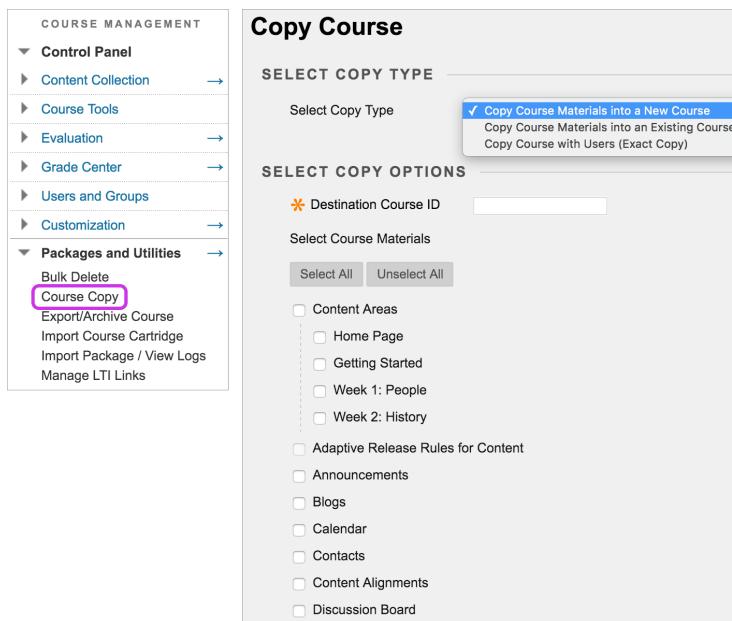


Figure 4: Copying course content.

Note that attendance data is not included when you copy a course into a new/existing course. For more information on what is/is not copied along with more information on copying course materials can be found at https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Course_Content/Reuse_Content/Copy_Courses.

1.9 Create Content

You can add content to your Blackboard course: files, audio, images, video, etc. To add content to your Blackboard course:

1. *Control Panel → Content*
2. Under the *Build Content Tab*, select the desired content type.
3. Provide the necessary entries.
4. Select *Submit*.

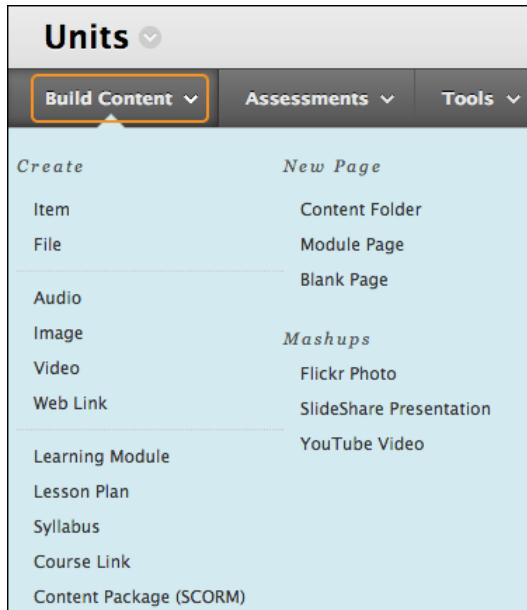


Figure 5: Adding content to Blackboard.

Whenever possible, you should provide accessibility features, such as alternative text, to help students who may require additional accessibility options in order to use the materials. Also consider this when you add items like PDFs, PowerPoints, YouTube videos, etc. You can also add special conditions on when materials become available to students such as required scores on assignments. For more on all these options and abilities, read more below:

- Blackboard Create Content: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Course_Content/Create_Content
- Setting Release Options: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Course_Content/Release_Content

1.10 Creating Assignments/Surveys

You can create assignments and surveys in Blackboard.

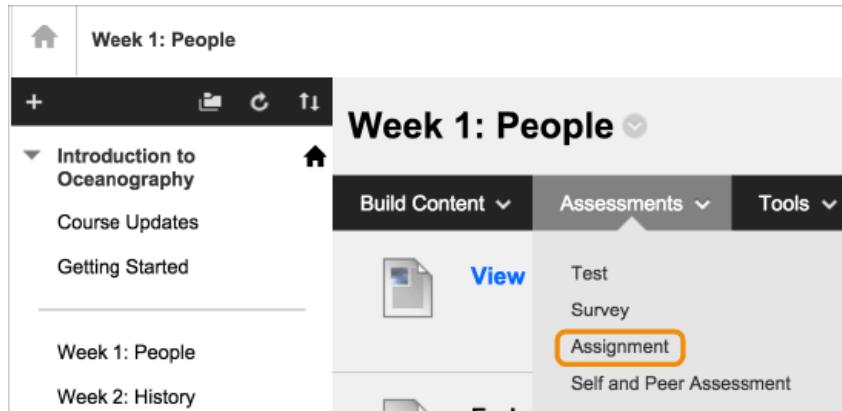


Figure 6: Creating assignments and surveys in Blackboard.

