Amarillo College
Faculty Training

Blackboard Learn
Session 1

Revision Date: July 23, 2013

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SCHEDULE OF CHANGES

Whenever changes are made to this document, the changes will be listed here to make it easier for you to determine if you want to print the page or not.

Date of Change	Change that was Made
07/23/13	PP. 36-37 The "Archive" section was redone and the steps documenting how to delete old archive files was added.
07/23/13	PP. 38-41 The "Getting Help" section was added.

GETTING STARTED WITH BLACKBOARD

THE AC CONNECT PORTAL

The AC Connect portal is our new single-sign-in program. One username/password set now gives you total access to the following programs: Outlook e-mail, Gmail e-mail, integrated calendar, WebAdvisor, Colleague, College Announcements, Outlook tasks, and myAccount.

Accessing the AC Portal

1. Use a web browser such as Mozilla Firefox (or Chrome) to navigate to the web page:

   https://acconnect.actx.edu   (don't forget to type https:// in front of it)

2. Specify how to connect to the portal:

   a. "**Public or Shared Computer**" will time out after ten minutes of inactivity

   b. "**Private Computer**" will time out after six hours of inactivity

   NOTE: Even if the AC Connect portal times out for inactivity, the Blackboard browser tab will not time out.

What is on the AC Connect Portal Page?

1. **My Week** – A calendar showing Outlook and Blackboard calendar events for the week

2. **My To-Do** – This is a list of tasks that come over from Outlook

3. **Unread Messages** – Exchange (Outlook) and Google

4. **Announcements –** Campus-wide announcements will be displayed here

5. **AC Connect Classes** – Blackboard classes that you are teaching or taking

6. **Applications** - Colleague and myACcount can be accessed from here

7. **My Bookmarks** – A place to create links to important websites that you visit

8. **Self Service** – WebAdvisor

Syncing up Your Exchange (Outlook) Email

The first time you log in to the AC Connect portal, you will need to update your credentials so that your Outlook email can be retrieved.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal. The directions are in the first section of this manual.
2. At the top of the middle column of modules, locate Email (Exchange).
3. As illustrated below, click the "Enter Your Credentials" link.

4. Type your username and password, and then verify the password.

   NOTE: *This is a one-time procedure. After this is done, your email will automatically be synced up to Outlook.*

Syncing up Your Google (Gmail) Email

Many AC employees do not know that they have a free Gmail e-mail account. This account is yours forever, even if you leave the college.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal.
2. As shown in the illustration above, click on "Unread Messages (Google).
3. Sign in to Gmail:
   a. **Username** = same as the one used to log in to the AC Connect portal
   b. **Password** = same as the one used to log in to the AC Connect portal

Requesting a Course Development Shell

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal.
2. In the upper right corner of the screen, click the "**My Bookmarks**" link.
3. Click the "**Add to my links**" link.
   a. Title = "Course Shell Request Form"
   b. Address = http://www.actx.edu/ctl

4. OK

5. Click on "My Bookmarks" again.

6. Click on the link that was created back in step #3 to get to the CTL page.

7. Rest the mouse pointer on the "**Blackboard Resources**" menu link (left side of the CTL screen) and then click the "Course Shell Request" link from the resulting menu.

8. Fill out the form as needed

Miscellaneous Information about the Request Form

- On page 4 of the form:
  - The Course Name & Number have to match what is in Colleague
  - The Complete Course Title can be customized. If the class is offered in the summer, you can include that info.
- Up to three course shells can be requested per request form.

QUICKLY LAUNCHING THE AC CONNECT PORTAL

Saving a Shortcut on the Desktop

1. Use the Firefox web browser to navigate to the AC Connect portal (**do not log in**).
2. If the Firefox menu bar is not visible, do the following:
    a. As illustrated below, right-click the area to the right of the browser tabs (see the red arrow) and then click "Menu Bar" from the resulting menu.
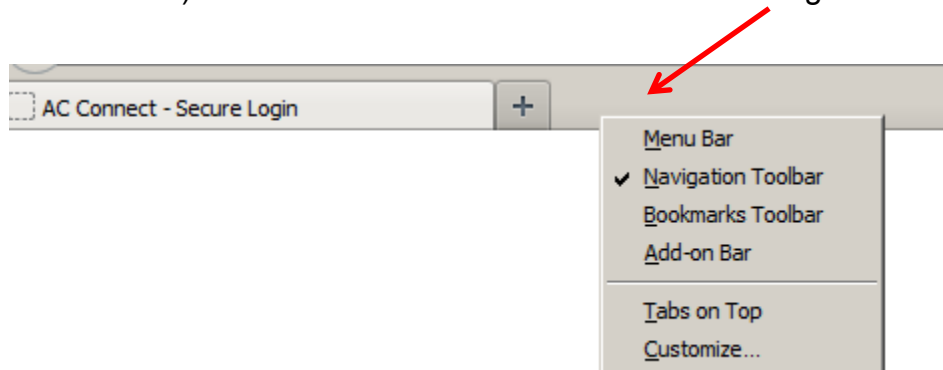
3. From the Bookmarks menu, click "Bookmark this Page."
4. Done
5. Locate the bookmark, "AC Connect – Secure Login." *HINT: You may have to open one of the folders in the Bookmarks area to find it.*
6. Right-click the bookmark and choose "Copy."
7. Minimize all open windows.
8. Paste the shortcut onto the desktop:
    a. Right-click the computer's desktop and choose, "**Paste Shortcut**." This will place a shortcut to the AC Connect portal webpage onto the computer's desktop.
9. Rename the shortcut:
    a. Right-click the shortcut on the desktop and choose, "Rename."
    b. Type the text, "AC Connect"
10. From the keyboard, press ENTER. **NOTE**: From now on, all you will have to do to access the AC Connect portal on that computer is to click the shortcut on the desktop.

