OAK

Online Access to Knowledge

Quick Start Guide

Blackboard 7.1.134

Revised 01/09/07

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Using This Guide

Overview

Welcome to Vanderbilt's **Online Access to Knowledge (OAK) system**, powered by Blackboard Learning System™. The Blackboard course management system provides instructors with a powerful and flexible platform for distributing course content, conducting technology enhanced lessons, assessing student work, and communicating with course participants.

The **OAK Quick Start Guide** begins by reviewing the teaching and learning environment for Instructors. The bulk of the guide details the functions available to Instructors through the Control Panel. For further help and documentation, please visit http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oak.

Suggestions for Getting Started

This manual should be read as a reference guide. Do not read this manual from cover to cover.

1. Peruse this manual quickly before getting underway.
2. Gather the materials you will need to construct the various areas of your online course such as:
    - Schedule or calendar
    - List of topics or units
    - Lists of assignments and due dates
    - Course files and documents
    - Media you would like to use (html, graphics, web sites, etc.)
3. Log in to OAK and have a look around: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oak/
    - Locate the courses you will teach
    - Explore a course you are teaching
    - Note the content areas and tool groups listed in every course by default on the left-hand frame
    - Locate and peruse the control panel, which you will use to adjust the settings of the course
4. Post a document or two and add a link to the content areas, to see how they appear to users
5. Review and test the several messaging features of your course

	Making your course "available": Blackboard Courses are invisible to students until the instructor goes to the control panel, chooses "Settings" in the "Course Options" box, chooses "Course Availability" and chooses "Yes" to the "Make course available to students" question item. (See page 25 of this manual for step-by-step instructions.)
	Your students may not appear as enrolled in your Blackboard course, or you may not find a complete listing until after the "bump and balance" period that precedes a given semester. At the request of the undergraduate associate deans, course enrollments will not be updated within Blackboard courses until after this period. Please see the academic calendar for information on the dates for a given academic term. You can find the academic calendar at http://registrar.vanderbilt.edu/calendar.htm

Getting Help

Help and support for OAK at Vanderbilt is available from several sources. Each School provides support for OAK, additional support is available through the ITS Helpdesk (615) 343-1631.

LOCAL SUPPORT PROVIDERS

College of Arts and Science
Bill Longwell (615-322-6950)
william.longwell@vanderbilt.edu

Blair School of Music
Michael Hime, (615) 343-3166
michael.s.hime@vanderbilt.edu

Divinity School
Jimmy Byrd, (615) 343-3976
james.p.byrd@vanderbilt.edu

School of Engineering
Andy Richter, (615) 343-4518
andy.richter@vanderbilt.edu

David Linn, (615)343-6164
drl@vuse.vanderbilt.edu

School of Law
Law IT Team
tech-help@law.vanderbilt.edu

School of Medicine
Donna Schot, (615) 343-4942
donna.schot@vanderbilt.edu

School of Nursing
VUSN OAK Support
VUSN OAK Support Website (http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/nursing/imc/support.html#oak)

Peabody College
Ralph Knapp (615) 343-2602
ralph.knapp@vanderbilt.edu

Psychology - David Bass
LPO and H&OD - Matt Chumley
T&L and SPED - Jeff Balturshot

Logging in to Blackboard

Logging In

To access OAK, type the URL: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oak into the address bar in your web browser. Click on the **LOGIN** link in the center of the screen. On the next screen, enter your VUnet ID and e-password in the appropriate fields.

A VUnet ID and e-password are required. There are several reasons why a user receives an "Unable to Authenticate"; two of the most frequent issues are forgetting to change an e-password after ITS notification and name and/or social security changes.

If you know you have the correct password, but you still receive this message, visit the ITS website (http://its.vanderbilt.edu) to see if you need to reset your password for security reasons. You can also contact the ITS Help Desk at (34)3-9999.

> Members of the Vanderbilt community who have recently changed their last name or social security number will also receive this notice. When changing this information, you must change it with both the Registrar's Office AND HR (if you receive monies from Vanderbilt). Changing this information in one place and not the other will cause you to be denied access to OAK.

Blackboard Layout

Blackboard contains two areas: the Header frame and the Information frame. The header frame contains navigation buttons that allow the user to access the institution home page, access the help, and logout, as well access to the user tabs.

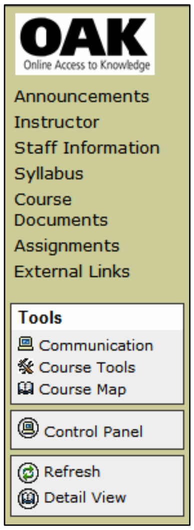
Tabs

Main: The Main tab contains tools and modules information specific to each user's preferences. The major portion of the screen contains the default modules: Announcements, Courses, Calendar, and Tasks. Users can remove modules from their Main tab.

To change the contents of this frame, click on the small Contents button in the upper right corner of the frame. To change the arrangement of the modules or the color scheme, click on the Layout button to the right of the Contents button in the upper right corner of the frame.

Courses: Users click on a link from the Courses tab to access a Course. Courses are organized by the user's role in a course.

The Default Course Menu



Overview

Courses contain content and tools for teaching and learning. The Instructor assigned to a Course oversees the course through the Control Panel. While the Instructor has control over the Course, the Administrator can set overrides that restrict or require course areas and tools.

A Course consists of the Course Menu and a content frame. The Course Menu links users to content and tools. The content frame displays content and tools.