1. *Control Panel → Assignments*
2. Under the *Assignments Tab*, select the desired assignment type.
3. Provide the name, instructions, and any necessary additional files.

Optional Add a due date, any rubrics, and additional options.

4. Select *Submit*.

If you assign a due date to an assignment, it automatically shows in the course calendar and in the *To Do* module. Assignments submitted after the due date are automatically marked as late, but you may also choose to make the display date the same as the due date so that students cannot submit the assignment late. Assignments also automatically appear in the *Gradebook*.

When students submit an assignment, it also automatically appears in the *Needs Grading* section of the *Grade Center*. Students can copy and save the confirmation number of their submission as proof of their submission. If multiple submissions are allowed, there is a different confirmation number for each submission. Even if a student deletes a submission, the instructor and administrators always have a retrievable record in the system. You can access all submissions and confirmation numbers from the *Reports* tab under *Full Grade Center*, which is found under the *Grade Center* tab of the *Control Panel*.

You have the ability to edit, reorder, and delete any of your assignments. You also can delete assignments. If you delete an assignment for which student submissions already exist, you can either preserve the scores in the *Grade Center* while deleting the submissions (you will no longer be able to access them) or delete the assignment, the corresponding *Grade Center* column (along with the grades for the submissions), and all the student submissions. These actions are irreversible. Alternatively, you can simply make the item unavailable to students.

Grade Center : Full Grade Center

Create Column Create Calculated Column Manage Reports

Create Report View Grade History Submission Receipts

Submission Receipts

User Name: Not blank Go Options User Information

CONFIRMATION NUMBER	STUDENT	SUBMITTER	COURSEWORK	DATE	SUBMISSION	SIZE
9e710457-8d9f-4bdd-b553-7aa3703813e9	Alyssa Dubois	Alyssa Dubois	Week 1 Study Guide Questions	Sep 14, 2016 7:19 PM	study_guide_adubois.doc	29.5kb
41ab7c64-aa91-4879-8711-ba4a8ae8fcf2	Juan Hernandez	Juan Hernandez	Week 1 Study Guide Questions	Sep 14, 2016 6:21 PM	Written submission	0.8kb
21a25e5e-c1e6-46e1-ac66-01a2a1ed1697	Bruce Lopez	Chris Casper	Group Outline	Sep 14, 2016 8:46 PM	grp_outline_casper.docx	113.8kb
21a25e5e-c1e6-46e1-ac66-01a2a1ed1697	Chris Casper	Chris Casper	Group Outline	Sep 14, 2016 8:46 PM	grp_outline_casper.docx	113.8kb
21a25e5e-c1e6-46e1-ac66-01a2a1ed1697	Sarah Spooner	Chris Casper	Group Outline	Sep 14, 2016 8:46 PM	grp_outline_casper.docx	113.8kb

Figure 7: Accessing grade reports.

Assignments

Build Content Assessments Tools Partner Content ↑↓

Planet Paper

Please write a 1 page paper on a planet of your choice. Use an image from the internet to support your writing. Explain what you have learned about the science of the planet.

Please cite all sources used. You may attach your paper to this assignment or attach it to your dropbox folder.

This assignment is due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 16, 2016.

You are allowed to submit up to 3 versions of this assignment.

Group Outline

After meeting in groups, each group will submit a basic one page outline about your planet. This assignment is due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 16, 2016.

Included in the assignment is a rubric for grading.

Reorder: Content

Items

- Planet Paper
- Group Outline
- Group Plan**
- Astrophotography Rounds 1 and 2
- Extra Credit Assignment

Cancel Submit

Figure 8: Reordering assignments.

You can find more information along with video on all of the above features below:

- Blackboard Creating Assignments: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Assignments/Create_and_Edit_Assignments
- Creating Assignments—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUXXCp1pnHs>

1.11 Creating Tests

You can administer tests on Blackboard. Because the topic of creating exams is very specific to the exam you are creating: the number and type of questions, timed or untimed, allowing/disallowing web access, etc., we will not go into the process of creating Blackboard tests but rather provide all the links to the necessary information.