Adding a Shortcut to the Firefox "Bookmarks" Toolbar

1. Use Firefox to navigate to the AC Connect portal but do not log in.
2. Add the "Bookmarks Toolbar."
   a. As circled in the illustration below, right-click the gray area just to the right of the "Help" menu (see note below) and add a checkmark to "Bookmarks Toolbar."
   NOTE*: If the menu bar is not visible, use the directions listed on the previous section of this manual to display the menu bar.*
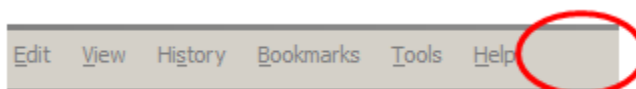
3. As shown in the next illustration, click-and-drag the padlock icon located at the first part of the address bar onto the newly-displayed "Bookmarks Toolbar."
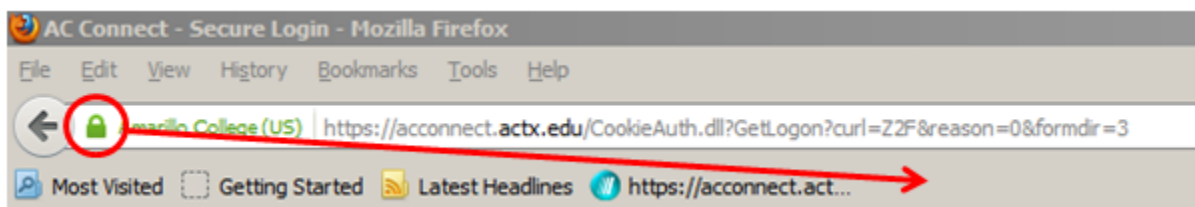
   NOTE*: When you release the mouse button, the shortcut will be copied/pasted onto the "Bookmarks Toolbar."*

BLACKBOARD

Parts of the Blackboard Screen

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal. The directions are listed in the first section of this manual.

2. In the **AC Connect Classes** module, click on any desired class. This will launch Blackboard.

3. You will have access to many parts of the program:

    a. **Course Menu** – The customizable list of links located at the left side of any Blackboard class.

    b. **Control Panel** – The collection of links <u>below</u> the course menu. Even though they look like the course menu, they are not part of that menu. These links are under the "Course Management" title in the menu.

    c. **Institutional Tabs** – These are the links located in the upper-right portion of the Blackboard screen, starting with "My Institution." These tabs (links) are customizable by the college and may change over time as our faculty need more access to other parts of Blackboard.
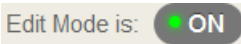
    d. **Colors** – The ![icon] icon, located below the Institutional Tabs in the upper-right portion of the Blackboard window allows you to quickly change the color scheme for the class. Whatever color scheme is chosen by the instructor cannot be changed by the student.

    e. **Edit Mode** – This button ![Edit Mode is: ON] is either "ON" or "OFF." If Editing Mode is "ON," the instructor can modify the class as needed. If Edit Mode is "OFF," the instructor can only see the class as a student would see it and no settings can be changed.

    f. **Logout Button** – This button ![logout] logs the user out of Blackboard. It breaks the connection to the server and another unauthorized person cannot use your username/password set to get into the Blackboard.
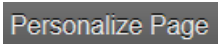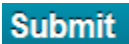
THE "MY INSTITUTION TAB"

This tab is similar to the opening page of ANGEL. It has small groupings of information called modules which are similar to the "nuggets" found in ANGEL.

Launching the "My Institution" tab

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and click on a class to open it in Blackboard.
2. Click the "My Institution" tab. This takes you out of any class.

Setting the Color Scheme for the "My Institution" tab

1. Launch the "My Institution" tab.
2. Set the Color Scheme:

    a. In the upper-right portion of the screen, click the `Personalize Page` button.

    b. Click the desired theme.

    c. `Submit`

Moving Modules

1. Launch the "My Institution" tab.
2. Click-and-drag the title bar of the chosen module to a new location. As you move the module to a new location on the screen, there will be dotted lines that show where the module would be located if it was released.

Deleting Modules

1. Launch the "My Institution" tab.
2. Rest the mouse pointer on the title bar of the module. If the module can be deleted, a gray "Close" icon will appear at the right side of the title bar.
3. Click the gray "Close" icon for the module and it will disappear.

Adding Modules

1. Launch the "My Institution" tab.

2. Click the [Add Module] button, located above the menu bar at the left side of the screen.

3. Scroll through the list of modules until you find one to add.

4. Click the [Add] button.

5. Repeat steps #3-#4 for each desired module.

6. Scroll to the bottom of the list.

7. Click the [← OK] button in the lower-left corner of the screen.

Editing Your Profile

For this exercise, you will need to have a small picture of yourself either on your computer or on a flash drive.