> The default Course Menu contains the same content for all users, with the exception of the link to the Control Panel. The Control Panel is only available to users who are enrolled as instructor or teaching assistant.
>
> Though the Course Menu may be modified, instructors are encouraged to make only slight modifications so that students will have a similar experience across all their courses.

Functions

The table below includes information on the components of a Course.

AREA	DESCRIPTION
Announcements	Announcements post timely information critical to course success. Click **Announcements** from the Course Menu to view Announcements.
Staff Information	Staff Information provides background and contact information on Instructors and Teaching Assistants.
Course areas	Course areas can contain a wide-range of content items including: Assessments, Assignments, Learning Units, and multimedia files.
Communication	The Communication area allows users to: • send and receive messages • open Discussion Boards • enter the Virtual Classroom • view roster • view Group pages
Tools	This area contains tools that can be used in the Course. These include: Digital Drop Box, Edit Home Page, Personal Information, Calendar, View Grades, Student Manual, Tasks, The Electric Blackboard®, and Address Book.
External Links	External Links connect users to learning materials outside of the Blackboard Academic Suite.
Course Map	Navigates through a collapsible tree directory.

About the Course Menu

The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course and contains links to materials and tools within the course. The Instructor can customize the appearance of the Course Menu and the content and tools available to users.

Two views may be made available to users; if both views are available users may toggle between them:

- *Quick View* – Displays top-level of course materials. Links may be displayed as buttons or text.
- *Detail View* – Displays course materials as seen in the Course Map. This view expands to show the hierarchy of course navigation.

A Tools Panel appears as part of the Course Menu. This box may contain links to the Course Map, Communication tools and/or Course Tools. Links to tools may also be added to the main part of the Course Menu so they appear in the Detail View or the Course Map.

Information about when the Course Menu was last refreshed is also available in the Course Menu. Hold the mouse over the Refresh icon to view the date and time the menu was last refreshed. In the Detail View the date and time information appears at the bottom.

View New Content

When content is added to the Course Menu or the Course Map it takes 20 minutes for it to cache; this means that new content in the Course Menu and Course Map does not appear for 20 minutes. To view content within the first 20 minutes of it being added click **Refresh**.

Set up Menu display options

The Instructor can make the Quick View and/or the Detail View available within a course. Follow the steps below to change the view:

1. Select **Course Design** on the Control Panel.
2. Select **Manage Menu Display Options** on the Course Design page.
3. Select a default view for the Course Menu.

Set up Tool box display

The Tools Panel may be set to display links to Course Tools, Communication tools, and/or the Course Map. The display of the Tools Panel is managed separately for the Detail View and the Quick View. This allows Instructors to set up the Tools Panel differently in the two separate views.
Follow the steps below to set up the Tools Panel display for the Quick View:

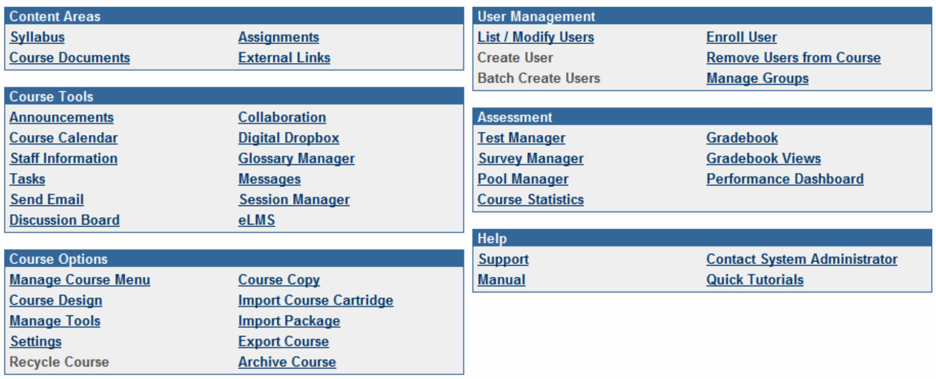
1. In the Control Panel, select **Course Design**.
2. Select **Manage Tool Panel** on the Course Design page.
3. Select **Quick View Tool Panel Options** or **Detail View Tool Panel Options** on the Manage Tool Panel page.
4. Select which links to display in the box and enter a name to appear in the header. If no options are selected, the Tools Panel does not appear in the Course Menu. If **Header Name** is left blank, no header appears in the Tools panel. The background and text color for the header may also be selected.

Course Control Panel

Overview

All course administration is done through the Control Panel. This area is only available to users with one of the following defined course roles: Instructor, Teaching Assistant, Course Builder, Grader, or System Administrator.

To find the **Control Panel**, open a course and click **Control Panel** in the Course Menu.



Functions

The Control Panel provides access to all the tools and features necessary to administer the course. It is comprised of six areas:

PART	FUNCTION
Content Areas	Provides the tools necessary to add text, files, and information into a course. Click on "Edit View" while browsing any content area to modify a content area directly.
Course Tools	Contains the communication tools to send email, create tasks, and work with groups.
Course Options	Contains security and customization options, such as Settings, where Instructors may make the course available to students, and Manage Course Menu, where they may create new content areas and modify the contents of the Course Menu.
User Management	Provides tools to manage users, enrollments, and groups.
Assessment	Provides tools for building Assessments, recording grades, and tracking user activity.
Support	Offers support contacts and online documentation. "Help" will send an email to the system administrator; for individual assistance, contact your local support provider.

Courses are Invisible to students before you go to the control panel, select **Settings** in the "Course Options" box, followed by **Course Availability** and finally select **Yes** to the "Make course available to students" question item. Click **Submit**.