- Blackboard Creating Tests: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys/Create_Tests_and_Surveys
- Creating Tests—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hms51SQtYzY>
- Question Settings: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys/Question_Settings
- Test & Survey Options: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys/Test_and_Survey_Options
- Deploying Tests: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys/Create_Tests_and_Surveys#deploy
- Test & Survey Results: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys/Test_and_Survey_Results

1.12 Gradebook

The *Gradebook* allows you to access your students grade and assignment submissions. You access the *Gradebook* using the *Control Panel*. To view all your students grades and submitted assignments (or those that need grading), select *Full Grade Center*.

To create a grade column:

1. Select *Create Column*.
2. Enter a name and description.
3. Choose your grading scheme (you can create custom grading schemes).

The screenshot shows the 'Grade Center : Full Grade Center' interface. On the left, a sidebar titled 'Course Management' includes a 'Control Panel' section with 'Content Collection', 'Course Tools', 'Evaluation', and 'Grade Center'. Under 'Grade Center', there are three options: 'Needs Grading', 'Full Grade Center' (which is selected and highlighted with a purple border), and 'Assignments' and 'Tests'. The main area displays a grid of student data with the following columns: LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, TOTAL, WHAT DO YOU, DISC: PLUTO OI, and UNIT 1 QUIZ. The data rows are as follows:

	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	TOTAL	WHAT DO YOU	DISC: PLUTO OI	UNIT 1 QUIZ
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brown	Tony	70.00	✓	!	30.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Casper	Chris	10.00	✓	!	--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooper	Ashby	80.00	✓	7.00	30.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lopez	Bruce	70.00	--	--	20.00

At the top of the grade center, there are buttons for 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', 'Reports', 'Filter', and 'Work Offline'. A 'Sort Columns By' dropdown is set to 'Layout Position' with 'Order' set to 'Ascending'. The status bar at the bottom right indicates 'Last Saved: September 26, 2016 3:00 PM'.

Figure 9: Viewing student grades and submissions.

4. Enter the points possible.

5. Select *Submit*.

Note that when you create a survey, quiz, exam, or other assignment a column is automatically added in the *Grade Center*. Assignments which are not yet graded appear in the grade center as a yellow exclamation mark (see the figure above). You can select this cell to grade that students submission. Alternatively, you can view all student submissions which require grading using the *Needs Grading* option under the *Grade Center* tab in the *Control Panel*. You can control also the order of the grade columns for yourself using the *Column Organization* option.

You can select whether a grade column is visible to students using the drop-down tab option of the grade column title. From this drop down tab, you can also choose to edit the column after its creation. For instance, you can edit the amount that the assignment is worth. You can download the grade center data. To download grades:

1. Access the *Work Offline* menu and select *Download*.
2. Select the data to download (most likely full grade center).
3. Select the file type, download location, and whether to download hidden columns.
4. Select *Submit*.

You can also use your own gradebook off of Blackboard. You then have two options. First, you could simply create columns such as 'Course Average', 'Quiz Average', 'Participation Grade', etc. and simply update these columns regularly. You can use the rest of the grade center as normal. A second option is to upload your gradebook to Blackboard. However, this requires the gradebook to have specific formatting. We will leave this to the Syracuse University specific link shared below.

- Blackboard Grading: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade>
- Syracuse University—Uploading/Downloading Grades: <https://answers.syr.edu/display/blackboard01/Uploading+and+Downloading+Grades>

1.13 Customization

There are several ways you can customize your Blackboard course page to make it stand out. For instance, you can organize the course menu by renaming, re-ordering, deleting, hiding, and adding course menu links to fit the course needs. However, deleting a content area link deletes the entire area as well as the items within it, and this action is final. A better option in some cases would be to hide the content area instead. You can read more about the course menu and creating items at this link https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Getting_Started/Navigate_Inside_a_Course.

You may also customize the course structure. Most of these course customization options are found under the *Control Panel* → *Teaching Style* tab.

