Teaching with Technology Tip—Getting Started Checklist for Blackboard Courses

**REMINDER: Make Your Course Available**
Courses are set as unavailable to students when they are created to allow instructors time to update the content before students see the course. To allow students to see your course when they log into Blackboard, you must make your course available. Log into your course and follow these steps: Control Panel > Customization > Properties > Set Availability > YES > Submit.

**Create an Announcement to Welcome Students to your Course**
Create an announcement for students to see when they log in to Blackboard. Check the Email Announcement setting to send a copy of the announcement as an email to students at the same time for double the impact.

**Copy Content from Another Course**
Quickly copy the content and settings of an entire course into a new course, or selectively copy specific areas. The Course Copy option is one of the most convenient and useful features of Blackboard, and usually involves just a couple of clicks of your mouse and less than five minutes to complete. You will receive an email when the course copy is complete. Please be patient and do not retry the course copy until you receive your email to prevent duplicating items in the new course. If you only want one item copied, use the Copy option for that individual item by clicking on the chevron (arrow) on the right of the item title and selecting Copy from the menu. It is not recommended to use the Move option from the menu. If you are copying quizzes and tests, be sure to copy all three parts as they are linked together: 1) Tests, Surveys and Pools; 2) Grade Center Settings; and 3) the location where you have linked or posted the quiz/test. [Here is a video on the process of copying a course.](#)

**Combine Multiple Sections into one Combined Blackboard Course**
Faculty who combine several sections of the same course into one Blackboard course site reap the benefits of posting information only once for display to students in all sections. To request a combined course, complete a course/organization request, linked under the Blackboard Help tab at the top of the Blackboard screen. At the same time, you can also request that content from a previous course, or one of your current updated sections, be copied into this newly combined course—or you can use the Copy Content instructions above to quickly do it yourself. Once students submit blog or discussion board entries, or assignments have been entered into the Grade Center, it will not be possible to combine the sections, so NOW is the time to consider this option. Combined courses are immediately visible to students, so change the setting to unavailable while you are updating the course.

Manage sections by creating a Group for each section and using the Adaptive Release option to customize content for each section, or release information at different times. By organizing your course with groups, you can email separate sections for class updates, view different sections (Smart Views) in the Grade Center for quick and easy grading, or collect group assignments with one submission. If you have questions about the advantages of combining sections, contact an Instructional Designer for a discussion of class management strategies.

**Use Open Education Resources (OERs) for your Textbook or Course Materials**
UND is participating in a NDUS initiative to reduce student textbook costs by using Open Education Resources (OERs). OERs may be free or reduced price textbooks, or media and text available under Creative Commons licensing. CILT and the Chester Fritz Library staff are available to help you source appropriate OERs for your course. [Visit our website to learn more.](#)

**Edit the Tools Menu to Hide Unused Tools.** Click the “Hide Link” toggle button for tools you are not using. It declutters the page and prevents student access.
Add a Tegrity Link in Your Menu
Go to https://apps.und.edu/course-request/ to request a Tegrity link in your course menu so that students have easy access to your recorded lectures. If you copied a course from a previous semester, check that the link has been updated. Watch this one-minute video for more details.

Set Clickers – Turning Technologies Availability On
If you are using Turning Technology clickers in your classroom, click on Tools in your left menu bar and scroll down to the Turning Technologies Registration Tool link to confirm that your students can see the link.

Groups, Smart Views, and Group Assignment Submissions
Once you have created groups, you can create a Smart View in the Grade Center that filters the list of students. Smart Views is useful when using groups for different class sections of a combined Blackboard course site. Do not select the Smart Views option when you first set up a group, as you will be unable to rename it. Instead, set up Smart Views after creating groups by selecting Grade Center > Manage > Smart Views, and clicking the star under “Add as Favorite” so that the group appears under the Grade Center navigation menu, allowing for quick access.

Create groups to allow one member of a group to submit assignments on behalf of all members, which then displays the file, instructor feedback and grade to each member in the group. You have the option to change a grade for individual members, if appropriate. Use the Assignments > Submission Details section for group submissions.

SafeAssign Integration for Plagiarism Checking
Assignments now include SafeAssign plagiarism checking options. When creating an assignment, open the Submission Details section to include plagiarism checking. Select the “Exclude submissions” box if using link for a draft assignment so that the file is not checked against itself when submitted later as a final copy.

Install and Update your Respondus License to Create Blackboard Quizzes and Tests
Create quizzes and tests in Blackboard in less than one minute using the Respondus application. Visit the UND Tech Support website to download Respondus or update your license with the current year’s serial number in July. If you have selected the option to remember your Blackboard password, you may need to update the password according to your 90-day reset schedule.

Consider Proctoring Options for your Exams
UND offers students the option of taking a proctored exam at the Chester Fritz Library, setting up a remote proctoring appointment with ProctorU, or selecting a proctor in their local area. Check proctoring information and dates before scheduling your exams. Visit the Tech Support website for more information on proctoring.

Be a Student in Your Own Course
Two features allow you to 1) “see” your course as a student, or 2) “act” as a student so that you can see and complete work, and view the My Grades window. The Edit Mode indicator in the upper right of the screen is a toggle button to view content as your students do. The Student Preview “eye” icon in the upper right of the Blackboard screen is toggled to display an orange bar at the top as a reminder of your Student Preview User role (the Student Preview icon appears next to the Edit Mode indicator). With Student Preview User you can see and complete work as a student, then give yourself a grade and feedback as an instructor, and also view it in My Grades as a student. Note: To retain your student data so that you can view and grade it, change the default Student Preview settings to “remember the settings” and “keep the preview user and all data.” You will then see your name in the Grade Center.

Organize Your Course List in Blackboard
Rearrange the list of courses that is displayed in your My Courses List by hiding courses from previous semesters or changing their order. In Blackboard, select the Gear in the green bar of My Courses or Course List to display a list of your courses and check boxes. Uncheck the box to the RIGHT of the course name to hide the course in the list. Use the arrows on the LEFT of the course name to rearrange the course list. Click Submit to set your changes. Courses remain available to you for four semesters if you need to view them again.