

Blackboard Guide

Getting Started on Blackboard

Accessing Your Course:

1. Go to blackboard.gwu.edu (Chrome works well for Blackboard)
2. Log into your Blackboard account with your GW username and password (Your username is the phrase in your email address appearing before @gwu.edu)
3. On the Course List page, you will see all of your courses. To make sure that your course is “Live” you’ll see a green check mark or red X. A green check will appear if the session is live, students will be able to view the course. **If you see a red check, click the red check so that the course is live.**
4. Once your course is live, **click on the name of the course** and you will be brought to the course page. The first page you see will be the “announcements” page. To navigate the available widgets, **click the blue pop out bar on the left side of the screen.** (You will see other course widgets: Syllabus, Assignments, etc)

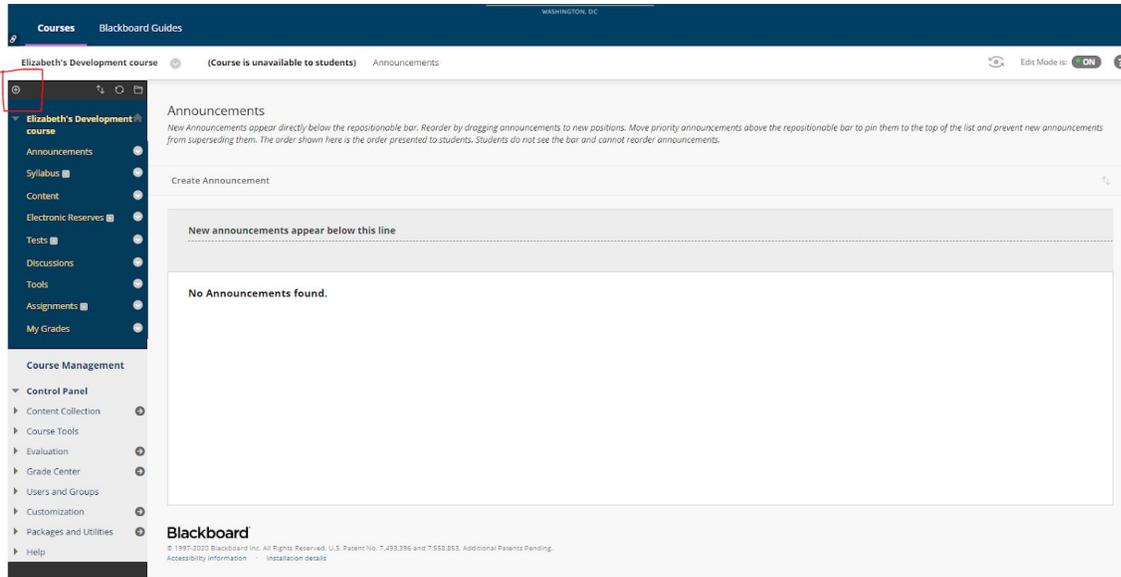
Adding a syllabus

1. **Select** the Syllabus widget
2. **Select Build Content** → and **upload** your syllabus from the desktop
3. Upload File Options

Helpful Tip: Create a new content area in your course for the material that students need after spring break. To create a new “Content Area” follow the below steps.

Creating a new content area:

1. **Select the plus sign** in the upper left hand corner. (Name this new content area something helpful like “Content Material After Spring Break”).
2. **Press the Gray square** to make sure it is Available to Users
3. **Click Submit.**



Once you have created a new content area, you can add weekly folders to this content area. By separating your course materials by week, you keep your content organized and easy to find.

By **clicking on your “Course material after spring break”** you’ll be brought to a screen where you can start adding content such as links to readings, videos, discussion boards, and to your live sync session, or PowerPoint Slides.

To organize your content into weekly folders, **hover over the “Build Content”** menu option and **select “Content Folder”.** Name the content folder for the week of the course.

Now that you have your weekly folder added, you can begin to add content that you want students to be able to access for that particular week of class.

To Add Content:

1. **Click** on the **link** to the week you wish to add content
2. **Hover** over the **“Build Content”** option
3. To **upload** a PowerPoint slide deck, readings, or document style uploads **select “File”**
4. To **upload** a link to a video **select “Web Link”**

It is important to name each link and provide a description if there are instructions you want the students to follow for each uploaded content item.