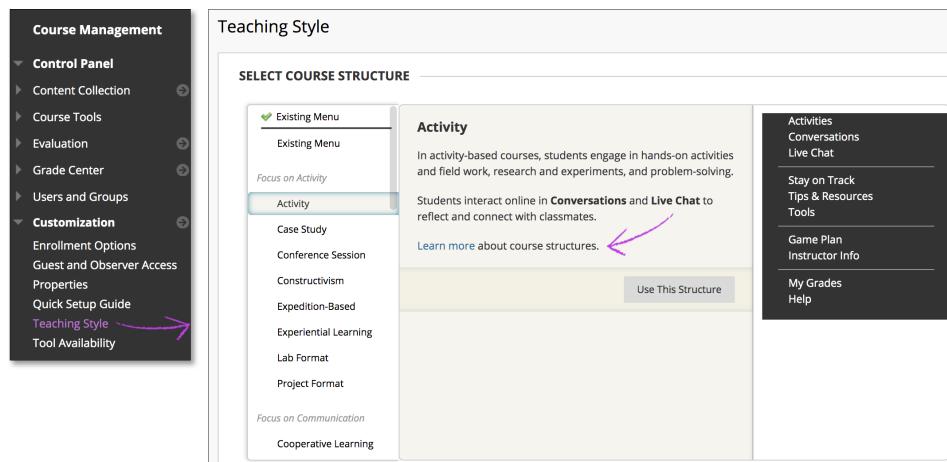


Figure 10: Finding the teaching style tab.

For instance, you can choose the first area students will see when they load the course Blackboard page. You may also choose a background image or theme to make your course look more distinctive. This is chosen under the *Change Course Theme* option. The menu can also be customized in its color choice, button type, button shape, and button color. This is chosen under the *Select Menu Style*. Finally, you can also add banners to your course. You can find out more using the links below:

- Blackboard Course Options: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Courses/Course_Customization/Course_Style_Options

- Blackboard Entry Point—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtCKI27Uao4>

You may also choose the Blackboard tools which are available to students. These options are found under the *Tool Availability* page. There is also an option for students to have access to Blackboard email features. You may read about these features below:

- Blackboard Tool Availability: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Courses/Course_Customization/Course_Tool_Availability
- Blackboard Tool Availability—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=665fns0CaMY>

You can also choose a name and description, course classification, course availability, course duration, language pack, etc. For more information on these options, visit https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Courses/Course_Customization/Course_Properties. You can also read about all of these topics more generally at https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Courses/Course_Customization.

1.14 Creating Emails/Announcements

You can create announcements or send email some of all of your students in a course via Blackboard. This is done using the *Announcements* feature of Blackboard. To send an announcement:

1. *Control Panel* → *Course Tools* → *Announcement*.
2. Choose *Create Announcement*.
3. Type a subject, which will appear as the subject of the announcement (and email if it is sent).
4. Type your message, include any links or images you would like using the tool bar above the message box.
5. Choose any date restrictions and whether you want to send an email to all course users or simply post an announcement (the checkbox marked *Send a copy of this announcement immediately*).
6. (Optional) You can use the *Course Link* section to link to a course area, tool, or item.
7. Select Submit.

If you choose not to send an email to course users, students will still receive a notification on their Blackboard page when they login (assuming they have not turned this feature off). Note that though all the embedded images, videos, links, formatting, attached files, etc. appear as intended when viewing the announcement on the *Announcement* page on Blackboard, they may not appear/work as you had intended in the email.

If there is a mistake in an email or announcement, you may edit the announcement/email or delete it. To edit or delete an announcement, select *Edit* or *Delete* in its menu. Deleting an announcement is irreversible. If you edit an announcement (whether or not it was originally emailed), you have the option of sending the message via email. In addition, you have the option of

You also have the ability to send emails from Blackboard to specific users or groups of users. To do this, follow these instructions:

1. *Control Panel* → *Course Tools* → *Send Email*.
2. Select the desired option, e.g. all users, select groups, select users, etc.
3. Send an email starting at step 3 as above.

You can find more resources for sending emails using Blackboard below:

- Blackboard Announcements: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Announcements>
- Blackboard Email: [https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Email](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact>Email)
- Blackboard Creating Announcements—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFsPszU0l1k>
- Blackboard Sending Email—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vdtTB7QC-4>

1.15 Feedback for Students

It is possible in Blackboard to record feedback on students submitted work. Feedback can be typed and/or consist of video/audio recordings. When grading an attempt, there will be an arrow to expand the grading screen where you can record written feedback.

In the same window you type your written feedback, you can select the microphone or video recording icon to open a window that allows you to record audio and/or video feedback for your student. You will need to give Blackboard permission to access your computer's microphone and/or camera. Recordings can only be up to five minutes long. Each feedback is unique to the student's submission.