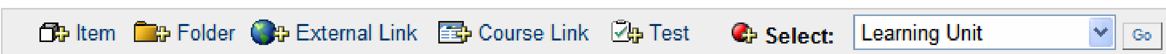
Content Areas

Overview

Content areas in Blackboard are organized like folders in a file cabinet. The top-level folders are listed along the left side of your window, and their contents, which may include documents, links, files, links to Blackboard tests and assignments, and other folders appear in the large central frame of the screen. Instructors can use the Course Content areas to display various materials and exercises, including syllabi, assignments, tests, and lecture notes.

Add or Modify Items in a Course Content Area:

Click a **Content Area** on the left side of your screen and then click **Edit View** in the top-right corner. Then click a button on the options bar to choose the type of content you want to place in the folder and follow the directions in each section.



1. Content Information

   Name – You will have the option of selecting a Name for the item from a drop-down list or typing your own title for the item (e.g. “Some Author’s Article”).

   Text – A space is provided for typing or pasting text that describes the item, if needed.

2. Content Attachments – Files may be associated with the item by clicking Browse and selecting the appropriate attachment. Files may be associated by link, which is the usual method for text documents and image files. In addition, media files can be embedded within the page and compressed files can be decompressed upon clicking. The OAK system supports a wide variety of commonly-used file types like .doc, .xls, .ppt, and .jpg.

3. Options – This section allows you to specify the accessibility of the item. You can choose to make the item visible or not, include tracking information if you want to receive reports on how often the item is accessed, and set date restrictions to limit access to the item.

   Note: Make sure that you choose YES to the question that asks “Do you want to make the content visible?” Otherwise students will be unable to view the file.

	Content Items in Blackboard content areas look a lot like files that you see on the desktop of your computer. They have icons next to them, and are followed by their names or descriptive links.
	However, you can not manipulate or move items in Blackboard from one place to another by clicking-and-dragging, as you might on your computer’s desktop. Content items must be placed in the area where you want them to appear by adding them in a particular Content Area’s Edit View. If you want to move the item later, you must upload or create it in the new area and delete it from the old area. For this reason, among many others, **it is important to keep backup copies of all of your posted files and items on your hard drive.**

Post Files in a Content Area:

To post a file like a Word Document, PDF, movie file, or graphic choose ITEM in the content area Edit View. Be sure to fill out all information areas for each file you upload.

Find the text box editor, and click the appropriate button for the type of file you want to place in the content area. The content types are (from left to right)

- File (for word documents, PowerPoint, PDF, etc.)
- Image (for .jpg, .gif, .png, etc.)
- MPEG / AVI (for movies or video clips)
- Quick Time (For Apple Quick Time video)
- Audio Content (.wav, .mp3, .wma, etc.)
- Flash/Shockwave

Finally, add text that will appear with the item in the large white editor box below the rows of buttons. You can format this text using the Microsoft Word-like formatting buttons above the typing area and then click **Submit**.

Blackboard's WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get, pronounced "whiz-ee-wig") editor has buttons that allow you to attach files with options for specific media types. Using the WYSIWYG editor is probably the best way to attach content, unless you would like to upload a ZIP archive and have the system "unpack" it. If you do not need to use zip files, using the WYSIWYG editor may offer more features for specific content types like movies and graphics.

	All files are scanned for viruses when they are uploaded. If your file is infected with a virus, a link to the file will not appear on your screen. Delete that item, clean the file on your computer, then try to upload the file again.
	Users have the ability to add multimedia files when authoring content in the Text Box Editor; however, **the practice of inserting large files (larger than 50 MB) is STRONGLY discouraged** as it puts a strain on the system. Streaming servers are available for larger content; contact your local support provider for details.

Additional Options

CREATE A LINK TO A WEB SITE

- To create a link to another website, click **URL** in the Content Area Edit View – DO NOT USE COURSE LINK FOR URLs and web sites.
- Fill in the requested information including the web address or URL and whether you want the content to appear in the Blackboard window or in a separate window.
- Click **Submit**.

CREATE A LINK TO OTHER BLACKBOARD CONTENT AREAS OR TOOLS

- To create a link to another area of your course, click **Course Link** in the Content Area Edit View.
- You will see a **Browse** button. Click this button for a list of your course's contents.
- Choose another area in your course (like Discussion Boards) by clicking the radio-button next to the item.
- Click **Submit** on the Browse window.
- Finish filling out information on the Add Course Link window and click **Submit**.

CREATE A FOLDER WITHIN A FOLDER IN A CONTENT AREA

- To create a folder within a Content Area, choose **Folder** in the Content Area Edit View
- If you choose to create a folder, you can return to the Content Area through the Control Panel, click the Folder, and add Items, Files, and Links within the folder to improve organization.

CHANGE, MODIFY, COPY, OR REMOVE CONTENT

- These functions appear next to individual items when you access them through the Edit View
- Click the "Modify", "Copy", or "Remove" button next to the content item or file you want to change.

HOW TO CREATE A NEW CONTENT AREA

- Click **Control Panel** on the left side of your screen
- Click **Manage Course Menu** in the Course Options box.
- Click **Content Areas** next to the word Add near the top of the main window
- Choose **Options** and make the area available for students
- Click **Submit**
  Note: You can also use this area of the control panel to rename existing content areas.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING CONTENT AREAS AND CONTENT ITEMS

Content areas are a flexible way to organize online materials for your course.