1. In the upper-right corner of the Blackboard window, click the drop-down arrow located at the right of your name.

2. Click the top icon which is called, "View Profile."

3. [Edit My Blackboard Profile]

4. Upload a small picture of yourself to be used as your profile picture.

5. Fill out the form as needed.

6. [Submit]

Notification Dashboard

The "Notification Dashboard" will be very useful to the faculty member because it shows at a glance everything that needs to be graded.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and click on a class to open it in Blackboard.

2. Once inside Blackboard, click the "**My Institution**" tab to close any open class.

3. In the upper-left corner of the "My Institution" tab, click on **Notification Dashboard**.

4. Look at all of the modules available and located the "Needs Attention" module.

   a. If there are any items that need to be graded, there will be links such as "Assignment Needs Grading" or "Discussion Board Forum Needs Grading" followed by a number. This number represents the number of items in that category that need to be graded.

   b. Click on the category to be graded such as, "Assignment Needs Grading."

   c. This will open all of the items in that category.

   d. Click the drop-down arrow located at the right side of the item to be graded.

   e. Click "**Grade**" from the menu.

   f. Grade the item as needed.

5. To leave the Notification Dashboard:

   a. Click the "Courses" institutional tab.

   b. Click the desired class to open.

COURSE MENU

The course menu is located at the left side of the screen and contains useful links to various parts of the course. The menu is your navigation system through the class. It is important for you to decide how you want the class to be structured before beginning the building process.

Adding Menu Items

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and open the desired class in Blackboard.
2. Make sure that the Edit Mode is set to "ON." This is the button in the upper-right corner of the Blackboard screen.
3. Rest the mouse pointer on the **Add Menu Item** ⊞ icon, located at the top of the course menu at the left side of the screen.
4. Move the mouse pointer down to select the desired item.
   a. **Tool Links** are used for adding Announcements, Calendars, Discussion Boards, Journals, etc.
   b. **Web Links** are used for links to outside web pages, and to your course syllabus.
   c. **Dividers** separate areas of the menu.
5. Place a checkmark in the "**Available to Users**" box. If this is not checked, the students will never be able to see this item in the course menu.

Renaming Menu Items

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and open the desired class in Blackboard.
2. Make sure that the Edit Mode is set to "ON." This is the button in the upper-right corner of the Blackboard screen.
3. Rest the mouse pointer on the menu link to be renamed.
4. Click the drop-down arrow located at the right side of the menu link.
5. Choose "**Rename Link**" and then type a new name for the link.
6. ENTER.

Making an Item Available/Unavailable

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and open the desired class in Blackboard.
2. Make sure that the Edit Mode is set to "ON." This is the button in the upper-right corner of the Blackboard screen.
3. Click the drop-down arrow located at the right side of the menu link.
4. Choose "**Show Link**" or "**Hide Link**."
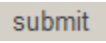
Removing Menu Items

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and open the desired class in Blackboard.
2. Make sure that the Edit Mode is set to "ON." This is the button in the upper-right corner of the Blackboard screen.
3. Click he drop-down arrow located at the right side of the menu link.
4. Choose "**Delete**."
5. OK

Blackboard FAQs

The "Blackboard FAQs" link opens the Frequently-Asked-Questions page which lists faculty questions about Blackboard and the answers to those questions. This is an area that faculty may get help without having to call CTL personnel.

Add Questions to the Blackboard FAQs

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal. The directions were listed in the first section of this manual.
2. In the **AC Connect Classes** module, click on any desired class. The class will open in Blackboard.
3. In the menu at the left side of the screen, click the link, "CTL BlackBoard FAQs."
4. On the black toolbar at the top of the screen, click "**Add Question**."
5. Fill out the form as needed.
6. submit
7. When finished with the FAQ page, close the browser tab to get back to your Blackboard class.

The Course Management Menu

- This menu is also known as the "Control Panel."
- The Control Panel is located below the course menu at the left side of the Bb screen.
- When you are logged into any Bb class as an instructor, you will <u>always</u> be able to see the Control Panel menu, even if you are viewing the class as a student.
- One of the most common uses for the Control Panel menu is to access the "Full Grade Center" (Gradebooks) area where tests and other assessments can be graded.

COURSE CONTENT AREA

The Course Content Area (or simply the Content Area) is where the students will see most of their course material for the class. Students will access this area to read class material, view videos, find outside web links, and take tests and other assessments.
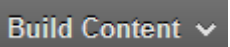
1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.
    NOTE: If you open a Course Development Shell that was copied from ANGEL, you will see your class content from your ANGEL class.
2. Click the **Content** link located in the course menu at the left side of the screen.
    NOTE: The Content area is similar to the "Lessons" tab in ANGEL.

