Blackboard Essentials

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Blackboard Support

Assistance via email: it@gvsu.edu

This account is read daily Monday-Friday excluding university holidays.

Assistance via telephone to our Bb Graduate Students: 616-331-8526

After hours/weekends/holidays: If calling the help desk after hours (616-331-2101) callers are auto forwarded directly to Blackboard's 24 x 7 service.

Blackboard Help Documents: http://www.gvsu.edu/elearn/help/.   Note the A- Z section also.

When you are logged into a Blackboard (Bb) Course, click the "Help" button on the left panel for a variety of videos and PDF files for Bb assistance
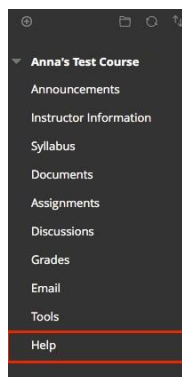
The Blackboard Company's website also contains a variety of help documents: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor

Logging into Blackboard

1.   Open your web browser. Suggested browsers are current versions of Chrome, Edge Chromium Firefox and Safari.
2.   In the URL Location, type in https://mybb.gvsu.edu. A link to Blackboard is also

available on the GVSU homepage by clicking on the Bb icon on the top right corner of the page.

3.

4.   Enter your network username (**NOT** your G-number), current password and click LOGIN.
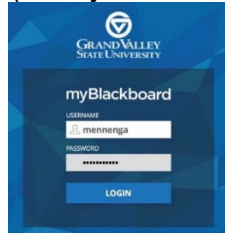
Once logged into Blackboard, you will see the **MyBb** tab that lists all Blackboard courses you have access to and displays announcements, organizations, calendar entries, and tasks for all your Blackboard courses. Click on the hyper-linked name of your course to get access to that specific course.
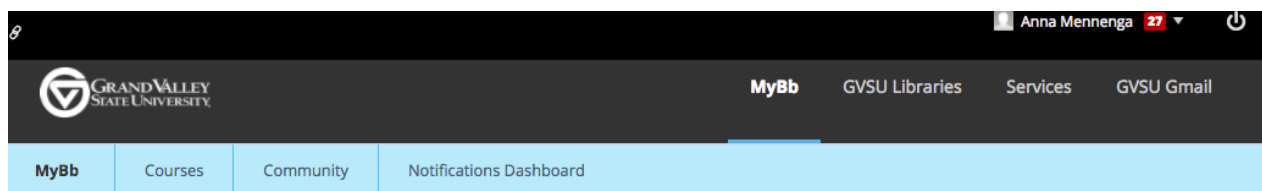

Login Information
Username and Password

Your *Username* is the same as your network login or the first part of your GVSU email address (NOT your G-number).
-   Faculty/staff example: Kate Smith's email is smithka@gvsu.edu, thus her Blackboard username will be: smithka
-   Student example: Ben Smith's email is smithbe@mail.gvsu.edu, thus his Blackboard username will be: smithbe

Your *Password* is the same as your GVSU network/email password.

Note: Faculty/Staff members who are also students
If a Faculty/Staff member is taking classes at GVSU, they will use their Faculty/Staff username to log into Blackboard, not their student username. All emails sent from BB will go to their Faculty/Staff Outlook account.

Reset Password
Faculty/Staff and Students: may change their password at by visiting the Network Self-Service Password Reset page.

If you need additional assistance, you can call the IT Help Desk at 616-331-210. *Note: You must have a personal email address and/or primary cell phone number in Banner before being able to reset your password.*

Faculty Course Assignments

All course assignments will be displayed on your MyBb page in the **My Courses** module. This module contains courses where you are the instructor, and any other courses you are enrolled in as a TA, grader, student, etc.

NOTE: If you do not see your courses under "My Courses", contact your Departmental Coordinator who acts as liaison to the Registrar's office. Once the Registrar's office has the teaching assignment in Banner, Blackboard will reflect the change within 9 hours.
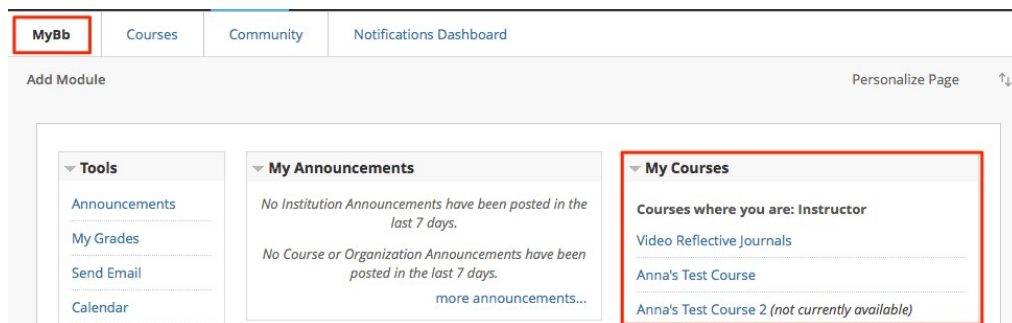
User Management
Enrolling Students

Blackboard student enrollments are received from Banner every four hours. Students are automatically added or dropped from a course based on their Banner enrollment.

Any student not registered for a course in Banner, but needs student access in Blackboard, must first request permission from the Registrar's Office. Blackboard Administrators can only add students fulfilling incompletes and students that are writing consultants. These requests can be made to services.gvsu.edu.

Enrolling an Instructor, T.A., Grader, Course Builder, or Guest

If faculty want someone enrolled, other than a registered student in the course, send the following information to services.gvsu.edu. This account is read during regular business hours.
The following information must be included in an email request:
-   Participant's correctly spelled name
-   GVSU email address
-   Class they will be participating in (Ex: STA 215 01 Winter 2018)
-   What rights they should have to your course (Student, Instructor, Grader, TA). Description of these roles is found below.
-   If the person to be added is a GVSU student include a very brief statement on their purpose in the course. We cannot add any student who will be registered for the course in Banner.