You may notice a gray box next to the content area. This means that the content is not visible to students. Once you have uploaded all of the content you can [click this symbol and make it visible](#).

Important tip: You should see a switch icon in the upper right hand corner of our screen. This indicates that “Edit Mode” is on. This is a default setting for professors. When this mode is turned off, you can see how your Blackboard course looks in the student view.

TIP 2: Blackboard allows you to click the back button in the browser to see all changes that have been made to your course.

If you don't want students to get ahead, you can make weekly folders hidden until a certain time. A good time to do this is if there is an exam coming up or an essay.

To Hide Content Folders:

1. While creating new content files (after you've named the file)
2. **Scroll** down to the settings section and **select “No” when permitting users to view the content**.
3. Next, you can **select a date range** for when you would like the content to be available to students
4. **Click** submit

BLACK BOARD COLLABORATE ULTRA

How to set up a Live Sync Session

1. **Go** to your “Course Material After Spring Break **content area**”
2. **Go** to the **weekly folder** you created above
3. **Hover** over the **Tools menu option** and **scroll over to the Select Blackboard Collaborate Ultra**
4. **Name** your Session (Tip: Name the sync session the date of the lecture)
5. **Add a description** for the session (Tip: your description should also include instructions for tuning in: time of and duration of the session, when to logon, what the students should have completed before the session)
6. **Select Submit**
7. By adding the Collaborate Ultra session to the weekly folder, you can keep the content organized for students.

Helpful tip: You can build out all of your live sync sessions ahead of time.

Now that you've set up the link to your Live Sync Session now you're ready to set up the individual session.

Create the Live Sync Session

1. In your "Course Material After Spring Break" content area, **go to the weekly folder** with the live sync session you created above. **Click the link.**
2. **Select "Create Session."**
3. Name the session (Name the session the date of the Lecture)
4. **Go to "Event Details" Section**
5. **Select the date and time** of the Live Sync session.
6. **Select the Entry time** (how far in advance do you want students to login)
7. Session Settings: You can update what functions you want participants to have (chat function, audio and video)
8. Make sure you **set your session to be "downloadable,"** that way, if you'd like to save it and add it elsewhere, you can.
9. **Attendance Reporting:** Choose how you want to track student attendance
 - a. Good for controlling participation
 - b. Select share attendance information for the LMS- loads onto the Grade Center
 - c. Set the parameters for what makes the student late or absent, and the required time for in session

Are you having a guest speaker?

You can create a guest link to send to your guest speaker. **Copy the link** by using the icon on the right of the url and send to the guest speaker via email.

If the Guest Speaker will be presenting you can select the guest role: Moderator, Presenter, Participant.

Helpful Settings to Know:

Session Settings

Default Attendee Role: Participant (Most students will be participants)

You can allow for downloadable recordings (students can watch and download the class).

Participants Can: (This is where you can control what your participants to be able to do)

Enable session telephony- allows students to join ultra via telephone (Strongly suggest enabling this feature because this will greatly reduce connectivity issues)

Group Chat: Allows participants can chat private with moderators or each other, you can also monitor private chats

Good to Know: Blackboard collaborate ultra is supposed to be compatible with up to 500 students, however the connection can become shaky when more students are added.

Suggestions- record the session without students and have them watch the lecture at a later date or have students log in for different hours (Divide by alphabet)

SETTINGS YOU CAN CHANGE DURING A LIVE SYNC SESSION

The **purple arrow** in the bottom right of you screen will be where you can control the session settings while the session is live. Here you can set up polls, breakout sessions, and monitor the chat room.

TIP: You check that you session is live because the link to your session will be bolded and clickable.

Interacting with Students During the Live Sync Session

- If a student has a question they can raise their hand and you will receive a notification. If you **click on the notification** so the student can turn on the audio and ask the question.
- Students can also ask questions via the chat box.

TIP: Even if you have 500 students tuned into the session, you will only be able to see the last 4 students who have spoken. Be aware that there is a 5 second lag time between audio. ***If a student raises their hand, it may take 5-10 seconds for the student to actually start asking their question, you'll want to keep this in mind throughout your live sync lectures.***

Tip: Once the session is open, tell students to unmute their audio prior to beginning your lecture. You can check who has unmuted the session via the attendees section (this will tell you who is actually listening and paying attention to the session)

BRINGING POWERPOINT TO THE LIVE SESSION

You have two options for sharing your PowerPoint presentation during a Collaborate Ultra.

