



### 1. Stay Connected

**a) Check Your Webmail and Blackboard Daily for Announcements.** For most classes, this will be how instructors keep you informed and up-to-date.

**b) Three Important Tabs in Blackboard**



**Algonquin:** news and current events

**My Courses:** listing of available courses (e.g. made visible by your teacher)

**Services:** listing of college and departmental services

### 2. Send Email to Instructors Using Algonquin Webmail Only

Most professors will only accept student emails from a College account.

**Note:** Blackboard lets you send emails to your classmates and instructors. However, only Webmail lets you see email that you have received and sent.

### 3. Browser Issues and Blackboard

**a) Browser Weirdness.** Most web browsers (e.g. Internet Explorer and Firefox) are compatible with Blackboard. Sometimes, however, different browsers have difficulties with certain Blackboard functions. For example, there have been issues with Firefox Version 3 and Blackboard.

*If Blackboard is doing something weird, try logging in using a different browser.*

**b) Pop-up Blockers.** Most web browsers use *Pop-Up Blockers* to prevent other annoying ads from appearing when a page is loaded. However, certain Blackboard features, such as quizzes and web links, require new windows to “pop-up” in order to work. If a browser window won’t open:

*Hold down the “ctrl” (control) key while clicking the link.*

### 4. Opening and Saving Documents: Understand the Difference!!

**a) Open:** Click on link and document will open within Blackboard.

*“Open” is okay for viewing a document, but not great for adding content to it.*

**b) Save:** Right-click (use right mouse button) on the filename link, Select “Save Target As”, and choose a location (i.e. My Documents) to save your file.

### 5. File Management: Watch Where and How You Save Your Files

**a) College Computers: Save to your N: Drive!**

College lab computers and laptops you can borrow from the Learning Resource Centre will clear the C: drive whenever students log out. **Save to your personal network (or N) drive. It’s labeled: “Home on .... (N:)”**

*Only use your C: drive or “My Documents” on your own laptop or home computer.*



**Are you constantly losing track of files? Perhaps some file management tips would help. See Life Saver For Students: File Management Tips.**

**b) Memory (USB) Sticks: Invest in One!**

College lab computers *do not* have floppy drives (A:). Invest in a Memory USB stick, which can be purchased at the computer store or other technology stores.

**c) Avoid File Storage on Your Memory (USB) Sticks**

Memory (USB) sticks (or "thumb drives") are meant for taking files with you from one computer to another. *They should not be used as a place to store files.* As a small device, they are very easy to lose or damage. Students often lose important assignment files when their USB stick goes missing.

*Save your files in more than one place (e.g. home and school)!*

**6. Printing PowerPoint Presentations: Save Your Money – and Some Paper**

**a) Print Option for Printing Slides on Fewer Pages.** Before printing, select "Print", then under "What", click on drop down menu to select *Handout, Note Pages or Outline View*. *Handout* allows you to print multiple slides per page.

**b) Print Clearer Slides and Save Printer Ink!** Under the Color/Grayscale area, you can select "Pure Black and White". This will save a lot of ink.

**7. The "Assignment Tool" and the Assignment Button Are Two Different Things!**

The assignment button opens up a content section. However, the Assignment Tool offers much more. You can get assignment instructions, complete your assignment, submit it, and receive feedback – all in the same place. The Assignment Tool link looks like this:

>> [View/Complete Assignment: ASSIGNMENT#2](#)

**Note:** Before submitting your assignment, make sure that the filename of your assignment does not include spaces and special characters (e.g. #, %, \$). These characters can make it difficult for your teacher to open your assignment.

**8. Webmail vs. Sending Email in Blackboard**

**a) Send Email in Blackboard.** The *communication* button will show "Send Email" as the last link in a list of items. Clicking this will allow you to send emails to your instructor and classmates.

A copy of your email is sent to webmail (i.e. you are copied (c.c'd)). You will see this in your inbox the next time that you log in.

**b) Webmail is Your Full Email Program.** *You can't read your email in Blackboard.* Blackboard only has functionality to send email. Seeing your inbox and sent mail requires you to log into Webmail.