The materials in this manual are to assist instructors using Blackboard. The manual will cover topics such as adding, updating and deleting content. This manual does not cover all aspects of the Blackboard system, but it will provide a foundation for successfully managing your Blackboard-enhanced courses.

Questions about Blackboard should be directed to James Fogt (fogtj@hssu.edu or 340-3574).

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The Control Panel is your main link for modifying your course materials. The Control Panel is only available to instructors, and students will not see this option on their course page.

All of the course options may be adjusted from within the Control Panel.

Clicking on any of the links will take you to a page to modify your course materials.

For example, if you click on the Announcements link, you will be taken to a page where you can edit your course announcements.
To add an announcement, click on the Add Announcement button.

Type in the announcement subject and the full announcement message (or you can cut and paste from another document, such as Word).

Choose the date and times you want the announcement to appear.

If you like, you can link the announcement to another area in Blackboard. For example, if your announcement is related to an assignment you have posted, you can link that announcement to the assignment so students don’t have to go searching for it.
The Calendar

In the Control Panel, click on the Calendar link. When the calendar comes up, click on the Add Event button.

Add the event title and the full text explanation of the event.

Choose the date and time of the event.

After you submit the event, it will appear in your calendar and in the calendars of all the students enrolled in your course.
In the Control Panel, click on the Staff Information link.

When the Staff Information page opens, click on the Profile button.

Enter information that you want students to have access to.

You can determine whether or not you want to make the information visible.

Browse your computer for an image of yourself, if you would like to post one.

Click on the submit button to make the information available.
Tasks can be set up to remind students of course assignments or tests. Any task you set up will appear in the student’s personal task list when he/she logs onto Blackboard.

To add a task, click on the Tasks link in the Control Panel.

When the Tasks page opens, click on the Add Task button.

Enter the title and description.

Enter a due date and a priority level.

Submit the task so that it appears in your students’ task list.
Adding Discussion Boards

Discussion boards are a good way to get students to collaborate in the learning process by posing and replying to questions related to the course. For a discussion board to be of value, the instructor should monitor the discussions that are going on in this area.

To create a discussion board, click on the Discussion Board link in the Control Panel, then click on the Add Forum button.

Enter a title and description for your discussion board. Select the forum settings appropriate to your needs.

Forum User Settings allow you to set limits on how some or all students use the discussion board. If a student is using the discussion board inappropriately, you may block them for posting, while they will still be able to read the board and access all other course content.

When you submit the discussion board setup information, the board will be automatically generated. You may create as many boards as you like. They are great tools for creating content for individual instructional units.
Right away, you want to have students update their email information in Blackboard. All student Blackboard accounts contain a default email address, which is "changeme@yourdomain.com."

When students change the default email to their correct email, you will be able to email them directly from Blackboard. Students are responsible for keeping their email information up to date.

In Blackboard, you have a number of email options for contacting course participants. Select the email option that suits your needs and click on OK.

For example, if you select the Email All Users option, the email will be automatically addressed to all users in the course.

Type in the subject and the message, add an attachment if desired, and submit the email.

Students will also have access to email lists so they will be able to send information to both you and other students.
The Collaboration Option allows you to create tools for students to interact with each other in real-time. The collaboration area contains both a chat room and a virtual classroom. The virtual classroom is a self-contained area that contains a chat room, a white board, and all of the course tools in Blackboard. It is fairly comprehensive.

To set up your collaboration area, click on the Collaboration link in the Control Panel. Then click on the Create Collaboration button.

Choose a descriptive session name so that students can identify the collaboration session.

Schedule the time when the collaboration area will be available.

Finally, choose a collaboration tool: either the Lightweight Chat or the Virtual Classroom.

Students will be able to access the collaboration area, which can be made available during class times, all the time, or when you are off-site and wish to conduct your course from a distance.
The digital drop box allows you to place files on the server and give students access to course downloads, such as PowerPoint presentations, sample databases, or other electronic documents.

Students may also send materials to your digital drop box, such as homework assignments or presentations.

In the Control Panel, click on the Digital Drop box link, then click on the Add File button.

Enter a title for the file you wish to put in the digital drop box, browse for the file on your hard drive or floppy disk.

Add any comments or instructions associated with the file, then submit the file.
You can also send a file to a specific student’s account by clicking on the Send File button.

Select the individuals to whom you wish to send the file, select or upload the file you wish to send, add a title and instructions, then click the Submit button.

The file will appear in the selected student’s digital drop box area.
Adding course information is a tool to provide students with information about your class. With course-information options, you can add items of interest, link to other areas in the course, or link to external URLs.

In the Control Panel, click on the Course Information link and then choose a category to add: Items, Folder, URL, Course Links, or Test.

The numbers next to each item indicate the order in which the item will appear. Old items should be given high numbers, while new items are given low numbers. This will prevent students from having to do a lot of searching for course information.

Items that are grayed out still exist in the system but are invisible to students. It is better to make content invisible to students rather than deleting it. This way, you can re-open the content for students or another course when you want to. This will cut down on redundant work for the course instructor.

Each item can be changed by clicking on the Modify button next to it. Items can also be removed by clicking on the Remove button. Once an item is removed, there is no way to retrieve it, so you will want to carefully consider whether you want to remove an item or simply make it invisible to students.
Adding course information allows you to choose from many options, such as the name of the content and a descriptive explanation. You will be able to upload and link to files from your computer or link to other documents you have already placed in Blackboard.

With Blackboard, you will be able to choose when the materials are available to course participants. You can also track whether or not students have accessed the materials by clicking the Track Views option. With particularly important assignments, you may want to track views to make sure that students are accessing the materials.

You will be able to make content available only after certain times, such as a two-day window before a test. The content will automatically be made invisible to students at the end of the time that you set.

Once you have set your preferences, click the submit button. The material will become available on the dates and times you have selected.
COURSE DOCUMENTS

Course documents can be added in the same fashion as you added course information.

In the Control Panel, click on the Course Documents link and select items, folders, urls, course links, or tests to add.

EXTERNAL LINKS

External Links can be added in the same fashion as you added course information.

In the Control Panel, click on the External Links link and select items, folders, urls, course links, or tests to add.

With External Links, it is better to just add URLs of outside web sites so that students don’t get confused when looking for information.
You will be able to add and delete buttons from your course menu. It is best to remove non-used items from the course menu. This limits the number of locations students will look for relevant information. Menu items can always be put back when content becomes available by clicking on the Add Content button.

To manage your course menu, Click on the Manage Course Menu link in the Control panel. Add or remove the options appropriate to your course.

You also have access to course settings in the Control Panel. By clicking on the settings button, you will be able to make changes to various aspects of your course. Typically, you may want to consult with the help desk (340-5953) prior to making changes to your course settings.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WILL BE ADDED TO THIS MANUAL OR OTHER MANUALS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. FOR IMMEDIATE QUESTIONS, THE FOLLOWING CONTACTS ARE AVAILABLE:

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