

BLACKBOARD QUICK START GUIDE

Helping Faculty build their course in Blackboard, 2020

MCC Faculty

Use this reference guide to build your course in Blackboard; post a syllabus, create an assignment, organize your grade center, build a test, create a discussion board, use Collaborate, the web conferencing tool and more.

Roxanne McCorry, Director, Academic technology & Distance Learning mccorryr@middlesex.mass.edu

Daniela Loghin, Instructional Designer and part-time Faculty, MCC loghind@middlesex.mass.edu

Quick Start Guide for Blended and Online Courses

Request your course content copied at: loghind@middlesex.mass.edu or mccorryr@middlesex.mass.edu

Note: Course copy can take a week to process.

Find Your Course

1. Log in <https://mymcc.middlesex.mass.edu/Pages/default.aspx> with your email credentials.
2. Find your course in the **Courses** tab on the left navigation bar.
3. Click on your course title to launch the course.

Add Your Syllabus

1. Check that **Edit mode** is **ON** (top right of your course). **Edit mode must be ON for you to edit in your course.**
2. Click on **Start Here (Syllabus)**- (on left-hand side of course menu)
3. Click on **Build Content** on the action bar at the top of the page.
4. Choose **Item**
5. Name file as desired
6. **Browse your computer** to find your syllabus
7. Under file options: be sure file is set to open in a new window
8. Then **Submit!**

Make an Announcement

1. Click on **Announcements**—on the course menu
2. Click **Create Announcement**
3. Give it a subject
4. Type your announcement
5. Check the Email announcement box
6. Then **Submit!**

Add Content (see Pg. 2 if you need to add a content area to your course menu)

1. Click on **Course Materials** or **Weekly Sessions** in the Course menu
2. Choose the **Build Content** menu
3. Click **Content Folder, Item, or Web Link** for the type of content you want
4. Follow the steps and **Submit!**
5. Repeat to add more content

Create a Discussion

1. Click on **Discussions** on the course menu
2. Choose **Create Forum**
3. Name the Forum
4. Type your prompt or question to be discussed in the text box
5. Choose **Grade** if you plan to grade forum and set the points available
6. Keep the default settings and **Submit!**

****Please take time to read this entire Quick Start Guide as it is designed to inform you about Blackboard Basics**

STEP 1: Set up your Course Menu

Important: You may need to add a “CONTENT AREA” to your Course Menu.

A Content Area is where you will place your course content such as your weekly folders with your assignments or you may want to create Thematical Units. You can name this “**content area**” several names based on your course needs. Such as;

Weekly assignments, Units of Study, Course Content, Course Materials, Assignments, etc.

Once logged in to your course, click on the “+ in the circle” (see below) to get the drop down that you see below.

