UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
Faculty Center for Learning Development

Blackboard 9: What's the Same? What's Different?

Blackboard 9 provides a significant upgrade to the overall look and feel of Blackboard, while preserving all the traditional teaching and learning tools from previous Blackboard versions. It is a lot like switching from Microsoft Word 2003 to Microsoft Word 2007 when Microsoft added the ribbon menus. Word pretty much still did the same thing, but the tools were in different places and were accessed differently. The upgrade to Blackboard 9 will be a lot like that. It still basically does all the same things it did before; you just need to find where everything is located. In addition, there are some wonderful new teaching and learning tools such as wikis, blog, and journals, and improvements to areas such as Groups. **One very important note, the Digital Dropbox has been dropped and is no longer included in Blackboard 9**, so instructors who use the Digital Dropbox should plan to use the Assignment Tool instead. The following are highlights of what you can expect to find in Blackboard 9:

Improved Support and Help

On Demand

Video Tutorials covering many of the basic Blackboard course tools are available. Go to *My Blackboard Home page* and look for "On Demand" or go to http://ondemand.blackboard.com.

Redesigned Interface and Navigation for Easier Course Editing

Customizable Homepage

Blackboard 9 features the ability to personalize *My Blackboard Home Page* so students or instructors can focus on features they use most, hide content they do not use, and add a variety of new tools using **Add Module**. Using these modules, students can set up their *Home Page* to be able to see all their Blackboard course grades and receive Blackboard alerts and notifications so they know when there is new content. Instructors can use modules to receive alerts when students submit assignments.

Easier Course Editing and Previewing

The Control Panel is now accessed from the main course page (the Announcements page), so that instructors can edit their courses more efficiently. A new *Edit Mode* switch allows instructors to easily toggle between the instructor view and the student view for any page in their course.
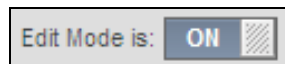
Edit Switch – Must be ON to edit course

CAUTION: Although it is now possible for instructors to remove a button from their course menu, all content within that area will also be removed. To avoid this, FCLD recommends instructors hide buttons, rather than remove them.

Drag and Drop

Reorder menu buttons, content, and page layouts using "drag and drop."

Better Organized Course Menu

Instructors can add divider lines and subheadings in the main course menu.   Course menu areas that do not have any content are automatically hidden from students. Communication and Course Tools are combined into one menu called Course Tools.

Centralized Storage Area for Course Content

All content for a course can be accessed and from a central file repository called "Course Files." If you create your file in the file repository, you can return to it later, make edits and all instances of the file in your course will automatically update.

New Teaching and Learning Tools

Wikis, Blogs, and Journals

Students can now privately or publicly share their experiences and thoughts about a course through the Wikis, Blogs and Journals feature. Wikis are used for collaborative assignments such as study guides, glossaries, and collaborative writing. Blogs encourage Blackboard users to share ideas and opinions and receive feedback and comments from others. Journals allow a student to record their course experience and share it privately with the instructor or allow all users to view their Journal.

Easy Access to Internet Resources and Multimedia

Flickr photos, YouTube videos, SlideShare and other rich instructional content can be easily added into any content area of your course with just a few clicks. *NOTE: Instructors may have to enable these options by going to Control Panel > Customization > Tool Availability.*

Notifications

This new feature alerts students and/or instructors when changes have been made to course content in two ways: by posting an alert on their Blackboard Home Page and, if enabled by the user, sending it via an email message or email digest to their university email account.

SafeAssign Anti-Plagiarism Software

SafeAssign is a plagiarism detection tool. Papers or other assignments are submitted and cross-checked against public Internet documents, ProQuest, and the collection of all

papers previously submitted to SafeAssign by instructors and students from other institutions. SafeAssign generates a report, displaying the percentage of suspected plagiarized text, and a list of suspected sources. Scores over 40% indicate a high probability of plagiarism. Instructors using SafeAssign are strongly urged to notify their students that they are using this tool using wording that can be found in the FCLD handout on SafeAssign.

