

Using the VTBE Editor in Blackboard

The Virtual Textbox Editor (VTBE) appears in every text box in Blackboard. It has standard word processor features, very similar to Microsoft Word, such as spell-check; change font, size and colour; create bulleted and numbered lists; use a highlighter; and add links to sites on the Internet. In most places on Blackboard you can add **Text**, **Pictures** and **Tables**, as well as **Multimedia**. You also can use the editor to display other documents, such as Word or Excel files.

In certain areas, for example in announcements or in the instructions for tests, you do not have the ability to add pictures, documents or multimedia.




The VTBE editor includes WebEQ Equation editor and an HTML pane. A separate handout discusses **Creating Math Equations in Blackboard**.

Adding Text

- To add text, click within the VTBE editor window and start to type.
- Use **Enter** to start a new paragraph. By default, the lines will be double-spaced. **To single-space the text** (recommended in order to limit the amount of space used), hold the Shift key then click on Enter.
- Text will **wrap** at the right edge of the window.
- To **spell check** your work, click on ABC (with a check mark below).
- Select **Heading Style**, **Font** and **Size**.
- Click the icons or use keyboard commands to insert **bold** (Control-B), underline (Control-U) or *italic* (Control-I).
- Select **left-justified**, **centered**, or **right-justified alignment** by paragraph.
- Select **numbered list** or **bulleted list**.
- Select **indent left** to move your paragraph to the right, or **indent right** to move your paragraph to the left.
- To **highlight text**, select the text you wish to highlight by highlighting it with your cursor, then click the highlighter tool and select the colour you want to use.
- To **change font colour**, select the text you wish to change and then click the font colour tool to select the colour you want to use.

Adding Tables, Lines, Equations or HTML to your document


- To **add a table**, click where you want the table to appear, then click the Table tool. Specify the rows and columns, caption, and the table and cell characteristics.
- To **remove a table**, click on the table. Selection squares will appear and then click **delete**.

- To **add a line**, click where you want the line to appear and then click on the pencil tool. To **remove a line**, click on the line. Selection squares will appear and then click **delete**.
- To **add an equation**, click where you want the equation to appear, then click on the WebEQ Equation Editor () or the MathML Equation Editor () to construct your equation. *When the equation is complete, click **Submit**. The equation will **not** display properly in your editing pane.*
- To **add HTML**, open the HTML pane by clicking on **Toggle HTML Source Mode** (). You can either edit the code that is already there or paste HTML code into the window **replacing everything that may be there**.

Adding Documents, Graphics and Multimedia

- Add Documents, Graphics and Multimedia, such as .mpeg, avi or QuickTime, sound or flash files to your item by clicking on the appropriate icon. In all cases you can determine whether you want to upload a document or link to a document that is already on the Internet.
- **Documents**: To add a document, click on the icon and identify which document you wish to display.
- **Image**: To add an image, click on the image icon, and determine the display size and the Alt text (for screen readers).
- **Movie**: To add an .mpeg/.avi or QuickTime, click on the appropriate icon, and select whether you want the movie to auto-play and the controls you wish the students to have.
- **Sound**: To add a sound, click on the appropriate icon and select whether you want the sound to auto-play and the controls you wish the students to have.
- **Flash**: To add a macromedia flash object, click on the appropriate icon and select the display size, whether you want the object to auto-play, and the display quality.

Copying Material from your Word Processor

Our experience is that copying text and tables directly from Microsoft Word using the clipboard works well, but that you will need to add pictures using the VTBE editor interface. You can paste HTML directly by clicking on (). Remember that you are selecting the code between the <body> tags in your original HTML document.

Other Resources

Prof's Resource web site:

<http://www.algonquincollege.com/Its/profres/>

Provides information about developing online courses.

Professional Development web site:

<http://www.algonquincollege.com/employee-pd/>

Lists on-campus workshops related to Blackboard, teaching and course development.