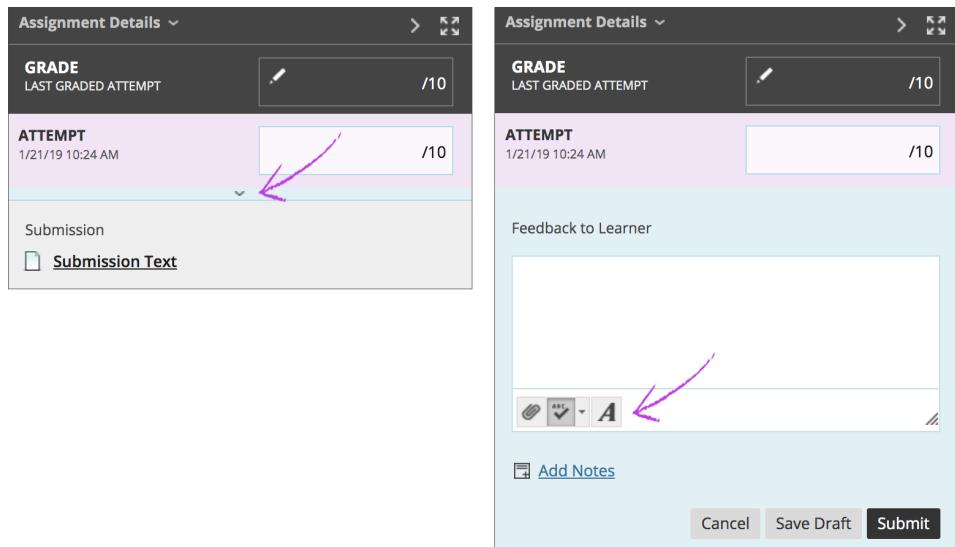


Figure 11: Feedback on assignment submissions.

You cannot download, share, or reuse feedback recordings. If you want to access feedback you have given a student, you can select the students grade in the *Grade Center* and select *View Grade Details*.

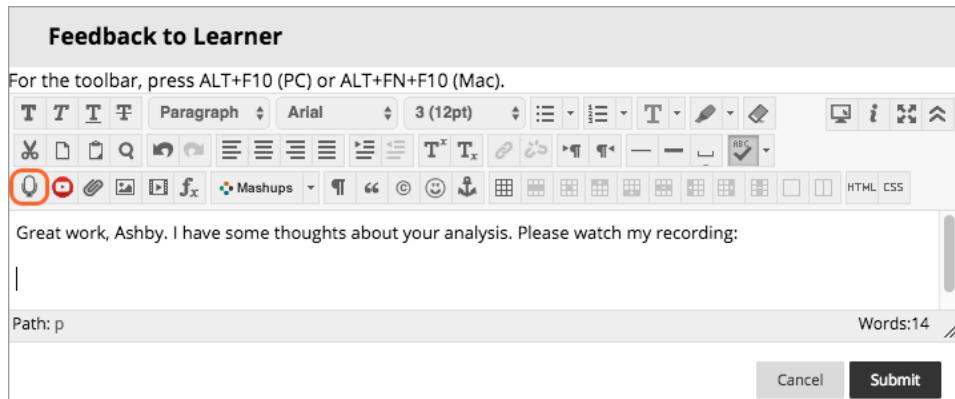


Figure 12: Recording audio/video feedback.

Alternatively, one could record video/audio and save it to your computer using the method of your choice and then attach it to the student's grade submission using the option in the window above. This would also be a method to record general feedback for your classes submission. For instance, if many students made a similar mistake, record feedback on the error(s) using a method of your choice, then save the file to your computer. You can then create an announcement (for

instance titled ‘Assignment Name—Feedback’) and in announcement attach the audio/video file for students to view. For more information on this topic, see the link below:

- Blackboard Giving Feedback: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Interact/Audio_Video_Recording

1.16 Feedback from Students

You can also use Blackboard to survey your students for course content/discussions or to receive feedback on an assignment, exam, or general performance. One option is to create a quiz (worth 0 points if you wish) where you allow students to respond to your survey questions, e.g. extended response or multiple choice based on a Likert scale. This has the advantage of this is being able to assign points for students completing the survey as well as tracking who has/has not completed the survey.

However more than likely, you will want to make the survey anonymous. Creating anonymous surveys is possible in Blackboard. [If the survey is anonymous, then you will probably want to let the students know, and you may want to consider a test survey and showing the students your view of the results to emphasize the anonymity.] To create a survey:

1. *Control Panel → Course Tools → Tests, Surveys, and Pools.*
2. On the survey page, click *Build Survey*.
3. Follow the instructions to create the survey description. Then click *Submit*.
4. Create the survey using *Create Question* to enter the questions.
5. Click *Submit*.

