Three Things to Know about Course Design in Blackboard

Topic Overview

Below are three tips and tricks that can help faculty and teaching assistants run and enhance their Blackboard courses.

The Difference Between Creating Items, Files, Content Folders, and Learning Modules

There are several different ways content can be uploaded and shared within your Blackboard course:

Items

- Items allow you to insert a title, descriptive text, and file attachment.
- When adding an item you will get the text box editor, which allows you to embed objects, add tables, images, audio, and video.

Files

- Files will allow you to insert a title and attach a file.
- No additional text can be added.

Content Folders

- Creating a folder will allow you to give the folder a name and descriptive text.
- When creating a folder, you will get the text box editor, which allows you to embed objects, add tables, images, audio, and video.
- A content folder will give you the ability to insert items "into" the folder, allowing you to further organize your course.

Learning Modules

- A learning module is similar to a content folder - you are able to give the learning module a name and descriptive text.
- When building a learning module you will get the text box editor, which allows you to embed objects, add tables, images, audio, and video.
- A learning module will give you the ability to insert items "into" the module, allowing you to further organize your course into modules, units, or weekly lessons.
- Unlike the content folder, a learning module will give you and your students a table of contents that automatically lists the content you put within the module.
- You can enforce sequential viewing of the items in the learning module, so students will need to access the items in the order than you determine.

Customizing the Course Menu

The course menu on the left side of a course page in Blackboard can be customized to reflect the needs of your course.

Add a New Button to the Course Menu

- Additional buttons can be added to the course menu.
- These buttons include web links, content area buttons, tool links, course links, module pages, and blank pages.

Renaming and Reordering Menu Buttons

- You can rename a button in the course menu to reflect the needs of your course and your students.
- These buttons can also be reordered by clicking on the left side of the button until an arrow appears. If you click and drag this arrow, you can move the button anywhere in the menu.

Adding Dividers and Subheaders to the Course Menu

- Adding dividers and subheaders to the course menu can make items easier to locate.

Customizing Your Blackboard Course Site

Your Blackboard course site can be customized to reflect your course content. By going to the Control Panel and clicking on Customization > Teaching Style, you will find several options that allow you to personalize your course site.
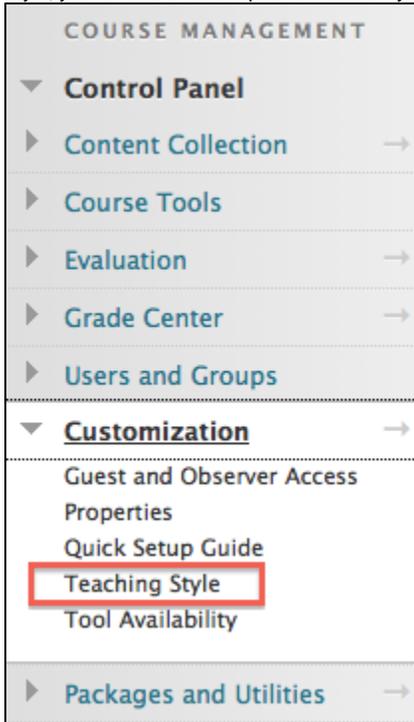
Within this Teaching Style section, you will be able to:

- Select your course structure
- Change your course entry point
- Upload a course banner

Sources and Relevant Links

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