



Paul J. Gutman Library

Instructional Technology @ PhilaU

A Guide For Using Technology
In The Classroom

Managing Blackboard Course Content Blackboard 6.3



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The Blackboard Text Box Editor

The **text box editor** is a feature that allows **WYSIWYG** (what you see is what you get) **editing** within the text boxes in blackboard.

Please note: Currently, this feature is ONLY available when using the Internet Explorer browser on a Windows based PC.

For any text box, you are presented with **a selection of tools bars with options represented by icons**. The editor consists of three separate rows of tools:

Row 1 - Text formatting to change font, emphases, alignment, indentation, and bulleted and numbered lists.



Row 2 - Tools for modification and adding special content - spell check; cut/copy/paste; highlighting; font color; tables; web links; equation editors; preview; and help.



Row 3 - Tools to insert multi-media content directly into the text box - file links; graphics; audio; video; QuickTime and/or Flash animations. **When using these tools, you are uploading the file into Blackboard and the text box area.** Items uploaded in this manner will download and display when the item is accessed by you or your students. Use caution, as multi-media files can be very large and cause delays on even high speed connections. **Blackboard does not stream these files** - they will need to download completely before they will play for your students.

Note: You should continue to use external links for access to large multimedia files which should be converted to a streaming format and placed on our streaming server.

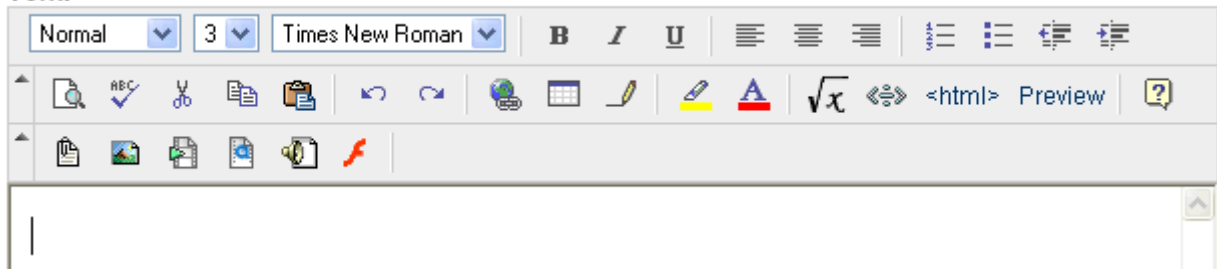


You will notice an arrow as the first icon in rows 2 and 3. If the user wishes, when available, **the second and third rows can be collapsed to display only the first row along with a narrow band to represent the hidden but available rows** - this does not change the default view for subsequent accesses. The **small upward pointing arrow** at the far left of the toolbar

can be used to **collapse the row**. Once collapsed, it is replaced by a narrow band with a **downward pointing arrow** on the far left. This will **expand the row** to once again display the full array of options.

The full selection, displayed as three rows, is **available in any CONTENT area** where you would be using a text box. All three rows display by default.

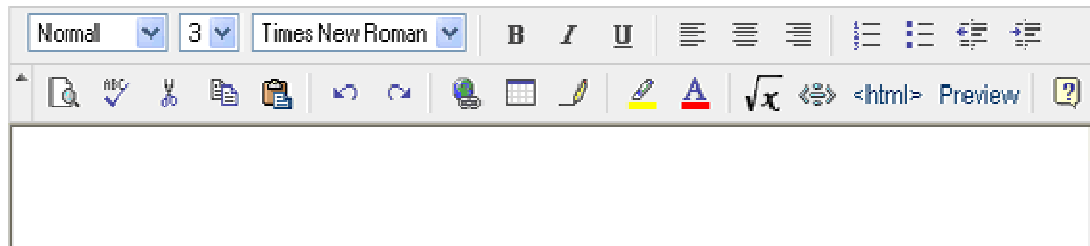
Text:



