Blackboard Guidelines
for Faculty
# Table of Content

Purpose ........................................................................................................................................... 3  

Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 3  

GUIDELINES.................................................................................................................................... 4  

I. Defining Blackboard and Web Campus......................................................................................... 4  
   Blackboard ................................................................................................................................. 4  
   WebCampus ............................................................................................................................... 4  

II. Access to Blackboard .................................................................................................................. 4  
   User Accounts ............................................................................................................................ 4  
   Blackboard Training .................................................................................................................... 5  
   Changing password ...................................................................................................................... 5  
   Student Access ........................................................................................................................... 5  
   Enrolling Users in a Blackboard Course ....................................................................................... 5  
   Special Account/Access Requests ............................................................................................... 5  
   Blackboard Administrative Access ............................................................................................. 6  
   When are Blackboard Courses Created? ...................................................................................... 6  
   When are Blackboard Courses Removed? .................................................................................... 6  
   Course Cancellations ................................................................................................................... 6  

III. Course Management .................................................................................................................. 7  
   Adding the Course Syllabus .......................................................................................................... 7  
   Building a Bb Course Checklist .................................................................................................... 7  
   Recycled (copied) Courses ........................................................................................................... 7  
   Exporting & Archiving Courses ................................................................................................... 7  
   Gradebook Information ................................................................................................................ 7  

IV. Course Delivery .......................................................................................................................... 8  
   Content Availability .................................................................................................................... 8  
   Official Roster ............................................................................................................................. 8  
   Library and Copyright .................................................................................................................. 8  
   Grade Submission ........................................................................................................................ 8  
   Students with Disabilities .............................................................................................................. 9  
   Online Course Evaluations ......................................................................................................... 9  
   Course Closing ............................................................................................................................ 9  

V. Getting Technical Help ............................................................................................................... 9  

VI. Addendums ............................................................................................................................... 10  
   A: Building a Blackboard Course Website Checklist  
   B: Blackboard Best Practices: Making Course Content Available to Students with Disabilities .... 11
Purpose
This document is intended to provide the following:

- Establish procedural issues related to Blackboard
- Provide consistency in decision-making related to Blackboard
- Save time for instructors using Blackboard
- Assist in the enhancement of a Blackboard course
- Support Blackboard usage

Introduction
This document is intended to serve as a set of guidelines for decision-making related to the use of Blackboard (Bb) course management software licensed to Wilmington University (WU).

Included are statements related to Blackboard Access, Course Management, Course Delivery, and related procedures.

This document is intended to reside online for ease in usability and access, as well as to ensure the availability of the most current version. Do not rely on printed copies of this document without first verifying their accuracy against subsequent online updates. Changes to these guidelines will be indicated by a change in the "Last Updated" date listed at the end of this document.
GUIDELINES

I. Defining Blackboard and Web Campus

Blackboard
Blackboard is a password protected web environment that allows instructors to upload data to this course management system. Instructors simply point and click to automatically incorporate learning materials from word processing, audio, video, and presentation files. Best of all, instructors and students can access Blackboard Course Sites anytime, anywhere, and from any Web browser.

WebCampus
WebCampus is an online student/faculty information system. Using one username and password students can register for courses, make tuition payments, check their schedules, view grades, send and receive e-mail with a wilmu.edu email address and access Blackboard. Faculty can see their course rosters for a chosen term, submit course grades to the Registrars’ Office, instructor forms are available, view the academic calendar, send and receive email and access Blackboard.

II. Access to Blackboard

User Accounts
All University Faculty members are given a single username and password to access Blackboard and WebCampus at the time of their “new Hire” orientation. While faculty can begin logging into WebCampus right from the beginning, to be granted access to Blackboard an instructor must first take a three hour Getting Started Blackboard course prior to being granted access to Blackboard. (See “Blackboard Training” below)

Students are given a single username that grants them access to their Blackboard/WebCampus/Email accounts. This information is given to them at the time of acceptance to Wilmington University.
Blackboard Training
Before faculty can access Blackboard, they must attend a **three-hour session** entitled "**Blackboard Getting Started**". These sessions are offered free by the Distance Learning Department Training Center. All faculty have the option to attend the workshop either completely online or in a face-to-face format.