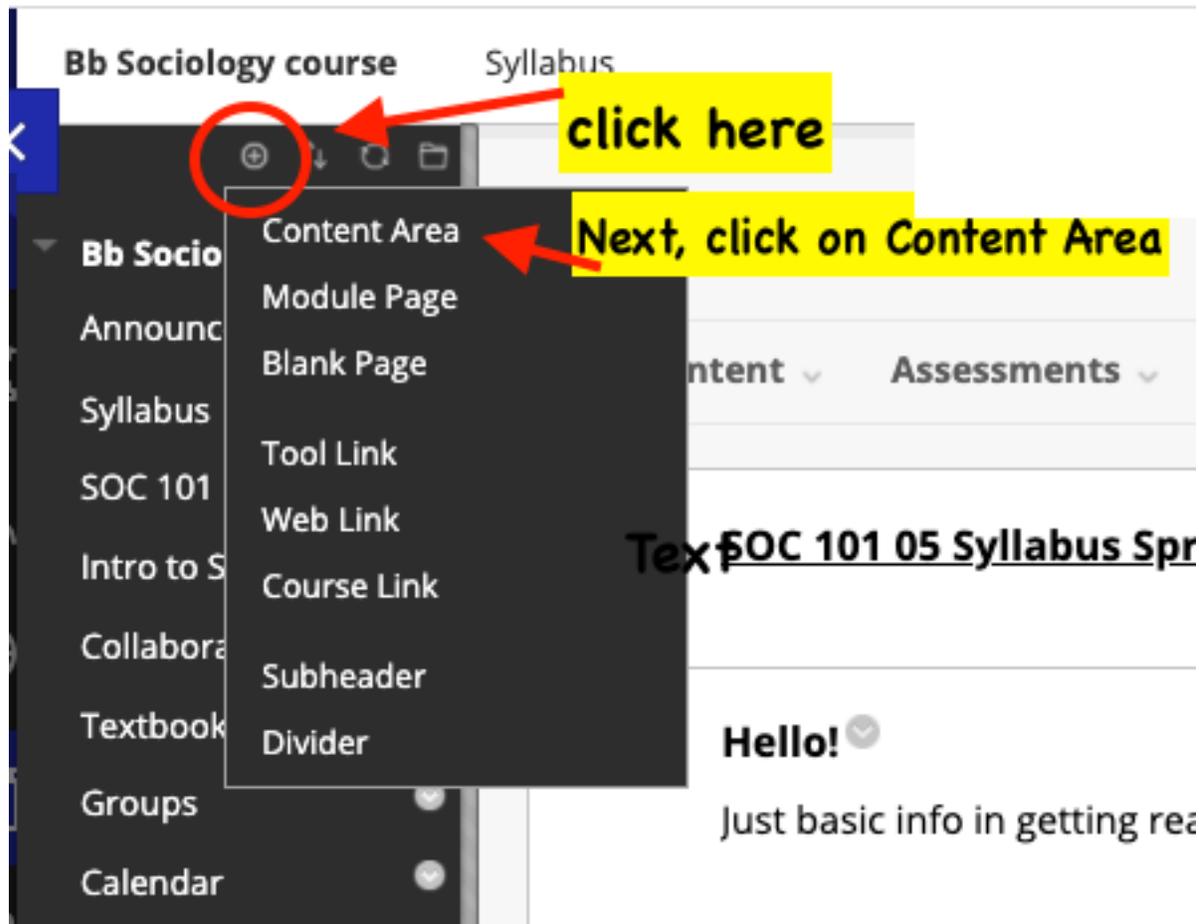
Next, click on “**Content Area**” and name the content area (ie) Course Content.

Then, select “**make available**” checkbox.

You will see the “**Content Area**” that you just created at the bottom of your course menu.

To move the “Course Content” area up on the course menu, left click next to “Course Content” that you just created and drag it to the top of your course menu until it is under your “Syllabus”.

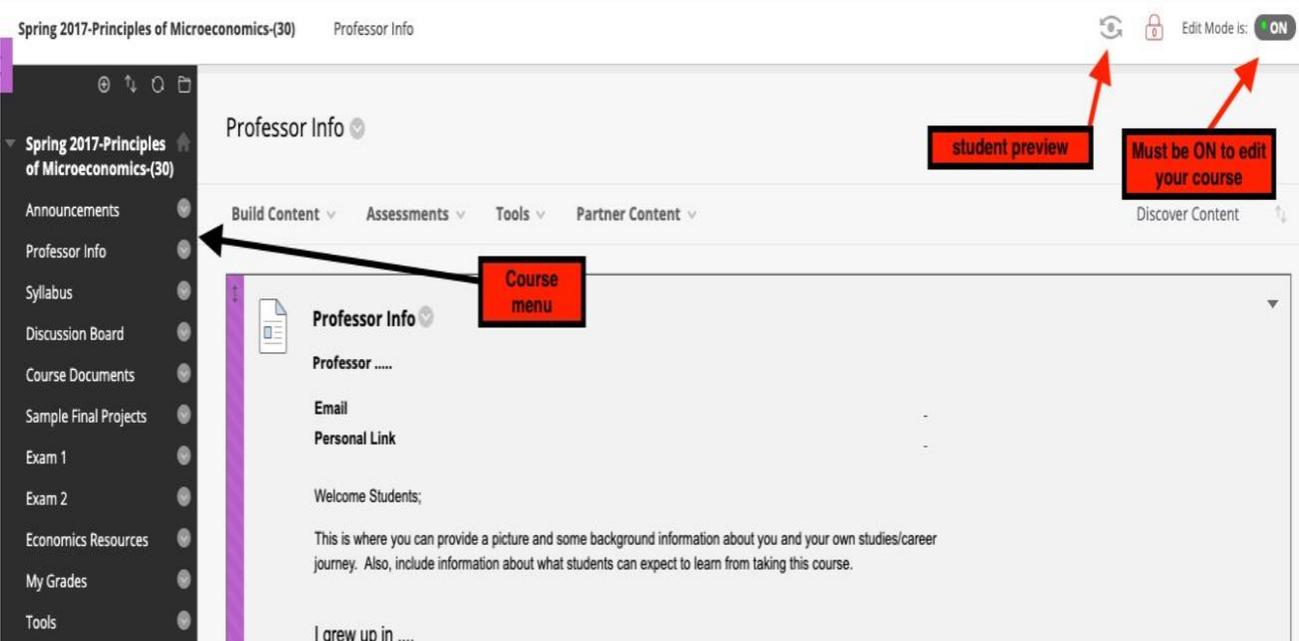
Now you can click on “Course Content” and start building your course sections.