Announcements and Discussion Board message boxes will display only two rows as the items on the third row are not available to be used in these areas. The default is to display both. If the user wishes, the second row can be collapsed to show only first - this does not change the default view for subsequent accesses

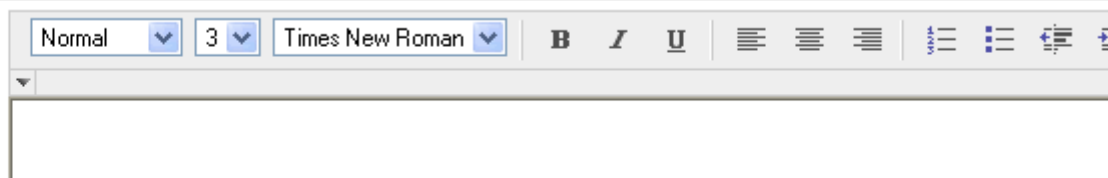
* **Subject:**

Message:



Assessments text and information, including question/answer boxes will default to only display the first row, Note the small downward pointing arrow which provides the option to expand or display the second row. Like Announcements and discussion boards, the third row tools are not available for assessments.

* **Question Text:**



Special Considerations:

Note: Students will also have access to these text box editor tools for discussion board threads and essay type assessment questions.

When the Blackboard Text Box Editor is activated the text entry area look will change! The row of options along the bottom of the text box is no longer displayed. These options are instead available in Row 2 of the editor options. The HTML code required to enable the formatting you have selected is automatically included (no more need to cut/paste to get formatting into your text boxes). You can view the code inserted by clicking on the HTML item in Row 2. If you are using a browser other than Internet Explorer, you will continue to see only the Text Box Options shown at the bottom of the text boxes.

Remember: Many of these features when launched open in what is considered a Pop-Up Window! If you use pop-up blockers with your browser, you will need to either turn them off while using Blackboard, or set Blackboard as a site to always accept pop-up windows in order to take advantage of these features.

Adding Course Content

Overview

You can create as many content areas and folders as you want to in your course. See the Manage Course Menu section. Blackboard has three basic ways for you to add content to content areas:

1. You can create Blackboard documents to type in all your information, this method will be covered in this tutorial.
2. **You can attach documents such as Word documents, PowerPoint presentation or PDF files, this method is covered in the "Attaching Documents" tutorial.**
3. You can add documents to Learning Units, which provide students with some basic navigation.

Creating a Blackboard Text Item

You may choose to build some of your course material directly in Blackboard.

Blackboard is designed to allow you to build simple, text documents without having to know any HTML and without web-authoring tools. To do this, follow these steps:

Note: You create a folder in the same manner to store multiple documents. More will be covered later in the handout.

1. Click the **Control Panel** button to enter the control panel.
2. Select **Course Information** from the content areas section (your content areas section may look different, reflecting the content areas you have added for your course).



3. Click the **Add Item** button.
4. Specify a name for the item. By default, document titles in Blackboard are black.
5. In the second section you may select a file to upload.

A screenshot of the 'Content' form in Blackboard. The form has a title 'Content' and a subtitle 'Files can be attached to the above information. Click Browse to select the file to attach and specify a name for the link to this file.' The form contains three sections: 'Attach local file' with a text input field and a 'Browse...' button; 'Name of Link to File' with a text input field; and 'Special Action' with a dropdown menu showing 'Create a link to this file'.

6. Click the **Browse** button to select the file from your hard drive.
7. Locate the file and click the **Open** button in the dialog box. The name and path of the file will appear in the "Attach local file" line.
8. On the line labeled "Name of Link to File" you can type in directions for student to click on the link.

Note: Names should NOT have any spaces or special characters in them.

***TIP:** An excellent way for students to view your documents in another browser window is to tell them in the link to "Right-Click and select OPEN IN A NEW WINDOW." By utilizing the right-click (option-click on Macintosh) and Open in a New Window command students can view the documents without the Blackboard navigation and will have the entire browser window to view the document. When done they can close the window, and they will return to their Blackboard course.*

9. The third section of this form is the Options section. This area allows you to control the availability of the document.