- You can simplify finding course materials by adding content areas for units in your course
- Try to avoid creating too many "nested" folders (folders within folders) – this might be confusing to students. If you choose to do this, students can use the "Detail View" to see how these folders are organized.
- You can avoid sending numerous e-mail attachments by posting documents as content items

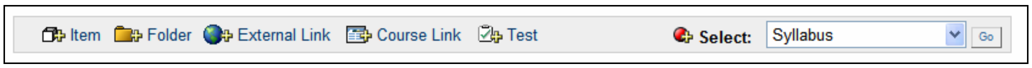
Creating a Syllabus

Overview

A new feature in Blackboard 7.1 is the Syllabus Builder. For those instructors who have need of a structured format for delivering the course syllabus content to their students, the Syllabus Builder within Blackboard may be the most appropriate place to start.

Adding a Syllabus

Click on a Content Area in a course, click on the **Edit View** and then click on the pull-down menu and select "**Syllabus**" and click "**Go**."



Syllabus Information:

1. Input a content area name on the next screen.
2. Select either "Create New Syllabus" or "Use Existing File." If you choose "Use Existing File," you can browse for the document on your hard drive to include a link to the file in your course.
3. Click **Submit**.

Syllabus Builder:

1. Syllabus Information – If you need to modify the name of the syllabus, you have the option here. Enter syllabus information in the three text boxes (description, learning objectives, and required materials), or enter new names to match your syllabus.

2. Syllabus Design – Instructors have the option of choosing a design for the syllabus - different pre-formatted styles are included. Colors of the header and text can also be modified.

3. Build Lessons – This feature is similar to the Session Manager tool. It provides you with the option to create a number of lesson shells, or not to include lesson shells at all. (See "Creating a Course Schedule" in the next section.)

4. Options – This section allows you to specify the accessibility of the item. You can choose to make the item visible or not, include tracking information if you want to receive reports on how often the item is accessed, and set date restrictions to limit access to the syllabus.

5. Click **Submit**.

Session Manager: Creating a Course Schedule

Overview

Blackboard offers multiple options to instructors for organizing their courses. The following section will highlight the primary tools available for instructors and will give suggested applications for those tools.

Traditionally, an instructor works from a course calendar which s/he has put together in order to organize the pace and flow of the course. Use of Blackboard as an instructional tool can help to enhance that organization by providing both flexibility and structure as needed in the course. Understanding what tools are available and how best to take advantage of them can give instructors the ability to choose and successfully apply the tool most appropriate to their needs.

Options for Course Outlining and Organization in Blackboard

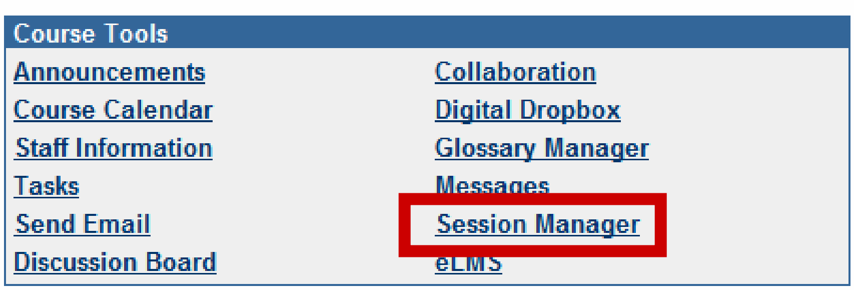
For the instructor who has a course calendar/schedule which has been developed over a series of semesters, and which is not likely to change significantly in the course of any given semester, the tool most appropriate to take advantage of might be the **Session Manager.** The **Session Manager** tool is designed to provide a calendar-based format for development of course content. Instructors can create multiple sessions or single sessions, edit the content and modify dates and descriptions, as well as restrict content availability based upon the calendar schedule for the course.

Instructors who have courses for which the schedule is still in some stages of development may find that the use of other Blackboard tools, namely the **document and content development** features, suit their needs better. They may prefer to use the various text and html editing tools available in the content areas for developing the course schedule online and displaying it to the students as an integrated portion of the default course structure.

Using the Session Manager to Create a Schedule with Content Areas and Items

The Session Manager in OAK is a tool developed in large part to provide functionality similar to that available with the Outline feature of Prometheus. Similar functionality can be found through the "Syllabus Builder." Please read the instructions carefully.

Access to the Session Manager is available by clicking on the Session Manager link in the Course Tools area of the Control Panel.



Once you have clicked on the Session Manager link, you will be sent to the introductory screen for the tool. **PLEASE NOTE: Instructors will have only one opportunity to identify the content area location** (not the names of sessions) for the sessions generated by the tool. It is suggested that users create a new content area just for the sessions.

GETTING STARTED:

1. Under the Title option on the first Session Manager screen, next to "New Area Name" type in the name you want for your session content area. Then click **Submit**.
2. On the Session Area Initialized screen, click **OK**
3. The main Session Manager screen offers a link for detailed instructions on how to use the tool. Click on the **Show Instructions** link just above the Add Multiple Sessions button to display the instructions. Click on **Hide Instructions** to remove them from the display.