First Option: You may choose to upload your presentation to the live session so that you can scroll through your Powerpoint while in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. The downside to this approach is that the file upload can take a while. You can upload your files when the session is live during the 15 minute period prior to the start of your lecture.

To upload your powerpoint follow these instructions:

1. **Select** the **Square with the arrow** next to the attendee button
2. **Select** the **Files** to Upload
3. **Browse** your computer and allow the files to convert.

To Share Your PowerPoint via Screen Share

1. **Select** the **Square with the arrow** next to the attendee button
2. **Select Share Application/Screen**
3. Make sure your PowerPoint Presentation is **uploaded** and open on your desktop.
4. Your Powerpoint will appear on the screen. To open the Powerpoint **double click**.
5. Now your Students will be able to see the PowerPoint application.

Tip: If using the screen sharing application you will not be able to change slides via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. Instead, you will need to change slides within the PowerPoint application.

SHARING ADDITIONAL CONTENT

1. You can use the Share Application/Screen to show websites, maps, etc during your session. Just be sure to open a new tab and go to the website prior to starting your session that way you will be ready to go during your lecture.
 - a. **Tip:** We do not recommend sharing your entire screen, instead only share the Application Window.
2. You can also share a blank whiteboard where you can write things on a board for demonstrations during your lecture.

OTHER HELPFUL TOOLS IN BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE ULTRA

Polling

You can take polls during the live sync session. This is a helpful tool to get a sense of what a majority of students know. To take a poll

1. **Go** to the **Share Content Icon** (via the square with the arrow)
2. **Select** Polling
3. **Create** your **poll** by following the question prompts.

Tip: Polls will help you give you the general numbers of the results, but will not provide the individual student results. The poll cannot be built before the class. You will have to design the poll while in the lecture session.

Breakout Sessions

Breakout sessions are a great option if your class requires some group discussion. You can customize or randomly assign students to groups.

To Create a breakout session got to:

1. **Share Content** (Square with arrow)
2. Breakout Groups
3. **Create** your groups by **choosing custom or randomized** groups.

Tip: Breakout sessions cannot be assigned prior to the live session. These have to be physically inputted. You can have students log in 15 mins before the session begins so that you can manually assign them to groups in order to be ready for the class start.

Select Start- you cannot see students during the breakout session

Tip 2: To confirm that students are talking to each other you can go to the attendee list. If you see the microphone icon next to a student's name, this means that they are talking in their groups. As a moderator of a session, you can also drop in on students by selecting a group.

TIMER

You can choose to set a timer for group discussions. To do this go to:

1. **Share** Content (Square with the arrow)
2. **Select** timer
3. **Set** your **timer** by following the prompts.

The timer will appear on everyone's screen that is in the session.

Chat Function (via the bubble icon)

As mentioned above, you can have students be able to chat you and each other as well as the entire class with questions or comments during your lecture. The chat is on for every live session by default.

You can turn off the chat function prior to the session start or during the live session by:

1. **Selecting** the **gear icon** in the bottom left corner of your screen
2. **Unselect** the Post Chat Messages setting option

RECORDING A LIVE SESSION

Best practice: Whenever starting a Live Sync lecture class be sure to record each session. To record a live session, **go to the three lines on the left** and open the session menu and **press start recording**.

Recording the session is important. If a student is having connectivity issues, they can login online to watch the lecture.

IMPORTANT TIP

You can record the live session by yourself without the students and save the recording. This will allow you to capture your lecture with audio and make it available for students to listen to at a later time.

Why do this is Collaborate Ultra to record a lecture without the Live Sync?

1. WebEx uses phone recording and not the best for capturing a lecture.

Keep the all mics off when not speaking because the camera will shift to the audio that it picks up

Lighting and Background for creating an online session: before going live BB will show you what you look like via a test video.

In general: more lighting from the front, depending on the camera on the computer. No distractions behind you.