3 Options

Make the content available Yes No

Track number of views Yes No

Choose date and time restrictions


Display After

Jun 02 2006 10 15 AM

Display Until

Jun 02 2006 10 15 AM

10. Click "**Yes**" next to "Make the content visible:" This allows students to see the document. This is a useful option because you can upload multiple documents at the beginning of the semester and then slowly reveal them (making them available) to students as the course progresses.
11. Click "**Yes**" next to "Track number of views." This option tells the system to keep statistics about which students looked at the document. This is an excellent way to monitor a student's progress and to determine how well they may be keeping up with the class assignments and materials.
12. If you would like the document to be available to students for a certain period of time you could use the "Choose date and time restrictions" to automatically make a document visible and then disappear after a certain date.
13. The last section of the form is for saving changes. Click the **Submit** button to have your content uploaded to the Blackboard server.
14. This may take several minutes for large files. When the content has uploaded you will get a success receipt.
15. Click **OK** to return to the Content Area. You will see your document now listed under the buttons.
16. Your text will appear as shown below:



5 Course Projects

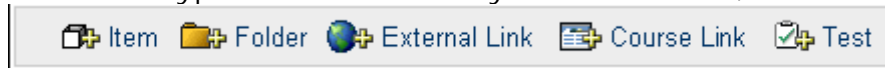
This is a brief **example** of what can be done with **text** in

- Blackboard
- version
- 6.1

Creating a Folder

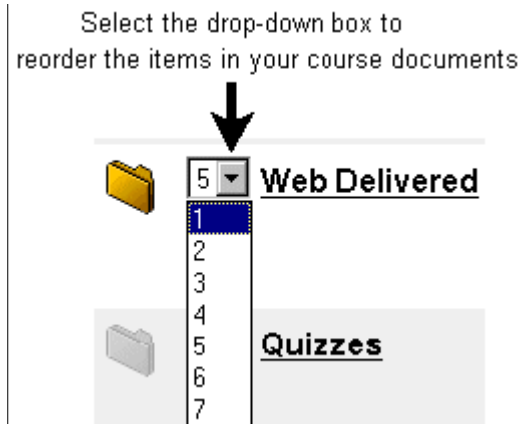
A folder will allow you to store multiple text items, documents, links, etc. Here is some more information on working with folders:

1. Click the **folder title** to enter the folder.
2. Click on the type of content that you wish to add,



Note: Add Item is used for adding a single item, for example, a Word document. Add Folder is used for adding a folder which can hold multiple items. Add External Link is used for adding a web address. Add Course Link is used for adding a link to another area within the course. Add Test gives you the option of linking to a test currently in your Blackboard course or adding a completely new test.

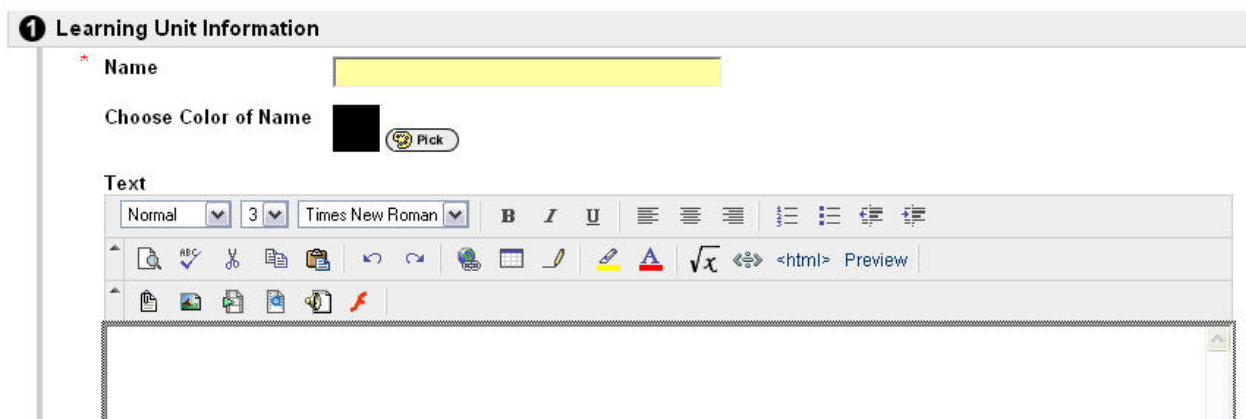
3. Complete the steps to **add the item** you want in the folder.
4. Click the **title of the folder** you have been working with. This will allow you to enter the folder.
5. Click the **link** you created to open the file.
6. You can reorder the items listed in your content area. Click on the drop-down box next to your folder and pick the number corresponding to the location where you want.




