Quick Start Guide

This manual will introduce you to the new Blackboard Release 9

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Getting Started with the Course Environment

1. The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course page. It holds buttons or text links to Content Areas, Tools, and links. The Course Menu is usually arranged by subject or the order in which Students progress through the course.

2. Breadcrumbs appear at the top of pages and provide links back to each previous page the user navigated through to get to the current page.

3. The Banner is the area at the top of a frame, often used to display an identifying image for the course organization or institution.

4. The Help icon appears in the top frame. It can be set by the System Administrator to point to institution resources for providing assistance to users.

5. The Edit Mode button allows you to change the view of content on screen from the instructor’s view (Edit Mode: On) to the student’s view (Edit Mode: Off).

6. The Content Frame is the main area of the browser window where content items and tools are displayed.

7. The Control Panel is the interface for managing the content, features, and appearance of a course or organization. It is accessible to users based on the privileges assigned to their Course Role. Students do not see the Control Panel.

8. The Drag and Drop Arrows enable you to use the mouse to re-position items directly on a page by clicking on the item, dragging it to the desired location, and releasing the mouse button.
Edit Mode:
Edit Mode allows Instructors to make changes to content from within the Course view instead of navigating through the Control Panel. The Edit Mode toggles On and Off. The toggle appears in the navigation bar in each Course area and any subfolders.

When the Edit Mode is set to ON, users with specific roles in the system can add, remove, and edit content and tools in the Course. Switching the Edit Mode to OFF displays the Course as students see it. The Edit Mode toggle appears only to those users who have permission to use it. Click the Edit Mode button to ON or OFF to change the view.

Edit = Off means the page is displaying what the students will see
Edit = On means that the editing tools are visible for the instructor

Look for the “chevron” (double drop-down arrow next to many items) to find options for this item (and also menus/options that used to be on separate pages)

Blackboard now uses a drag-and-drop method the change the order of a list of items (for example, the course menu or the columns in the Grade Center). When Edit Mode is On, these appear as double-headed arrows (1) ; when you hover the mouse over them, the image changes to a four-pointed arrow (2). Click and hold the item in order to drag it to a new location; then let go to drop it there. Click the chevron to the right of any menu item to see the options for that item and make any change.
For more details watch the following interactive video: Course Environment

Where did the Control Panel go?
There is no separate page for the Control Panel any longer. Its functionality has been either absorbed into other areas (for example, the ability to add announcements and edit the course menu directly from the course home page) or it is located right here on the course home page, below the Course Menu, in the area entitled “Course Management.” All the tools that used to be on the Control Panel page are located within a sub-menu which can be accessed by clicking a chevron.

How to create an Announcement:
1. Go to the Announcements page (this is the default course home page).
2. Click the Edit Mode switch to “On” (this makes all the editing tools appear).
3. Click the “Create Announcement” button.
4. Enter information as needed and click “Submit.” (Note: Announcements will display unless otherwise restricted by a date range, most recent on top.)
How to add material to a content area:

1. Click the Edit Mode switch to “On” (this will display all content areas of the course, even those which are unavailable or have no material in them).
2. Go to the content area in which you wish to add your material
3. Click the “Create Item” button
4. Type in the name and instructions of the item in section 1 or Browse to the document in section 2.
5. Set options as needed and click “Submit.”
6. For folders and external links, click that option under the “Build” button menu.
7. For tests, surveys, assignments, and Safe Assignments, click that option under the “Evaluate” button menu.
8. For discussion boards, groups, blogs, and journals click the “Collaborate” button menu.

To Change an Item already created:

1. Click the Edit Mode switch to “On” (this makes visible all the chevrons for item menus).
2. Click the chevron next to the item you need to modify (a long menu should pop up).
3. Click the first option, “Edit,” to change information or replace a file or click the “Copy” button which allows copying this item to another course space; and there is also a “Delete” option if necessary.

For more details watch the following interactive video:

Adding Content Areas
Student View:

1. **Due Date:** Date by which the assignment should be submitted
2. **Points Possible:** Instructor-defined number of points a gradable item is worth
3. **Assignment Files:** File, or files, the instructor provides with an assignment
4. **Comments:** Student comments about the assignment
5. **Submit:** Option for students to save the assignment

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For more details watch the following interactive video:
[Making Tools Available on the Course Menu](#)

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**How to build a test**

1. Go to “Course Tools” under “Control Panel” and click on “Tests, Surveys and Pools.” Select the “Test” link.
2. Click on “Build Test” to create a Test and enter Test Information.
3. Click “Import Test” to import a local file or a file from the Content Collection.
4. Select “Edit” from the contextual menu next to the name of the test.
6. Click on “Create Questions” to add a new question. The Create Question contextual menu lists all of the different types of test questions available.

7. On the “Reuse Question” contextual menu to create a random block question or find an available question from a pool or another test.

8. Click “Upload Question” to browse for a local file.

9. The “Creation Settings” control the options available when creating Test questions. Not all option are available for all question types.

10. Click the arrow icon next to the question name to rearrange the test questions after they are created with drag and drop.

The Grade Center

To access the Grade Center:

1. Click the chevron to the left of the “Evaluation” sub-menu under the Control Panel area.

2. Click the Grade Center link (the Grade Center will take a few seconds to load).
The Grade Center Components:

**Action Bar**

- **Create Column:**
  Click to create a column that represents a gradable item in the course.

- **Create Calculated Column:**
  From the contextual menu, select one of the following: Average, Minimum/ Maximum, Total, or Weighted Column.

- **Manage:**
  From the contextual menu, select an option to manage Grading Periods, Grading Schemas, Categories, Smart Views, Column Organization, Student Visibility, or to Send Email.

- **Reports:**
  From the contextual menu, either create a report or view grade history.

**Views**

- **Interactive View:**
  In the interactive view, grades can be typed directly into the table cell for each grade. Use the arrow keys or the Tab key to navigate, and press the Enter key to submit a grade.

- **Screen Reader View:**
  In the screen reader view, the table is static and cannot be edited directly. To enter a grade, click the table cell and select View Grade Details from the contextual menu.

- **Current View:**
  From the contextual menu, select the desired view. Users can toggle between the Full Grade Center view and any defined Smart Views or Grading Periods.

- **Sort Columns By:**
  From the contextual menu, select one of the following options for sorting the columns: Layout Position, Categories, Due Date, Date Created, Points Possible, or Display Name.

- **Order:**
  From the contextual menu, select whether to place the columns in ascending or descending order according to the Column Organization defined by using the Manage contextual menu.
More Grade Center Options:
• Click the “Create Column” button to add an item to the Grade Center.
• Hover the mouse over the “Manage” tool button in order to see a menu of tools options, including the “Column Organization” page where you can show/hide columns, change the order in which columns appear in the Grade Center, change the sort order and many other features.
• Click the chevron to the right of any column header to see options for that grade center item, including editing existing items, deleting columns, and options specific to certain types of columns (for example, statistics for surveys or downloading files for assignments).
• Click in the cell for a specific student and column in order to enter a grade; click the chevron which appears on the right side of the cell for grade details or to add a comment.
• Hover the mouse over the “Work Offline” button to see the options for downloading or uploading Excel readable files.
• Under “Reports,” you will have the “Create Reports” to print or sent reports via emails and “View Grade History” will show all changes to all student grades.

9. You can temporarily change the order of columns by using the “Sort Columns By” and “Order” options (permanent changed should be done via “Column Organization” under “Manage”).
10. You can choose the number of rows to see at once by using the “Edit Rows Displayed” button.

For more details watch the following interactive video: Creating a Grade Center Column

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