BLACKBOARD SUPPORT (Faculty)

Blackboard ABCs

This document covers the basic items needed to use Bb successfully.

a. Support	b. WPUNJ Bb tools	c. Log in
d. Course site overview	e. Edit *My Courses* module	f. Edit the Course Menu
g. Course activation	h. Announcements	i. Add a content area
j. Upload files	k. Create a group	l. Discussion board
m. Assignments	n. Grade Center	

Questions, comments, corrections? Contact Robert Harris, harrisr@wpunj.edu

a. Support options

We offer Blackboard support 365 days a year through the **Bb Support Center**:

https://liberty.wpunj.edu/bb/support-center/

One of the benefits of the form is that it asks for the kind of information we need to resolve your problems quickly and efficiently. It seems to make sense that leaving a phone message or email would be quicker but that is not normally the case. Messages often don't include the kind of information we need to resolve a problem quickly and efficiently, and the Support Center remains the best venue of help.

The Bb Support Center is staffed 12 hours a day during the semester and throughout the weekends. We promise a response within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours during the weekends, but response times can be within minutes or hours.

Links to the Support Center can be found on the student and faculty support tabs in Blackboard, and on these pages:

Bb Home: http://bb.wpunj.edu
IRT Home: http://www.wpunj.edu/irt/
IT Services: http://www.wpunj.edu/its/
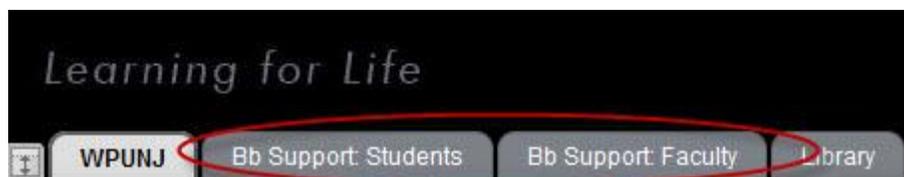
A new support feature is Blackboard On Demand, over 30 video tutorials that offer step-by-step interactive help with issues including content, collaboration, and assessment. Links to various On Demand files are available in this document. Access the site:

Bb On Demand:
http://www.wpunj.edu/bb/on-demand/

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b. WPUNJ Blackboard Tools/Standard Procedures

Course creation
Courses are created approximately two months before the beginning of the semester. For any number of reasons faculty might not be assigned to their proper courses; if you don't see your course please contact the Bb Support Center (see above). Course names are comprised of the department designation, four-digit course number and section, and are prepended with the year and semester designation, for example: 201240-bio1010-10. Semester designations are two digit numbers: 10 = Spring, 25 = Summer, 40 = Fall, 50 = Winter

Course population
Students are added to course shells on the first day of the semester. Database updates are performed twice daily during the add/drop period and once a day for the rest of the semester. Students can not be added to courses for which they are not registered without the express written consent of the Registrar.

Course Archiving
Courses are archives two years (four Fall/Spring semesters) after they are offered. The content can be restored or used to update an existing course shell upon request.

Transfer course content
Please use this form to request a transfer of course content from a previous semester to an existing shell:
https://liberty.wpunj.edu/bb/transfer/

Merge course shells
Please use this form if you'd like students of several sections diverted to one course shell from which you can manage the course. Only multi-section and cross-listed courses are eligible to be merged. Shells not being used will still be on your Bb site but should be left unavailable.
https://liberty.wpunj.edu/bb/combine/

Welcome letters for online courses
Distance learning courses are usually accompanied by a welcome letter that serves as a combination of mini-syllabus and guide to Bb. It is posted on a page outside of Bb so it can be accessed by students who have no idea how to access the course management system.
https://liberty.wpunj.edu/bb/welcome-letter/

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c. Login to Blackboard

Open a web browser and enter this address:
http://bb.wpunj.edu

One may also log in through WPConnect, but accessing Bb directly prevents some potential problems.

In the text area provided enter your university credentials: username and password

- English is the default language, but users can also select :
  Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Turkish

- Other languages are available – if you teach in another language please contact the Bb administrator
  through the support center.

- Faculty who need help with their university credentials should contact the Help Desk:
  Email: help@wpunj.edu
  Phone: 973.720.help (x4357)

- Students can find their credentials on this page:
  http://www.wpunj.edu/username/

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d. Course site overview

Click here for a video course tour

Course Menu:
Customizable navigation tool

Control Panel:
Administration tool for faculty
(not visible to students)

Support tools!