Note: Only graduate students can be given TA or Grader access to a course. To follow FERPA,

Undergraduate students can only be given Course Builder or student access to a course site.

Description of Course Roles
-    ***Instructor*** = access to all of the control panel, can change privileges
-    ***TA*** = access to almost all parts of the control panel (Faculty, Staff and Graduate Students only)
-    ***Grader*** = access to the Grade Center and assessment part of the control panel Faculty, Staff and Graduate Students only)
-    ***Course Builder*** = access to the documents part of the control panel. No access to Grade Center.
-    ***Student*** = no access to the control panel
-    ***Guest*** = the person only has access to content items you've turned on guest access to (you have to do it to each content item). If you click on the dropdown arrow, there is a "Allow Guest Access". They are all OFF by default.

Course Site Overview

When opening a course, you will be brought to the Announcements page (this is the default course entry page). In the top left of your course is the course menu. These are areas where you will add materials for students to see. In the bottom left is the Course Management area and Control Panel. This section is not visible to students.
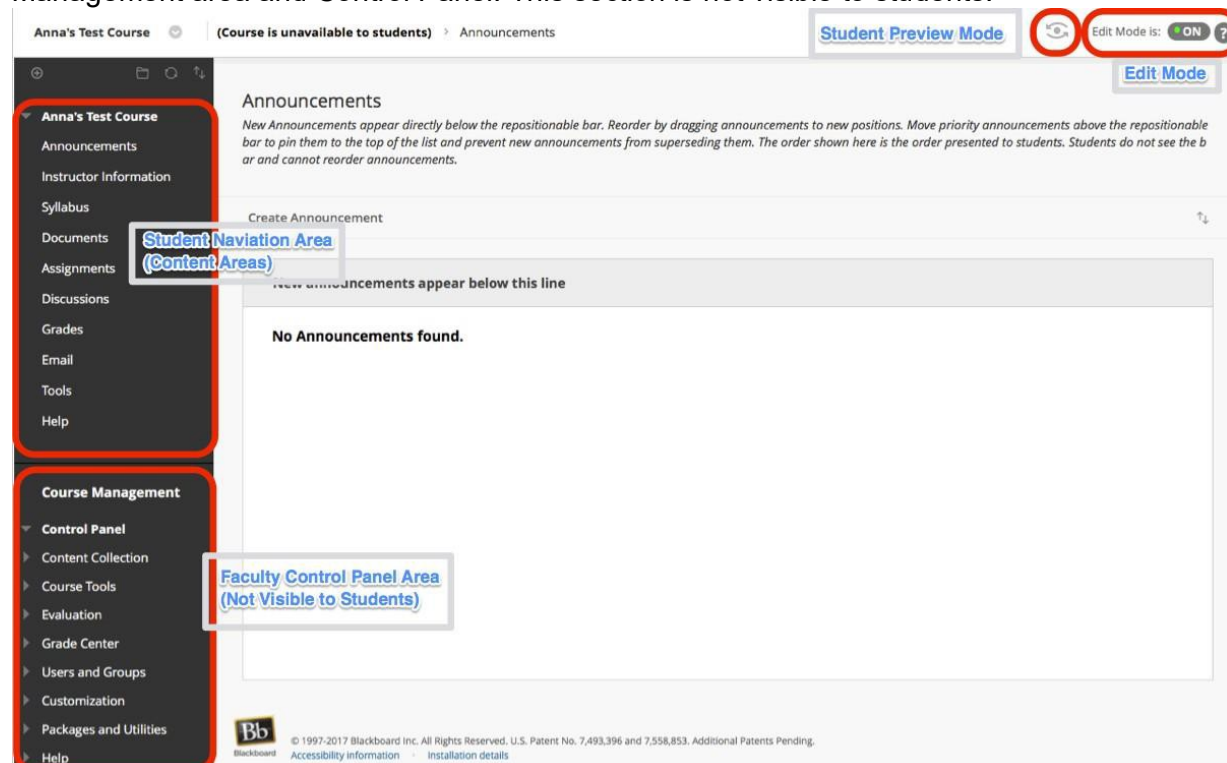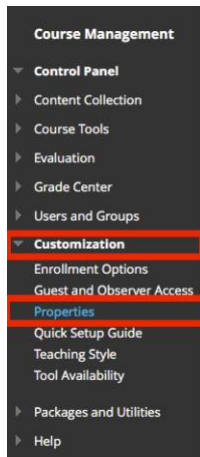

Course Availability

Initially, all your assigned courses will be unavailable so you are able to build content before permitting students to view it. From the MyBb Tab on the top right, you will see the classes your department has told the registrar's office you are teaching. The courses available to you are under your My Courses module. If the courses are marked "**not**

currently available" the instructor is the only person who has access to it. Faculty may still add content when the course is unavailable.
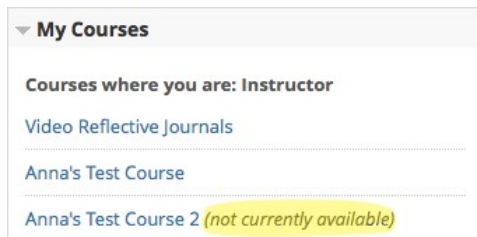
How to make your course available to students:

1. Go to the course you wish to make available.
2. Go to the **Control Panel**.
3. Select **Customization.**
4. Select **Properties.**

5. Scroll down to **Set Availability**
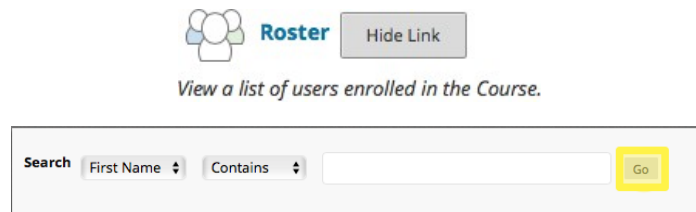6. Select **Yes**
7. Click **Submit**

Students will now be able to see the course. This has to be done for all courses.