Important Tips for Recording a Lecture:

1. Have students keep their mics turned off to eliminate background noise
2. Have good lighting in front of you and a simple background behind you.
3. Before going live, Blackboard will show you what you look like via a test video.
4. If you typically take mid-class breaks you can pause the recording via the left hand menu (by **clicking** on the **3 bars** in the left corner) to take the break and restart the recording. You can also set a timer for the break as well.

To leave the session:

After you've stopped recording your session, **go back to the menu bar on the left** (icon with three bars) and **select "Leave Session."** You will be prompted to close your browser.

Your recording is automatically uploaded to the lecture section of your weekly folder (in the link that you created first)

Important Tip: Webex requires a 24-48 hour time period before your lecture will render to Blackboard while Blackboard Collaborate Ultra is instant. This saves time and confusion, and stays organized within your weekly folder.

Accessing the recorded Collaborate Ultra lecture:

Go to Blackboard collaborate ultra within your weekly folder where you added the link to the Live Sync session. **Select** the Menu bars in the left hand corner of the screen. **Scroll down and select "Recordings."**

VOICE THREAD

Voice thread is a great option for asynchronous lecture recording.

1. **Go** to your **Weekly Content Folder** and **Open**
2. **Hover** over **Tools** and **Select** Voice Thread
3. **Name** the voice thread (Date of the Lecture)
4. You can **assign grading requirements** (If you're tracking participation you can assign a point value)
5. **Click** Submit
6. Going back into the Weekly Folder **select the link** to the **Voice Thread** to begin set up.
7. To create a new Voice Thread **select "Add Your Own"** in the **upper right hand corner.**
8. **Click** "Create a new Voice Thread."
9. **Click Add Media** and **select the content** to **upload** to your Voice Thread (This is where you will add your lecture slides).
10. You can **add a title** and **instructions** for the students and **Click Save.**

ADDING COMMENTS

To add professor comments to the voice thread you can **click on the comment option** bar.

To comment on a specific slide **click the plus icon** near the bottom of the screen and **choose the mode** you would like to use to comment (you can choose a direct written comment, a phone call, voice recorded comment or video comment)

Once you are done recording the voice thread you can **click the X** in the right corner of the screen

Click the **Share** and **Return to Course**

Here you will select how you want the students to view the voice thread (decide if students can view, view and comment, or view,edit or comment)

Your voice thread will automatically appear under the Voice Thread link in your weekly content folder.

DISCUSSION BOARDS

While in your Weekly Content Folder, you can Create links to your discussion board through the toolbar function at the top of the screen

1. **Go to tools** → **Discussion Boards**
2. **Select** Create New Forum
3. Add a description for the discussion board. This is usually where you will write the prompt. Copy the description before moving to the next section.
4. Go Back to your weekly folder and **select tools** → **Discussion Board**
5. **Select** "Discussion Board Forum"
6. **Select** "Next"
7. **Paste** Your Description
8. **Choose** your **settings** and **Select Submit**

Your discussion board should now be found in your weekly folder.

TIP: To grade all of your discussion board responses more efficiently go to the Evaluation Widget on the right side of your screen under "Course Management."

1. **Select** "Performance Dashboard"
2. Under the Discussion Board Column, **click** on the **number listed** under each discussion board. Tally the amount of times students have responded, and even read their individual responses if you'd like.

CREATE AND GRADE ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Go** to the **weekly Content Folder**
2. **Go** to Assessments → Assignments

3. Name of the project
4. Due date and time
5. Add the amount of points possible
6. **Select** Plagiarism Tools
7. **Submit.**

Tip: By selecting Plagiarism tools, Blackboard will use SafeAssign to match check for plagiarism. Please be advised that SafeAssign does not work with Google Docs.

To Grade the Assignment:

1. **Go to Grade Center**
2. **Needs Grading**
3. **Select** the assignment and grade.
4. You can **make comments** on the assignment and **provide a grade**
5. While in the grading window you will see the SafeAssign match. If you **click on the percent match** you can view the Originality report. The Originality report will show you if the student's work matches published or unpublished work and where it came from (published work, unpublished source, website, etc.)