Edit Mode needs to be ON in order to update the course
Turn the Edit Mode to OFF in order to see the student view

Tabs across the top include:

- Bb Support: Students/Faculty
- David and Lorraine Cheng Library
- Instruction & Research Technology
- Content – a course-independent content management tool
- Scholar -- bookmark collection tool

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e. Edit the *My Courses* module

Courses are archived every two years, but that can still leave a long trail of entries on a course site. To manage which shells are visible in the **My Courses** module click on the asterisk icon:

Use the **Personalize** interface to select which course names are displayed on your site. Courses are hidden, not deleted, and the process can be reversed.

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f. Edit the Course Menu

   Click here for a video on adding and editing items in the course menu

Select the cross-shaped icon in the upper-left corner of the **Course Menu**:
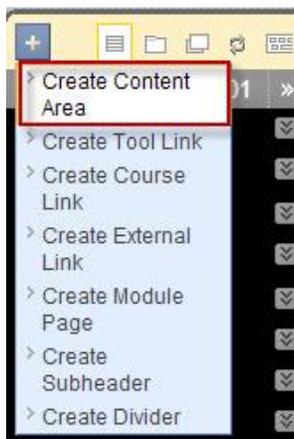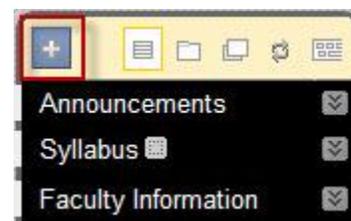
Then choose the **Create Content Area** option

Enter your own name for the new content area, click Available to Users, then Submit

You can edit the names and availability of both the course items you create and those that come in the course template. Left-click the chevron-like icon to the right of the menu item and choose to rename, hide or delete
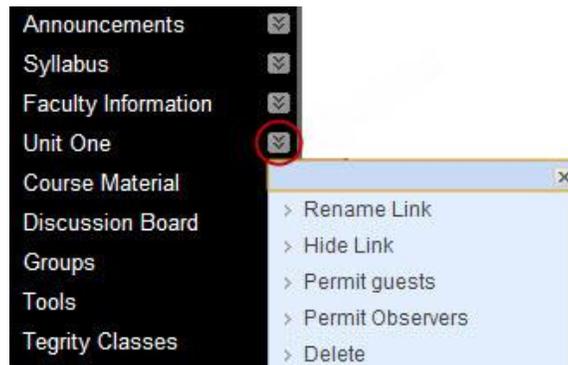
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g. Course Availability - activate your course

Courses are unavailable to students by default, and each faculty member is responsible for activating the course shell. Students will not see a course shell until it has been activated.

Begin by selecting **Customization** from the **Control Panel:**

From the ensuing menu select **Properties:**

Select the **Yes** radio button, then **Submit:**

h. Create and edit Announcements

Click here for a video demonstration of adding an announcement

In the Announcements area select **Create Announcement:**

In the **Options** area you can determine when the Announcement will appear, and for how long. You can also choose to mount the announcement permanently.

*Use the **calendar** tool to set dates   Use the **clock** tool to set times*

Enter content using the **visual editor**, then **Submit**:

To edit an announcement left-click the chevron-like icon next to the announcement name and select **Edit:**
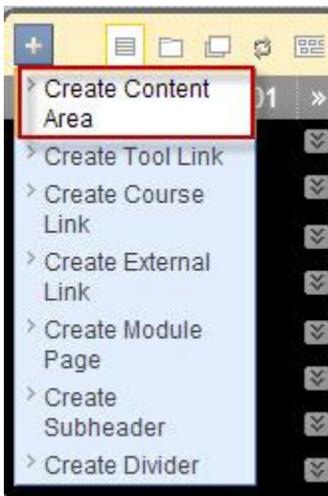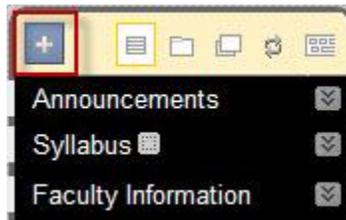
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i. Add a content area

Click here to see a video demonstration of adding a content area to the course menu

The course menu is standardized across the curriculum, but it can be customized.