For times and dates of these training sessions see the online Training Schedule at this link: [http://www.wilmu.edu/edtech/training/trainschedule.html](http://www.wilmu.edu/edtech/training/trainschedule.html)

Changing password
Faculty and students change their password for WebCampus and Blackboard in WebCampus at [https://webcampus.wilmu.edu](https://webcampus.wilmu.edu).

1. On the left menu chose “Change Password”
2. Enter your old Password (the one you logged into Web Campus with)
3. Enter the Password you want to start using
4. Enter the new Password a Second time
5. Click “Change Password”

Student Access
Students who register for a class are automatically enrolled in the Blackboard course within 24 hours of their enrollment. Instructors are asked to not turn off their courses while in development since this is how students receive their Syllabi.

Enrolling Users in a Blackboard Course
Students are automatically enrolled in their courses in Blackboard within 24 hours of registering for their courses. Instructors should not enroll students in their courses. The only instance an instructor should enroll a student is if they are not on the official course roster, but the faculty member would like to grant them access to the course. Faculty members should consult the Academic Policy Manual for guidelines on allowing access to their course online to non-enrolled students.

Special Account/Access Requests
Faculty and students are automatically assigned to/enrolled in their Blackboard courses by our student information system. Access to the Blackboard system or specific Blackboard courses other than regular course enrollments must be specifically requested online:
You will be presented with to login to the system before you can access this page. To do so you will use your domain/email username without the @wilmu.edu (john.q.faculty) and password to be granted access to this page.

*Special Bb access may consist of the following:*

1. Guest access: Bb access for a user not already affiliated with Wilmington University (faculty or student)
2. Wilmington University administrative staff
3. Other types of special access to the Blackboard system.

**Blackboard Administrative Access**

Blackboard administrators may access a course site without instructor permission or prior notice to respond to a specific student or instructor problem/ concern.

**When are Blackboard Courses Created?**

Blackboard courses are created at least 6 weeks prior to the start of the semester and are available as soon as they are created. Instructors are required to keep their courses available for students to access even while in development since this is how students receive their syllabi.

**When are Blackboard Courses Removed?**

A Blackboard course that was created and is published in the registration book will be in the Blackboard system for 16 months, after this time it will be permanently removed. The course removal happens 3 times a year, during week 2 of Block II of each semester. During that time we will permanently remove the courses from the same semester of the year before.

*Notices of course removals are sent out to instructors 3 weeks prior to the course removal. It is the responsibility of the instructor to backup any information they do not wish to lose.*

**Course Cancellations**

Courses can be cancelled due to low enrollment at any time. Once a course in the system has been cancelled, the course will then become removed from Blackboard. It is the instructor’s responsibility to create a backup of the course prior to the course becoming cancelled.
III. Course Management

Adding the Course Syllabus
The course syllabus is added to Blackboard by the Faculty or the Academic Affairs Support team syllabisupport@wilmu.edu, as soon as the Blackboard site is available. Faculty must submit their syllabus, before class begins. The overall benchmark is two weeks before the class.

Building a Bb Course Checklist
Please see Addendum A

Recycled (copied) Courses
Each semester, instructors can recycle their course site and its materials for re-use in a later semester by going to the Control Panel of their current course and clicking on "Copy Course" to select the new destination. Complete directions can be found at: http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/instructors/managecourse/copycourse.htm

Exporting & Archiving Courses
Instructors can export or archive their course information. To download certain areas of your course website, instructors should use the Exporting option. For example, it is strongly recommended that you back up your Gradebook any time you make significant changes. To download a course as a whole, which includes board submissions and grades, instructors should choose to use the Archiving option instead of Exporting.

Gradebook Information
The Bb online gradebook is a tool designed for the convenience of students and faculty. However, it is not an official record of student grades, nor should it be considered a legally binding record of student scores. Faculty are strongly encouraged to periodically download and save or print out a copy of the Online Gradebook, and to print a final copy of their records after the semester ends.
IV. Course Delivery

Content Availability
Instructors are asked to not turn off their courses while in development since this is how students receive their Syllabi.

Students should be able to access the “content” of the course at least one week prior to the start date of the class.

