

Blackboard Basics Online Tutorial

Six Steps to Get You Started in Blackboard

These are the Six Steps needed to get you started working in Blackboard, along with some general information. Note that these Six Steps are the beginning Blackboard basics. Please see the last section of this handout to learn more about how to use Blackboard effectively as a teaching and learning tool.

What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is a system at SDSU that creates course web sites where you can place content, communicate with your students, and more!

How do I get a course in Blackboard?

Courses are assigned to you after your department submits paperwork regarding your semester teaching status and has finalized faculty course assignments. This information is placed in the Student Information System SIMS/R and the SDSU Web Portal and then fed automatically to Blackboard. Questions about course assignments and teaching status should be directed to your department coordinator.

How do my students enroll in my Blackboard course?

Students are placed in your Blackboard course(s) automatically using data sent to our system daily from the student registration system. Students who add a your course will appear in your Blackboard course. Students who drop your course will be dropped from your Blackboard course as well.

How do faculty access Blackboard?

SDSU's Blackboard site is located at the following web address:
<http://blackboard.sdsu.edu>

Use your RedID and SDSU Web Portal password to access Blackboard. This information can be obtained from your department coordinator.

The Six Steps

Step One – Setup a Current Email Address in Blackboard

In order to use Blackboard email tools, faculty must enter a preferred email address directly into Blackboard. The steps to setup faculty email are listed below:

1. Log into Blackboard (after doing this, you will see the My SDSU page).

2. Click the Personal Information link, located in Tools box in the upper left of the My SDSU page.
3. Edit your personal information to reflect your current email address (This does not have to be an SDSU address).
4. Click OK

Step Two - Adding Content to Your Course

A wide number of different electronic file types can be added to your Blackboard course and downloaded by students when needed. Examples of these are syllabi in the form of Microsoft Word documents, lectures in the form of PowerPoint shows, along with manually typed text. In the Blackboard system, this is called, "Add Item." The steps to Add an Item are listed below:

1. Enter your course and Click on the Control Panel Button
2. Click on desired Content Areas (Course Information, Assignments, Course Documents, or External Links).
3. Click the **Add Item** icon.
4. Choose a **Name** from the drop down menu or enter your own name for the document in the **Name** field.
5. Enter a description or instructions for your students into the **Text** field (optional).
6. Scroll down to the **2. Content** area.
7. Click on the **Browse** or **Choose File** button to find your file (on your hard drive or disk).
8. Type the link name "Click to Download" into the **Name of Link to File** field
9. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the **Submit** button.

Your content item has now added to your course!

Step Three – Placing Your Faculty Information in Your Course

Faculty are encouraged to place information about themselves into each Blackboard course. This allows students to learn about the faculty member and obtain contact information such as office hours and location. Note that this Task is optional. The steps to add faculty information are listed below:

1. Enter your course and Click on the **Control Panel Button**

2. Click on **Staff Information** in the Course Tools section of the Control Panel.
3. Click on **Add Profile**.
4. Fill out the desired text fields.
5. Select an image file by clicking on Browse to find your digital photo on your hard drive or disk (This step is optional). Images should not be larger than 150 x 150 pixels in size.
6. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the Submit button.
7. Your Faculty Information has now been added to this course. Students see your Faculty information by clicking the “Faculty Information” button located within the student view (front) of your course.

Step Four – Making Your Course Available to Students

By default your students cannot access your course or your course’s content. When ready, you must “turn on” your course by making it available. This task is very important. See the following procedure to make your course available to students:

1. Enter your course and Click on the **Control Panel Button**
2. Click the **Settings link** in the Course Options section.
3. Click the **Course Availability** link.
4. In the Set Course Availability section, click the **Yes** radio button.
5. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the **Submit** button.

Step Five – Send Email

You can quickly send email to all or select students in your course using the Send Email tool. This replaces the need to keep a list of student email addresses in your favorite email program. This is a very useful and popular tool in Blackboard but its use is optional. See the following procedure to Send Email via Blackboard:

1. Click on **Send E-mail** in the Course Tools section.
2. Choose the group or individual(s) to send email to.
3. Fill in **Subject** and **Message** fields.
4. Add attachments if desired, by clicking on the **Add** button and finding the file on your computer.
5. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the **Submit** button.

Note that a copy of this email will be sent to you, the sender.

Step Six – Learning More and Getting Help

The steps listed above will help get you started in Blackboard. However, it is highly recommended that faculty expand their Blackboard skills to make the most of this powerful teaching and learning tool. The following resources are available to you if you would like to learn more or just need some help:

The Blackboard Support Site

<http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/instructor/index.html>

Blackboard Step-By-Step Guides

http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/instructor/guide_page.html

Blackboard Workshops (Details and Schedule Information)

<http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/instructor/training/wsschedule.html>

The Blackboard Help Desk

bbhelp@sdsu.edu or 594-3485