

Requesting a Master Course

If you teach multiple sections of the same course, you may prefer to manage those sections through a single master course. For example, you can combine the 400 and 500 level sections in a course that is cross-listed, or combine a regular section with an honors section.

A master course also automatically includes a group for each of the combined sections. To request a master course, after logging into Blackboard, click on the word "Services" in the top navigation bar. Once on the Services, screen click the Blackboard Faculty Tools link. The page will have two choices: "My Courses" and My Shells. My Courses is for requesting your Blackboard course or courses. Students who are registered for the course in MyNIU will automatically be enrolled in the Blackboard course. My Shells are for course development purposes only, and students are never enrolled in a shell.

To proceed, click on My Courses. Next, select the semester from the drop-down menu, and click Submit. Blackboard is then going to retrieve all courses where you are listed as the Instructor of Record for that semester. This list also shows anyone else who is listed as Instructor of Record for the courses in MyNIU. If you don't see the course you want to request, or if the list of Instructors of Record is incorrect, you will need to contact your department scheduler to have the course assignments updated in MyNIU.

To create a master course, select the courses to be combined by clicking the checkboxes in front of them. Then, click the "Combine Sections" button. On the "Blackboard Master Course Request" page, choose the course you want to be the master course. It may make sense to use the section with more students, or you may want to use the lower section number as the master course.

The availability option allows you to automatically make your course available to students on a specific date. To opt-in, leave the "Auto Availability" box checked. By default, the availability date is set to the Start Date for the course. However, you can specify a different date. If you wish to opt out of Auto Availability, uncheck the box. In this case, you will need to make the course available manually when you are ready for students to access the course.

If everything looks correct, click Submit. After you click Submit, you will receive a message that your request has been submitted, and your course will be available to you instantly. You will also receive a confirmation email to confirm that your request has been processed.

After the request has been completed and processed, you can access your course by clicking on the "Courses" tab. All students enrolled in any of the combined sections will be added to the master course. Any students who add or drop any of the combined sections will also be changed in the master course.