ADDING MULTIPLE SESSIONS:

1. Click on the **Add Multiple Sessions** button on the Session Manager screen.
2. Input the appropriate data in the Session Information section. This includes Start and End dates for the course, start and end times for sessions (if they are consistent), and days of the week during which the sessions meet.
3. Under Options, define an appropriate default topic (which may be edited at a later time).
4. If you select "yes" for the "Add Sessions to Course Calendar" option, the system will populate the course calendar with session information and links to the corresponding content.
5. If you select "yes" for the "Hide Display of Dates" option, dates will not be displayed in the subsequent content areas generated by the system.
6. If you select "yes" for the "Add Sessions to Course Navigation" option, the system will add a menu item for each individual session created. While instructors can remove these menu items through the Manage Course Menu tool, it is suggested that if a large number of sessions are being created, instructors should leave this option set to "no."
7. Under "Restrict Content Availability to Start Date," instructors may choose to have the system withhold display of the material until the course start date specified in the Session Information section.
8. The Default Content Items section offers the instructor the option of having the system generate empty content areas for Class Plan, Required Readings, and Recommended readings for EACH session. The defaults for these options are all "Yes." If the instructor does NOT wish to have these content areas generated automatically, s/he should set the option to "No".
9. After selecting all the appropriate options, click on the "Submit" button in the lower right portion of the screen.

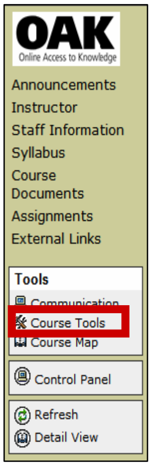
NEXT STEPS:

1. This provides the instructor with the ability to edit easily the default titles, dates, and topics for multiple sessions in one screen. Instructors may also manually edit this content using content area tools, but this screen provides the option of editing all at once.
2. After any desired edits to these areas have been made, click on the **Submit** button.
3. The next screen provides some summary information about how to add content to the newly created session areas, and how to remove individual sessions. Clicking **OK** on this screen will take the user to the next area, where s/he can modify properties and content as well as remove single sessions in their entirety.
4. Instructors may also navigate to the content area that was created at the outset of the Session Manager and modify, copy, and remove content using the native Blackboard editing tools.

ADDING A SINGLE SESSION:

1. The steps a user takes to add a single session, including the options available, differ from the addition of multiple session only in the absence of features related to multiple sessions (Start and End dates, for example).
2. To add a single session, click on the **Add Session** button on the Session Manager screen.
3. Provide appropriate Session Information data (topic and title information are required).
4. Select appropriate options.
5. Click **Submit**.
6. Click **OK** to move past the Session Manager summary screen.
7. Continue customizing content using either the Session Manager content editor tools or the Content Area development tools in the Control Panel.

Course Tools



Overview

The Course Tools section has several features for students: Address Book, Homepage, My Grades, Personal Information, and The Electric Blackboard. Other tools available for use within the course are the Calendar, Digital Dropbox, Glossary, and Tasks.

> The Digital Dropbox contains multiple steps and has shown to be cumbersome for students. Users have suggested using the "Messages" tool (explained in "Communicating within Blackboard") to submit assignments is much easier for students and faculty alike.

Functions

The table below includes information on the components of a Course.

PART	FUNCTION
Course Calendar	The course calendar lets you post notices of events. These events will appear on students' and your own general calendar, found on the left side of the screen when you click the "**Main**" tab at the very top of the OAK window. Announcements and tasks do not appear on the calendar and vice-versa.
Digital Dropbox	Used for sending files between instructors and students – not for student to student file exchange. See notes on the Digital Drop Box section below.
Glossary	Each course has its own Glossary of terms. The Glossary must be enabled by the Instructor before Students can view it.
Tasks	The Tasks list is located in the Tools area – a link on the left side navigation of every course. Tasks are a simple list of items that can be priority-ordered by each individual student.

Course Calendar

The Course Calendar tool allows instructors to communicate timely course-related events to enrolled students through the Calendar Module in the Main Screen. Students will see the calendar entry on the Main screen after they have logged into the system and can click on the title of the entry or "more..." to see additional information about the entry.

ADD EVENT

- Click **Add Event**.
- Enter event title and related description.
- Select event date, start time, and end time.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Calendar Receipt screen.

CALENDAR QUICK JUMP

The Calendar Quick Jump allows you to move to a specific date or event on the calendar without using the View options. To move to a specific event:

- Click on **Quick Jump.**
- Enter the date you wish to move to.
- Select the view type (Month, Week, Day).
- Click **Submit.**

Tasks

To access Course Tasks, enter the Control Panel for the specific course for which you wish to post a task. Next, in the Tools module, click on Tasks.

ADD A TASK

- Click on the **Add Task** button.
- Enter the task title and description.
- Select a due date for the task.
- Set the priority for the task (Low, Normal, or High).
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Add Task Receipt screen.

MODIFY A TASK

- Click on the **Modify** button to the right of the task you wish to edit.
- Make the desired changes in the appropriate fields.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Modify Task Receipt page.

REMOVE A TASK

- Click on the **Remove** button to the right of the task you wish to remove.
- Click **OK** on the Delete confirmation dialog box.
- There is no receipt page for removal of tasks.

MANAGING TASKS

- Click on the **Main** tab
- In the Tasks module, click on "more..." at the bottom right of the Tasks window
- From the drop-down menu to the right of the Tasks screen, select from the following options: All Tasks, My Tasks, All Course Tasks, individually selected course tasks

- Students may modify the status of an instructor-created task but may not remove it
- To change the status of a particular task, users may click on the underlined status name (IN PROGRESS, NOT STARTED, COMPLETED) in the task display OR they may click on Modify and change the status in the Modify Task screen
- To view the status of student progress on a course-related task, go to the Tasks tool in the Course Control panel and click on the name of the specific task. The self-reported status of enrolled users' progress on the task will display.