Class Lists

Note: The class lists are automatically uploaded from Banner and synched with the BB courses several times a day.
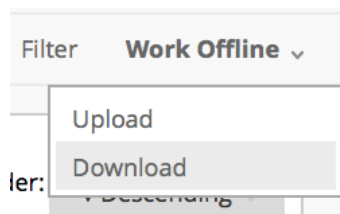
View a list of users enrolled in your course:

Click Tools, click Roster, and then click Go without adding any search criteria.
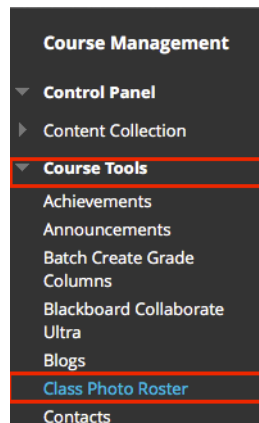

Download a list of students:
Go to the Grade Center, click Work Offline, click Download, Submit, and then Download again.


To view the Photo Roster:
Click Course tools, Click Class Photo Roster.

Student Preview Mode

This function allows instructors to navigate their course as if they were a student user. Use student preview to review the course content and validate the course behaviors. In student preview, you can also take tests/surveys and submit assignments.

To enter student preview mode, click the Student Preview button located to the left of Edit Mode. In order to use Student Preview, Edit Mode must be ON in the top right corner of your Bb screen. Edit Mode must remain on to make changes to your course.
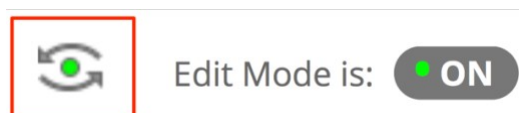
When you enter student preview mode, the student preview bar appears at the top of every page. The bar displays the text "Student Preview mode is ON" and has Settings and Exit Preview functions.

Student preview creates a student account, called the preview user account, logs you in as that student and enrolls you in the current course. As a preview user, other students can interact with your account and all of the work submitted by the preview user is kept like student data.

To Exit preview, click "Exit Preview", in the orange banner.

When you exit the student preview, you are prompted to keep or delete the preview user and all its associated data. Select the option you prefer and click the continue button.
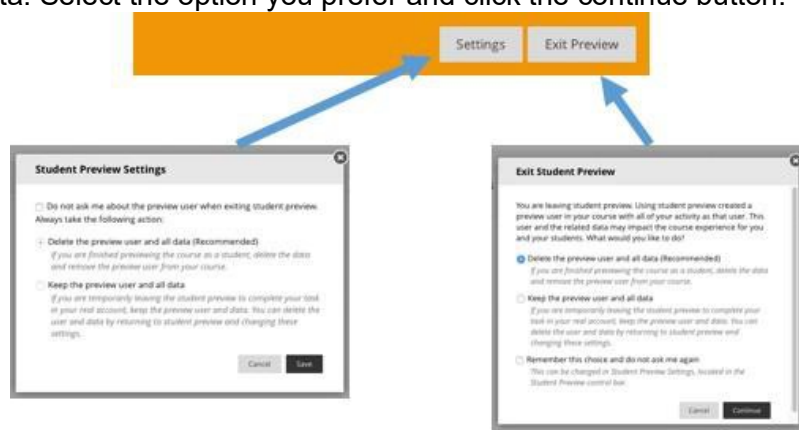
Select Keep the preview user and all data if you need to keep the user and data to see how student activity presents itself to you as the instructor, such as grade calculations. If you keep the data, the preview user account will appear in the course roster, Grade Center, and any place where you did something as that user. Data from the preview user can be deleted later.

When you Save the preview user account, the dot in the middle of the Enter Student Preview function icon turns green, indicating the preview user account is available for use.

To change the settings of the preview user, click Settings on the student preview bar. From here you can delete the preview user, or choose to save the user.

Left Menu Area

Announcements

Announcements may be used to notify students about course events, time changes, assignments due, corrections/clarifications of materials, changes in the syllabus, etc.

Create an Announcement

1. Select **Announcements** from the course menu
2. Select **Create Announcement**. If you do not see a create announcements, you may need to turn ON your edit mode.
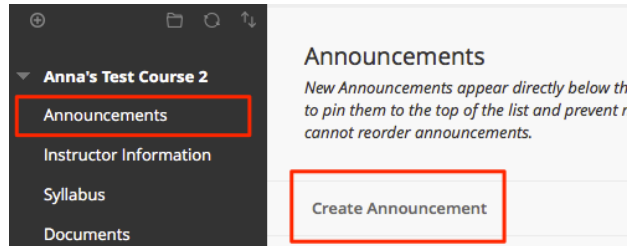
3. Type **Subject** and **Message**

4. Set the displayoptions that meet your needs. If you keep the default section "Date Restricted" the announcement will be moved to the tab after 7 days.

5. (optional) Click **Browse** to link content in the course to the Announcement. If the link points to a content item that is not available, the link will not appear in the Announcement until the content is available.
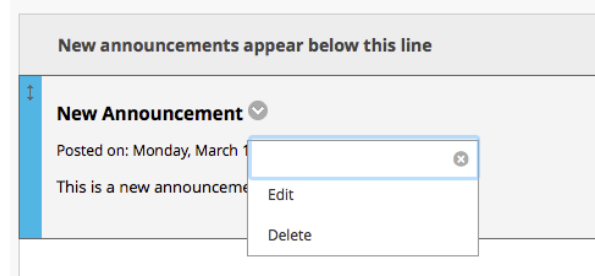

Note: Removing the content will remove the link to the content in the Announcement but the Announcement itself will remain.