Peer and Self-Assessment

Using the Peer and Self Assessment tool, an instructor can set up essays designed to let students assess their own learning. For example, after the completing an essay, a student may go back in and assess his or her own work, or have another student assess it. The instructor is able to read and view the responses via the Grade Center, but is not able to 'grade' them.

Blackboard Scholar

Blackboard Scholar is a social bookmarking service customized for education. Students and instructors can locate and tag relevant resources on the Internet and share them with users from universities around the world. Furthermore, by storing and sharing associated information with each resource such as tags, discipline, and other users who have tagged the item, Scholar allows users to find and then evaluate the most relevant and reliable resources.

Renamed Blackboard Tools

Course Reports

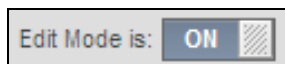Blackboard Course Statistics are now called Course Reports.

Blackboard Help

The Blackboard User Manual is now called Blackboard Help.

Bulk Delete

Blackboard's Recycle Utility is now called Bulk Delete.

Navigating Blackboard 9

Basic Navigation Tools

Edit Mode appears on the upper right of every course page. In the ON position, instructors can edit their course. In the OFF position, instructors cannot edit but can see how their courses appear to students.

Downward facing chevrons are located next to menu items, content items, and other areas in Blackboard. Clicking the chevron reveals a drop-down menu. These open and shut menus like a toggle switch.

The Control Panel

Blackboard 9 is flatter. The Control Panel is now located on the same page as the Course Menu.
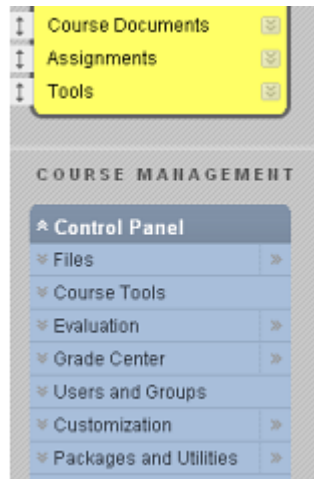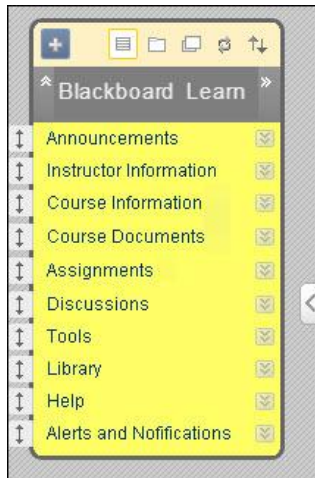
Double-sided arrows are present next to items that can be moved and or rearranged using the 'drag-and-drop' method.
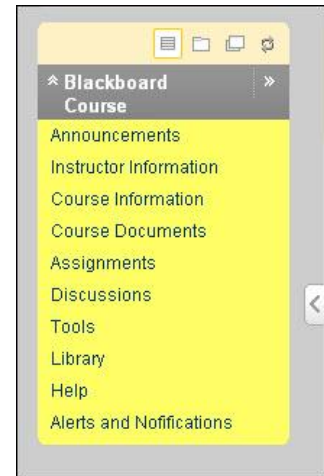
Right-facing chevrons open menu options and content in the main content area of the page – the 'work area.'

Blackboard's Course Menu

When *Edit Mode* is ON, the instructor view of the course menu has more editing capabilities than the students' view.

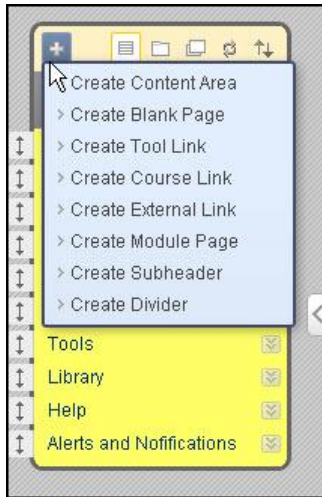**Instructor View of Course Menu**

Student View of Course Menu

Customizable Course Menu: Adding, Renaming, and Deleting Menu Items

To add or edit buttons in the main Course Menu:
1. Click the "+" icon in the upper left of the Course Menu.
2. Choose the type of menu item needed.
3. Name the button, make it available to users and click Submit.