Quick Start GUIDE – Designing & Developing Content in Blackboard MCC's Course Menu

All MCC Blackboard courses have been designed with a basic template to create a consistent look and feel. Please think carefully before changing this course menu template.

1. **Course menu:** The menu is used as a way to navigate your course. We provide you with a basic template that includes most of the menu items that you will need.
2. **Student Preview** and **Edit Mode:** These two buttons are in the upper right corner of the course. Student Preview (looks like an eye ) allows you to see your course from a student's perspective. To make any changes, edits, or additions to the course **Edit Mode** must be **ON**.
3. **Announcements:** The landing page for the course. Links to the announcement page, where you may address the entire class with important information. You can also add or delete modules as needed for your course.
4. **Start Here (Syllabus):** A content area for uploading your syllabus.
5. **Weekly Sessions:** A content area for uploading materials into weekly folders. Best for multiple items per week. Hide this area if you do not intend to use it.
6. **Course materials:** (hidden from students) An open content area for uploading materials if not using Weekly Sessions. Best for a smaller number of items. Unhide this area if you intend to use it.
7. **My Grades:** Where your students may view their grades.
8. **Discussion Posts:** Links to the discussion board. Access old or create new forums from this link. Here you will also find Course Questions & Answers.
9. **External Email:** (hidden from students) Allows you to email one, several, or all your students via their MCC email accounts. No records of these emails are kept in Blackboard.
10. **Course Message:** Recommended, email stays internal within Blackboard, keeps a record of emails sent and read.
11. **Web Conferencing:** Gives you access to Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, a web conferencing tool and the informational resources to use it. This tool allows your class to meet synchronously online.