Digital Dropbox

Instructors of a course may use the Digital Dropbox tool in the **Control Panel's Course Tools** module to transfer files between the instructor and individual students. To distribute files to students via the Digital Dropbox, instructors may use either the Add File tool or the Send File tool.

ADDING FILES TO THE DIGITAL DROPBOX (DOES NOT SEND ANY FILES TO ANYONE)

- Click on the **Digital Dropbox** option in the “Course Tools” module of the Control Panel.
- Click **Add File**.
- Enter the appropriate information and choose a file to upload.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Dropbox Receipt page.

SENDING FILES FROM THE DIGITAL DROPBOX (ADDS THE FILE IF NECESSARY & SENDS IT)

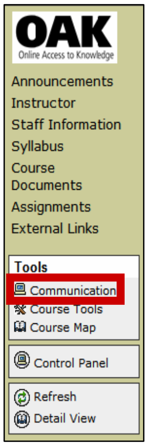
- Click on the **Send File** button from within the Digital Dropbox screen.
- Click on the user's name to select a recipient for the file. Holding down the Ctrl or Shift keys and selecting names will allow the Instructor to select more than one at a time.
- Under File Information, select the file name from the drop-down menu.
- Alternatively, upload a new file by filling in the title, browsing for the file, and entering comments.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Dropbox Receipt page.

REMOVING FILES FROM THE DIGITAL DROPBOX

- From the Digital Dropbox screen, identify the file you wish to delete.
- Click the **Remove** button to the right of that file.
- Click **OK** on the confirmation dialog box.

- **ALL** instructors in a given course **share** a drop box. Files sent by a student to a particular instructor will be visible to all instructors in the course.
- If one instructor deletes a file from the instructor dropbox in a course, all other instructors in that course will lose access to the file (i.e. it is completely deleted from the instructor dropbox).
- If you are using the groups feature and have created a group of students and/or instructors, the dropbox for that group is accessible to all members. Any file in a group dropbox can be read by all members of the group.

Communicating within Blackboard



Overview

Blackboard offers several flexible ways to communicate with students. It's important to know what these tools are and to have a plan for using them efficiently. The communications tool area contains several utilities.

> Blackboard Quick Tutorials on using the individual Communication Tools can be found under the "Courses" tab.
>
> When viewing the tutorials, be advised that not all functionality currently exists in Vanderbilt's implementation of Blackboard; Vanderbilt is currently running the Blackboard Learning System, Release 7.1.

Functions

The table below includes information on the components of a Course.

PART	FUNCTION
Announcements	Links to the announcements area.
Collaboration	Contains the chat and whiteboard tools.
Discussion Board	Threaded discussions to which you and students can post messages – this type of tool is often referred to as a "threaded discussion" or "message board." Messages posted here are generally for all to see and reply to.
Group Pages	Allows you to make working-groups of students and allow them to have a content area of their own that others cannot view.
Messages	Provides tools for building Assessments, recording grades, and tracking user activity.
Roster	Lists the users enrolled in the course.
Send Email	Sends traditional e-mail messages to the e-mail accounts associated with users enrolled in a course.

> - Decide which tools you want to use to communicate with students, be sure they understand the differences, and be consistent in your messaging
> - Consider that most students will have and be familiar with using their own Vanderbilt E-mail accounts – you can send them messages using the Send E-mail communication tool.
> - Decide how you want to receive assignments, files, and other messages from students and check the appropriate tool, area, or e-mail consistently

Announcements

To access the Announcements feature for a selected course, first navigate to the Control Panel for that course. The Announcements feature is found in the Course Tools module in the Control Panel.

The display of announcements is divided into four areas:
(1) View Today,
(2) View Last 7 Days,
(3) View Last 30 Days, or
(4) View All.

The default display is View Last 7 Days. If no announcements have been posted for the date range selected, the system will report, "No announcements found."

ADD ANNOUNCEMENT

- Click on the **Add Announcement** button.
- Input a subject line and a message in the Announcement Information area.
- Select the option to have the announcement display “always” on the course's main page, or set a date and time range for the announcement to display.
- Browse to and then link to a location within the course. For example, an announcement about an upcoming assignment might include a link to course material related to the assignment.
- Click **Submit**. Users will see a completed transaction receipt display on the screen after a successful announcement submission.

MODIFY ANNOUNCEMENT

- Click on the **Modify** button that appears to the right of the announcement you wish to change.
- Make the desired edits.
- Click **Submit**.
- The Announcement receipt will display the message "Announcement updated," along with the text of the announcement.
- Click **OK** on this screen to return to the main Announcements administration screen.

REMOVE ANNOUNCEMENT

- Identify the announcement from the list and click the **Remove** button.
- The system will generate a dialogue box asking if you are sure you want to remove this item.
- Click **OK**.
- The announcement will then be removed; there is no receipt screen for this action.

Discussion Boards

The Discussion Board feature of Blackboard allows you to hold online discussions with your class. Instructors have the ability to change the order of forums, create new forums, modify permissions for forums, and allow users to upload attachments.

ADD A FORUM

- Click **Communication** on the left-side course navigation bar
- Click **Discussion Board**.
- Click **Add Forum**.
- Enter the Title and description of the forum.
- Set Forum Settings (allow anonymous posts, allow author to modify message after posting, allow author to remove own posted messages, allow file attachments, and allow new threads).
- Select Forum User Settings (assign moderator privileges, block user from posting).
- Click **Submit**.