Instructor view of course menu showing the drop-down menu for creating items.

Button Choices

Content Area is the same as in Blackboard 8: areas such as Course Documents or Course Information, where you can post files or folders of files.

Blank Pages adds a single page of content as a clickable link in your Course Menu. Only text, images and files can be added to Blank Pages; Course Tools and Assessments should be added through a Content Area or a Tool Link.

Tool Link links to tools, including class blogs, wikis, etc.

Course Link creates an area in your course where students can access a specific course item. For example, if you post your syllabus under "Course Information," you can link to it from your Course Menu by adding a Course Link.

External Link pages make it easy to add links to Internet Web sites.

Module Pages are customizable "alert" areas that allow students to see grades, alerts, and tasks in a dashboard layout. All new Blackboard courses have a module page called *Alerts and Notifications*. Instructors and students may add further modules to this page.

Subheaders and Dividers allow you to add headings & divider lines.

Online Blackboard Help

Instructions are available from any screen in Blackboard for both you and your students. Select the **Help** icon at the top of the page next to the logout button. Instructors can also call FCLD at (860)768-4661 or email fcld@hartford.edu.
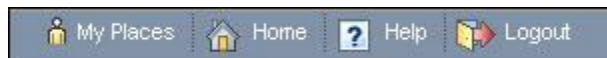
Help is also available from any Control Panel in the **Help** area:

- **Blackboard Help** – accesses the Blackboard instruction manual, which has very good step-by-step instructions.
- **Contact Support** – sends an e-mail to FCLD staff.
- **Video Tutorials** – accesses Blackboard's On Demand Learning Center containing video tutorials and other written support documentation.

If FCLD is unavailable to help, a quick 'Google' search will help locate answers to common Blackboard questions, as there are many Blackboard technical support documents from other University websites.

Steps in Blackboard 8 Compared to Blackboard 9

Task	Steps in Old Blackboard	Steps in New Blackboard
Add an announcement	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Announcements**. 3. Click **+Add Announcement**. 4. Add subject, text, options, etc. 5. Scroll down and click **Submit**.	1. Click **Announcements** on *Course Menu*. 2. Click **Create Announcement** button. 3. Add subject, text, options, etc. 4. Click **Submit** (found on the top or bottom of page).
Add instructor information	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Staff Information** from Course Tools. 3. Click **+Profile.** 4. Add information and **Submit**.	1. Click **Instructor Information** on *Course Menu*. 2. Click the **Create Contact** button. 3. Add information and **Submit**.
Add a syllabus or other content to your course	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click a content area, e.g. **Course Information**. 3. Click **+ Item**. 4. Add name and description. 5. Click **Browse**. 6. Navigate to file, click **Open**. 7. Fill in options if needed. 8. Scroll down and click Submit.	1. Click a content area, e.g. **Course Information** on *Course Menu*. 2. Point your cursor to **Build Content,** then select **Item.** 3. Add name and description. 4. Click **Browse My Computer.** 5. Navigate to file, click **Open**. 6. Fill in options if needed. 7. Click **Submit**.
See your class list/roster	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **List/Modify Users**. 3. Click **List All** tab. 4. Click **List All** button.	Click **Users and Groups** under *Control Panel* and slide down to click **Users.**
Send Email	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Send Email** in the Course Tools area. 3. Select **All Users** or another option. 4. Compose email and **Submit.**	1. Click **Course Tools** under *Control Panel*, slide down to click **Send Email.** 2. Select **All Users** or another option. 3. Compose email and **Submit.**
Access Grade Center	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Grade Center** in the Assessment area.	Click the right-facing chevron next to **Grade Center** under *Control Panel.*

