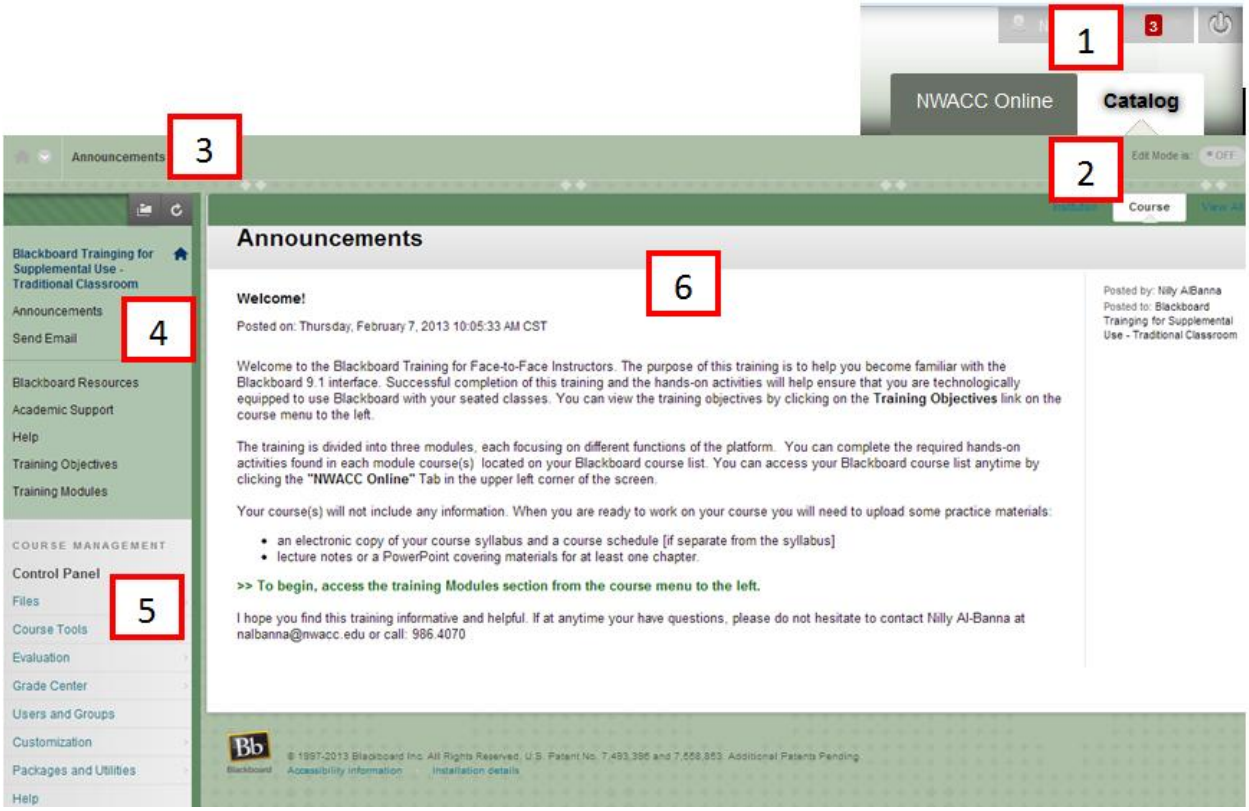
Blackboard 9.1 Quick Start Guide

For

Face-to-Face Classes

The Course Layout

By default, the entry point to all courses is set to display the announcements page. This means when a student clicks on the link to access a course the first page they will see will be the announcements page.



1.Global Notification System	The Global Notification/Navigation System is available at all times in the upper right corner of the screen and provides a quick access to your courses and tools as well as any notifications for those courses.
2. Edit Mode	The Edit Mode allows for you to change how you view the content on the screen. To add or edit course content you will need to turn the Edit Mode to "ON". To view content as a student will view it, turn the Edit Mode to "OFF"
3. Bread Crumbs	At the top of the page are Breadcrumbs, which provide links back through the path you have navigated through.
4. Course Menu	The Course Menu includes links to various contents within the course. The menu is customizable. You can reorder the menu or add links to other course items or tools.