6. Click **Submit**

Modifying and Removing Announcements

1. Put your cursor over the drop-down arrow next to your Announcement and select edit or delete.

2. To reorder your Announcements, use left your left mouse button and drag anddrop your Announcements in the order desired.

Instructor Information

Instructors are able to add their contact information under the **Instructor Information** content area. Other contacts can also be added in this area. To do this, follow the steps below.

1. Click **Instructor Information**
2. Click **Create Contact**
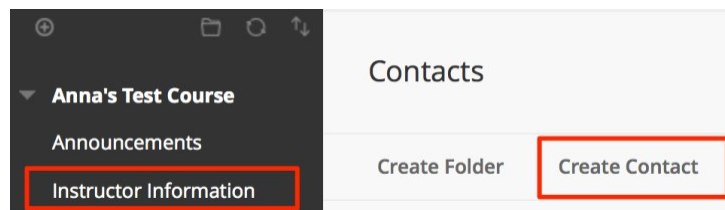
3. Fill out the Information you would like to be included with the contact
4. Choose **YES** for Make the Profile Available
5. To add an image, click **Browse**
6. Press Submit when finished

Syllabus, Documents, and Assignments
These three Content Areas have the same screen. By default, they are in every new Blackboard course. Once you are familiar with one area, you have also mastered the other two.

Suggested Uses:

**Syllabus:** Syllabus, Class schedule/Itinerary, Prerequisites
Documents: Any documents that supplement the course
**Assignments:** Instructions for labs, homework, projects, papers, etc.

Adding a new Content Area

To create a new content area, enter the course and find the menu at the left of your screen.

1.	In Edit Mode ON, click or hover your mouse on the + button at the top left of the menu.
2.	Select **Content Area**
3.	Give the new content area a **Name**
4.	Select whether you want the content area to be available to student
5.	Click **Submit**
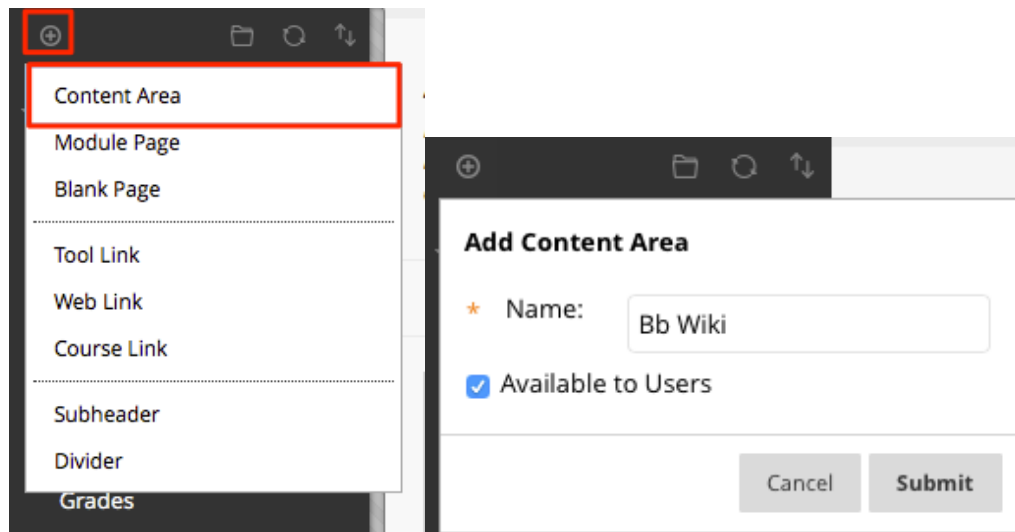
The new content area will appear at the bottom of the left menu list. To reorder the menu list, simply drag the up/down arrows on the left of the content area list to the desired order.
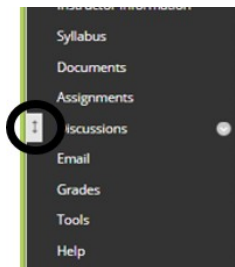
Renaming, Hiding or Deleting a Content Area

Put your cursor on the drop-down arrow next to the content area you wish to rename or delete and select the appropriate option.

File Names

When you save a file that you will be uploading to Blackboard it is important to follow standard naming conventions.

Do not use any special characters like: , # > < ~ / & . , or any foreign characters: i accent, u umlaut, etc. The underscore (_) and the dash (-) are safe to use.
Make sure your file name contains an extension. Example: Lesson1.doc or sample_amounts.xls

Attaching a Document

Note: When files are attached to a course item, students must have appropriate software to open the files. For example: If you attach an Excel document, students must have Excel on their computer to open the file. Any type of file may be attached to Blackboard.

