



My Blackboard

Once you Log in, you are at the **My Blackboard** screen which is made up of two parts — the Tabs at the top, and the Tools down the left side.

Tabs

1. **My Blackboard** provides access to Tools, courses, calendar, tasks and announcements.
2. **Courses** provides access to browse or search for courses.

Tools

Most of the items also appear in each course Web sites, but from here you can access them on a system-wide scale

1. **Announcements:** Displays announcements posted for each course.
2. **Calendar:** Personal and course.
3. **Tasks:** Status, due date, and priority.
4. **View Grades:** A list of enrolled courses. Select a course to see grades.
5. **Send E-mail:** Click on a course to email individuals/groups/instructors.
6. **User Directory (searchable):** Users appear only if they agree to the privacy agreement. User may enter information unique to him- or herself.
7. **Address Book:** Empty until user enters his/her own data.

Designing Your Course: The Control Panel

You have access to the following features in your Blackboard course through the **Control Panel**. The **Control Panel** is where you manage the look, feel and content of your page. It is also how you can pick up items deposited in the **Digital Dropbox**, manage the different communication tools (**Calendar**, email options, **Discussion Board**, etc), manage users, and use the instruction manual for support.

Think of the **Control Panel** as the central location for all your designing tools.

1. Click **My Blackboard** in the upper left side of the screen.
2. Click the name of your course, listed under **My Courses** on the right side of **My Blackboard** screen.
3. Notice the **Control Panel** listed at the very bottom of the menu on the left.

Using Course Options to Enable, Disable and Secure Menu Items

Change the availability of buttons and features

1. Click **Control Panel** at lower left of the screen.
2. Under the heading **Course Options**, choose **Settings**.
3. Select **Course Availability**.
4. Select **Yes** in order to enable your students to view the course.
5. Click **Submit** at the bottom of the screen.
6. Click **OK** to preview your changes.

Using Course Options to Change the Color and Face of Menu Buttons

Change the color and appearance of buttons

1. Click **Control Panel** at lower left of the screen.
2. Under the heading **Course Options**, choose **Settings**.
3. Select **Course Design**.
4. Select **Course Design** once again.
5. Under **Button Style**, choose the shape and style of button you'd like.
6. Click **Submit**.

Adding Documents to Your Blackboard Course

There are several ways to add documents to your Blackboard course. The method you choose will depend upon how you would like your students to access and use the information.

Typing (Typing text directly into the Blackboard editing screen)

You can type text into the Add Document editing screen. This method places all of the text onscreen in Blackboard where the student can read it.

1. **Smart Text:** Automatically recognizes a hot link if it is the first thing entered in the text box or if it proceeded by a single space. The benefit of smart text is that it recognizes the Enter key as a paragraph tag. Smart text accepts HTML tags as well.
2. **Plain Text:** Displays text as written. (Can be used to show HTML coding as written.)
3. **HTML:** Displays text as coded using HTML tags.

Cut and Paste (Copying text into the Blackboard editing screen)

You can cut and paste text from an existing document, e.g. a Microsoft Word document. This method places all of the text onscreen in Blackboard where the student can read it. This method does **not** retain all of your document's original formatting. You have to add HTML codes to add formatting.

1. Use **Control Panel**.
2. Under the heading **Content Areas**, open the section of your Blackboard course where you want the text to appear (e.g., **Course Information**, **Course Documents**, **Assignments**).
3. Click the **Add Item** button.
4. Select a predefined name or select **Other** and enter your document name in the box below the list.
5. Select a color for the title display.
6. With your Blackboard course in one window, open a second window to view your document.
7. Minimize the blackboard site by clicking once on the line in the upper right hand corner of the screen. Your Blackboard site will still be open, it will just be at the bottom of the screen.
8. Then click on the application that you can pull your file up in (Word, PowerPoint, etc.)
9. Open your file.
10. In your original document, highlight the text you want to copy. Use **Edit | Copy**.
11. Maximize your Blackboard site by clicking once on it at the bottom of the window.
12. In the Text section of Blackboard course window, use **Edit | Paste**. You will lose most formatting (bullet lists, fonts, etc.).
13. Click **Submit** and then **OK** to preview the document.

Link to a Document (Attaching a file to Blackboard)

You can link to an entire document, e.g. Word, PowerPoint, HTML. This method shows only the link on the Blackboard screen. When the student clicks on the link, the document will open for them to read and print. This method copies a file from your local computer or disk to your Blackboard course site. Because the file opens in the application in which it was created, all of the original formatting should remain.

1. Use **Control Panel**.
2. Under the heading **Content Areas**, open the section of your Blackboard course where you want the file attached (e.g., **Course Information, Course Documents, Assignments**).
3. Click **Add Item**.
4. Select a name for the document.
5. Select a color for the title display.
6. In the Text section of Blackboard course window, you may include a brief description of the file (e.g., "This assignment is due on Monday, September 14th at the beginning of class.")
7. Under **Content**, click **Browse** to locate and select the file you want to attach.
8. Next to Name of Link to File: type in some text to identify the document. You can use the name of the application in which it was created so that your students know if it is a Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or HTML file. This text will become the hyperlink.
9. Click **Submit**.
10. Click **OK** to preview the change.

Questions? E-mail blackboard@depaul.edu or call 773-325-1091!