Start by left-licking the cross-shaped icon in the upper left corner of the **Course Menu:**
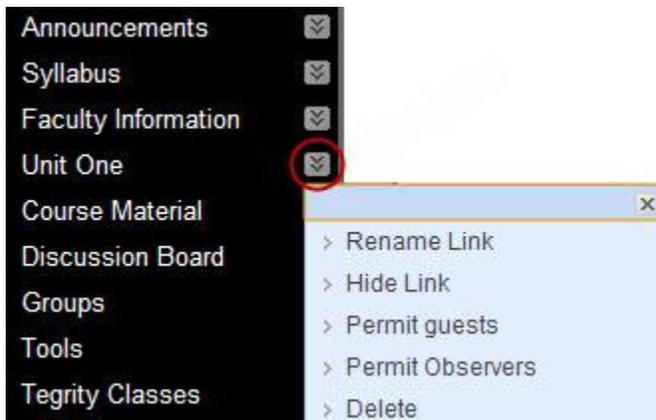
Next, choose **Create Content Area** from the menu

Other menu options allow users to add a tool and to create hyperlinks, modules, sub headers and dividers

Enter a name for the new area and check the availability box:

to Edit a content area left-click the chevron-like icon to the right of the area name and select rename, hide, or delete.

Both template items and items added by the faculty member can be edited.

j. Upload files

Course material can be any digital file: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, HTML, audio, video, etc.

In any course area select
the **Create Item** button

1. Click on the **Choose File** button and browse your computer for the file to upload. If you have material in your content area choose the **Link to Content Collection** button.
2. Add a name for the file – the **name** is the link students will see; if you leave this area blank students will see the filename
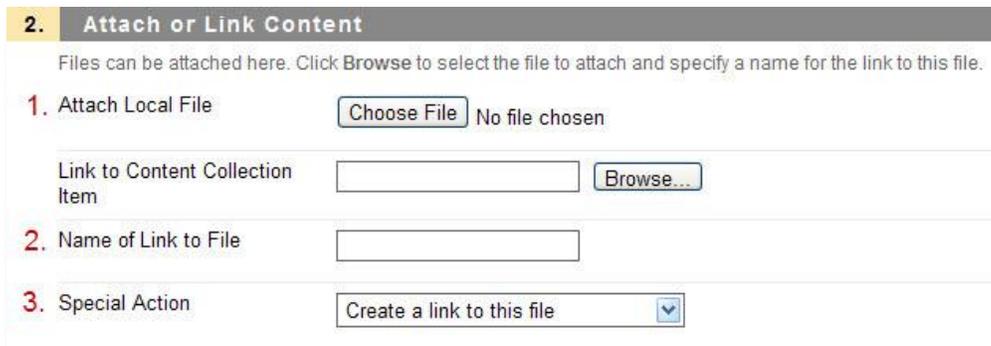
3. The default action is to create a link to the file, see #3 below

k. Tools menu

Twenty items are present in the Tools area of the Course Menu. Confusingly there is also an area with the same name in the Control Panel, but it serves a different purpose.

Announcements	Blogs	Calendar	Collaboration	Contacts	Course Portfolio
Discussion Board	Glossary	Groups	McGraw-Hill	Journals	Messages
My Grades	My Scholar	Portfolios Home	Roster	Scholar Home	Send Email
Tasks	User Manual	Wimba Pronto			

Most of these items are self-explanatory, but some are less very clear:

- **Collaboration**: Also found in the Communications tab, Collaboration allows users to chat in real time on the class level (Lecture Hall) or one-on-one (Office Hours).
- **McGraw Hill Higher Education:** Use books and other content supplied by McGraw Hill in the Bb interface
- **Messages:** This tool posts messages that can be retrieved in the Bb environment; Messages are not send to a users email box (see Send Email)
- **Roster:** A course roster with a confusing interface. The roster will appear to be empty until the user selects the **Go** button to the right of the text-entry box:

- **Send Email:** Also found in the Communication tab, this tool does just what it says it will, but is confusingly placed; while the tool listing is alphabetical the email tool is filed under **S** rather than **E**, and can be hard to find.
- **Wimba Pronto:** This is a tool that allows users to chat independently of the Blackboard interface, but the name of the tool is **Bb IM**, not Wimba Pronto!

Contact an instructional technologist through the Support Center for help with any of these tools.

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k. Create a group

  Click here for a video demonstration of group creation / adding students

Use Groups to sub-divide class members into working units.