5. Control Panel	The Control Panel is the interface for managing course content and features [file storage, grading, and tool availability]. Students do not see the control panel
. Content Frame	The Content Frame is the main area of the browser window where the content items and tools are displayed

The Course Menu

The course menu is customizable, allowing you to add organization to your course. You can add links to course tools, modules, and external links to name a few. To edit the course menu you must be in Edit Mode. Edit Mode allows you to view the instructor functions and make changes to the course site.

To access the Edit Mode, you will need to click on the button to change it from "OFF" to "ON". When the Edit Mode is "ON" you will notice that the Add Menu Item button is now available on the course menu. The arrow icons appearing to the left of the links allow you to reorder your menu. As you hover your mouse over the arrow icon it will change to a cross hair , clicking on the icon will allow you to drag and drop the link to its desired location. Also notice the action links to the right of the menu items. By clicking on the action link you can rename, hide, or delete the menu item.

Please Note: When a Content Area is added to the course menu, the link will not appear to the student until content has been added. Once content is added, it will become visible to the student.

The Control Panel

When you access your course site you will have access to its control panel. The Control Panel is not visible to students in your course. The Control Panel is where you will access various course management functions such as managing the course tools, add content such as quizzes, tests, and surveys, and your course file management. The Control panel is also where you will access the Grade Center.

The Control Panel is accessible to the instructor regardless of whether the edit mode is "ON" or "OFF". The down arrow to the left of the menu item will expand to show its menu options. Some menu items have an arrow to the right, clicking on this icon will take you to that area of the course.

➢ Control Panel Descriptions:

- Files - this is the storage area for the course.
- Course Tools - Expanding this area will give quick access to the various tools available in the course.
- Evaluation - Course reporting area.
- Grade Center - Expanding this area will give you access to the Grade Center and items that need to be graded such as assignments or tests.
- Users and Groups - Create and manage groups
- Customization - Course customization area.
- Packages and Utilities - Course copy functions as well as exporting and archiving course information
- Help - link to Blackboard resources including the On Demand videos.

Please be mindful about what you **require** your students to do in Blackboard. This is a face-to-face course; **you cannot make Blackboard the centerpiece of the class**.

Course Tools

There are a variety of tools available for use in the platform. A list of tools and their descriptions are located in the table below. Tools can be turned off or on. If you do not plan to use a specific tool then it is good practice to not make it available by turning it off. Tools that are used frequently like the Discussion Board and Email can be added to the course menu for ease of access.

➢ Changing Tool Availability

1. On the **Control Panel**, select **Customization**

2. Select **Tool Availability**.

3. On the **Tool Availability** page, make the availability adjustments required.
   - To make a tool **Available**, select the tool's check box.
   - To make a tool unavailable, clear the tool's check box.

4. Click **Submit**.

Tool	Description
Tools Area	Provide a link to the Tools page where students select the tool needed
Announcements	Post announcements visible to all students
Calendar	Post dates for assignments, quizzes, and other course activities
Collaboration	Provide students with access to Chat and Virtual Classroom sessions
Contacts	Post information about the instructor and other staff or guest speakers
Discussion Board	Encourage online discussions, debates, and class community
Journals, Blog, and Wikis	Provide areas for self-reflection, collaboration, and the sharing of information
Email	Provide email system that sends messages to users' external email addresses
Groups	Assign students to group activities, including discussions, Chat sessions, and an area to share files
Messages	Provide private internal email system to allow students to communicate with you and each other
Portfolios	Allow students to create portfolios of their work which they can share with others
Roster	Provide students with a searchable list of students in the course
Tasks	Provide students with a task list that contains items, their priority, and status

Announcement Tool

The Announcement Tool is a great way to communicate important course information to your students. By default, when students access the course site the first thing they see will be the Announcements Page. The Announcements Page is the ideal place to post time-sensitive material such as assignment due dates, changes to course/syllabus, corrections or clarification on assignments, or test reminders. When you add an announcement, you also have the option to send the announcement out as an email, which ensures that your students see the announcement even if they are not logged in to the course site. As an instructor you can add, delete, or edit announcements from the Announcements Page in the Edit Mode.