Creating a Learning Unit



A Learning Unit provides an organizational structure with navigational links between items. If you have a series of related pages, a Learning Unit will provide the navigation between those pages.

1. Click the **Control Panel** button.
2. From the **Content Areas** section, choose the content area in which you want to create a folder. In this example, we chose **Course Materials**.
3. Click the **Go** button on the right side of the page with Learning Unit selected in the drop down menu. This is the default option.



The screenshot shows a form titled "1 Learning Unit Information". It contains a "Name" field with a yellow background, a "Choose Color of Name" section with a black color swatch and a "Pick" button, and a "Text" area with a rich text editor toolbar. The toolbar includes options for font style (Normal), size (3), font face (Times New Roman), bold (B), italic (I), underline (U), bulleted list, numbered list, decrease indent, and increase indent. Below the toolbar are icons for undo, redo, link, unlink, insert image, insert table, insert link, insert document, and a red arrow icon.

4. In the **Name** field, specify a name for the Learning Unit.
5. You can choose a color for your folder name by clicking the color picker next to **Choose Color of Name**.


Choose Color of Name:   ← Click here to choose a color for folder name
6. You can add a short description to the folder to give your students an indication of the material it contains. Type your description in the **Text** box.
7. In section two, Learning Unit settings can be altered.

2 Options

Make the content available Yes No

Enforce sequential viewing of the Learning Unit? Yes No

Open in new window Yes No

Track number of views Yes No

Choose date and time restrictions

Display After

Jun 02 2006

10 45 AM

Display Until

Jun 02 2006


10 45 AM

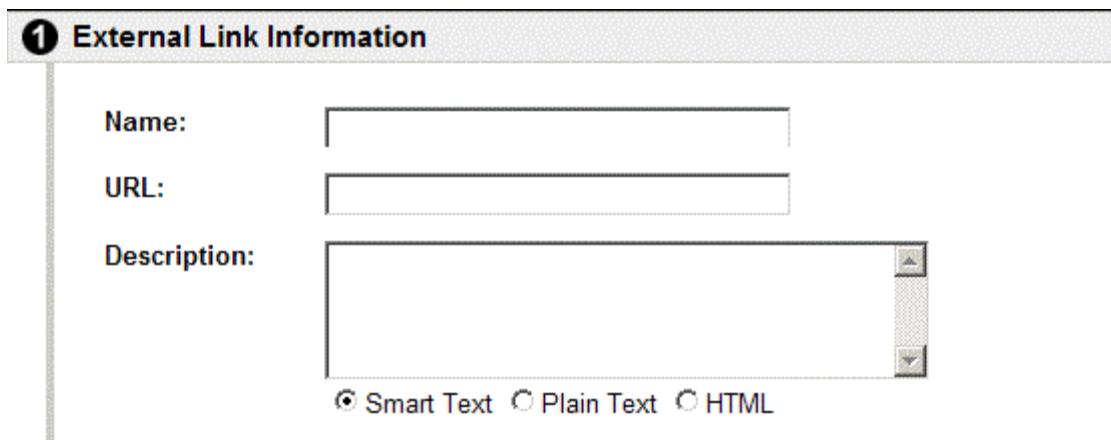
8. Click **Submit** when finished.