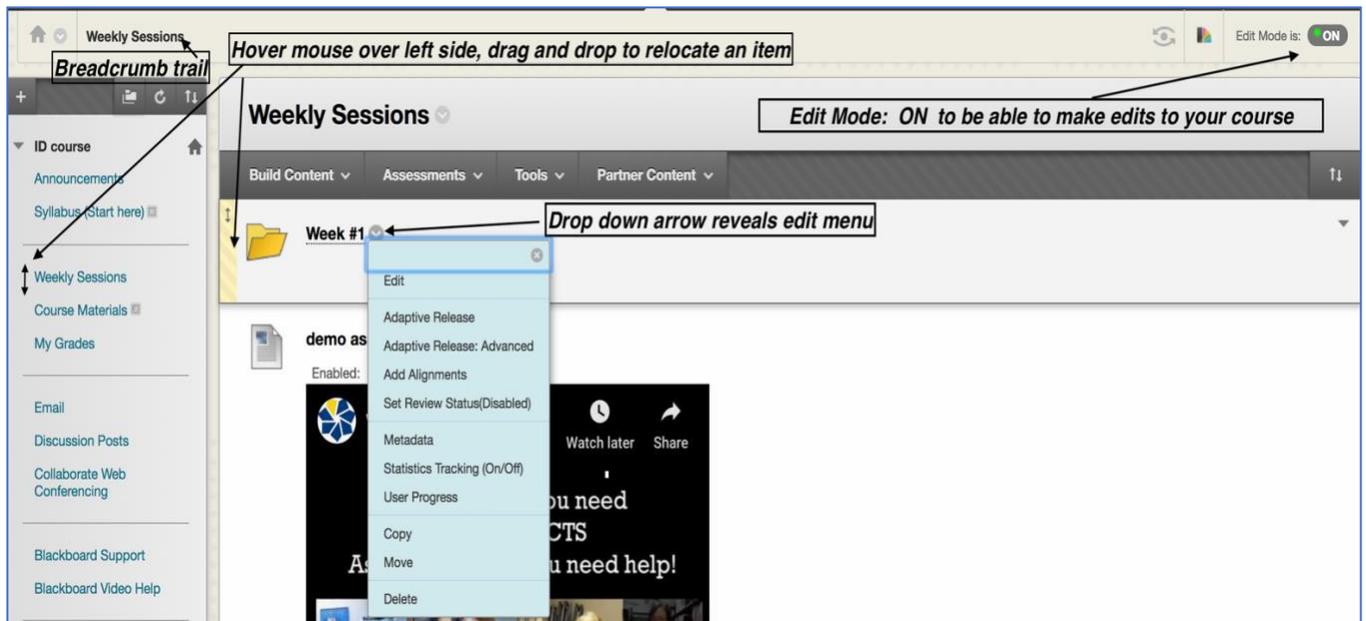
The screenshot shows the Blackboard course interface for "Spring 2017-Principles of Microeconomics-(30)". The course menu is visible on the left, and the main content area shows "Professor Info". Annotations include:

- A red box labeled "student preview" with an arrow pointing to the "Student Preview" button in the top right corner.
- A red box labeled "Must be ON to edit your course" with an arrow pointing to the "Edit Mode: ON" button in the top right corner.
- A red box labeled "Course menu" with an arrow pointing to the "Course menu" item in the left sidebar.

The Blackboard Four Fundamentals

Four Basic Fundamentals that you can apply throughout Blackboard.

1. **Edit Mode:** To do **ANY** editing in your course be sure Edit Mode is **ON**.
2. **Hover:** To **edit** content, hover just to the right of titles to display a hidden drop-down arrow. This will reveal an edit menu.
3. **Drag and Drop:** Newly added content appears at the bottom of the page. To move your new content into place, you can either
 - a. Drag and drop: by hovering over the left side of the new content until a double-sided arrow appears. Then click and drag into place **OR**
 - b. Use the arrows located on the upper right corner of the content area to re-order items.
4. **Breadcrumb trail:** The **Light Gray Bar** tells you where you are in the course and the Breadcrumb Trail helps you navigate back.



The Course Menu - how to move/edit content

1. To **'Edit'** a Course Menu link such as **Discussions** hover to the right of its title to reveal a **drop-down arrow**. This arrow, when clicked, opens an edit menu allowing you to **rename, hide or delete the link**. Drag and Drop will allow you to rearrange the menu order.
2. **Icons:** The box with a diagonal line through it means **Hidden from Students**. The plain gray box means **No content** or empty.
3. The **Control Panel**, under **Course Management**, is available **ONLY** to instructors. The grade center is located under the control panel.

The screenshot displays the Blackboard Course Menu for a course titled "Weekly Sessions". The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with items such as "ID course", "Announcements", "Syllabus (Start here)", "Weekly Sessions", "Course Materials", "My Grades", "Email", "Discussion Posts", "Collaborate Web Conferencing", "Blackboard Support", "Blackboard Video Help", and "COURSE MANAGEMENT". Under "COURSE MANAGEMENT", there is a "Control Panel" section with sub-items: "Content Collection", "Course Tools", and "Evaluation".

