This getting started guide will provide you with basic instructions on how to design features in your online course.

Office of Distance Education
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Introduction

Even if you are new to online teaching, with help from the Office of Distance Education and the available resources, you can create a fully online course that is engaging and interactive. We have compiled basic tasks and steps to help guide you along the way. Of course, if you have any questions or need assistance, you can always contact the Office of Distance Education.

Helpful Resources

There are many resources available regarding Blackboard. Below is a list of resources that are available to provide assistance.

Instructional Design and Development Center:
330-941-3244
iddc@ysu.edu

Instructional Designers:
330-941-1535

Electronic Information Technology Center:
330-941-2762

Tech Desk:
330-941-1595

Blackboard Online Help:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor
Build Content

To add content to your course, you will often use what Blackboard refers to as an item. These are very flexible spaces where you would typically add text, but where you can also put images, attach files, link to web pages or videos, or even embed a video for your students to view. When you create an item, Blackboard gives you a text editor window where you can add all these kinds of content.

To build an item:

1. Click **Build Content** and then click **Item**.

2. In the **Name** box, type a title for the item.

3. In the **Text** box, provide a detailed description for the item. Below are commonly used editing options.

4. Click **Submit**.
Build a Discussion Board

Online discussions can provide unique opportunities for engagement. Because students can take time to ponder before they post ideas, you may see more thoughtful conversations play out throughout your course. You can observe as students demonstrate their grasp of the material and correct misconceptions.

To build a Discussion Board:

1. Click **Discussions** on the menu panel and then click **Create Forum**.
2. In the **Name** box, type a title for the Discussion Board.
3. In the **Text** box, provide a detailed instructions for the Discussion Board.
4. Optionally, enter display dates and times to control visibility.
5. Set the Viewing Threads/Replies option.
   a. Standard View: students can see all the created threads and replies as soon as they click on the discussion board.
   b. Option Two: The students will have to create their own post before they can see other student’s posts.

6. In the **Grade Discussion Forum** box, assign points.

   ![Grade Discussion Forum](image)

   - **No Grading in Forum**
   - **Grade Discussion Forum**: Points possible:
     - This type of forum requires a specific set of options enabled. Those options were set for you:
       - Thread alignments was changed to Forum alignments

7. Optionally, in the **Show participant in “needs grading”** box, select the number of posts.
8. Lastly, click **Submit**.
Build a Discussion Board Link

If you are using Discussion Boards, it is best practice to create a link to the discussion in the module you want the students to complete it in. This improves clarity for the course by having the students complete all their work in one place.

To build a Discussion Board Link:

1. Click **Tools** and then click **Discussion Board**.

2. Click the radio button for **Select a Discussion Board Forum**.

3. Click the **Discussion Board** and then click **Next**.

4. In the **Text** box, provide a detailed instructions for the Discussion Board.

5. Optionally, enter display dates and times to control visibility.

6. Click **Submit**.
Build an Assignment

With assignments, you can create coursework and manage the grades and feedback for each student separately. When you create an assignment, a Grade Center column is created automatically. From the Grade Center or Needs Grading page, you can see who has submitted their work and start grading. You can decide when the students will be able to access the assignment through the settings, as well as, assign due dates and point totals.

To build an Assignment:

1. Click Assessments and then Assignment.

2. In the **Name** box, type a title for the Assignment.
3. In the **Description** box, provide a detailed instructions for the Assignment.
4. Optionally, attach any supporting documentation.
5. Enter a Due Date and Time. This will add the assignment to the calendar in Blackboard.

6. In the **Points Possible** box, assign a number of points.
7. Optionally, enter display dates and times to control visibility.
8. Click **Submit**.
Build a Test

You can build tests and quizzes in Blackboard to assess the student’s knowledge. There are multiple question types that you can create. If you have a test created in a Word document, please consider contacting the IDDC at extension 3244 to discuss importing services.

To build a test:

1. Click Assessments and then Test.

2. Click Create.
3. In the Name box, type a title for the Test.
4. In the Description box, provide a detailed instructions for the Test.
5. Click Submit.
6. Click Create Question and select your question type. See the image below for a list of the question types. For this example, we will use multiple choice.

7. Click Multiple Choice.
8. In the Question Text box, type your question.
9. Set the options for how the answers will display. For example, you can have numbers or letters for the answers.

10. In the **Number of Answers** list, select the number of answers for the question.

11. Type the correct answer in the first answer box and the rest of the answers in each box.

12. Optionally, type feedback for correct and incorrect answers in the respective boxes.

13. Check the box for, **Show Answers in Random Order**.

14. Click **Submit and Create Another Question** to continue building the test.

15. Once all the questions and answers are created, click **Submit**.
Deploy the Test

Once you have built a test or quiz, you will need to deploy it in the course. Best practice is to deploy the test in the module the students will be working in that week. This improves clarity for the course by having the students complete all their work in one place.

To deploy a test:

1. Click **Assessments** and then **Test**.
2. In the **Add an Existing Test** box, select the test and then click **Submit**.
3. Set the radio button to **Yes** to make the test available.
4. Check the box for **Multiple Attempts** and set the number to allow the students to take the test more than once. Leaving the box unchecked will allow the students only one attempt.
5. Check the box for **Set Timer** to assign a time limit.
6. **Under Auto Submit** set the radio button to **Yes** to have the test automatically submit when the timer is expired.

7. Optionally, set the availability date and time to control visibility. If you do not set any dates and times, you can also control the test with the Make the Test Available option.

8. **Under Show Test Results and Feedback to Students**, set the options that best fit your student’s needs.

9. **Under Test Presentation**, set the option for how the questions will be presented.

10. Optionally, click the checkbox for **Randomize Questions**.
Previewing Your Course

As you are developing your course and setting up availability dates, it can get confusing as to what the students are actually going to see. Blackboard has a feature called Student Preview Mode. With one click, you can actually see the exact same view as the students. This is very nice to verify you are setting up your course correctly.

To enter Student Preview Mode:

1. Click Enter Student Preview Mode, to view the course from the student’s view.

2. Once you have reviewed the course, click Exit Preview.

3. Keep the radio button on the recommended option and click Continue.