1. Make sure the Edit mode is ON first.
2. On the left, select a content area such as Documents
3. To add a new item, select **Build Content**
4. Select **Item.**
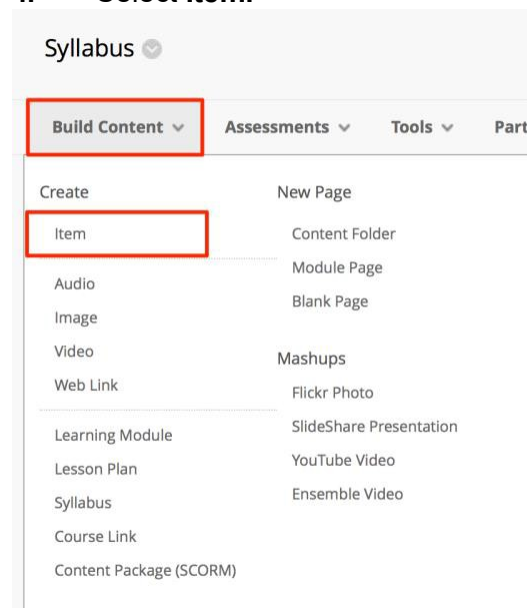
5. Click in the Name field and type in a name
6. Type a brief description of the file in the Text field. This may also be a good area to give due dates or other date sensitive items so that they are not part of the attached file. The files may then be copied to future semesters without containing old dates.
7. In the Attach File field, click **Browse My Computer**
8. and locate the file from your computer or Browse Content Collection for items already existing within your Blackboard course (see below). You can also attach a file by dragging and dropping it into the outlined box.
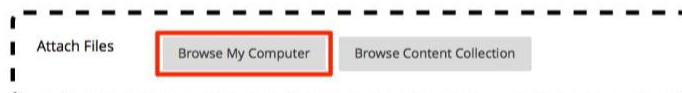
9. Select the file you want and select Open
10. Leave the default Yes on permit users to view
11. Click Track number of views to see if students are accessing the content
12. Choosing date and time restrictions is OPTIONAL. If you want to use Display after, you may leave Display until blank.

STANDARD OPTIONS

Permit Users to View this Content: ● Yes ○ No

Track Number of Views: ○ Yes ● No

Select Date and Time Restrictions: ☐ Display After [ ] 📅 [ ] 🕐
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

☐ Display Until [ ] 📅 [ ] 🕐
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.
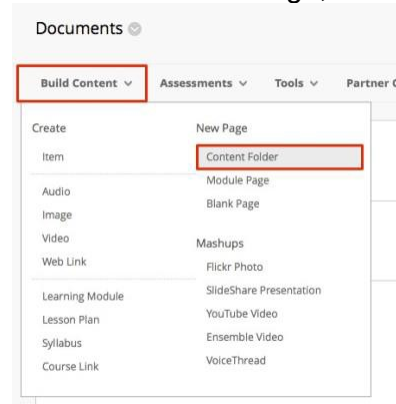
13. Click **Submit** to complete the process. A receipt will appear to confirm the process.
14. To reorder your items, you can drag and drop them by placing your cursor over the item and holding down your left mouse button and dragging it to the appropriate spot in the list
15. Click on the file link to view the document. The word processing program will launch and open the file on your folder

Note: If your computer asks if you want to Save or Open the file, select Open.

Creating Folders and Organizing Files

It is possible to organize course files into easy to access folders.

1. From any content area, such as **Course Documents**, select **Build Content**
2. Under New Page, select **Content Folder**

Documents ⊘

Build Content ∨ Assessments ∨ Tools ∨ Partner C

Create | New Page
Item | Content Folder
Audio | Module Page
Image | Blank Page
Video | Mashups
Web Link | Flickr Photo
Learning Module | SlideShare Presentation
Lesson Plan | YouTube Video
Syllabus | Ensemble Video
Course Link | VoiceThread

3. In the Name field, type a name. If desired, type a description for the folder in the text box.
4. You can also choose to date/time stamp the folder and track the number of users.
5. Click **Submit** when finished

Accessing the folder and adding a document

1. Click on the folder link you created to enter the folder. Once in the folder, adding documents is the same as any other content area.
2. Select **Build Content** and click on **Item**.
3. In the Name field, type a name.
4. Type a brief description of the file in the Text field.
5. In the Attachments field, click **Browse My Computer** and locate the file
6. Click **Submit** when finished

Creating an Assignment and SafeAssign

SafeAssign Assignments can now be created for ANY Assignment by following the same steps for Assignment creation and then choosing the SafeAssign option under the Submission Details area.

1. Select the content area where you want the students to submit the assignment. Place your mouse over the **Assessment** button and select **Assignment.**
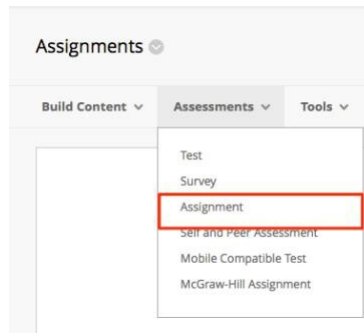
2. Fill in the name of the assignment and use the instructions area to provide more details about the assignment.
3. If necessary, you can also attach a file associated with the assignment.
4. In the grading area, enter the total points possible for the assignment.
5. Expand Submission Details by clicking it. Here you can choose the **Assignment Type**, the **Number of Attempts**, and Plagiarism Tools
6. Check "**Check submissions for plagiarism using SafeAssign**" to apply SafeAssign to the assignment

7. After checking the SafeAssign box, you will have the options to Allow students to view originality reports as well as Excluding submissions from Global Databases.
8. **Grading Options** allows you to enable different grading preferences.
9. **Display of Grades** also allows further control of what and how students view their grades as well as how they are entered.
10. The **Availability** area allows you to choose when the assignment is available
11. Click the **Submit** button when you are finished creating the assignment

Adding External Links

Instructors can designate course related external links (web sites) for students to visit. These can be integrated into the course and used to take students on virtual "field trips" to course related places on the web. Below is an example of how an external link will appear in Blackboard.

1. Click on the Content Area in which you wish to add an External Link
2. Select **Build Content** and then click on **Web Link**
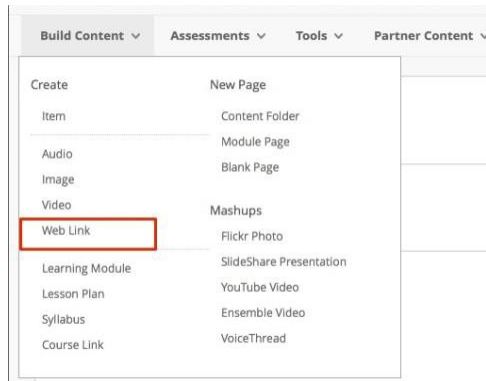
3. Enter the website name, URL (example: http://www.gvsu.edu/it/learn) and a brief description. It is always a good idea to copy and paste URLs to cut down on typographical errors.