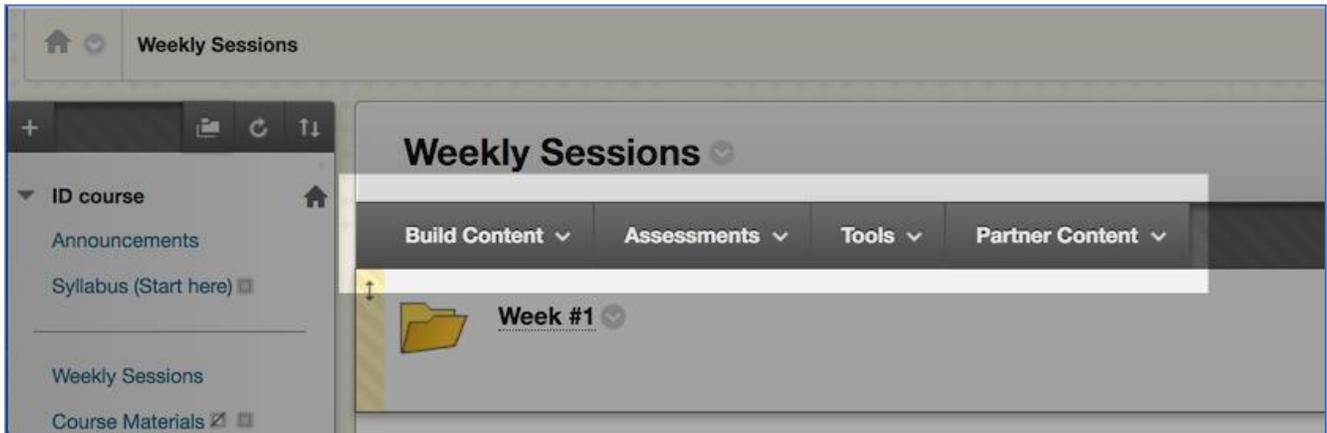
The main content area shows a "Weekly Sessions" folder containing a "demo assignment #1" (with "Statistics Tracking" enabled) and a video titled "eat a frog". A video player is overlaid on the content, showing a scene with people in a library setting. The video player has controls for "Watch later" and "Share".

Annotations with arrows point to specific features:

- Icons:** Points to a gray box with a diagonal line through it next to the "Course Materials" link in the sidebar.
- Edit Features:** Points to a drop-down menu that appears when hovering over the "Discussion Posts" link, containing options: "Rename Link", "Hide Link", and "Delete".
- Drag and Drop:** Points to a double-headed arrow icon next to the "Discussion Posts" link in the sidebar.
- Control Panel:** Points to the "Course Tools" link in the "COURSE MANAGEMENT" section of the sidebar.