Official Roster
The roster provided in Blackboard is not the “Official Roster” for your course. Student enrollments in Blackboard can take up to 12 hours to apply to the course. Your official course roster is available in WebCampus at https://webcampus.wilmcoll.edu.

Library and Copyright
i. As the instructor for this class, you would be responsible for ensuring copyright compliance utilizing Blackboard, a password protected area, by:
   - Maintaining integrity of the document by only posting allowable amount
   - Removing document in the agreed upon time limit.
   This permission is granted through the "fair-use" section of the copyright code.

ii. Additional information related to the College’s library resources and copyright support can be found at: http://www.wilmu.edu/library/developmentpolicy.html

Grade Submission
i. Online “Grade Entry” by faculty is done through WebCampus using your username and password. For any questions contact Louise Hyatt, Registrar’s Office at 302.356.6929 or louise.a.hyatt@wilmu.edu or Nancy Doody, Faculty Development Office at 302.356-6726 or nancy.c.doody@wilmu.edu.

ii. Final grades should be entered by the deadline provided in the Academic calendar.
**Students with Disabilities**
Blackboard Best Practices: Making Course Content Available to Students with Disabilities (Addendum B)

**Online Course Evaluations**
Evaluations for Distance Learning courses are taken online through the IDEA center's web site. The course evaluations begin the Tuesday of the 5th or 13th week of class and run until the end of the course. During this time students and instructors will receive a link to their evaluations via email where they will be asked to complete the course evaluation.

**Course Closing**
Please make the course **unavailable to the students** within **two weeks** of the close of the course.

**V. Getting Technical Help**

**Distance Learning Directory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Development Support</th>
<th>Help Desk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours of Operation:</strong> Mon – Fri 8:30 – 4:30pm</td>
<td><strong>Hours of Operation:</strong> 24/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toll Free:</strong> 1-877-967-5464</td>
<td><strong>Toll Free:</strong> 1-877-708-2905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-mail:</strong> <a href="mailto:distancelearning@wilmu.edu">distancelearning@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td><strong>Web:</strong> <a href="http://esupport.wilmu.edu">http://esupport.wilmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Web:</strong> <a href="http://www.wilmu.edu/distancelearning">http://www.wilmu.edu/distancelearning</a></td>
<td>- with Live Chat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sallie Reissman</td>
<td>Director of Distance Learning</td>
<td>302.356.6807</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sallie.a.reissman@wilmu.edu">sallie.a.reissman@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td>DL Operations &amp; Course Scheduling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>302.356.6804</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bonnie.l.kirkpatrick@wilmu.edu">bonnie.l.kirkpatrick@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td>Course Design &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meredith Wesolowski</td>
<td>Instructional Technology Coordinator</td>
<td>302.356.2457</td>
<td><a href="mailto:meredith.c.wesolowski@wilmu.edu">meredith.c.wesolowski@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td>Technology Innovation and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Rapposelli</td>
<td>Instructional Technology Assistant</td>
<td>302.356.6979</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joseph.a.rapposelli@wilmu.edu">joseph.a.rapposelli@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td>Training and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Buchanan</td>
<td>Instructional Design Assistant</td>
<td>302.356.2462</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stephen.a.buchanan@wilmu.edu">stephen.a.buchanan@wilmu.edu</a></td>
<td>Training and Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Addendums

Building a Blackboard Course Web Site Checklist
A Blackboard Tip Sheet

Transferring the classroom-based model of learning to the Internet-based model can be difficult for instructors new to online learning. This tip sheet will serve as a checklist for instructors when creating a Blackboard course Web site. It will provide instructors with a basic guide to create and manage a course Web site.

- General
  - Student information
    - Provide students with an overview and/or orientation of your course Web site.