4. Choose the options for the URL and click **Submit.** A receipt will appear to confirm the process
5. View the link by clicking directly on the link
6. If you have selected Open in a New Window a new browser window will open and take you directly to the site

Note: It is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain the external links section. Blackboard has a built-in feature that allows you to check all of the URLS in your site at once. With this tool, you can validate the Web Links within any area in your course.

In **Control Panel**, choose **Course Tools**, and click **Link Checker**

Groups

You can facilitate collaboration among students by setting up groups. Groups allow students to establish a closer virtual relationship with members of the class and promote a sense of online community. From a Group page, users may:
- send email
- exchange files others cannot vie
- enter discussion forums
- enter Collaboration sessions and Record student meetings/presentations
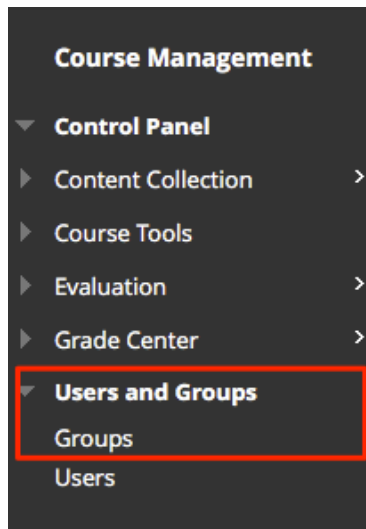
How to Enroll Course Group Members Manually

1. Click **Users and Groups** under the Control Panel
2. Click **Groups**
3. Click **Create**
4. Select Manual Enroll from either the *Single Group* (to create one group) or *Group Set* (to create more than one group) lists.
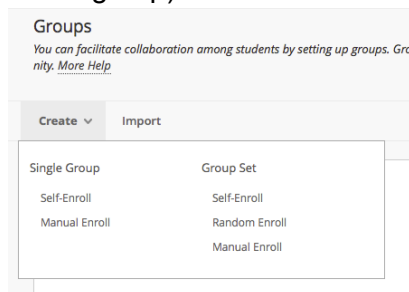
5. Enter the **Group Name**, **Description, Tool Availability**, and **Module Personalization** Setting. *Note: Only check the tools the students will need to use.*
6. Add Users to the group by clicking on **Add Users**, under Membership. A new window will open.
7. To view all students, select Not Blank and then click Go. Students can also be searched by Username, First Name, or Last Name in the search bar. Check the students who are to be included in the group. *NOTE: To add instructors check "Show all users regardless of role" and then search.*

Add Users

Search: Any ▼ | Not Blank ▼ | [   ] | Go
☐ Show all users regardless of role

☐	USERNAME	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ROLE
☑	mennenan.sup_previewuser	Anna	Mennenga_PreviewUser	Student
☑	new.alumni	ALUMNI	ACCOUNT	Student
☐	new.faculty	FACULTY	ACCOUNT	Student

Add Users **4** ☐   Cancel | Submit

8. Press **Submit** when finished choosing students.
9. Press **Submit** again to finish creating group.

Note: Adaptive release rules can be applied to the content page link, which would provide the ability to limit the availability of the sign-up sheet

For instructors to see student group pages
1. Open a Course
2. Expand Users and Groups, under the control panel. Click Groups
3. Select the name of a Group. This will take you to the group's page.

Email

All email sent from Blackboard will go to students' GVSU email accounts. For students: The email address is username@mail.gvsu.edu. Students may read their mail at http://www.mail.gvsu.edu.

You can send email to individuals who participate in your course using the Send Email function. Emails are sent to individual users or to groups of users within the course, such as all Students. The email will be sent to the user's GVSU email. A copy of this email is sent to the sender by default.

You can send email to the following people in a course:
- **All Users:** Sends email to all users in the course.
- **All Groups:** Sends email to all of the groups in the course.
- **All Student Users:** Sends an email to all students in the course.
- **All Teaching Assistant Users:** Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in the course.
- **All Instructor Users:** Sends email to all of the instructors in the course.
- **All Observer Users:** Sends email to all of the observers in the course
- **Single/ Select Users:** Sends email to select users.
- **Single/ Select Groups:** Sends email to select groups.
- **Single/ Select Observer users:** Send email to a single observer or select observers in the course.

Note: Recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

Instructors cannot send email using this tool to others that do not have access to the course/organization.

Send an Email

1. Access Email by clicking **Email** on the Course Menu
2. On the Send Email page, click one of the options listed to send the email, for example, Single/ Select Users.
3. For the Single/ Select Users or Single/ Select Groups, select the recipients in the Available to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the Selected box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the recipient list. Click Invert Selection and highlighted users are no longer highlighted and those users that are not selected will be highlighted.
4. Type your **Subject.**
5. Type a **Message**.
6. Optionally, select the Return Receipt box to send a copy of the message to the sender.
7. Click Attach a file to browse for file from Click to toggle glossary term definition: Your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.
8. Click **Submit.**

Sending Email from the Grade Center

Navigate to Grade Center. In the left column tick the box beside the name of the student you wish to email. Hover over the student's name and click the drop-down arrow, then Email User, or click Email in the menus.
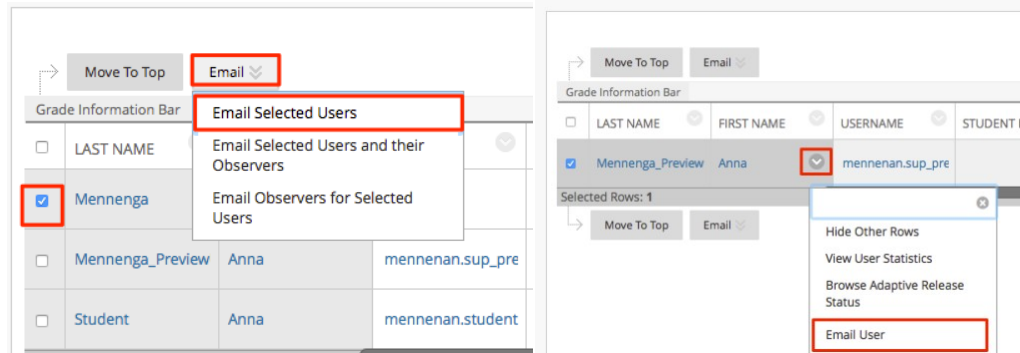
*Note: Students are not able to see which students are included in the email. It is BCC.*

Note: Another quick way to send out an email to everyone is to create an announcement. An Email of the Announcement is sent to everyone.