Adding Course Content

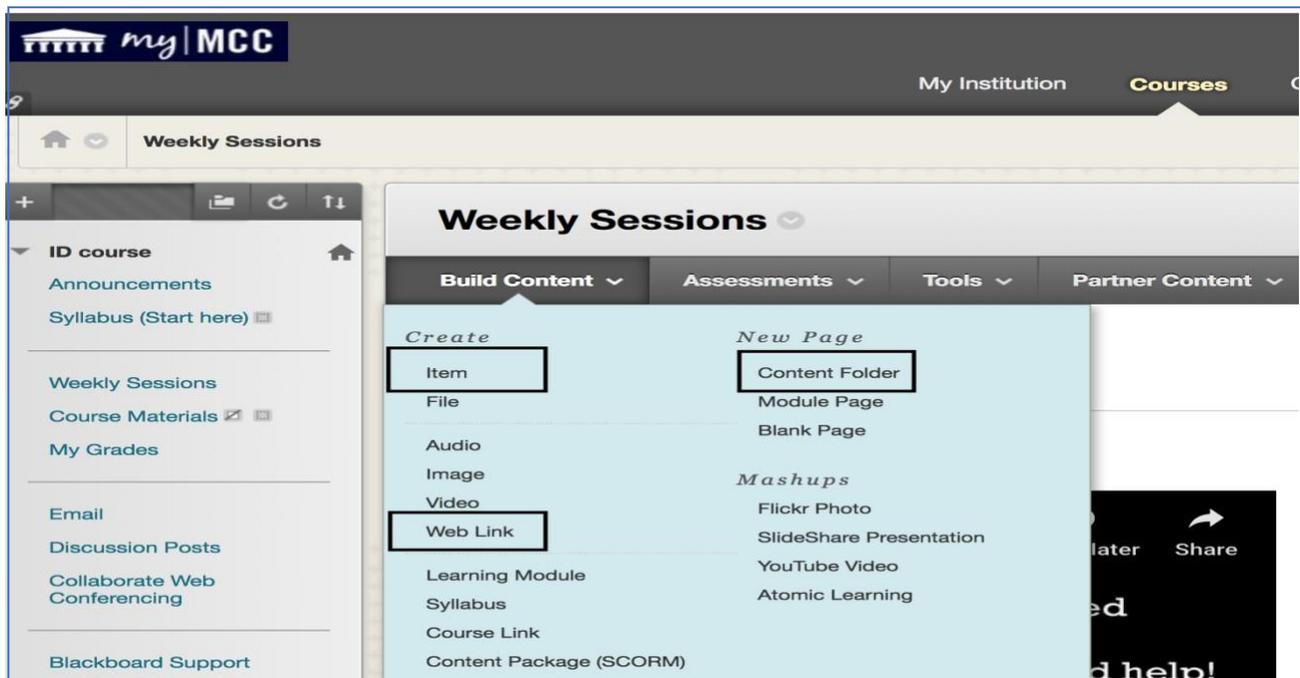
In a content area such as the **Start Here (Syllabus)**, **Weekly Sessions**, or **Course Materials**, you will find a menu across the middle top of the screen that looks like this:



Be sure you are where you want to add content and then click on the down arrow to the right of **Build Content** to open the build menu.

There are three main content types that you will use the most to add content.

1. **Item:** an item allows you to add some text and to optionally to attach a file such as a PDF, Word doc, or a Power point (pptx).
2. **Web Link:** links the user to an outside URL (it is important that these are set to open in a new window).
3. **Content Folder:** creates a new area for content such as a Weekly Session folder or a readings folder (just like a regular manila folder).



Follow the steps to add an item and attach a syllabus:

1. Click the **Start here (Syllabus)** content area.
2. Hover over **Build Content** on the dark gray action bar and click **Item**.
3. Name it, “**Syllabus**” or your choice of title.
4. Add instructional text about the document (i.e. Be sure to read the syllabus.....)
5. Next, see below, to attach a document (syllabus).

Create Item

A content item is any type of file, text, image, or link that appears to users in a Content Area

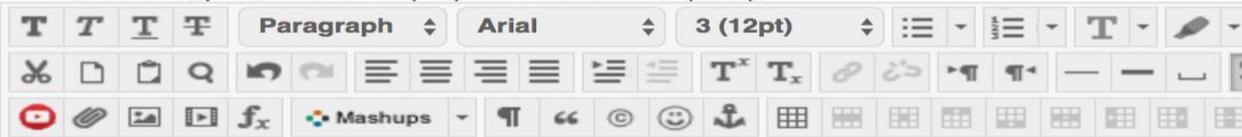
** Indicates a required field.*

CONTENT INFORMATION

*** Name**

Color of Name Black

Text
For the toolbar, press ALT+F10 (PC) or ALT+FN+F10 (Mac).



Read the syllabus carefully before the beginning of class!