Task	Steps in Old Blackboard	Steps in New Blackboard
Edit content already uploaded to Blackboard	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click the content area, i.e., **Course Information**, where you will find the content to modify. 3. Click **Modify** found at the right.	1. Click a content area, i.e. **Course Information**, from the *Course Menu* where you'll find the content to modify. 2. Click the associated chevron to the right of item and click **Edit**.
Make your course available to students	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Settings**. 3. Click **Availability**. 4. Select **Yes** and **Submit**.	1. Click **Customization** under *Control Panel*, and click **Properties.** 2. Select **Yes** for *Set Availability* and **Submit.**
Add a Forum to Discussion Board	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Discussion Board**. 3. Click the 'entry way', i.e. the course number. 4. Click **+Forum**. 5. Provide a name, description, set availability and choose settings. 6. **Submit**.	1. Click **Discussion Board** from *Course Menu.* 2. Click **Create Forum.** 3. Provide a name, description, set availability and choose settings. 4. **Submit**.
Deploy Tests, already created in Blackboard's Test Manager	After creating a test in Test Manager: 1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Assignments** or another content area from *Content Area*. 3. Click **+Test**. 4. Select a test from the list. 5. Click **Submit**, and then click **OK**. 6. Click **Modify the Test Options**. 7. Provide a description, set availability, options, feedback, and presentation. 8. **Submit**.	After creating a test in Test Manager: 1. Click **Assignments** or another content area from *Course Menu*. 2. Click **Create Assessment**, and then **Test**. 3. Select a test from the list. 4. **Submit**. 5. Provide a description, set availability, options, feedback, and presentation. 6. **Submit**.

Task	Steps in Old Blackboard	Steps in New Blackboard
Copy Course	1. Enter the course from which you want to copy. 2. Click **Control Panel**. 3. Click **Course Copy**. 4. Click **Copy Course Materials in an Existing Course.** 5. Click **Browse** to locate and then **Select** *Destination* course (the course into which you want to copy). 6. Select all course materials to be copied - **do not select Enrollments**. 7. **Submit.**	1. Enter the course from which you want to copy. 2. Click **Packages and Utilities** under *Control Panel* and select **Course Copy**. 3. Select **Copy Course Materials in an Existing Course** from the drop-down provided. 4. Click **Browse** to locate and then click associated *Destination* course (the course into which you want to copy). 5. Select all course materials to be copied - **do not select Enrollments**. 6. **Submit.**
Enable/Disable Tools	1. Click **Control Panel**. 2. Click **Manage Tools**. 3. Click **Tool Availability.** 4. Select or deselect boxes next to each tool to make them available/unavailable.	1. Click **Tools** from the *Course Menu* 2. Click **Hide Link** or **Show Link** next to each tool.

Find help in Blackboard	• Click **? Help** at the top of the page for documentation of instructional technologies, including Blackboard, on FCLD's website
	
	• Click **Control Panel,** then click
	    ○ **Contact System Admin** to send an email to FCLD
	    ○ **Manual** for Blackboard's written documentation
	    ○ **Quick Tutorials** for how-to videos created by Blackboard.
		• Click **? Help** at the top of the page for documentation of instructional technologies, including Blackboard, on FCLD's website
		
		• Click **Help** under *Control Panel*, then click
		    ○ **Contact System Admin** to send an email to FCLD
		    ○ **Guide** for Blackboard's written documentation
		    ○ **On Demand** for how-to videos and other documentation created by Blackboard.

Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford

Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)
FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology- related equipment including: PCs, Macs, scanners, and projectors as well as support staff. Faculty wishing to use the lab may contact FCLD.
Phone: (860) 768-4661
Email: fcld@hartford.edu
Website: http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/fcld/

Information Technology Services (ITS)

ITS Help Desk – Computing Center
For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, printer not working, Banner, campus facebook, and grades). Students should contact ITS with questions about Blackboard.
Phone: (860) 768-5999
Email: its@hartford.edu
Website: http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/its/

Media Technology Services (MTS) – Harry Jack Gray Center E113
MTS maintains and installs classroom equipment, such as projectors, Sympodiums, and interactive white boards, delivers and sets up technology needed for classes such as laptops, overhead projectors, microphones, sound systems, DVD/VCRs, digital cameras, etc., and provides instruction on its use. MTS is also responsible for overseeing ECHO360 Lecture Capture classrooms and administers WebEx web conferencing accounts.
Phone: (860) 768-4643 (Main) or (860) 768-4662 (Tech Line)
Website: www.hartford.edu/mts