Discussion Board

For detailed information on Discussion Boards visit http://www.gvsu.edu/elearn/help/, and click on Faculty Help. There will be multiple help documents on Discussion Boards. For a brief overview of Discussion Boards, follow the steps below…

Create a Forum

1. Click the **Discussions** tab on the course menu
2. If you have previously created groups, go to the groups to create a discussion board from the Course Tools area and choose Discussion Board.
3. Click the **Create Forum** button
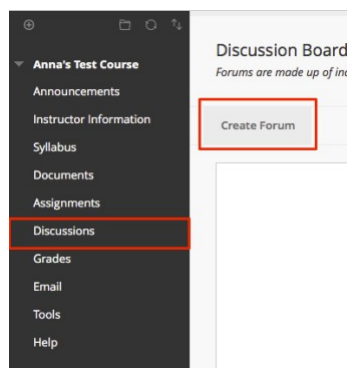
4. Type in the name of the Forum
5. Type in a description or post your discussion questions
6. Set Forum availability if the Forum is to only be available during certain dates.
7. Check or uncheck any settings that seem appropriate.
8. Click Submit when done.

Deleting a Forum

To delete a forum, check the box next to the forum and select Delete at the top of the page. You can also delete a forum by clicking the drop-down arrow next to the forum and clicking Delete.
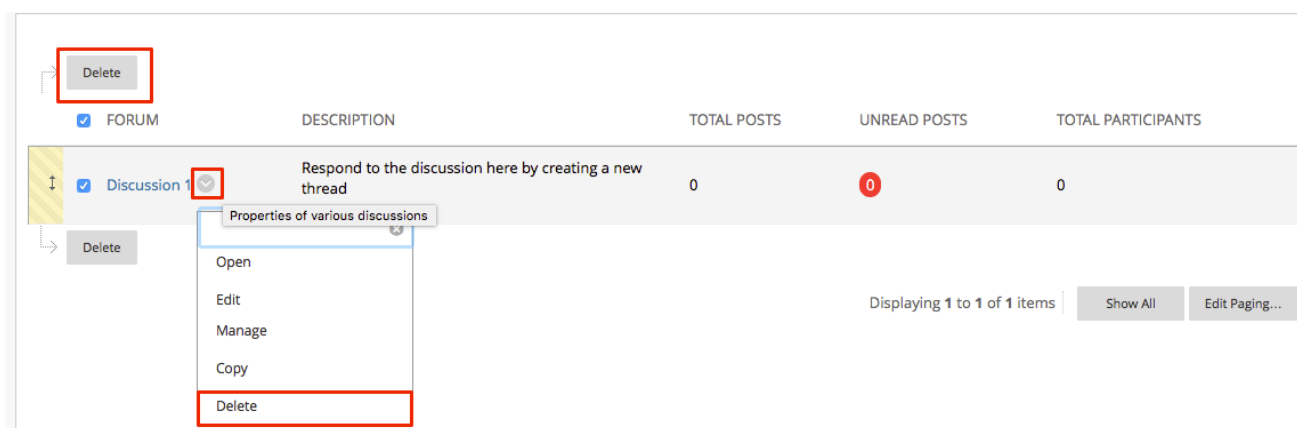
Manage a Forum

To see if a thread has had activity, you must look under Unread Posts. Here you can also see the total number of posts and total participants.
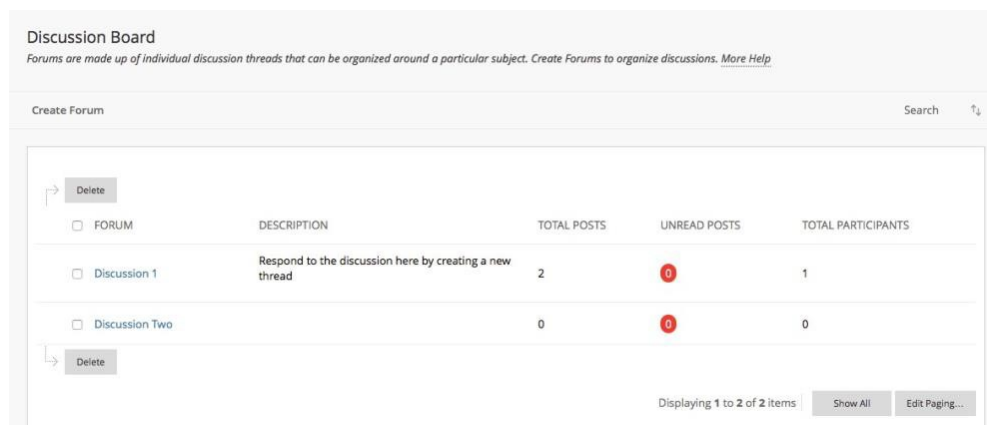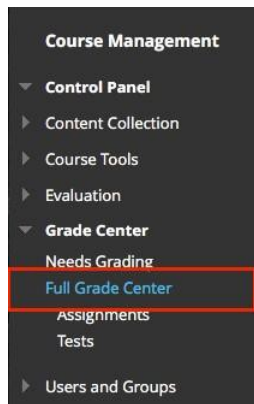

Grade Center

For detailed information on Grade Center, visit http://www.gvsu.edu/elearn/help/ and select Faculty Help. Grade Center posts all student grades associated with Tests and Assignments. The Grade Center also accommodates scores for essay questions and grades for work completed outside of Blackboard.

