

Blackboard offers a tool that helps you manage assignments. The **Assignment Tool** is an electronic mailbox which can be used as an alternative to the Digital Dropbox. The Assignment tool provides a convenient means for you to receive assignments and to give feedback to each student.

Assignments are created and added to any content area (usually Assignments or Course Documents) where they are accessed by students. Once completed by a student, an assignment is submitted directly to the Gradebook. Blackboard does the file management and keeps a record of submitted assignments.

- Assignments posted as documents do not have the link to the Gradebook. In order to provide the link, you must use the Assignment Tool. Specific assignments linked with the Assignment Tool are identified with a clipboard icon and a text link.

Create an Assignment using the Assignment Tool

1. To post an assignment click on the **Assignments** link in Content Area of the Control Panel.
2. Choose **Assignment --** from the **Select** drop down menu on the right of the tool bar which runs across the top of the screen -- and click **GO**.
 - Under **Assignment Information** type the name, possible points, the due date, and any instructions.
 - Under **Options** indicate if you want to make the assignment visible, if you want to track the number of users, and the dates you want it to be visible to students.
- When creating an assignment, if you select **track number of views** you will be able to monitor student activity.
3. Attach any files students may need to complete the assignment.
4. Click **Submit**.
 - Note: Assignments are linked to the Gradebook and will not copy to another course unless the Gradebook is copied.

Grading Assignments

1. Once the assignment has been submitted by the student for grading you will see a **!** in the gradebook column for the assignment.

- ➔ If you see a lock symbol instead of a **!**, the student may have saved the assignment but not submitted it. Generally, it is best not to do anything with the lock unless the student reports a problem.
- 2. To begin grading click on the **!**
- 3. You will be sent to a screen where you can view the student's assignment. To view their submission click on the **View** button.
- 4. In the first section (**Assignment Information**) you will see the information you entered into Blackboard regarding the assignment. In the second section (**User's Work**) you will see any comments made by the student as well the assignment to be downloaded for grading. (Assignments need not be downloaded for grading.)
- 5. To download the assignment right click on the file name underlined in blue and save to your N: Drive.
- 6. The third section (**Feedback to User**) is where you provide feedback for the student after you have graded the assignment.
 - To give a grade delete the **!** and enter the grade.
 - Type any comments in the text box; these will be visible to the student in his/ her gradebook.
 - If you wish to attach a file with your response, click on **Browse** to attach the file. You have the option of attaching more than one file, by clicking **Add another file**.
- 7. The fourth section (**Instructor Notes**) is for notes that are can only be seen by the instructor. This is an area where you can save additional comments regarding the assignment.
- 8. When you are finishing entering the grade and comments click **Submit**.

Downloading Multiple Assignments

1. Click on **Gradebook** in **Assessment Area** of the Control Panel.
2. Click on the **Assignment name**. If a student has submitted an assignment you have not marked, an **!** will appear in the column.
3. You can download several assignments at once or you can do them individually.

4. To download more than one assignment click on the Item Download link.
 - **Select All** will select all assignments to download.
 - **Select Ungraded** will select assignments without a mark to download.
 - **Unselect All** will not select any assignments to download.
5. Check the box beside the assignment(s) you want to download and click **Submit**.
6. Click on **Download assignments now (file size)**.
7. In the download dialog box, choose **Save this File to Disk** and Click **OK**.
8. Navigate to where you want to save the files and click **Save**.

Blackboard packages the files in a compressed format called a "zip" file. You will need to use WinZip or Power Archiver to unzip these into readable files. Blackboard automatically adds the student's username to the name of the assignment.

9. Once you have extracted the file you can proceed to **Grading Assignment**.

Deleting Graded Files

Blackboard courses have a quota which limits their size. Once you finish grading all assignments it is good practice to delete uploaded (returned) files.

1. Click on gradebook in the **Control Panel**.
2. In the gradebook click on the title of your assignment. This will send you to a list of **Item Options**. Click on **Item File Cleanup**.
3. This will show you a list of students who have submitted files for the graded assignment. Check all boxes for the assignments you wish to delete.