Attach a document:

1. Attach a document by clicking **Browse My Computer**. Upload a PDF or a Word document.
2. Accept the default settings under **Standard Options (Best Practices)**.
 - Permit students to view the document (**Yes**)
 - Track number of views (**No**)
 - Select time and date (**Blank**)

Click **Submit**,

3. Use **Student Preview** to review the **Item** you have created and access the document.

*You can drag files from your computer to the Attach Files area or use the browse functions. Files are saved to the Attach area. Click **Attach** to remove a selected file.*

Attach Files

STANDARD OPTIONS

Permit Users to View this Content Yes No

Track Number of Views Yes No

Select Date and Time Restrictions

Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

*Click **Submit** to proceed. Click **Cancel** to go back.*

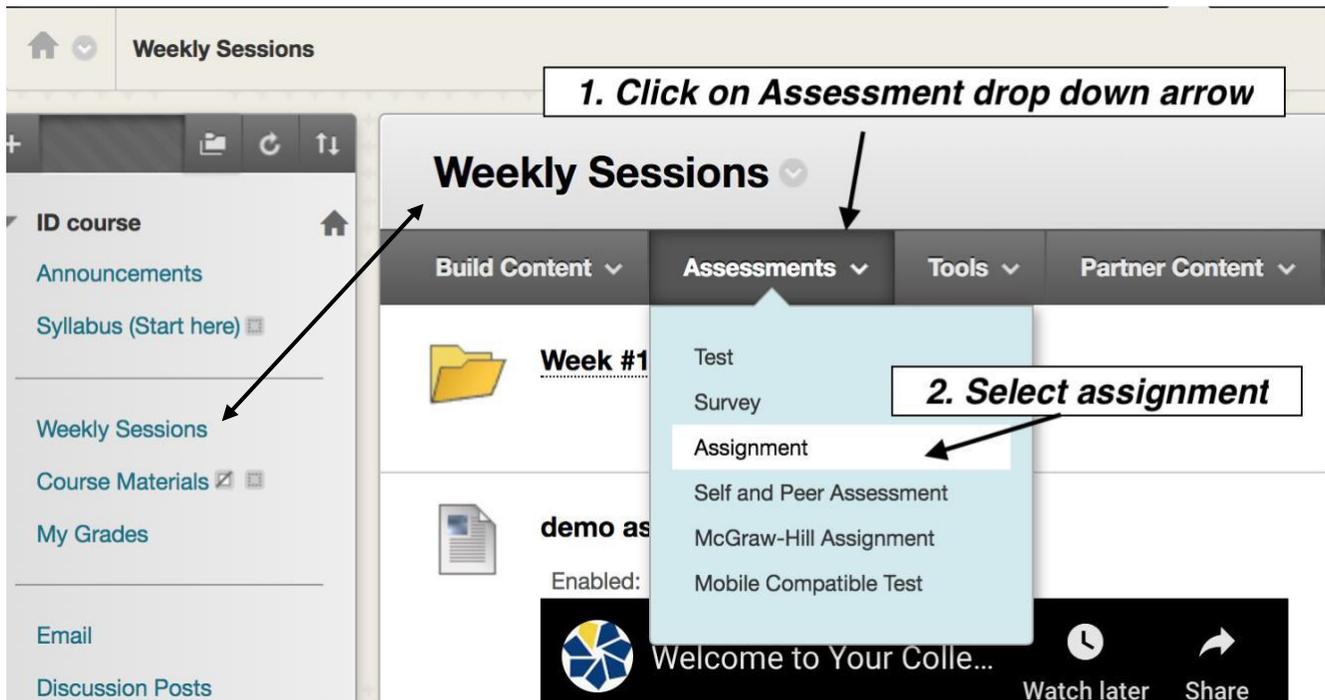
Creating an Assignment

When you add an Assignment, you are creating a “dropbox” for students to submit their work. Also, once you create an assignment, Blackboard *automatically creates a gradebook column in the Grade Center*.

Note: You can also create online **Tests** with many different types of questions and options to deter cheating. Go to https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Tests_Pools_Surveys to learn more about these and other educational technologies.

Create an Assignment:

1. In the content area, select **Weekly Session, Course Materials, Exams**, etc., click on **Assessment**.
2. Select **Assignment** to create an assignment.



Create Assignment

Assignments are a form of assessment that adds a column to the Grade Center. Use the Grade Center to assign grades and give feedback.

* Indicates a required field.

ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

* Name and Color

3

 Black

Instructions



A rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting (bold, italic, underline, strikethrough), paragraph alignment (left, center, right, justified), font color, background color, bulleted and numbered lists, indentation, link and unlink, undo, redo, and other editing functions. It also includes a 'Mashups' dropdown and 'HTML CSS' options.

4

Path: p

ASSIGNMENT FILES

Attach Files

DUE DATES

Submissions are accepted after this date, but are marked **Late**.

Due Date

5

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

3. Name your assignment
4. Write your instructions in the text box
5. Choose your due date

6. Set the number of points possible
7. Under **Submission details** – choose individual submission, and the number of attempts allowed. We suggest two attempts, so if a student makes a mistake, they can try again without your help. Multiple attempts can also be used to provide initial feedback and preliminary grades.
8. Under **Display of Grades** leave as default setting unless you desire a change.
9. Check the assignment available and use **Limit Availability** to set the date and time that you want your students to have access to the assignment.
10. Then, click **Submit**

GRADING

* Points Possible **6**

Associated Rubrics

Name	Type	Date Last Edited	Show Rubric to Students

Submission Details

If any students are enrolled in more than one group receiving the same assignment they will submit more than one attempt for this assignment. It may be necessary to provide these students with an overall grade for the assignment.

Assignment Type **7**

- Individual Submission
- Group Submission
- Portfolio Submission

Selecting this option will require students to submit a portfolio as a response to this assignment

Number of Attempts

Plagiarism Tools

- Check submissions for plagiarism using SafeAssign
SafeAssign only supports English-language submissions. See Blackboard Help for more details. If SafeAssign is enabled with Anonymous Grading, SafeAssign Originality Reports will be hidden from Instructors until Anonymous Grading is disabled. However, Students may still be able to see SafeAssign Originality Reports depending on the state of the "Allow students to view SafeAssign originality report for their attempts" setting.
- Allow students to view SafeAssign originality report for their attempts
- Exclude submissions from the Institutional and Global References Databases

Grading Options **8**

Display of Grades

AVAILABILITY

9 Make the Assignment Available
This assignment cannot be made available until it is assigned to an individual or group of students.

Limit Availability

- Display After
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.
- Display Until
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Track Number of Views

Click Submit to finish. Click Cancel to quit without saving changes.

10

The Grade Center

There are two main things you need to know when it comes to the Grade Center. After you click, **Grade Center** from the left-hand course menu, you will have two options, **Needs Grading** and **Full Grade Center**.

To access any of the work your students have submitted via the assignment tool, go to **Needs Grading**. There you will find all submitted work. When you click on a student's name, you will be able to see their work and grade it in Blackboard. Once you input the grade in **Needs Grading**, Blackboard automatically enters the grade in the grade book column.

In the **Full Grade Center**, you will be able to manage columns, create manual columns, hide and show columns, edit grades, and total columns. You can also create a weighted column to match the designated grading formula in your syllabus.

**The Grade Center can be tricky so we suggest you use;
<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade>

The Grade Center:

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Grade Center interface. On the left is a navigation menu with 'Grade Center' expanded to show 'Needs Grading', 'Full Grade Center', and 'Assignments'. The main area is titled 'Grade Center : Full Grade Center' and includes a toolbar with 'Create Column', 'Create Calculated Column', 'Manage', and 'Reports'. Below the toolbar is a table header with columns for 'Last Name', 'First Name', 'Username', 'Student ID', and 'Last Access'. A box labeled 'Manage gradebook' points to the 'Manage' button, and another box labeled 'Grade Center' points to the 'Grade Center' menu item.

Help & Resources

Contact Technical Help:

Call 1-978-656-3301 or visit <https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/technologycenter/> to chat or submit a ticket to the Help Desk.

You can also email servicedesk@middlesex.mass.edu for technical help.

Consult with e-learning and instructional support for Online Course Development;

Roxanne McCorry mccorryr@middlesex.mass.edu

Daniela Loghin loghind@middlesex.mass.edu

We hope you have found this Quick Start Guide useful. Please feel free to share your feedback, so we can continue to improve it!

Thank you.

E-learning and Instructional Support