Adding a Content Folder

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.
2. Click the **Content** tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.
3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.
4. Click "Content Folder."
    a. Type a name for the new folder
    b. Change the color of the folder's title if desired.
    c. In the **Text** field, type some general information about the contents of the folder being created. This is useful for the student.
    d. Fill out other fields if desired.
        NOTE: For any item being created, ALWAYS set "Track Number of Views" to "Yes" to make it easier to see if a student has gone accessed that item.

    e. Submit

Adding an Item

When an "Item" is created in a Content Folder, the student will <u>not have to click</u> on the title to see the text inside the "Item" because the contents of an "Item" are always displayed.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.
2. Click the **Content** tab located in the course menu at the left side of the screen.
3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.
4. Click "Item."
   a. Type a name for the new Item.
   b. Change the color of the Item's title if desired.
   c. In the Text field, type the information that you want the students to see when they open the folder containing the Item.
   d. Fill out other fields if desired.
   e. **Submit**

Adding a Blank Page
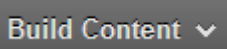
A "Blank Page" is different from an "Item" since a student will have to click on the title of the blank page to open it to read the contents. Remember that an "Item" does not have to be clicked before its contents can be seen.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.
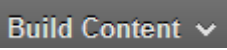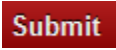2. Click the **Content** tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.
3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.
4. Click "**Blank Page**."
   a. Type a name for the new blank page.
   b. Change the color of the blank page's title if desired.
   c. Type the content text (add graphics too if desired) to be displayed.
   d. Fill out other fields as desired.
   e. **Submit**

Adding a File

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.

2. Click the Content tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.

3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.

4. Click "**File**."

   a. Type a name or title for the file.

   b. Change the color of the file's title if desired.

   c. Click either the "**Browse My Computer**" or the "**Browse Content Collection**" button to specify where the file is stored.

   d. Click the "**YES**" option button for the field, "Open in New Window."

   e. Fill out other fields as desired.

   f. Submit

Adding an Image

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.

2. Click the Content tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.

3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.

4. Click "**Image**."

   a. Type a name or title for the file.

   b. Change the color of the image's title if desired.

   c. Click the button corresponding to the location of the image.

      NOTE: *If the image is located on your computer or flash drive, use the "Browse my Computer" button*.

   d. Add a description for the image.

   e. Specify dimensions as needed.

   f. Fill out other fields as desired.

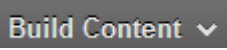   g. Submit

Adding a Web Link

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.

2. Click the Content tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.

3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.

4. Click "**Web Link**."

   a. Type a name for the new web link.

   b. Change the color of the web link's title if desired.

   c. Type (or copy from a web page address) the full address for the webpage to be displayed.

      IMPORTANT: You have to type the **http://** or the **https://** for this to work.

   d. Type a description of what website will be displayed if the student clicks on the link.

   e. Fill out other fields as desired.

   f. Submit

Adding a YouTube Video
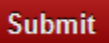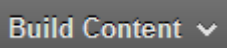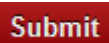
1. Log in to the AC Connect portal and then click on a class to open it in Blackboard.

2. Click the Content tab located in the menu at the left side of the screen.

3. Click the Build Content ∨ button.

4. Click "YouTube Video."

   a. In the Search field, specify the type of movie for which to be searched.

   b. Use the drop-down arrow to change the option from "All of the words" to "At least one of the words."

   c. GO

   d. Locate a video clip to add.

   e. Click the "Select" link for the desired video clip.

   f. Type a name for the new video clip link.

   g. Change the color of the YouTube Video's title if desired.

   h. Add a description.

   i. Fill out other links as desired and then press Submit .

Extra Information

- If possible, please do not embed a video or even a PowerPoint presentation directly into a class because of the amount of space that is used. Everyone needs to store this type of content outside of Bb and simply link to it.
- **SlideShare** (www.slideshare.net) give you a chance to convert and store PowerPoint slideshows & then link to them.
- **SlideRocket** (www.sliderocket.com) provides presentation software similar to SlideShare, but it does not allow you to add audio.
- YouTube (www.youtube.com) allows you to easily upload movie clips and then create links to them.
- Brian Nixon can load movie clips onto a server in his department and will then send you links that can be added to your course. Brian's can be reached at 806.371.5214.

Learning Modules

- Learning modules are like SoftChalk
- They offer self-contained unit areas inside the main part of the class. For example, we could have a Learning Module with Civil War information embedded into an American History class.
- We might have one already created to show them how a Learning Module would look if they wanted to create one later.

CONTENT COLLECTION

At the bottom of the menu at the left side of the screen is the "Control Panel." Inside this menu, there is a place which contains areas designed for sharing of data. You can share data between several of your own classes, classes from other instructors in your department, and the college as whole.

- **The class name** (the top link in the Content Collection) is the storage place for any item in the current class.

- "**Your username Content**" is an area in which you can store data that can be shared among any classes that you teach.

- "**All Courses Content**" is the area where data can be shared among all the classes taught in your department.

- "**All Organizational Content**" will be the storage place for stuff in the department. This is not working correctly at this time.

- "**Institutional Content**" is the storage place that is accessible by any instructor on campus. For example, if the AC Badger graphic is stored in this area, any instructor on campus can make a link to the Badger graphic.

Uploading Course Files Using a Web Folder

Web folders are folders on your computer that are linked to a folder that exists in your Blackboard class. You can drag-and-drop files in and out of these folders and is an easy way to add content to any of your Bb classes from your local hard drive, flash drive, or CD.

Copying the "Link to Course Content" Utility to Your Computer
The link is located on drive P: (not accessible off-campus) which is one of the AC network drives and cannot be accessed from off-campus.

1. Click on the Start button located in the left side of the monitor.

2. Click "Computer."

3. Double-click on the icon for drive P:

4. Double-click the CTL folder icon and then open the "Blackboard_Resources" folder.

5. Right-click "Link to Course Content"

   NOTE: You might have to answer "OK" to a security warning message.

