

Blackboard at Loyola University New Orleans

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Blackboard is Loyola's electronic classroom system. It provides a web page for the courses you teach and includes a number of tools to communicate and interact with your students. It can be useful for such things as distributing course material to your students and allowing your students to post questions on the web page in a discussion forum. You can also use it to easily e-mail all the students in your class.

Getting Started

Blackboard pages for all university courses are automatically created and are generally available a few weeks before the law school starts its classes each semester. All faculty - including adjuncts - have accounts on Blackboard whether or not you have used it before.

The Blackboard main page and log-in screen is here:

<http://loyno.blackboard.com/>

You use your same user name as your Loyola e-mail. If you don't know what this is, go to the Loyola "Find People" page here:

<http://www.loyno.edu/search/>

and look yourself up. Your user name is everything before the "@" symbol in your Loyola e-mail address and, by default, your Blackboard password is the first two letters of your first name followed by the last four digits of your social security number. For example, Joe Franks, whose Loyola e-mail is jfranks@loyno.edu and whose SSN is 321-45-9876 would log on to Blackboard at the address above using:

User Name: jfranks
Password: jo9876

(NOTE: Even if you have changed your Loyola e-mail password, your Blackboard default password is still as described above until you change your password *on* Blackboard - the two systems are **not** 100% coordinated.)

If you have any problems logging on to Blackboard, contact:

Jonathan Gallaway
Blackboard Manager
jgallawa@loyno.edu
864-7168

Your Blackboard Course Page

Once you have successfully logged on to Blackboard, you will be at the welcome screen. Towards the top right corner under “My Courses” will be the course(s) you are teaching. Click on the one you want to work with to go to that course’s page.

Your course page will look like what your students see except for one item: on the left panel, near the bottom, is the “Control Panel” button. This gives you access to all the faculty tools you need to create, edit, and use your Blackboard page.

Specific Tasks

Here’s how to perform specific tasks on Blackboard.

Upload Your Syllabus

By default, one of the buttons on the left of your course page is “Syllabus”. To upload your syllabus there, go to the Control Panel, look under “Content Areas” at the upper left and select the Syllabus link. From the next page, click the “+Item” icon. Then on the “Add Item” page that comes up, type a name for this item (“Syllabus”, “Course Syllabus”, “Updated Syllabus”, etc.) provide - optionally - a description of the item (i.e., your syllabus), then scroll down until you see the “Content” step where you can use the “Attach local file” field to browse your computer for the syllabus file you want to upload. After you have the file entered in the “Attach local file” field, you can scroll down and click submit (or you can tweak the options listed in that step - by default, the uploaded content is “Available”, Blackboard will not track the number of views, and it is not restricted by time or date). After you click “Submit” the next page will - hopefully - say “Success” to indicate your document has been uploaded.

NOTE: The Syllabus area of the Blackboard course page is just a pre-configured feature labeled Syllabus. The same basic procedure described above can be used elsewhere to upload course assignments, reading material, and other items in other areas of the Blackboard page.

Add/Edit Course Areas

The different Areas of your Blackboard course page indicated by the Menu Item buttons on the left side of the screen (“Announcements”, “Course Materials”, “Faculty Information”, “Syllabus”, etc.) can be edited or changed from the Control Panel by clicking the “Manage

Course Menu” link under the “Course Options” area at the bottom left of the Control Panel. This displays the existing Menu Items and lets you modify or change their order. You can also add new course areas by clicking on the “Content Area” next to “Add” above the listed Menu Items

NOTE: A “Content Area” is essentially a folder on Blackboard to which you can upload documents and other items. From this same “Manage Course Menu” screen you can also add other things - external links, tool links, etc. To keep your Blackboard page uncluttered, it is generally best to add specific items - texts, links to other web pages, documents - within specific content areas, and not to the Blackboard Course Menu itself. You can post general items - supplemental reading assignments, sample documents, links to other web sites, etc. - in other areas of the Blackboard page, such as under “Course Material” on the Control Panel. And, to help keep the materials organized, you can create folders within a specific course area to put different types of items in.

Using Discussion Forums

Discussion forums are electronic “message boards” where you and your students can post and respond to questions. Access the Discussion Forums under the “Communication” button on the course page. You can create one or more forums for your course; do this with the “+Forum” button on the top of the Discussion Board page.

E-mailing Students

Under the “Communications” link on your Blackboard Course Page is a link for “Send E-mail” that lets you e-mail your students. There are different options for “Send E-mail”, like e-mailing teaching assistants and other instructors, but the “All Student Users” option will let you e-mail all your students at once.

Changing Personal Settings

You can use any e-mail account in Blackboard. By default, it is set up with your Loyola e-mail account, but if you would rather use another account to communicate through Blackboard with your students, you can change it. On the Welcome screen (which you can get back to by clicking on the “My Institution” tab from any screen), click on the link for “Personal Information” at the bottom of the list of Tools on the left, then select the “Edit Personal Information” option to change your password.

Also under the “Personal Information” option on the Welcome screen is the link you can use to reset your Blackboard password. **NOTE:** Even if you change the e-mail account you use on Blackboard, your Blackboard user name will still be the user name for your Loyola e-mail.