Placing Content in a Learning Unit

1) If you wish to add content to your Learning Unit, you must go back into the content area where you placed the Learning Unit, and click once on the Learning Unit's title. The rest is the same as adding content done previously in this handout.

Add External Link to a Content Area

1. Click on the area in the **Content Areas** control panel where you want the external link to appear.
2. Click on **External Link**  on the row of buttons at the top of the Course Documents page.
 - a. When the **Add External Link** page appears, enter the name of the external link in the **Name:** field in the **External Link Information** portion of the page



1 External Link Information

Name:

URL:

Description:

Smart Text Plain Text HTML

3. Enter the web address for the external link in the **URL:** field
4. Enter a brief description of the link in the **Description:** field and select a text format.
 - a. Use the **Smart Text** option for text that may include a link. The link does not need to include the HTML tags as long as a space precedes the link.
 - b. Use the **Plain Text** option for text that does not contain any links or special formatting.
 - c. Use the **HTML** option for text that contains HTML formatting tags, e.g., ` bold text `.

- In the **Options** portion of the page (Figure 4), click on the appropriate **Yes** or **No** radio buttons to specify how and when you want the link to appear.
- Click on **Submit**, and click on **OK** on the next page.

2 Options

Do you want to make the External Link visible? Yes No

Launch Item in external window Yes No

Do you want to track number of views? Yes No

Do you want to add metadata? Yes No

Choose date restrictions

Display After

Jan 03 2003 10:00 AM

Display Until


Jan 03 2003 10:00 AM


The Blackboard Quick Edit feature!


QUICK EDIT is a feature that allows you to view your course content using the "Course View", (you may often here this referred to as the "student" view) and then, instead of clicking on Control Panel, Content Area, folder, etc, **with just one click you can get to the appropriate control panel area to edit the file.**

When looking at your course content in the course view, on the far right of the "bread crumb" navigation bar at the top of your content area is a link.

[COURSES](#) > [BLACKBOARD TRAINING](#) > [TRAINING DOCUMENTS](#) > EFFICIENT GRADING - BB ASSIGNMENT MANAGER [EDIT VIEW](#)

 **Efficient Grading - Bb Assignment Manager**

 [Training Agenda](#)
Bb Efficient Grading - Agenda (23.5 kb)

 [Assignment Manager](#)
Training Documents and Links to Tip Sheets

Clicking on this “**Edit View**” link will take you to the appropriate area of the control panel where this page is located.

A few things to notice about the new content area screen: The **Control Panel entries are displayed within the Blackboard content frame** rather than full screen as we see when going through the control panel link.

COURSES > BLACKBOARD TRAINING > TRAINING DOCUMENTS > EFFICIENT GRADING - BB ASSIGNMENT MANAGER > ASSIGNMENT MANAGER DISPLAY VIEW

Assignment Manager

Item Folder External Link Course Link Test Select: Learning Unit Go

- 1 Training Document
Enabled: Statistics Tracking
[Working with Assignments](#) (174.329 Kb)
This document shows you how to work with the Assignment Manager in Blackboard.
Modify Manage Copy Remove
- 2 Training Document
Enabled: Statistics Tracking
[Assignment vs. Drop Box](#) (69.173 Kb)
Modify Manage Copy Remove
- 3 How to Create an Assignment
Enabled: Statistics Tracking
Modify Manage Copy Remove

The familiar **Modify, Manage** (*only available if you enabled statistics/tracking*) **Copy, Remove** buttons are now available to use in editing these items.

Using the **Navigation Bread Crumbs**, you will be able to navigate to the root of the content area you are in to access other folders for modification.

The link on the far right of the "bread crumb" navigation bar at the top of your content area has changed. It now reads, "**Display View**". Clicking on this link will take you back into the course view of your content. In addition, clicking on any of the navigation buttons or links in the left hand navigation pane will take you back to the course view.

Full access to edit other content or content not visible in the course view is still accomplished through the Control Panel link.