6. Choose "Copy."

7. Select an area on your computer or on a flash drive and choose "Paste."

   NOTE: It is advisable to copy

Using the "Link to Course Content" Utility

1. Double-click the "Link to Course Content" utility that was copied in the previous section of this manual.

2. Type your username/password (the same one used to get into the AC Connect portal)

3. DO NOT check the "Remember my Credentials" checkbox

4. OK

   NOTE: Once this utility is run, you will see a list of all your classes. Each class will be in a folder marked with a number. Scroll down through the list until you see the desired class. In a course shell, when files come over, the files are placed in a folder called .ASSOC.

ENHANCING COMMUNICATIONS

ACCESSING YOUR COURSE SYLLABUS

Creating the Link

As directed by House Bill 2504, instructors are required to provide one-click access to their AC Syllabus in each class section.

IMPORTANT: Since Spring 2011, Amarillo College mandated that ALL course syllabi had to be entered into the college-supplied syllabus program and visible to students for three years. If you are not currently doing this, please contact Charles Hendrick at 806.345.5540 for further instructions.

1. Log in to the AC Connect portal.
2. Rest the mouse point on the **Academics** tab located on the black toolbar at the top of the portal page.
3. Click on "Syllabi" to open a separate tab containing our syllabus website at:
   www.actx.edu/syllabus
4. To locate the **URL** (web address) to link to a specific Course Syllabus, login to the Amarillo College Syllabus program.
5. Click **Employee Login** and log in with your Web Advisor login and password.
6. Click **Manage Syllabi** next to your name to get a full listing of your own syllabi.
7. Locate the course syllabus for the semester and section you want.

8. Be sure the **Visibility** is set to **Visible**. As shown below, click on the **Student View** link.
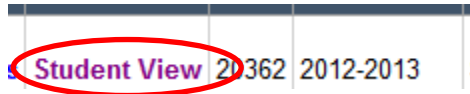
9. Copy **(CTRL-C)** the web address (URL) from the address bar at the top of the Firefox browser.

10. In your Blackboard class, click on the contextual (drop-down arrow) menu and select **Web Link.**
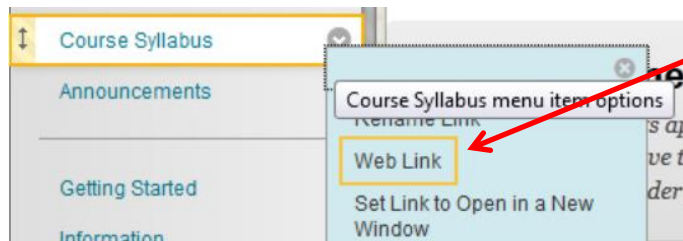
11. Paste **(CTRL-V)** the web address copied from the Student View of your AC Syllabus into the URL field. Click **Submit**.

12. Test the "Course Syllabus" link to make sure the correct syllabus opens. To view the Blackboard link as a student, switch **Edit Mode** to **OFF**.

NOTE: If you are still logged in to the syllabus program in another browser tab, the syllabus will look like it is editable by the student. Relax. That is not true. When you log out of the syllabus program in the other browser tab, the link in Blackboard will show the correct student view of the syllabus.

My Syllabus Link Does Not Work…What Now?

Several people have had difficulties getting their syllabus links to work in Blackboard. Those people had to do the following steps to get their syllabi linked properly.

1. Open the desired BlackBoard class.

2. Rest the mouse pointer on the broken syllabus link located in the course menu. This will cause the gray drop-down arrow (a.k.a. contextual menu) to appear at the right side of the menu link.

3. Click the drop-down arrow for the "Course Syllabus" menu link.

4. Click the option to **Delete**. This will remove the broken "Course Syllabus" link from the menu.

5. Click the icon, located at the top of the course menu.

6. Click the **Web Link** option

7. On the "Add Tool Link" window, do the following:

   a. In the Name field, type "Course Syllabus".

   b. In the URL field, paste the link to the Student View of the desired syllabus (this process was explained on the previous page of the manual).

   c. From the keyboard, press the left-arrow key one time.
      HINT: For some reason, the Submit button will not activate until the arrow key is pressed one time.

   d. Add a checkmark to the "Available to Users" box so that students can see the link.

   e. SUBMIT

8. Click on the "Course Syllabus" menu link to test it.

CALENDARS

Adding the Calendar Link

1. Open the desired BlackBoard class.

2. Click the ➕ icon, located at the top of the course menu.

3. Click the **Tool Link** option.

4. On the "Add Tool Link" window, do the following:

    a. Type a name such as "Course Calendar"

    b. Use the drop-down arrow to select "**Calendar**."

    c. Add a checkmark to the "Available to Users" box so that students can see the link.

