



# Blackboard Tips & Tricks

## Merged Course Sections

Instructors teaching multiple sections of the same course have options concerning how to handle their course requests and manage their individual Blackboard course sections. When you make your course request(s), you can choose to have all sections of a course included in a single merged course shell, OR you can choose to have separate course shells created for each section you are teaching. Putting all sections into one merged course shell often expedites managing the addition of materials to a course: you do everything just once. However, having all students from all sections in a single course can complicate things if you are using discussion boards, deploying quizzes to different sections on different days, etc. If you need assistance in deciding the best course of action for your individual circumstances, please contact us at [ftc\\_help@siue.edu](mailto:ftc_help@siue.edu) or 618-650-5500.

If you opt to request a course where multiple sections are merged into a single course shell, you must note the following:

- ✓ All work to develop the course in Blackboard *must* be done in the "merged," multi-section course shell. Nothing can or should be added to the individual section-specific "child course" shells.
- ✓ The individual "child course" shells should remain "Unavailable" to student users.
- ✓ In order to avoid confusion, instructors are advised to edit the "My Course" module on the My Blackboard tab and the "Course List" module on the My Courses tab, unchecking the boxes beside the "child courses" so that they do not even appear in those modules.
- ✓ The Grade Center for a single course shell with multiple sections will include all students from all sections listed in alphabetical order. Creating Smart Views in the Grade Center based upon the "Child Course ID" field will expedite filtering the Grade Center by section.
  1. Click on **Control Panel > Full Grade Center**
  2. Click on **Manage > Smart Views**
  3. Click on **Create Smart View**
    - Provide a "Name" (e.g. Section 001). To have this view appear nested under the Full Grade Center in the Control Panel for quicker access, check the box "Add as Favorite."
    - Under "Type of View," choose **Custom**
    - Under "Selection Criteria," choose **"Child Course ID" > Contains > section number**.
    - Under "Filter Results," choose **All Columns**.
    - Click on **Submit**.
    - Repeat these steps until you have created one smart view for each individual section of the course.

4. Choose the appropriate section-specific Smart View to view the Grade Center showing just those students in that one section of the class at a time.