- Content management
  - Planning
    - Plan out the placement of your materials before you start creating documents in Blackboard. Decide the hierarchy of folders you plan to use so you can create the folder structure before adding documents to them. Try to keep your folder depth to a maximum of 3-4 so students can find material easily.
  - Announce
    - Use the announcements feature consistently to inform students when content is added or changed.
  - Structure - using a course template
    - Using a template can enhance student navigation by keeping the "roads" to your content clear and consistent. It can also decrease the management time necessary when creating or uploading documents. Many institutions will have templates or requirements for organization and delivery of course material. Check with your local Blackboard system administrator for template information.
  - Adding Content
    - When adding course content, give clear explanations describing what each item is, what programs are necessary to access it, and how it fits in with the overall goals of the lesson.
    - Give comprehensive descriptions with each online assignment indicating the relevance to the classroom-based course component and corresponding materials.
    - Give placement cues directing students to related assignments, readings, web sites or course documents.
  - Evaluation
    - Evaluate student use of your course throughout the semester by creating a student survey in the Assessment Manager.
    - Check the Course Statistics in the Control Panel consistently to see when and how often your students are accessing your course.
Secure settings
  o Enable/disable buttons
    □ Limit access to areas of your course to enrolled students by disabling buttons from the navigation area. In the Control Panel, click on Course Settings and choose Area Availability. You can disable/enable buttons, and rename button titles by selecting from the drop-down menu.
  o Course material
    □ In the Area Availability area, you can also secure areas of your course from users on your Blackboard installation who are not enrolled in your course, or previewing the course as a guest. Student Tools, Communication areas and Announcements are automatically set to their defaults, but you may secure any other navigation area by selecting the appropriate box.

Interactivity
  o Asynchronous
    □ Require students to participate in discussion board forums. Students can do this with the entire class or with specific students through the Groups feature.
    □ Have students hand in assignments to you through the digital dropbox.
  o Synchronous
    □ Require students to participate in a virtual chat. Students can do this with the entire class or with specific students through the Groups feature.
    □ Remember that some students may not be as comfortable in synchronous communication as others, so keep chat size manageable. A recommended size is 3-7 students.
  o Groups
    □ Enroll students into groups to focus on interactivity among a smaller number of students, or to work collaboratively on projects.
  o Office hours
    □ Have specific online office hours for students who feel more comfortable communicating in the online environment or for whom it’s more convenient.
  o External resources
    □ Provide students with external resources or web sites (through the External Links area, or the Blackboard Resource Center), and tie them to your course assignments.

User management
  o Student roles
    □ Understand the different roles that can be assigned to students, course builder, grader, or teaching assistant, so you may have some student assistance if necessary.
  o Email addresses
    □ Make sure that all of your students have/keep updated email addresses so they can always receive email sent through Blackboard.
Hints and help
- Icebreaker activity
  - Include an icebreaker activity for students who may be new to the online learning environment. A simple activity might be for students to create a student homepage, participate in a fun discussion board, or deliver a document through the digital dropbox.
  - If you know that you will have documents that require the user to have a software application to open them, have a folder that contains links to Plug-ins, Players and Viewers. A simple way to find most software plug-ins is to visit the software company’s website and search through their available downloads.

For more educational materials about Blackboard products visit the Training Center (http://trainingcenter.blackboard.com)
Blackboard Best Practices: Making Course Content Available to Students with Disabilities

Introduction

The personal computer holds the potential of providing a more level learning space than ever before for students and professionals with disabilities. Digital information is largely display independent, and can be output in different modes to meet the different needs of individuals with disabilities. However, the wrong design choices by content providers can also create new and needless barriers to their material.

Blackboard has designed its interface to conform to the Federal Section 508 Web accessibility standards. There are two primary resources that guide content providers on Web accessibility: Federal Section 508 standards and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), guidelines and quick tips. The standards and quick tips are quoted here with pointers to those items that content providers will most likely need to use.

While most of what providers need to know relates to Web design, this document also contains information on providing accessible documents, PowerPoint presentations and to spreadsheets, all of which may be displayed in Blackboard.

Web Accessibility Basics

Faculty and instructional technology course providers using HTML to develop content will need to be familiar with both Section 508 and the WAI guidelines and tips. Those using less technical formats may only need to know a few Web accessibility features.

- First and foremost, use a format that is simple and easy to understand. Use text that is easy to read, and employ good contrast between the foreground and background.
- If using images, refer to Section 508 A and WAI tip 1.
- If using colors, refer to Section 508 D.
- If using tables and/or columns, refer to Section 508 G and H and WAI tip 9.
- If using graphics or charts, provide a text summary of the content as suggested in WAI tip 6.

