Blackboard Tips & Tricks

Troubleshooting

If students indicate that they are **unable to see or to access your course or content within your course**, take these troubleshooting steps:

a) **Make sure you have made the course available**. All course shells are unavailable at the time of their creation. You make them available via: Control Panel > Customization > Properties > 3. Set Availability > "Yes" > Submit. This is usually the ***last step*** taken before starting a new semester.

b) **Make certain that you have actually linked to the Content Collection item from** within the course. Simply adding a document to your Course Content folder of your content collection does ***not*** create the link to it from within the course. You must create a link to that file by adding it to a content area (e.g. "About This Course" or "Coursework").

1. With Edit Mode "ON," click on the link to a content area in the course.
2. Click on **Build Content** at the top of the screen and select the type of content you wish to build. ITS recommends using a "Content Folder," "Learning Module," and/or "Lesson Plan" to organize the content you will create within Coursework. After creating those content organizers, click on the name of the item to open it.
3. Click on **Build Content** and select either **Item** (includes a "Text" field for adding a description, information, and/or instructions) or **File** (includes only a link to the item, with no additional contextual information).
4. Click on the **Browse Content Collection** button to browse for and select the file in your Content Collection.

c) Make certain that you have posted Microsoft Office documents in a format that is compatible with all versions of Office. Office 2007 and Office 2008 for Mac files cannot be opened with older versions of Office. In order to assure backward compatibility, you could consider saving Office 2007 or Office 2008 for Mac documents as Office 97-2003. If you opt not to post your documents in a compatible format, then point students to the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack downloads on the ITS web page:
http://www.siue.edu/its/software.shtml#other

d) If you are posting PowerPoint presentations in Blackboard, note that students must either have PowerPoint installed on their computer or will need to download and install a PowerPoint Viewer. Point your students to that plug-in download on the ITS web page:
http://www.siue.edu/its/software.shtml#plugins

e) Note that you can see your course as your students see it by logging into Blackboard using your "Test Student" account (i.e. jdoe_s). You will create your own "Test Student" account in Blackboard once and then add that "Test Student" account to each course each semester.

1. Click on Control Panel > Course Tools > Add Test Student. You will create and manage the password for that account via this link.
2. Once your "Test Student" account has been created, you will need to "Enroll Test User" into each course, each semester through Control Panel > Course Tools > Add Test Student > "Enroll Test Student"
3. Once your "Test Student" is enrolled in your course, and your course has been made "Available" to your students, you can log into Blackboard using the link beneath the "Login" button on the Blackboard home page that reads: "CLICK HERE to login with your test student (_s) account" and see your course as your students see it.

If you have checked all of the above and still have questions, contact Information Technology Services by phone at 618-650-5500 or by email at ftc_help@siue.edu, providing the following information about the course you are troubleshooting:

- Course ID (e.g. MATH-101-001)
- Content area in which the issue has been reported
- Name of the specific item with the issue
- Brief description of the issue