> Start by selecting Groups in the Course Menu. If you don't see a Groups option you can add it – see above, **f. Edit Course Menu**
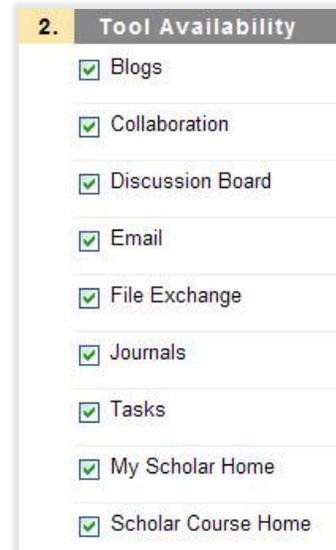
> In the Groups area select the button reading Create Single Group

You can allow the students to select their own groups, or choose to assign them to groups yourself with the **Manual Enroll** option:

In the **Tool Availability** area select from nine options:

Finally, choose group **Membership** by using the arrow tool (highlighted) to shunt students from the class list on the left to the group list on the right:
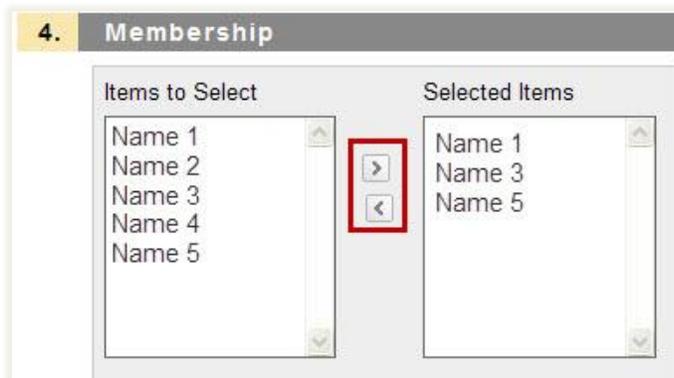
I. Discussion Board

Click here for a video tour of the discussion board

Use the Discussion Board to manage asynchronous discussions. Posts can include images, movies, and audio.

Start by selecting **Discussion Board** from the Course Menu.
If that option is not available add the tool by following the instructions above in:
f. Edit Course Menu

Discussion Board can also be found in the Tools area

Click here to see a video demonstration of forum creation

In the Discussion Board interface select the **Create Forum** button. Forums are sites within which **Threads** can be created. Bb discussions happen in Threads, and more than one thread can be created within one Forum.

Most of the forum settings – see the screen shot on the right -- are self-explanatory.

Post tagging refers to the practice of post organization by the creation of an individualized naming – tagging -- structure.

If you want students to create their own discussion topics select the **New Threads** area.

If the **Rate Posts** area is selected students have the ability to grade each others comments.

Moderation refers to the practice of faculty oversight of all new posts.

3. Forum Settings

☐ Allow Anonymous Posts
☐ Allow Author to Delete Own Posts
   ◯ All posts
   ◉ Only posts with no replies

☐ Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts
☐ Allow Post Tagging
☑ Allow Users to Reply with Quote
☑ Allow File Attachments
☑ Allow Members to Create New Threads

Subscribe ◉ Do not allow subscriptions
   ◯ Allow members to subscribe to threads
   ◯ Allow members to subscribe to forum
     ◯ Include body of post in the email
     ◉ Include link to post

☐ Allow Members to Rate Posts
☐ Force Moderation of Posts

Grade ◉ No Grading in Forum
   ◯ Grade Forum: Points possible: [＿＿＿＿]
   ◯ Grade Threads

	☑	Forum		Description	Total Posts
↕	☑	First week	⌄		0
			✕		
		> Open			
		> Edit			
		> Manage			
		> Copy			
		> Delete			

When a forum is created the next step is to create a thread. Either click on the forum name or left-click the chevron-like icon and select Open

Click here to see a video demonstration of thread creation

Select the **Create Thread** button and fill out the interface with the subject and message, illustrated below

Both questions and answers can feature external links, images, and multimedia.
When you are done students will be able to reply:

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m. Assignments

When you need students to submit a paper or other project the Assignments area is useful. In older versions of Blackboard users engaged the digital drop box for this purpose. A Grade Center column is created when an Assignment is deployed.

Pass your cursor over the **Evaluate** button in any content area and select **Create Assignment**
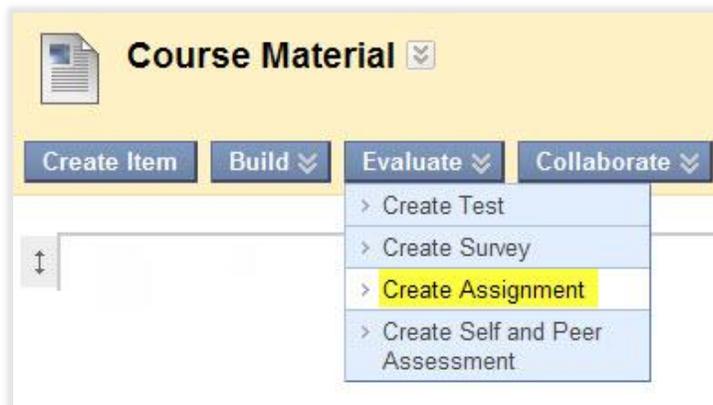
In the assignment interface the Availability dialogue allows users to specify how many times a student can attempt to upload an file. Because students can sometimes miss the first attempt many faculty allow unlimited attempts. Each submission is recorded, allowing the instructor to keep track of submissions.