After creating the survey, you need to deploy the survey. To deploy the survey:

1. Navigate to the content area where you want the survey to be.
2. From the *Assessments* tab, select *Survey*.
3. On the create survey page, select the survey from the *Add Survey* box.
4. Click *Submit*.
5. Enter the name, description, and options for your survey, including the due date.
6. Click *Submit*.

For each survey, you can view the aggregate results for each question. To view the results, go to the *Grade Center* and click the survey's column action link to access the contextual menu, then select *Attempts Statistics*. Surveys in Blackboard are anonymous by default. Alternatively, you can create a survey using Google Forms, Survey Monkey, etc. and link to the survey using a course Announcement.

1.17 Student Preview Mode

If you are wondering how things look or function from the student end of Blackboard, there is an option for you to view your Blackboard course page as a student. This is called *Student Preview Mode*. You access this using an icon in the upper right corner of your Blackboard page. This allows you not only to view the page as a student but interact with the course page as a student. This allows you to perform student activities such as submitting assignments, taking tests, creating blogs/posts, etc. This is different from *Edit Mode*, which hides your edit controls and content under certain conditions. The advantage to using *Student Preview Mode* is that when exiting the mode, you can save the data from your time in the mode. For example, you can enter student mode, take a quiz, exit student preview mode (saving your data), grade the attempt as the instructor, then re-enter student preview mode to see the grade/grade feedback from the student perspective—among other things.

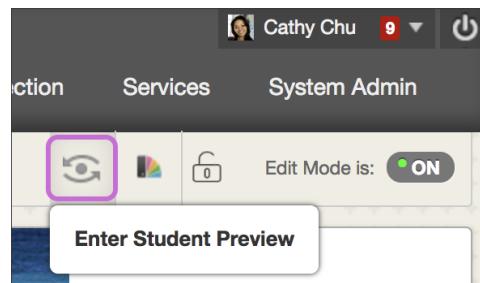


Figure 13: Entering student preview mode.

You can learn more about this using the links below:

- Blackboard Student Preview Mode: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Courses/Student_Preview
- Blackboard Student Preview Mode—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCrAQewg7Is>

1.18 Blackboard Collaborate

You can use Blackboard to give online lectures, create online person-to-person discussion sessions, etc. This is Blackboard Collaborate. However, there is a session

dedicated to using Blackboard Collaborate so we will not go into this in any detail here other than give you a link to read more about Blackboard Collaborate:

- Blackboard Help for Moderators: <https://help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/v12/Moderator>

2 Syracuse University Expressions

2.1 What is Expressions

Expressions is a Syracuse University hosted WordPress account. It is the equivalent of a premium account of WordPress. This allows you to make a site, upload a theme, and start building your own website. You can use this to host class page(s), as a teaching portfolio, blog site, etc. For instance, you are able to build a site like the one found here: <https://coffeeintotheorems.com/> or <https://jjheffer.expressions.syr.edu/>. These pages are also the basis for many university pages and you can set one up for your graduate department. For instance, <http://mgo.syr.edu/> is a university hosted Expressions page.

2.2 Signing Up

Each student and faculty can create their own WordPress site for free. Currently, you are able to keep the page even after you leave Syracuse University. The only difference between this and a typical WordPress premium page is that the page will have a *.expressions.syr.edu* url and some plugins may conflict with the University hosting. Signing up for an Expressions page is easy! Simply follow the link below and sign-up using your university NetID and password.

- Expressions at Syracuse University: <https://expressions.syr.edu/>

2.3 How to Use Expressions

We will not go into details on how to navigate using WordPress. There is a lot of literature out there on the internet on using WordPress. Syracuse University also has a help resource page for Expressions at Syracuse University.

- Syracuse Expressions Help Page: <https://answers.syr.edu/display/ITHHELP/Expressions>

Individual sites have up to 2 GB of storage while faculty sites for academic purposes host up to 5 GB. Of course, you can instead add links on your page to a Google Drive, DropBox file, etc rather than uploading the file directly to the Expressions system to help extend this storage. Below are a few links specific to the Syracuse University Expressions system. Of course, you may feel free to email IT with questions about Expressions. If your site ever goes down (which often happens if there are plugin conflicts), you may email IT to help bring the site back up.