MODIFY A FORUM

- Click **Modify** in the forum box.
- Make appropriate modifications.
- Click **Submit**.

REPLY TO A FORUM (CREATE A NEW THREAD)

- Click Add New Thread.
- Enter Subject and Message. (Option available for attachments)
- Click Submit.

REPLY TO A FORUM (REPLY TO A THREAD)

- Click thread name.
- Click **Reply**.
- Enter Message. (Option available for attachments)
- Click **Submit**.

Internal Messaging: "Messages"

The Messages feature of Blackboard allows you to send messages to individuals or groups within a given course.

Instructors may find this feature to be a better choice for messaging than using the "Dropbox" because it is more flexible and intuitive, and students can use the Messages feature to send documents to both individual instructors and to each other.

Each user's Messaging boxes are private to that individual, so if there are multiple instructors in a course, only those instructors who are listed as recipients of a message will receive it in their inbox. Replying to and forwarding messages work in the same manner as sending messages. These features are available when reading a particular message.

SENDING A MESSAGE WITH THE MESSAGES FEATURE

- Click **Communication** on the left-side course navigation bar.
- Click **Messages.**
- Click **New Message.**
- Click the **TO** button and choose recipients.
- Use the **>** and **<** buttons to move recipient names into the recipients list.
- Add carbon copy recipients and blind carbon copy recipients as needed as you would with an e-mail message.
- Enter the subject and text of your message.
- Add an attachment if necessary.
- Click **Submit**.

RETRIEVING MESSAGES WITH THE MESSAGES FEATURE

- Click **Communication** on the left-side course navigation bar
- Click **Messages**
- Click the message box you want to check (Inbox, for example).
- Click the link text that appears for the subject of the message you want to view.

Messaging is not the same as e-mail. **Messages and attachments sent with the Messaging feature are internal to a specific Blackboard course and will not appear in a user's University E-mail account. This can help to prevent e-mail accounts from getting filled with long messages and attachments, but it may also be confusing if both systems are used to exchange documents. Establishing a policy within your course for where and when to check for and retrieve messages will help to eliminate confusion about where messages are posted.** Be sure to keep backup copies on your local computer of all files that you send as attachments.

Using internal messaging with file attachments, versus the Digital Dropbox, is preferable for turning in assignments.

E-mail Messages

All enrolled users in a course have access to the Send E-mail feature. Student access is through the Communication option on the Course Menu. Instructors may access the feature either through Communication on the Course Menu or through the Control Panel via the Send E-mail feature in the Course Tools module.

SELECTING THE RECIPIENT

When users access the Send E-mail tool, they are presented with a menu of recipient groups and individuals to choose from. Selecting the following will generate an e-mail template for the corresponding user group:

- All Users: All users enrolled in the course, including Instructors
- All Groups: All groups defined by the Instructor
- All Teaching Assistants: All users enrolled with the role of Teaching Assistant
- All Instructors: All users enrolled with the role of Instructor
- All Observers: Does not apply at Vanderbilt

When choosing any of the pre-defined groups listed above, the e-mail template that Blackboard generates will automatically enter the appropriate recipients.

Choosing either Select Users or Select Groups will generate an e-mail template from which the sender of the e-mail must select recipients. When the sender clicks on either Select Users or Select Groups, the e-mail template will display a list of all users or all groups from which the sender must choose (by clicking in the corresponding check box) recipients, as seen in the image below.

MESSAGE DETAILS AND OPTIONS

- Once the sender has selected the recipients,
- Enter the subject and message content.
- Click **Submit**.

Email can not be read within Blackboard. You and your students must use your regular e-mail program to read email sent from within Blackboard.

Other Features

Staff Information

The purpose of the Staff Information tool is to provide an organized area where Instructors may post identifying information about themselves and about others who may contribute to the course, such as Teaching Assistants, guest speakers, and administrative assistants.

To add staff information, from the Course Control Panel, click on the Staff Information link in the Course Tools module. If no information has yet been added to this area, the screen will show "Folder Empty".

ADD A PROFILE

- Click **Profile** (for courses in which the Instructor would have only a single entry).
- Type in appropriate information (Name, Office Location and Hours, etc.).
- Set options (Make Profile Visible, Upload Image, Insert Link).
- Click **Submit**.

TO ADD A FOLDER

- Click **Folder** (for groups of individuals, such as Teaching Assistants).
- Provide a name for the folder (e.g., TA's).
- Set options (Make Folder Visible).
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** at the Receipt screen.

ADD A PROFILE TO A FOLDER

- Click on the Name of the folder.
- Click **Profile**.
- Follow the steps outlined above for adding a Profile.

MODIFY STAFF INFORMATION

- Click the **Modify** button to the right of the item you wish to modify.
- Enter desired changes in the appropriate fields.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Staff Information Receipt screen.

REMOVE STAFF INFORMATION

- Click the **Remove** button to the right of the item you wish to remove.
- Click **OK** on the "Are you sure you want to remove this item?" dialog box.

Teaching Assistants, Graders, Course Builders, and Other Instructors

Blackboard provides an easy way for instructors to add additional users, such as teaching assistants, graders, and other instructors. This is done through the "Enroll User" feature in the "Control Panel".

ENROLL USER (DO NOT USE TO ENROLL STUDENTS IN YOUR COURSE)

- Click on the **Enroll User** option in the User Management module of the Control Panel.
- Enter the user's last name.
- Click **Search**.
- Select the appropriate user by clicking in the empty box under ADD.
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the Enroll User Receipt page.