When communicating information that is meant for all students in the class, it is good practice to use the Announcement tool instead of email or messaging students individually. By using announcements,

you ensure that all your students will receive the information regardless of when they gain access to the course. This is especially important in the beginning of a semester when enrollment changes are still allowed.

➢ Creating an Announcement

You can create an announcement directly from the Announcement Page. To start, make sure you have turned the Edit Mode to "ON".

1. Click the "Create Announcement" button.
2. Provide a Subject and Message.
3. Set the Duration.
4. Select Not Date Restricted to keep the announcement visible until it is manually removed. If you add a date restriction then the announcement will disappear from the student's view once it has expired.
5. You can set an announcement to appear in the future (helpful for test/quiz reminders) without having to set an end date. When selecting the date, you can use the pop-up calendar and clock, or type them in the boxes provided. Make sure when manually entering dates that you enter it in the exact same format.
6. Select the box to send students an email containing the announcement. (This is optional. Currently the system is set up to send a copy of all announcements to the student's email automatically regardless if box is checked.)
7. You also have the option to link to a course area, tool, or item using the Browse button.
8. Click Submit.

➢ To Edit an Announcement

With Edit Mode turned "ON":

Click the action link next to the announcement's title and select "Edit". This will allow you to make changes to an announcement. To delete the announcement choose "Delete" from the action link.

➢ To Reorder Announcements:

Announcements appear below the repositionable bar in the order posted with the most recent announcement appearing first. To pin an announcement to the top of the list, drag it above the repositionable bar labeled "New announcements appear below this line".

This will keep the announcement at the top of the list and prevent new announcements for superseding it.

Adding a Content Area

1. In the **Edit Mode**, point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.
2. Select **Content Area**.
3. Type a **Name** for the new Content Area.
4. Select the **Available to Users** check box.
5. Click **Submit.**

Tip: Content Areas can be created and made available to users until needed.

Adding Your Syllabus

By default, your course menu should contain a Content Area for you to place your Syllabus. As discussed in the beginning of this training, some face-to-face students may not have a computer, high-speed internet, or may work hours that don't allow them to go to a campus computer lab, therefore, make sure that your students have access to the syllabus by providing a hard copy whenever needed.

➢ **To upload your syllabus:**

- Change the Edit Mode to "ON".
- From the Course Menu, access a Content Area.
- In the Content Area's Action Bar point to Build Content to access the drop-down list.
- Select Syllabus
- On the Add Syllabus page, type in a name for your syllabus.
- Next, select the Use Existing File option.
- Click Browse My Computer
- Click Submit.

- On the Edit Item page, you can change the Syllabus title color, add instructional or descriptive text, add tracking information, and set availability dates.

Caution: Setting the availability dates will control whether or not a student can see the syllabus. Students should have access to the syllabus throughout the semester so it is recommended to leave this section blank.

Content Folders

It is important to give structure and organization to your course. Whether you choose to organize your class by chapter, by week, or by units Folders can help you accomplish this. A content folder is a type of course area used to organize course content. Folders can be used to organize content to make materials easier to find and helps to reduce the amount of scrolling in a course area.

➢ To create a Content Folder:

1. Make sure the Edit Mode is turned "ON".
2. Access a Course Content Area [you might want to add a new content area]
3. On the Action Bar, point the cursor to the Build Content tab to access the drop-down menu.
4. Select Content Folder
5. On the Create page, type in a name for the folder
6. Select options such as permission to view, date and time restrictions, and tracking.
7. Click Submit

Once the folder is created a link will appear in the Content Area. Clicking on the folder's link will allow you to add content to the folder.