- Expressions FAQ: <https://answers.syr.edu/display/ITHHELP/Expressions+Frequently+Asked+Questions>

- Using Expressions: <https://answers.syr.edu/display/ITHHELP/How+to+Use+Expressions>
- Syracuse University IT Help Page: <https://its.syr.edu/get-help/>

3 Twitter

3.1 What is Twitter

Twitter is an online social media platform described as a ‘microblogging’ system. Users post short messages (currently 280 characters or less), photos, videos, or links. These posts are called tweets. Other users can comment or ‘retweet’ other users posts as well as ‘follow’ other users (meaning the users tweets can appear in their own personal feed of content they follow). Content can be ‘hash-tagged’ (labeled with #label, where the label can be anything), e.g. #oscars, #mondaymotivation, #icantevenwithtoday, etc. Hashtags which are being used by many users on the platform are said to be ‘trending’.

3.2 Why Twitter?

Twitter is currently one of the most used social media platforms. It is easy to use and can be used to connect students with each other, you the instructor, and possible course content. For instance, you can create a Twitter account, e.g. SUmat295, SUIntroAnthropology, etc., and have students follow the account. You can then ‘retweet’ content relevant to the course, e.g. news articles, videos, quotes, etc., and create your own posts and have students find it using unique hashtags, e.g. #SUm295course. Students can then comment on your posts to give opinions. Students could then also coordinate study groups using pre-determined hashtags like #sumat295studygroup, etc.

This gives students a chance to interact with the course ‘in real time’ (as can you see student interaction ‘in real time’ from your phone), interact with material, and coordinate/communicate with other students on a platform many of them will use daily. You could include comments, posting/reposting, etc. as part of the participation in the course. [Students need not use their own personal account but rather an account they create for the course.] How you choose to use it depends on the course, the course design, and your vision, but there are many possibilities!

3.3 Signing Up for Twitter

Signing up for Twitter is simple. Go to <https://twitter.com/i/flow/signup> and enter the required information, such as your name and email address. Once you have set up an account, you need to select a unique username. You will want to choose a name which identifies the course and which is easy to remember for students but is unique enough to be ‘limited’ to course users. After you create your account, you can complete your ‘bio’, i.e. add a course description, and add a profile photo/header for the account. For more on this, you can watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU19asmTsJw>.

3.4 Tweeting & Hashtags

Once you have an account, you can begin posting/retweeting content relevant to the course. What material you are tweeting, hashtags you are using, etc depend on the course and how you are using it. However, a few of the videos below will help you get started:

- The Ultimate Guide to Twitter: <https://www.theedublogger.com/twitter/>
- How to Use Twitter (A Beginners Guide 2020)—YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2_em-1gCp4
- How to Use Twitter—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jWNpLvdocU>
- How Hashtags Work on Social Media—YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX5MbZ48EwM>
- How to Use Twitter: Critical Tips for New Users: <https://www.wired.com/story/how-to-setup-twitter-search-hashtag-and-login-help/>

3.5 Twitter Concerns

As with using any social media in teaching, there are many things to be aware of. It is best to introduce these methods slowly in your course—a little at a time—to learn what works and does not work, as well as how to successfully engage students with the application. One should read thoroughly about teaching pedagogy using the application, experiment with the app independently, and plan thoroughly how to manage how students will use/interact with the app. As a few examples of things to think about, plan, or be concerned with:

- Privacy: Who will be able to access the course profile page? What could happen if people outside the course are able to access posts or course material? Is this a feature you want to use in the course or something you want restricted? How will links, posts, hashtags, etc by your students in the course ‘expose’ then? What type of information does the app gather and keep track of on the students end, e.g. geographic location, internet history, etc.
- Sensitive Materials: What types of posts, videos, and photos could the students see on the app? How will they engage others (non-students) using the app? How will you restrict (or not restrict) ‘objectionable’ material from being shared, tagged, or posted to the course profile? What is ‘objectionable’ (see below)? What level can students disengage if they feel uncomfortable? How are different students more or less vulnerable on the app due to their race, color, age, sex, gender (identity), sexual orientation, veteran status, economic status, appearance, disability, citizen status, national origin, religion, marital status, prior criminal status, etc.?

- User Guidelines: Students could easily begin teaching the course profile/material as social media first and course material second. Beyond the university guidelines on discussion and ethical behavior, what rules/guidelines will you use with students on the app? What level of control will you give students over tagging, sharing, posting, discussing? What is 'okay' and what is 'not okay'? What if students violate these rules? What are the consequences or leniency for students?