When using technical content, complex graphics, maps or other material that is difficult to make accessible online, be aware that you may need to produce hard copy Braille or tactile graphics in advance, and sending the items to the student by mail.

Section 508 Standards

a. A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via “alt”, “longdesc”, or in element content).
b. Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.
c. Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.
d. Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.
e. Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.
f. Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.
g. Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.
h. Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.
i. Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation.
j. Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
k. A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.

l. When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.

m. When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).

n. When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.

o. A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.

p. When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.

**WAI Quick Tips**

1. **Images & Animations.** Use the alt attribute to describe the function of each visual.
2. **Image Maps.** Use client-side MAP and text for hotspots.
3. **Multimedia.** Provide captioning and transcripts of audio, and descriptions of video.
4. **Hyperlink Links.** Use text that makes sense when read out of context. For example, avoid "click here."
5. **Page Organization.** Use headings, lists, and consistent structure. Use CSS for layout and style where possible.
6. **Graphs & Charts.** Summarize or use the longdesc attribute.
7. **Scripts, Applets, & Plug-ins.** Provide alternative content in case active features are inaccessible or unsupported.
8. **Frames.** Use NOFRAMES and meaningful titles.
9. **Tables.** Make each cell have a meaningful label. Use CSS for layout and style where possible.
10. **Check Your Work.** Validate. Use tools, checklist, and guidelines at: [www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT](http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT).

**Tips for Working with Documents**

Avoid using multiple columns. Screen reader software normally reads across the entire display left to right thereby jumbling columnized content. Avoid small print. Leaving a blank line between paragraphs or sections is useful. However, leaving many blank lines between sections may make the user think the end of the document has been reached when it is only a break. If you include graphics, include a title and some description.

**Tips for Working with PowerPoint**

Use clear text and good color contrast to help users with limited vision or with visual processing disorders. If you include an image, input a text label for that image via the Image Properties option.

Because students who are blind may not access PowerPoint (depending on the screen reader they use), you may wish to save the slide outline as text. You can save the outline as text via either the “Save As” or “Export” feature. Be sure to review the resulting file to confirm that it conveys your content. Inserting blank lines in that document between each slide will also be helpful.

If you plan to publish your PowerPoint to the Web, try using the PowerPoint accessibility plug-in at [http://www.rehab.unmc.edu/office](http://www.rehab.unmc.edu/office). Unfortunately, the plug-in can be quirky and takes time to use effectively. It is under constant development, and you should periodically check for updates.
Tips for Working with Spreadsheets

A spreadsheet that is complex will be confusing for anyone, but can be even more so for users with disabilities. Make it as simple and clear as possible; students with visual or cognitive processing disabilities work better with simple formats.

You can help your visually impaired users by denoting which row and column contains vital header information; this simple communication can simplify initial exploration of the document and facilitate understanding. Remember, a screen reader will “speak” the information from a spreadsheet in a single cell at a time, and exploring a spreadsheet for an initial overview can be frustrating.

About This Tip Sheet

This material has been provided for Blackboard by EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information), which provides month-long, instructor-led, interactive online courses on accessible information technology:

http://www.rit.edu/easi

- Barrier-free Information Technology
- Beginner Barrier-free Web Design
- Advanced Barrier-free Web Design
- Barrier-free E-learning
- Accessible Internet Multimedia
- Learning Disabilities and Information Technology
- Business Benefits of Accessible Information Technology Design
- Train the Trainer

For additional information...

Norman Combs EASI CEO ncombs@rit.edu
Dick Banks EASI CTO dick@easi.cc

Education Opportunities

Blackboard Learning Services offers comprehensive classroom training programs and educational materials for the Blackboard Learning System and Blackboard Portal System™ products. For more information about how Blackboard Learning Services can serve your institution’s training needs through on-site events, synchronous WebEx seminars, or via our Certified Education Center partners, please contact your Account Manager at Blackboard or visit the online Training Center at http://training.blackboard.com

For more information about the Blackboard e-Education Suite™ of applications, please visit the Blackboard Web site at http://www.blackboard.com.

Copyright © 2003 by Blackboard Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of the contents of this tutorial may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher, Blackboard Inc.