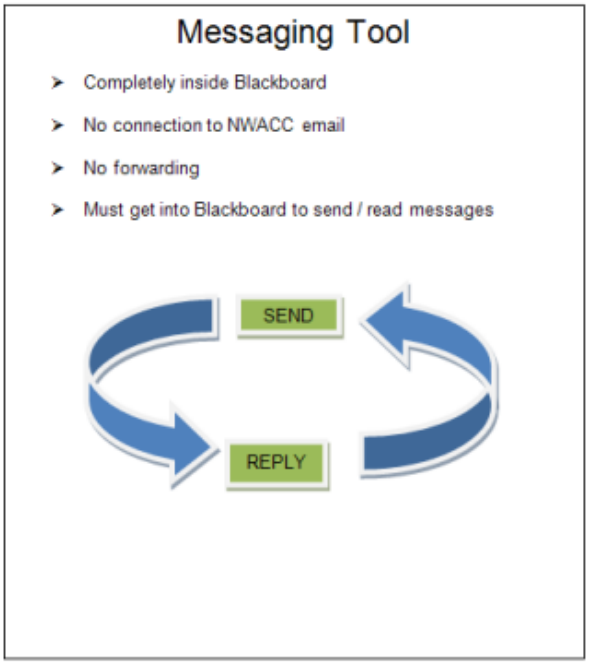
➢ Add Content to a folder

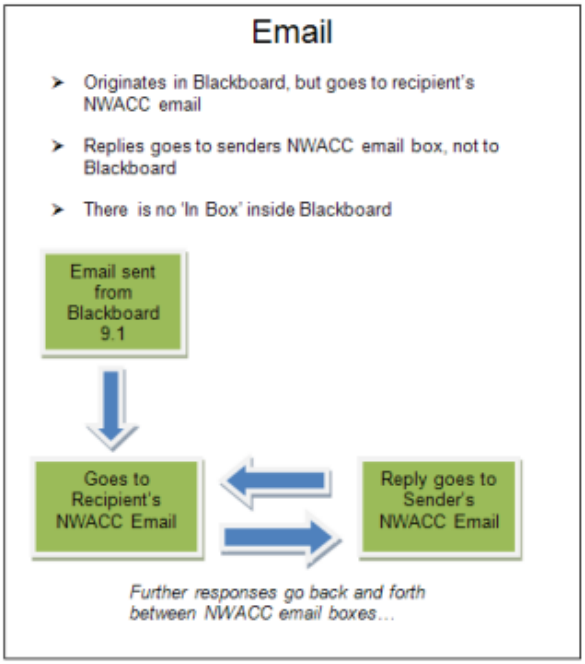
To add a file in your folder:

1. Make sure the Edit Mode is turned "ON".
2. Access the Content folder that you created.
3. On the Action Bar, point the cursor to the Build Content to access the drop-down menu.
4. Select file.
5. Browse for your file and give it a short and clear name.
6. Select options such as permission to view, date and time restrictions, and tracking.
7. Click Submit.

Email VS Messages

The next two communication tools we will look at are **Email** and **Messages**. While the primary purpose for both is to communicate and send information privately to students, how and where the information is delivered is different, so it is important to understand the differences between these two communication tools.





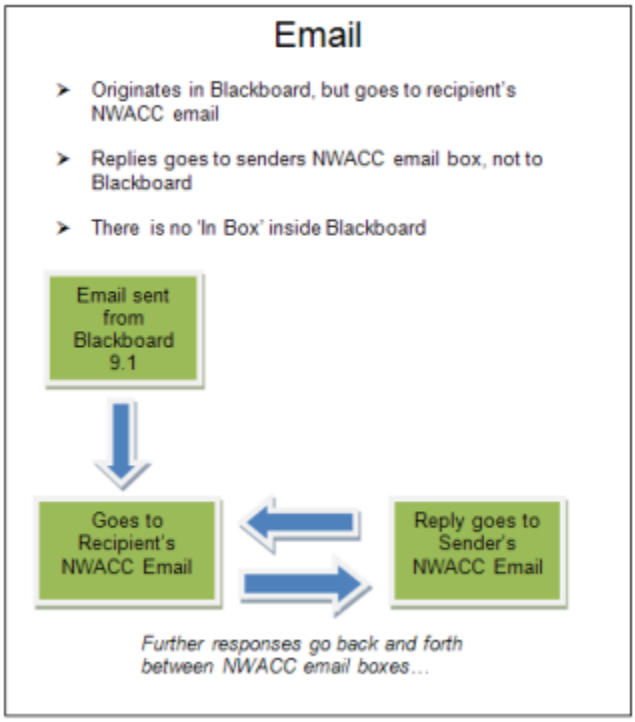
In order to minimize confusion about how students should contact you; when setting up your course, only use **one** of these options. By default, the Email Tool is available for use on the Course Menu, however this can be changed if you choose to use the Messages Tool.