    d. SUBMIT

5. Click-and-Drag the "Course Calendar" link up to a new location on the menu if desired.

Specifying the Correct Calendar

- In the gray area between the menu and the main calendar grid:
    - As illustrated below, there are three icons that allow you to specify whether you want to see the calendar in Day, Week, or Month view.
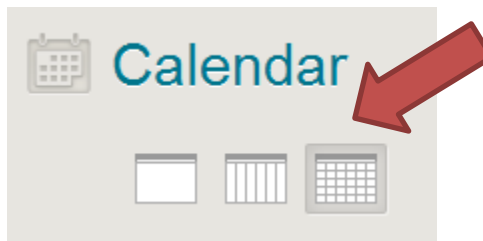
- As shown below, there will be a list of several calendars, each with a different color.
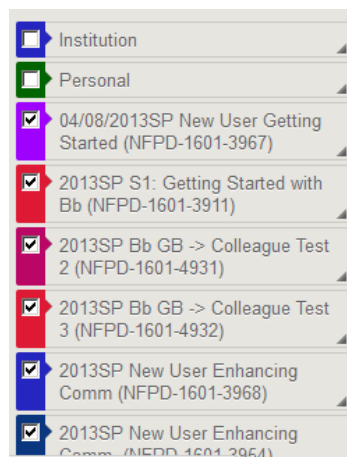
- Every class that you are teaching or taking (plus Institution and Personal) will have its own calendar in Blackboard.

- Students will not see events in your "Personal" calendar.

- Your Outlook calendar is not visible here, and your events on this calendar will not be displayed in Outlook.

- Events in this calendar **will** appear in the AC Connect portal.

- Adding calendar events can be done in only one calendar at a time and they cannot be copied to other classes or to other places in the same calendar.

Adding Calendar Events

1. Click the Course Calendar item which is located in the course menu.

2. Double-click the day on which the event is to be created.

3. On the "Create Event" window, do the following:

    a. In the top field, type a name for the new event.

    b. Use the drop-down arrow to select the calendar onto which the event is to be added.

    c. Set the Start day/time and the End day/time.

    d. Type the details that the students need to know in "Event Description".

    e. SAVE

4. If you add the event to the wrong date, just click-and-drag the event to the correct day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adding the Announcements Link

1. Open the desired BlackBoard class

2. Click the ➕ icon, located at the top of the course menu

3. Click the **Tool Link** option

4. On the "Add Tool Link" window, do the following:

    a. Type a name such as "Course Announcements"

    b. Add a checkmark to the "Available to Users" box

    c. SUBMIT

5. Click-and-Drag the "Course Announcements" link up to a new location on the menu if desired.

Creating a Blackboard Announcement

1. Click the "Course Announcements" link which is located in the course menu.
   NOTE: The name of the link may be different in your menu.

2. Click the **Create Announcement** button.

3. On the "Create Announcement" page, fill out the form:

    a. Type a title for the new announcement

    b. In the **Message** field, type the text that you want the students to see

    c. Specify if the announcement is date-restricted or not.

    d. SUBMIT

Miscellaneous Announcement Information

When several announcements have been created, the students will have to scroll through them to read the new ones. Each new announcement will be placed at the top of the list. If you want an announcement to always stay at the top of the list, do the following:

- Click the "Course Announcements" link located in the course menu.
  NOTE: the actual name of the link may be slightly different in your menu

- Drag the announcement up above the gray dotted line that is marked, "New Announcements Appear Below This Line ----------"

E-MAIL

The e-mail feature of Blackboard is very different from ANGEL. It is not self-contained in the class which means that any e-mail that is sent will not reside in the class. Each e-mail will go from the instructor's Outlook account and be received in the students Gmail (Google) account.

Adding the "Send E-Mail" Link

Newly-created Blackboard classes will have the "Send E-mail" link added to the course menu located at the left side of the Blackboard window. However, if there is not a link in the menu, it can be added.

1. Open the desired BlackBoard class.

2. Click the ➕ icon, located at the top of the course menu

3. Click the **Tool Link** option

4. On the "Add Tool Link" window, do the following:

   a. Type a name such as "E-mail" or "Class E-mail"

   b. Use the drop-down arrow to change the type to **Email**

   c. Add a checkmark to the "Available to Users" box

   d. SUBMIT

5. Click-and-Drag the "Send E-Mail" link up to a new location on the menu if desired.

Sending an E-Mail Message

1. Click the "Email" link, located in the course menu.

   NOTE: the name of the link may be different in your menu.

2. From the list, choose to whom you want to send the e-mail message

3. Fill out the form as needed. Make sure that you have at least one recipient in the "Selected" field.

4. SUBMIT

   NOTE: the e-mail is sent from your Outlook account to the student's Gmail account.

CREATING FOLDERS & RULES IN OUTLOOK

Many instructors do not want their student's emails to be mixed into their Outlook program's Inbox where e-mails from college employees and outside contacts are stored. Therefore, we can create folders and rules to intercept these student e-mails and redirect them into the specified Outlook folders.

Accessing the Web Version of Outlook

1. Use a web browser to login to the AC Connect portal (https://acconnect.actx.edu)

2. As illustrated below, click on the link for "Unread Messages (Exchange)"
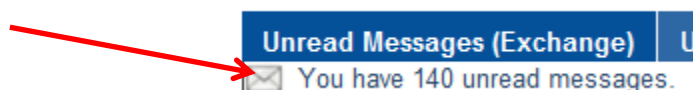
NOTE: This will launch the *web version* of Outlook.

