



Blackboard Tips & Tricks

Best Practices When Adding Content to a Course

- ✓ The "Coursework" navigational area in Blackboard 9.1 is envisioned to be the one-stop-shop for students to access *all* of the instructional materials and activities for the course from within a single link.
- ✓ Instructors are encouraged to select "Build Content" > "Content Folders," "Learning Modules," or "Lesson Plans" to first develop a meaningful organizational structure within Coursework for their materials and activities. The labels attached to those Content Folders, Learning Modules or Lesson Plans will likely mirror the structure already laid out in the course syllabus (e.g. Week 1, Module 1, Chapters 1-2, Lab 1, Photosynthesis," etc.).
- ✓ Once the organizational structure has been established, instructors are then encouraged to add course materials, activities and assessments within those "Content Folders," Learning Modules," or "Lesson Plans" by choosing one or more of the following paths:
 - "Build Content" > "Add Item," "Add File," "Add Link," "Add Mashup," etc.
 - "Assessments"> "Assignments," "Test," "Survey," "Turnitin Assignment"
 - "Tools" > "Discussion Board," "Blogs," "Journals," "Wikis," etc.
- ✓ To add a Word document, pdf file, or a PowerPoint file to a content area of the course, choose "Build Content" > "Add Item" or "Add File."
 - Add Item provides a "Text" box for entering explanatory information to that item.
 - Add File only provides an option to attach the file without any explanation.

With either option, whether you choose to "Browse My Computer" or "Browse Content Collection" the file you select will end up in the Course Content folder within the Content Collection (My Content tab) where it is editable using Bb Drive.
- ✓ When adding a YouTube video Mashup, be sure in section 2, "Options," to select the "Yes" radio button beside "Show YouTube URL." From time to time, there have been known issues in some browsers with the YouTube player not loading properly within Blackboard. With the YouTube URL included, students can always open the video in a separate window.
- ✓ When linking to "Tools," be sure to click on "More Tools" to see all of the options.



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- ✓ When linking to tools like Discussion Boards, Journals, Blogs, and Wikis, within the context of the course content organizational structure (e.g. Week 1, Module 1, Chapters 1-2, Lab 1, Photosynthesis), it is highly recommended that users choose the **second** option and link to a specific forum, journal, blog, or wiki rather than to the tool page itself which would show *all* of the discussion forums, journals, blogs or wikis.

ITS has always discouraged users from copying and pasting text directly from Word into the text editor in Blackboard. With the upgrade to Blackboard 9.1, service pack 10, in December 2012; Blackboard introduced a new content editor that reportedly *will* accept text pasted directly from Word. Users are advised to utilize the formatting tools within Word when developing content to be copied and pasted into Blackboard in order to maintain proper formatting on the other end. A new math editor is also available in the new content editor.

Tutorial: http://www.siue.edu/its/bb/fac_staff/bb_step4.shtml