4 Other Resources

4.1 MIT Open Courseware

MIT Open Courseware is vast collection of course materials from MIT. Licensed under a [Creative Commons License](#), these provide amazing opportunity for students and instructors alike. For students, the site provides an opportunity to learn from a large collection of materials from a diverse selection of courses. For an instructor, it can provide ideas for your own courses, give an extra materials to use with your students, or offer another source of lecture videos (when available). You are able to search courses by department or by available content. Lecture videos can be watched on the main OCW page <https://ocw.mit.edu> or on their YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/user/MIT>.



Figure 14: MIT Open Courseware.

In particular, OCW has very useful courses for graduate instructors and lab/teaching assistants in STEM. For those graduate students in STEM, we would encourage you to go through the materials and especially the lectures in *8.395J Teaching College-Level Science and Engineering (Spring 2009)* and *8.395J Teaching College-Level Science and Engineering (Fall 2015)*. These are wonderful lectures covering teaching in STEM specific to college level STEM.

The playlist for the YouTube lectures for these courses can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9uGFKoRGUU&list=PLB1304385546D6F86> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zm8uMV5aMdw&list=PLU14u3cNGP60bTiL2hg0h_akgz8ywXkCX.

Figure 15: OCW’s Teaching College-Level Science and Engineering.

4.2 Symbolab & WolframAlpha

Symbolab and WolframAlpha are symbolic calculators freely available online. Symbolab can be found at <https://www.symbolab.com/> and WolframAlpha can be found at <https://www.wolframalpha.com/>. These allow the user to enter things like

$$\begin{array}{ll} \frac{d}{dx} \sqrt[3]{x^5} & \int_1^3 (x^3 + 2x + 1) \, dx \\ \text{Solve } 3x + 4 = 5 & \sum_{n=1}^{10} n(n+1) \\ e^{3.2} & \text{Solve } E = \frac{1}{2} L^2 \omega^2 \text{ for } \omega \end{array}$$

This becomes very useful for students who may not have access to (often very expensive) calculators. Moreover, WolframAlpha serves as much more. It can be used as a computational device for many fields, including personal health, engineering, Earth Sciences, Food & Nutrition, Statistics, etc. It can also interpret, retrieve, and compute with more generic inputs. For example, you can enter

- Scrabble score ‘muzjiks’

- US GDP/US Population
- France GDP/US GDP
- Temperature Syracuse, NY October 22, 1996
- Location international space station
- Auriga Seamount relief map
- metabolic rate, female, 25y, 5'7", 130lb

WolframAlpha (a linguistic ‘baby’ version of the real program Mathematica, which is [available to Syracuse University students](#) for free but does require programming skills), can also take certain Mathematica commands to extend its utility. See [THIS DOCUMENT](#) for more information.

Instructors and teaching assistants alike should be aware of these and other similar websites. These not only will perform computations for students, but will show the steps. Symbolab shows steps (whenever possible) for free, while WolframAlpha requires monthly membership for this service. However last known, the smartphone app version of WolframAlpha will show steps for free without having an account. These and other similar applications could present an opportunity for students to pass off work performed by a computer as their own. Instructors should be aware of the methods these programs use (so that it is easier to recognize suspicious submissions), and consider these and other applications students may take advantage of when creating course assignments.

4.3 Classroom Polling

Whether teaching online, polling student opinion or questioning students on a topic is a great way to improve classroom participation, increase classroom learning, and help understand what students are thinking/feeling/learning/understanding. There are many ways to can integrate polling into your classroom. There are many options:

- [Blackboard](#) (which can do polls or surveys on the main class page or while using Blackboard Collaborate)
- [Poll Everywhere](#) (Free Account: Unlimited questions, 25 max audience, web or smartphone)
- [Google Forms](#) (free, online surveys)
- [Kahoot!](#) (survey/polls/questions, web or smartphone)
- [Socrative](#) (survey/polls/questions, web or smartphone)
- Others: [GoSoapBox](#), [Formative](#), [Micropoll](#), [PM](#)

4.4 Jeopardy!

Jeopardy! is a television game show in which contestants answer clues which are given as answers and the contestant's answers are given as questions. For example, a clue might be, "In 1492, Columbus sailed this famous ocean's blue," where the answer in this case would be, "What is the Atlantic Ocean." There are a few more aspects to the game: double and final jeopardy, etc. You can read more about the game on its Wikipedia page <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeopardy!>. These can be a great way for students to interact with course material, whether in the classroom or online (synchronous or asynchronous). There are websites on which you can create your own Jeopardy! games.

- Jeopardy Labs: <https://jeopardylabs.com/>
- Factile: <https://www.playfactile.com/>