Creating a new Folder

1. Access the web version of Outlook. (The directions are listed above)

2. At the left side of the Outlook window, right-click your name (this is located about half way down the list of folders)

3. As illustrated below, click the option to "Create New Folder."
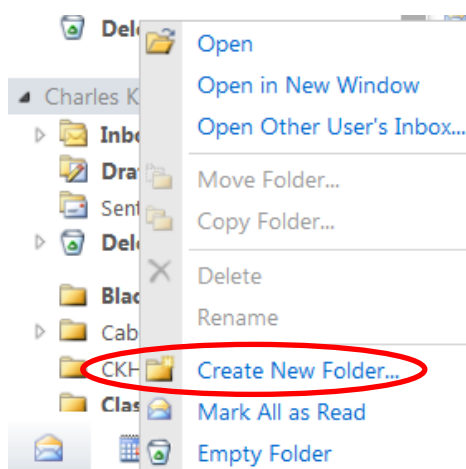
4. Type a name for the new folder and press ENTER. Most instructors are using the name of the class for the name of the folder so that it will not be as confusing.

    NOTE: *Make sure the name is easy to identify as a folder for a particular class*.

5. Repeat steps #1- #4 for each class that you are teaching this semester.

Creating a Rule to Redirect E-mails into the Class Folder

1. In the upper-right corner of the Outlook window, click on "**Options**."

2. Click the option to, "Create an Inbox Rule."

3. Click the New [New...] icon. The following window will be displayed:
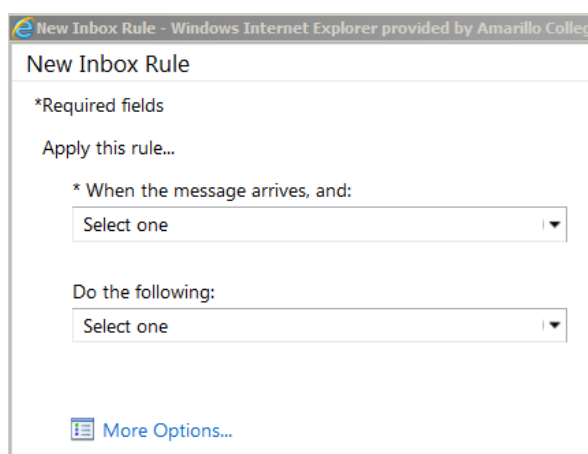
4. Specify the "Criteria Text":

    a. Click the first (top) drop-down arrow.

    b. From the drop-down menu, click the option, "It includes these words in the subject"

    c. Type the identifying text from the "Subject" line of an email from the associated class **and press ENTER**.

    For example, if you are creating a rule to redirect email from the class "NFPD-1601-3905" into a particular folder, then the identifying text would be "NFPD-1601-3905. Notice the hyphens between some of the characters.

    *NOTE: You have to be **extremely specific** when typing criteria text. "NFPD-1601-3905" is NOT THE SAME as "NFPD 1601-3905" because there is not a hyphen between the D and the 1 in the criteria text and there was a hyphen in the original text. It has to match EXACTLY!*

    d. OK

5. Specify the Action to take:
    a. Click the second (lower) drop-down arrow.
    b. From the drop-down menu, click the option, "Move the message to folder"
    c. Click the appropriate folder*.*
    NOTE: if the folder has not been created yet, you can use the "New Folder" button to create it now.
    d. OK

6. Name the Rule:
    a. Click the link.
    b. In the "Name of Rule" box, type an identifying name for this rule. Make it easy to identify from other rules so that you know the class which it is associated with.
    c. SAVE

7. Test the Rule:

    a. As illustrated below, click the "Mail" link (located in the upper-left corner)
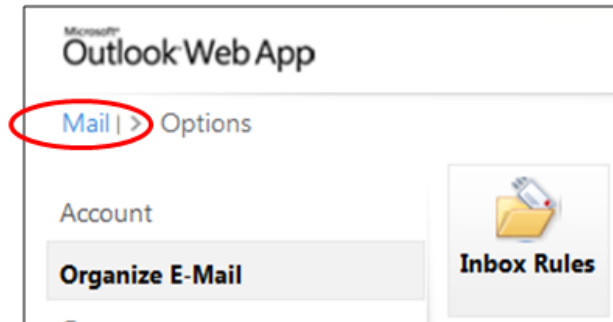
8. Send a message to yourself and include the criteria text (step #4). The rule should redirect the e-mail message into the appropriate folder.

9. Open the folder to see if the test message was redirected correctly.

JOURNALS

Adding the "Journal" Link

Many instructors do not want to use the e-mail feature because Blackboard does not keep a record of the correspondence with the student. Therefore, many are choosing to communicate with the student through a private journal instead of e-mail.

1. Open the desired BlackBoard class

2. Click the [+] icon, located at the top of the course menu

3. Click the **Tool Link** option

4. On the "Add Tool Link" window, do the following:

    a. Type a name such as "Journals"

    b. Use the drop-down arrow to change the type to **Journal.**

    c. Add a checkmark to the "Available to Users" box.

    d. SUBMIT

5. Click-and-Drag the Journal link up to a new location on the menu if desired.

Creating a Private Journal

1. Click the "**Journal**" link which is located in the course menu.

   NOTE: the name of the link may be different in your menu

2. Click the **Create Journal** button.

3. On the "Create Announcement" page, fill out the form:

   a. Type a title for the new journal, "Student-Instructor Communication"

   b. Make sure the journal is set to "**Available**"

   c. Date-restrict the journal to a couple of days past the end of the semester

   d. Set the Index Entries to "**Weekly**"

   e. Checkboxes

      i. **DO NOT** check any of the check boxes to allow students to edit delete their entries because you need to keep track of the entries

      ii. **DO NOT** allow them to delete entries for the same reason as above

      iii. **DO NOT** check the "Permit Course Users to View Journal" because this will make the journal public which means that all students in the class can view your private correspondence with the intended student.

   f. Do not grade the journal since this is being used as correspondence only.

   g. SUBMIT

ARCHIVE (BACKUP) YOUR COURSE

This simple process is very crucial. We suggest that you archive your course every time you make an important change to the course and every time you enter grades into the grade center. Why is this process so important? If something happens to your course or your grade center, it is an easy process to restore the class to its last saved state.