TESTS AND EXAMS

1. **Go to Course Tools**
2. **Select** Tests, Surveys, and pools
3. When creating a test- **Always go to pools first**- you can manipulate the questions from the pool.
4. **Select** Pool
5. You can **build a new pool** or **import** a pool from a test bank.
6. **Name** the **pool** and provide a description for the exam (usually the exam instructions)
7. **Click Submit** to Proceed with the pool. .
8. You don't need a question title- Just number them
9. Provide the question text
10. Always **select show answers** in random order
11. **Type 3 incorrect answers** and **one correct answer**, and **select** the **one that is correct**
12. **Submit** and **Repeat** the above create another question.

Tip: Create pools based on the type of questions (multiple choice, short answer, etc)

To Complete your test:

1. **Go back** to the **Tests, Surveys, and Pools Page**
2. **Select** Test
3. **Select** Build Test
4. **Hover** over **reuse question** and **Select Create Random Block**

5. **Select Pool**
6. **Choose** the pool you would like to use
7. **Select** Submit.
8. You'll see that the random block was saved.
9. **Select** the number of **questions to display**.
10. **Establish** the **number of points per question** in the **upper right hand corner**.

Things to Know about the Question Pool: Pulling from the pool, the order of the questions will be randomized, the order the answers will be randomized, and a 50 min exam- will limit cheating and plagiarism. If the exam is strict enough students have to study for the exam in the same way that they take an in-class closed book exam.

Once your question pool has been created you will go back to your content folder to make the exam available to students.

1. **Go** back to **content folder**
2. **Select** Assessments—Test
3. **Set** the test parameters
4. **Select** Force Completion
5. **Set** the **timer**- timed exam and select auto submit
6. You can **select** when you want the exam to be displayed

Test Availability Exceptions- this is where you would put students with accommodations

- Set up the time for each individual student with accommodations
- Set up a date window to access the exam

Due Date- the final submission, if you don't want them to take the exam after the due date- make sure to select that you don't want this option

Show Test Results and Feedback to Students

Be sure to select "**After Submission**" so that students can see which were wrong and tell their classmates (shorten the window for cheating).

Test Presentation

- Select how the exam will appear (one at a time or all at once)
- One at a time- internet might close out increasing the risk of having to reopen the exam for the student, decreases cheating
- All at one once- less clunky, but it can increase the incidence of cheating.

Tips for Eliminating cheating

1. Don't give them time to cheat (too many questions not enough time to look up the answers)

2. Creating a pool of questions will randomize every exam to improve cheating. By creating a question pool you can import tests from a test bank or manually enter questions.
3. Always randomize the order of answer selections

Student Presentations

Students can upload presentations to a discussion board by creating a new thread. An easy way to have students do presentations is to have them record videos of themselves giving the presentation. (popular sites are YouTube and Vimeo)

Once the student records the video they can embed the video into their discussion board post.

The journal option is similar to the discussion board, however in this option **only** the student and the professor are able to read the student's journal post.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Self-Guided Resources for ESIA Online Faculty:

Several topic-specific guides have been produced by Blackboard and by the library. To find topic-specific guides, please follow these steps:

- 1) Go to blackboard.gwu.edu (Chrome works well)
- 2) Log in with your GW username and password (Your username is the phrase in your email address appearing before "[@gwu.edu](mailto:)")
- 3) On the top left side of your homepage, you should see a tab for **Blackboard Guides**. Click there.
- 4) Depending on the issue you need help with, Blackboard has a corresponding guide and/or video.

ACCESSIBILITY

All materials must be ADA compliant by fall 2020. To find ADA compliant Elliott School PowerPoint Templates please go to: <https://creativeservices.gwu.edu/templates-download>

Scanned PDFs are not ADA compliant because they are not accessible via an e-reader. The Library has guides on how to ADA compliant materials. If you want to transfer materials you're using now to the fall semester, you can make sure course materials are ADA compliant now.

Contact the library Libresrv@gwu.edu to have them create ADA compliant course readings by providing the citation and course material. OR create a Course Request automatically via the library's website

<https://library.gwu.edu/services/reserves/request-form>

Tip: The library can only give you 10% of a requested book OR 30 pages.
To get around this requirement you can request materials from different editions of the same textbook. You can also ask the library to find a similar text to upload to your course.
If you've reached the page limit you can ask them to find something similar