CHANGE USER ROLE

- Click on the **List / Modify User** option in the User Management module of the Control Panel.
- Enter the user's last name.
- Click **Search**.
- Click on **Properties**.
- Under #4, Role and Availability, select the appropriate Role (Course Builder, Grader, Instructor, or Teaching Assistant).
- Click **Submit**.
- Click **OK** on the List / Modify Users Receipt page.

Course Copy (Combining Multiple Sections)

Contact your local support provider for assistance in combining multiple sections of a course into a single course.

Resources

What's new in Blackboard 7.1 – Quick Tutorials

Upon login in, you will immediately notice that the page may take a little longer than usual to load. This is not a performance issue, but a lag time that is caused by the underlying Blackboard code.

The Courses Tab now has links to Blackboard created tutorials. Though we do not have access to all the tools described, the tutorials are very good at explaining how individual tools work. You may want to take a look at the "Instruction, communication, and assessment" section of the "Quick Tutorials" section. (See list below.)

Quick Tutorials are available for tools:

- Enhanced discussion board
- Discussion board rating and grading options
- Advanced assessment questions
- Multi-language support (Currently English and Spanish are the two languages turned on. If you would like another language made available, please contact your local support provider.)
- Adaptive Release
- Performance Dashboard
- Syllabus Builder
- Advanced Course Menu

The "Main" OAK Website – Links to Resources

The main OAK page, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oak/ will continue to provide the most current place for OAK announcements and outages, as well as provide helpful hints, answers to frequently asked questions, links to local support providers (your first level of OAK support), and teaching resources.

To get the full experience of Blackboard, the following browsers are recommended:

- PC - Internet Explorer
- PC – Firefox
- Mac - Firefox.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: HOW CAN I REPORT A PROBLEM OR ASK A QUESTION?

A: If you have questions or problems with Blackboard, or other OAK services, contact the support person in your school or department. Contact information can be found in the Help page.

Q: I CANNOT LOGIN TO OAK - I'M TOLD THAT MY AUTHENTICATION CREDENTIALS ARE INCORRECT. WHAT DO I DO?

A: There are several reasons that this message will appear, two of the most frequent issues are forgetting to change an e-password after ITS notification and name and/or social security changes.

If you know you have the correct password, but you still receive this message, visit the ITS website to see if you need to reset your password for security reasons. You can also contact the ITS Help Desk at (34)3-9999.

Members of the Vanderbilt community who have recently changed their last name or social security number will also receive this notice. When changing this information, you must change it with both the Registrar's Office AND HR (if you receive monies from Vanderbilt). Changing this information in one place and not the other will cause you to be denied access to OAK.

Q: WHY IS MY COURSE NOT VISIBLE TO STUDENTS? HOW DO I MAKE IT "AVAILABLE"?

A: Courses in Blackboard must be made "available" to students before they can access content, regardless of whether they are registered and enrolled in the online course. To make a course available:

1. Click the course's Control Panel.
2. Click **Settings** in the “Course Options” box.
3. Click **Course Availability.**
4. Click **Yes** to the “Make course available to students” question item.

Q: HOW DO I ENROLL MY TA IN MY COURSE?

A: You will have to enroll the TA in the course, then change the TA's role from "student" to "TA". To add your TA to your course:

Part 1:

1. Click the course's control Panel.
2. Click **Enroll User** in the "User Management" box.
3. Search for your TA by enter the TA's email address (easiest).
4. Click on the box next to the TA's name under the "ADD" column.
5. Click **Submit**.

Part 2:

1. Click the course's control Panel.
2. Click **List/Modify Users** in the "User Management" box.
3. Search for your TA by enter the TA's email address (easiest).
4. Click on **Properties**.
5. In the 4th option, "Role and Availability," click the radio button to the left of "Teaching Assistant";
6. Click **Submit**.

Q: I AM AN INSTRUCTOR, BUT MY CLASS DOES NOT SHOW UP IN OAK. WHAT'S WRONG?

A: If you are listed in the course catalog as teaching a particular course, but that course does not show up in the list of courses you are teaching in OAK, then you need to contact your Registrar to set you up as "Instructor of Record" for that course. Once this is done, your course will appear in OAK after both OASIS and OAK have a chance to update.

Q: HOW CAN I COMBINE MULTIPLE SECTIONS OF MY COURSE?

A: Contact your local support provider for assistance.

Q: HOW CAN I SET UP A NON-OASIS COURSE?

A: Blackboard courses for testing purposes, ad-hoc groups, and other organizations can be set up by contacting the support person listed for your school or department on the Help page.

Q: WHY DON'T MY ASSIGNMENTS SHOW UP?

A: If you add assignments through the control panel and gradebook, those assignments will not appear anywhere else in your course.

Adding assignments in the gradebook is for tracking non-blackboard-administered assignments.

You must go to the "edit view" of the content area where you want to add an assignment and choose "Assignment" from the "Select" menu near the top right of the page. Click **Go**, create the assignment, make it available, and students will see it in the content area.

Q: THE LIST OF COURSES ON MY "MAIN" TAB IN BLACKBOARD IS VERY LONG. HOW DO I HIDE OLD/UNUSED ITEMS?

1. Click the "pencil" icon in the top-right-hand corner of the "Courses".
2. Un-check the checkbox in the "Show Course" column next to the courses that you would like to hide from view on the "Main" tab.
3. Click **Submit**.
4. Click **OK**.

Your hidden courses will still be available from the **Courses** tab, and you can reactivate them on the **Main** tab by re-checking them in the edit procedure described above.