NOTE: *When the archive process is completed, you will receive a notification email in your Outlook program.*

Create a New Archive
1. Login to your Blackboard class.
2. In the "Control Panel" area of the menu bar (lower left portion of the screen), click on **Packages and Utilities** to open it.
3. Click **Export/Archive Course.**
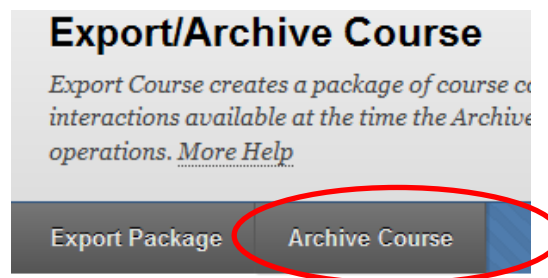
4. As shown in the illustration above, click on the **Archive Course** button.
5. **IMPORTANT**: Place a checkmark in the "**Include Grade Center History**" checkbox.
6. **Submit**

Delete the Old Archive File

Do not keep more than one copy of an archive because of space restrictions. Once you get a new archive, follow the following steps to delete the outdated copy.

1. After receiving the email from "Blackboard Administrator" (check your Outlook inbox) announcing the completion of the operation archive, login to your course again.

2. In the "Control Panel" area of the menu bar (lower left portion of the screen), click on **Export/Archive Course.**
   This will refresh the screen and display the newly-created archive file (it is in a zip format).

3. Rest the mouse pointer on the older copy. The newer copy is always placed at the bottom of the list.

4. Use the drop-down contextual menu to delete the older copy.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Training Courses from AC

There are several classes taught through the Center for Teaching & Learning. These classes are intended to show users how to use more features of the Blackboard system.

1. **Session 1** (3.5 hours)
    a. Using the AC Connect Portal
    b. Parts of the Blackboard screen
    c. Using the "My Institution" tab
    d. Creating and Working with Content Areas
    e. Creating Content in the Content Area
        i. Content folders
        ii. Items
        iii. Blank Pages (for HTML text)
        iv. Images
        v. Web Links
        vi. YouTube videos
    f. Effectively Using the "Content Collection Area" to Share Resources
    g. Using a Web Folder to Easily Copy Material into a Blackboard Class
    h. Working with the Course Menu
    i. Linking to Your Course Syllabus (found at www.actx.edu/syllabus)
    j. Creating and Working with Announcements
    k. E-mailing Students
    l. Understanding the Blackboard Calendar
    m. Archiving your Course

2. **Session 2** (3.5 hours)

    a. Create Assessments (Graded Items)

        i. Journal Entry

        ii. Discussion Forum Posts

        iii. Assignment (dropbox)

    b. Create and Deploy Tests

    c. Grade Center

        i. Understand the concept of an "External Grade" in Blackboard

        ii. Create a Grading Schema (grading scale)

        iii. Create Categories (Homework, Quizzes, Final Exam, etc.)

        iv. Create Calculated Columns to calculate averages

        v. Create Manual Grade Columns

        vi. See how to Organize the Grade Center (move columns, hide columns as needed, and freeze columns so they don't scroll)

    d. Examine the "Performance Dashboard"

    e. Understand the "Early Warning System"

    f. Archiving your Course

CTL Staff Members

As you begin working in Blackboard, you may need to contact a CTL representative for further help with Blackboard issues. This list also included each person's area of specialization.

1. **Brenda Davidson**   806 371-5148
   a. Working with Test Pools

2. **Brian Nixon**   806 371-5214
   a. Video-related questions
   b. Linking content from other sources into a class

3. **Charles Hendrick**   806 345-5540
   a. Creating and Managing Course Content
   b. Linking to AC Course Syllabi from Blackboard

4. **Dale McCurdy**   806 371-5940
   a. Creating and Managing Course Content
   b. Copying data from the hard drive into the Blackboard class environment

5. **Heather Voran**   806 371-5150
   a. Incorporating Publisher content
   b. Creating assessments and tying them to the Bb Grade Center
   c. Setting up and managing your Grade Center

6. **Kay Taylor**   806 371-5141
   a. Creating assessments and tying them to the Bb Grade Center
   b. Setting up and managing your Grade Center

Online Resources

This list contains some online resources for further instruction on Blackboard.

- Blackboard **On-Demand** Learning Center: http://ondemand.blackboard.com/

- Blackboard Help and Manuals: https://help.blackboard.com/

- Blackboard FAQ database: http://www.actx.edu/faq

- Blackboard Tutorials from Palomar University:

  http://www2.palomar.edu/pages/atrc/blackboard/faculty-information/tutorials-by-category/

- A 47-minute recorded webinar to show how to set up a Blackboard Course (skip first 4:30)

  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Loz2TXgw4tA&feature=player_embedded