**Course Menu**

Blackboard’s Course Menu provides users access to a course’s content and tools.

When a course is initially created, there are several default menu items. These include the following: the Home Page (which is the entry page students first see when they enter a Blackboard course), Announcements (where faculty can create and post announcements for their students), Information (an area to post course information items such as a syllabus), Content (the location to post a variety of instructional materials), Assessments (for posting assignments, quizzes, tests, and surveys), Discussion (access to the Discussion Board tool), My Grades (for students to view their progress on graded assignments and tests), Contacts (information about the instructor, if they so choose to add it), and Tools (a link to access available Blackboard course tools). These menu items and the order in which they appear are fully customizable and can be arranged based upon your course design and structure.

Only users who are teaching or building a course can edit the course menu, and Edit Mode must be on to make any changes. The icons located across the top of the Course Menu allow users to adjust the view of the menu.

One of the icons, the Refresh button, can be used to refresh the menu and course and is preferable to using your browser’s refresh button since that would take you out of the course, to the main Blackboard page.

By clicking on the action link to the left of the Course Title, you can collapse or expand the menu.

You can customize the course menu by clicking the action links located at the top of the Course Menu and on the right hand side of each menu item.

You can add additional content areas, links, or tools to the Course Menu by hovering over the “Plus” icon at the top of the Course Menu. A drop down menu reveals a list of resources that can be added to the Course Menu. The most common items to add to a menu are content areas, tool link, course link, and divider.

Let’s add a new Content Area to the Course Menu. A Content Area is a place where course content items, files, web links, etc, can be placed.

Hover over the ‘Plus’ icon again, and from the drop-down menu, click the “Content Area.” Provide a name for this new content area. Decide whether or not to make this item available to Users by checking the box. Then click Submit. Our new content item now appears as an item at the bottom of the course menu. When you click on it, you can see that it is empty.

Empty content areas are not visible to students. You can tell which content areas are empty because they have a gray box next to their name.

You also can add a shortcut on the menu to any available Blackboard tool by adding a Tool Link.

Hover over the ‘Plus’ sign, then click “Tool Link.” In this example, I will be creating a link to the blogs page.
After the Add Tool Link box opens, provide a name for this link. Then, select the tool from the drop down menu.

Again, determine whether or not to make this link available to Users. Then click Submit. You will see the new tool link as the last item in the Course Menu.

You can edit existing menu items by clicking the drop down arrow to the right of each menu item. After clicking the drop down menu, a menu reveals options to rename the link, hide link, or delete the menu item.

Let’s change the name of the Content item to ‘Course Content’ and click on the Save button.

If you did not want students to access this content area, you could hide the item by clicking on the 'Hide Link' option. While you would be able to view this menu item, it would not be visible to students until you selected 'Show Link' from the edit menu.

There is a crossed arrow icon to the left of each menu item as you move your mouse cursor over them. This icon allows you to reorder menu items.

When you hover over these arrows, the cursor changes to a cross hair symbol. Click and hold the left mouse button, then drag the item to a new location in the menu.

You can also click the Reorder button at the top of the menu to access the keyboard-accessible reordering options.

This tutorial introduced the Blackboard Course Menu and demonstrated how to edit it.