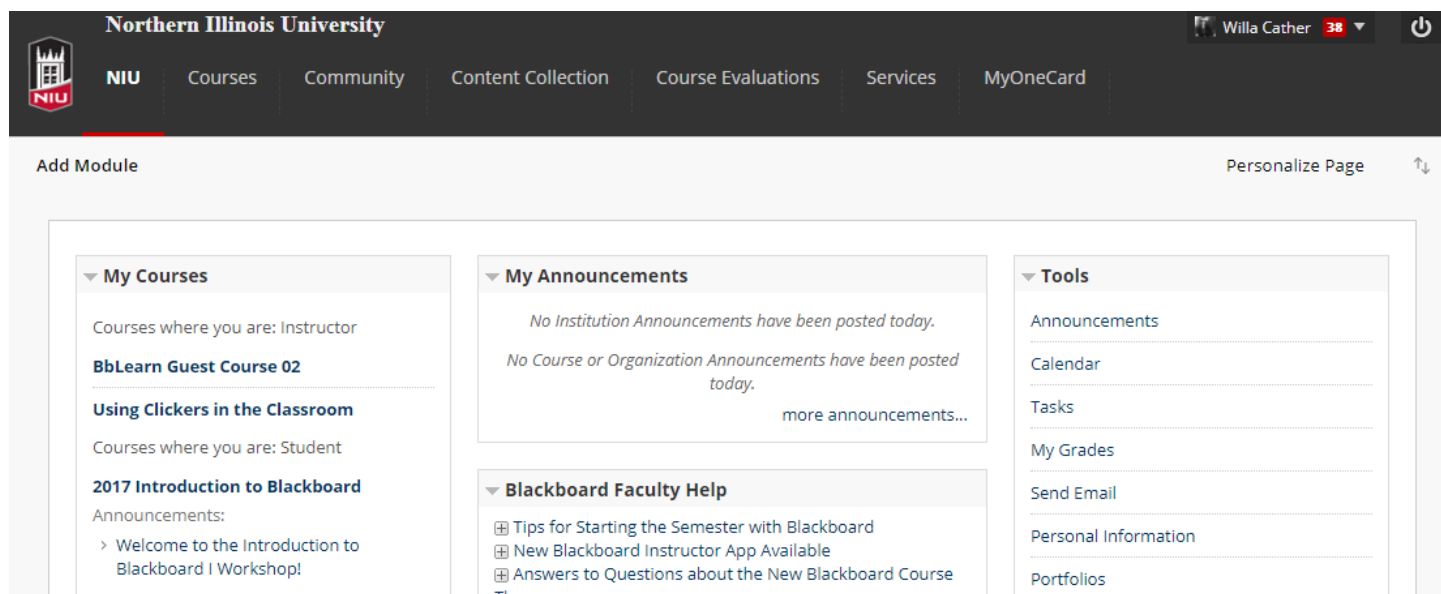




Blackboard Tips for Teaching Assistants

Blackboard is a course management system used campus-wide at NIU. Faculty and TAs may post course materials, deliver tests and surveys, hold online discussions, and facilitate many other course-related functions. As a TA, your responsibilities in Blackboard will be determined by the faculty member you work with.



Accessing Blackboard at NIU

1. Open a browser (Firefox, Chrome, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, or Safari)
2. Type **webcourses.niu.edu** in the address bar and click **Go** or press **Enter**
3. Type your **NIU AccountID** in the **Z-ID/AccountID** box
4. Type your **Password** in the **Password** box
5. Click the **Login** button to log in to Blackboard



Remember!

1. If you are the “instructor of record” and wish to teach using Blackboard, you must request your Blackboard course(s) each semester
2. If you are not the “instructor of record”, you must be manually enrolled in courses by the faculty member you work with
3. Which AccountID? You have access to both a Z-ID and an A-ID. The A-ID should be used for teaching responsibilities

Previewing Your Course as a Student

As you build your Blackboard course, you can use the Student Preview mode to use the course as a student. This allows you to check that everything is working correctly.

1. Log in to Blackboard and select a course from the **My Courses** module
2. Click the Student Preview icon, in the upper right corner of the course
3. Preview the course as a student
4. Click the Student Preview icon again to leave the preview mode



Note: Data created in preview mode, like assignment or test submissions, can be kept or deleted when you leave preview mode.

Learn more!

Tips, FAQs, and tutorials at
www.niu.edu/blackboard

Self-Paced Blackboard I online workshop at
facdev.niu.edu/selfpacedbb1

Ask a Question form NIU faculty and staff at
facdev.niu.edu/bbq

Creating an Announcement

Announcements are an ideal tool for communicating time-sensitive material to students, such as reminders about upcoming due dates or changes to the syllabus.

1. Click **Announcements** in the course menu
2. Click the **Create Announcement** button
3. On the *Create Announcement* page, enter the announcement **Subject**
4. Type the **Message**
5. Select whether the announcement is date restricted and if it is, enter **Date Restrictions**
6. Click the **Browse** button if you want to create a link to an area in the course
7. Click the **Submit** button

Adding Content to a Course

There are many ways for you to store and deploy course content in Blackboard. Content Areas exist in the *Course Menu* by default, but you can create additional content areas.

1. Click **Content** or **Information** in the course menu
2. On the *Action Bar*, click **Build Content** and select **Item** or **File** (**Item** will have an additional **Text** field while **File** only allows you to attach a file)
3. On the *Create Item/File* page, enter **Name** and **Text**
4. Click the **Browse My Computer** button to attach a file
5. Select **Date and Time Restrictions** if needed
6. Click the **Submit** button

Sending Email

Blackboard email is a tool designed to help you communicate with students, fellow staff members and TAs. Email can be sent to select students, TAs, or an entire class.

1. From the *Control Panel*, click **Course Tools**, then click **Send Email**
2. Select the **Recipients**
3. Enter the **Subject**
4. Type the **Message**
5. (Optional) Click **Attach a file** to attach a file in the email
6. Click the **Submit** button

Recording Grades

The Blackboard Grade Center allows you to record grades for various assessments, keep track of grading history, and generate reports that can be shared with students.

1. From the *Control Panel*, click **Grade Center**, then click **Full Grade Center**
2. Click the **Create Column** button
3. On the *Create Column* page, enter **Column Name**
4. Enter **Points Possible**
5. Select the Options for displaying the grades to students
6. Click the **Submit** button
7. To record a grade, under the added column click in the cell for a particular student, type the grade and

Grading an Assignment

The **Assignment** tool in Blackboard allows electronic assignment submission, collection, and grading. Once the Assignment is created, Blackboard automatically adds a column to the Grade Center where all of the submissions are collected and later graded.

1. From the *Control Panel*, click **Grade Center**
2. In the **Grade Center**, locate the column for the assignment. Exclamation mark icons in the cells indicate that students have already submitted assignments
3. Click the **round drop-down arrow** next to the exclamation mark for a particular student
4. Select **Attempt**
5. On the *Grade Assignment* page, under **Review Current Attempt**, view submission information from the student and comments. Next to **Attached Files**, click on the file name to view it or download it
6. Under **Grade Current Attempt**, type the **Grade** and enter **Feedback to User**. If desired, you can attach a file with comments by clicking the **Browse my Computer** button
7. Type **Instructor Notes** (those can only be seen by course instructors)
8. Click the **Submit** button