Regardless of which one you choose to use in your course site, please remember that it is best practice to post communication meant for the entire course to the **Announcement Area**. Students who gain access to your course after an email or message has been sent will not receive the message.

➢ About Email

The Email tool allows you to send email to other people in your course from within Blackboard without launching an external email client, such as your NWACC email (Outlook). Emails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users. A copy of the email is also sent to the sender by default. When an email is sent it will appear in the recipient's NWACC email inbox. To protect user privacy, recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

When sending email you have the following options:



All Users: Sends email to all users in the course.
All Groups: Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course.
All Teaching Assistant Users: Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.
All Student Users: Sends an email to all students in the course.
All Instructor Users: Sends email to all of the instructors for a specified course.
All Observer Users: Sends email to all of the observers for a specified course.
Single/Select Users: Sends email to select users.
Single/Select Groups: Sends email to select groups.
Single/Select Observer Users: Send email to a single observer or select observers in the course.

By default, there is a link on the course menu for email. If you do not plan to use the Email Tool you will want to remove this item from the course menu.

- **Sending an Email**

<u>(Please note, you can also access email directly from the Course Menu)**</u>**

<u>Please note: Blackboard does not require a subject line for an email to be sent, so you may want to advise your students to include their section number in the subject line**</u>**

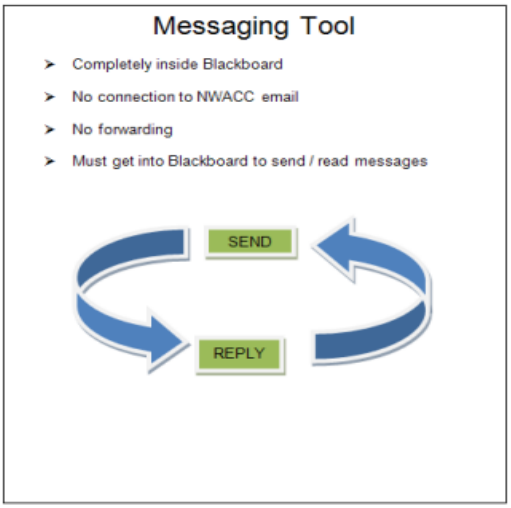
By default, there is a link on the course menu for email. If you do not plan to use the Email Tool you will want to remove this item from the course menu.

1. On the Course Menu, select Send Email.
2. On the Send Email page, click one of the options listed to send the email, for example, Single/Select Users.
3. Select the recipients in the Available to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the Selected box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the

recipient list. Click Invert Selection and selected users are no longer highlighted and those users that are not selected will be highlighted.

4. Type the subject of your email.
5. Type your email message.
6. If you need to attach a file, click the "Attach a File" option to browse for the file on your computer.
7. Click Submit.

About Messages



Messages are private and secure text-based communication that occurs within a course and among course members. Although similar to email, you must be logged in to the course to read and send messages.

Students are not notified if they receive a new message, so advise them to make routine checks for new messages. Both incoming and outgoing messages are saved in the Messages tool. Messages are organized in folders, marked as Read or Unread, moved to other folders, or deleted. The Message Tool has two folders, Inbox and Sent which you cannot rename or delete.

Sending a Message

First things first, if you have chosen to use **Messages** over **Email**, then you will first want to remove the Email tool link from the course menu by clicking on its action link, and selecting delete (make sure you are in Edit Mode).

Next you will need to add the Messages tool link to the course menu:

1. With the Edit Mode turned to "ON", hover the mouse over the plus sign above the course menu. This will allow the Add Menu Item drop-down list to appear.
2. Select Create Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link (for example, "Messages")
4. From the drop-down list, select Messages.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click Submit.

Once you have changed the menu you are ready to send messages.

1. On the Course Menu, select Messages.
2. On the Messages page, click Create Message on the Action Bar.
3. On the Compose Message page, select To and a list of course members appears.
4. In the Select Recipients: To line box, select the recipients and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the Recipients box.
5. Type the Subject.
6. Type the Body.
7. Browse and add attachments, if necessary.
8. Click Submit.