Instructors may also view the results of Surveys. Assessments and Assignments that are made available through a Content Area are viewed and graded in the Grade Center.

To access Grade Center, select Grade Center in the Control Panel and click Full Grade Center.

Adding Items in Grade Center

Instructors can create Assignments and add them to a Content area. Assignments list the name, point value, and a description for class work. Instructors also have the option of including attachments to an Assignment. Instructors also have the option to add columns in Grade Center without adding an Assignment in a content area.

1. Click the **Create Column** icon to add a new item to Grade Center

2. Enter the **Column Name**, choose the **Category**, if desired write a short **Description** of the item, the **Date** the item is due, **points possible** for the item, choose the Primary Display type for the mark, and choose whether to make grade Visible to the students

3.   Click **Submit**

COLUMN INFORMATION

* Column Name   Participation

Grade Center Name

Description
For the toolbar, press ALT+F10 (PC) or ALT+FN+F10 (Mac).

optional description of column

Path: p   Words:3

Primary Display   Score
Grades must be entered using the selected format. Grades display in this format in both the Grade Center and My Grades.

Secondary Display   Percentage
This display option is shown in the Grade Center only.

Category   No Category

* Points Possible   50

Associated Rubrics   Add Rubric

Note: You must choose a category if you want to drop a score or use weighted grades or sort/filter the grade column.

Entering Grades

You have two options for manually entering or changing grades in Grade Center. The first option, Option A, allows you to enter or change grades for the entire class and/or individual students in a spreadsheet- like way. Option B allows you to override a student's grade, to attach feedback or grading notes to the grade, and to view Grade History.

Option A: On the Grade Center page, enter a grade by clicking on the cell in which you would like to put a grade (you may need to scroll to the right to find the column) and type the grade directly into the cell (in the same format you chose for Primary Display when you created the column, e.g.: Letter Grades for Letter display option). Press Enter on the keyboard to save the grade and move to the cell below.

Option B: On the Grade Center page, hover your mouse over the grade you want to be changed. Click the dropdown arrow next to the grade and select View Grade Details. From this page, you can override the student's grade, attach feedback, and view attempts.

Uploading Grades from External Sources

To eliminate repeated entry of Grade Center data Instructors can upload grades from external sources such as a "Comma-separated Value" with file extension ".csv". Excel spreadsheets can

be saved as .csv files by choosing Save As and then changing Save as Type to CSV. Data must follow the downloaded grades format on Excel to upload correctly and be synched with existing Grade Center data.
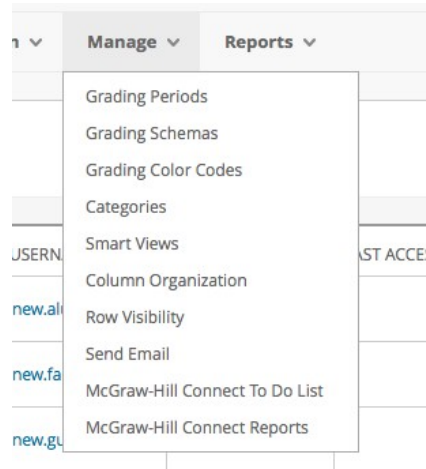
To upload or download grades

1.   Place your mouse cursor over the Work Offline button in the Grade Center.
2.   Click Upload or Download.
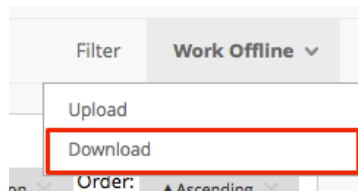
Manage

The Manage option allows the Instructor to modify Grade Center items and how they will appear in Grade Center

1.   Click the **Manage** button
2.   Click the appropriate option
3.   Click the Submit button after you have made the changes.

Note: To reorder Grade Center items, go to column organization drag and drop the columns by holding down your left mouse button and dragging.

Displaying Student Grades

It's a FERPA violation for students to see another student's personal information. Use Hide Other Rows to work with a student without displaying another student's information
Select the student's name, select drop down to the right of the student name. and select "Hide Other Rows"
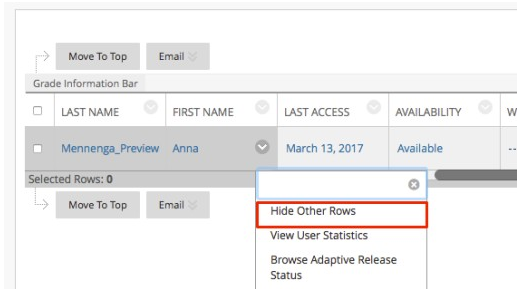
Show all rows (students):

Select student name, select drop down, and select "show all rows"
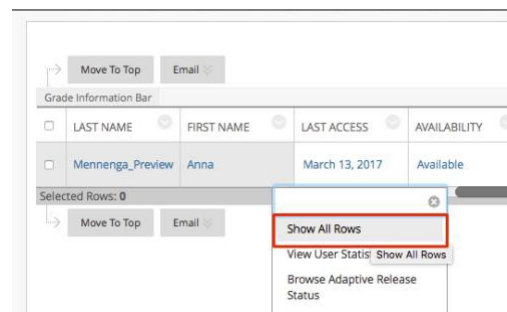
For additional Grade Center information, visit our IT Blackboard Site: http://www.gvsu.edu/it/learn. You can also access help documents directly in your course by clicking Help.