

Assessment Tools

The online assessment tools in Blackboard Learn can be utilized in many ways to assess what students are learning.

The tools in this tutorial include: Assignments, Tests, Surveys, and an overview of the Grade Center.

Assignments allow you to create coursework and manage grades for each student separately.

Assignments may be created from any Content Area within the Course Menu. NIU's default Course Menu includes a menu area for "Assessments".

To create an Assignment from the Course Menu select and click on a Content Area, such as Assessments in the left-hand navigation menu. Next, place the cursor over the drop down menu labelled Assessments and click on Assignment.

One can provide a name for the assignment, type instructions, attach a file, add a due date, and set the points possible.

Faculty also have the choice to enable plagiarism detection through the SafeAssign tool which can be accessed by clicking on the Submission Details link. SafeAssign detects unoriginal content in students' papers by identifying areas of overlap between assignments and existing works.

Once an Assignment has been created and submitted, students can access the assignment, complete it, and submit it from within Blackboard.

Assignments that are created within Blackboard will automatically generate a column in the Grade Center.

Another Blackboard assessment tool is the Test tool. The Test tool enables faculty to check the knowledge and skill level of users enrolled in the course.

Faculty can create different types of questions (including true or false, multiple choice, or essay), assign point values to each question, and deploy the test or quiz within Blackboard.

After a student completes a test, it can be automatically graded and the results are recorded in the Grade Center.

Questions that require manual grading, such as an essay, are marked in the Grade Center and can be graded later.

You can create tests in any content area, learning module or folder under the Assessments tab or under the Course Management menu where you would select Course Tools - 'Tests, Surveys and Pools'.

Finally, tests are made available or "deployed" in the content area where students will know where to look for them.

The Survey tool is useful for polling, conducting evaluations, and gathering information and feedback from students. Surveys are similar to tests and quizzes and you will find the survey feature under Assessments and Course tools. However, surveys are more opinion based and are not graded.

Instead, the results are shown as an aggregate and are anonymous.

The Grade Center includes features to communicate and share assessment data directly with students. The Grade Center is found under Course Management

It resembles a spreadsheet. Each row corresponds to a user in the course and each column is made up of Assignments, Tests and other items that can be graded.

Faculty can view attempts ready for grading or review on the Needs Grading page. Grading and reviewing can begin immediately from this page.

These are just a few of the assessment tools available in Blackboard. For more information go to niu.edu/blackboard and select Assessing Learners.