Click here to see a video demonstration of downloading an Assignment

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n. Grade Center

Formerly known as the Gradebook, the **Grade Center** is a sophisticated interface for maintaining the class record. Students can view their own grade by using the My Grades function in the Tools area.

Start by accessing **Evaluation** in the

Control Panel, then **Grade Center**

A column is automatically created for all Assessments and Assignments you deploy. To generate your own column select the Create Column button
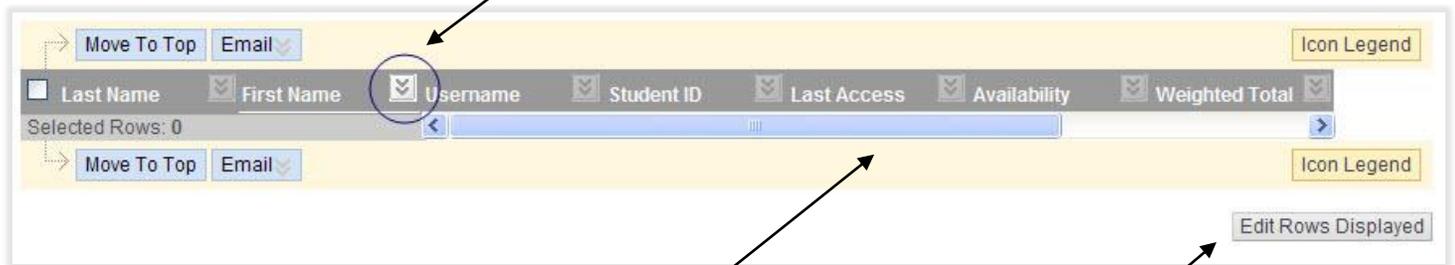
Click here to see a video demonstration of grade column creation

A grade column can be assigned both a primary and secondary display, and one must indicate the total possible points. Categories are generally not important.

Grade Center navigation:

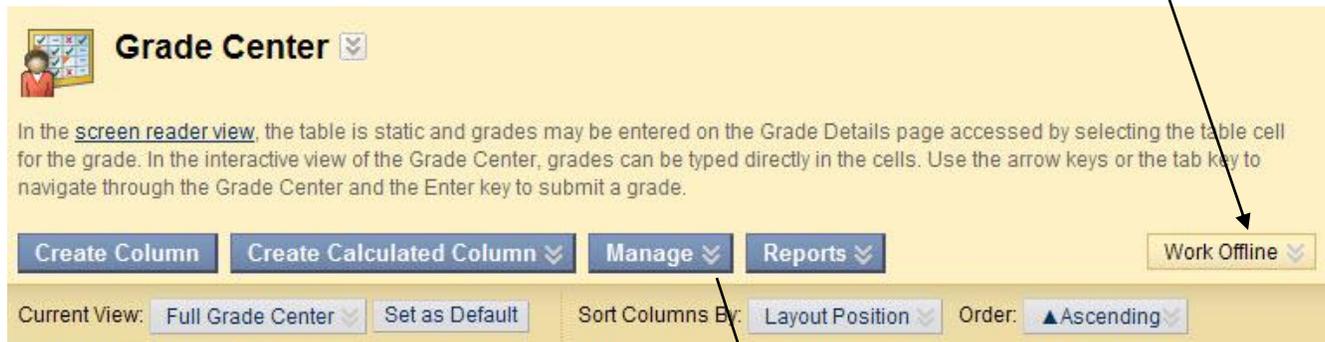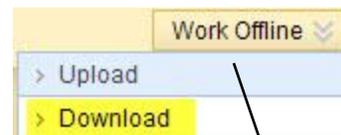Use the chevron-like icon to edit grade properties

Use the blue slide bar to move between columns   *Edit the number of rows you'd like to see in a single view*

One way to manage the Grade Center is to download students and columns in Excel format

Click here to see a video demonstration of downloading grades

Select the **Manage** button to organize the Grade Center