FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Last Updated 8/6/2019

Course List Organization

How do I reorganize the "My Courses" module to view lists of courses by semester?

The My Courses module can be customized by clicking on the gear icon in the upper-right-hand corner of the My Courses module. If you select the "Group by Term" option, your courses will be grouped together by semester in the My Courses list. If you wish to hide certain courses from the My Courses list, you can do that from this screen as well. *(see the "My Courses List" guide on the **Blackboard Guides** web page for additional details)*

Blackboard Users Accounts

When are user accounts generated for new students?

New user accounts are created by an automated process running every other hour from 7 AM to 7 PM daily. A new student should have a Blackboard account within two hours (or early the next morning) of enrolling in a class or classes within PeopleSoft/eServices.

How are student/employee name changes handled?

Blackboard user accounts will match names listed in eServices. Once a student/employee's official record is updated through the Registrar's Office (for students) or Human Resources (for employees), those updates should be applied in Blackboard within a couple hours.

Course Management

When will I have access to Blackboard sites for each semester?

Instructors will be uploaded to Blackboard course sites on a one-time basis within two weeks of the start of each term. Once instructors are given access to automatically-generated Blackboard sites, they will have immediate access to the course in Blackboard if assigned as instructor of that course within eServices. Instructors who are not assigned to a course within eServices at the time of instructor uploads will need to be manually enrolled in the course site at the request of the academic dean or administrative assistant.

How will instructor enrollments be handled when multiple instructors teach a course?

Any primary instructor in eServices will have the role of instructor in the associated Blackboard course; any secondary instructor in eServices will have the role of teaching assistant in the associated Blackboard course. Additional instructors can be added to any Blackboard course within the Users and Groups area of the Blackboard course Control Panel.

When will my students be able to view my site?
- Prior to the Course's start date, courses will be hidden from student view.
- On the course's start date, courses will automatically be made available.
- 45 days after the course's end date, courses will automatically be made unavailable
- Instructors will be able to adjust these availability dates for their Blackboard courses, if they wish.

How do I adjust course availability dates?
In the control panel of your Blackboard course site, click on Customization; then click Properties. Scroll down to the Set Course Duration section. Make the desired adjustments to the Start Date and End Date. Click Submit. *(see "Course Availability Dates" on the **Blackboard Guides** web page for additional details)*

Can I edit the Course ID or Course Name?
You will not be able to modify the course name for automatically-generated courses. The Course ID and Course Name will follow a standard format:
- Course ID: 2186_BIOL110_1052
- Course Name: BIOL110 – 1052 – LIFE SCIENCE

If you do make changes to the course name, those changes will be reset to the default course name within two hours, when the automated process runs again. You can still edit the course name (from the Customization > Properties area of the Blackboard course Control Panel) for any sites created prior to Spring 2018 or any TEMPLATE sites you have manually created, as well as Master sites.

What do the four-digit numbers mean in my Blackboard Course ID and Course Name?
The standard format for a Blackboard Course ID begins with a four-digit code that identifies the semester and ends with the course's unique four-digit identifying course number.

For example, if the course's Course ID is 2186_BIOL110_1052:

- 2186 is the code for the Spring 2018 Semester
  - every semester code starts with 2
  - the middle two digit are the end of the current fiscal year
  - the last digit is either 6 (Spring), 1 (Summer), or 3 (Fall
- 1052 uniquely identifies which course is being referred to

The standard format for a Blackboard Course Name contains the course's unique four-digit identifying course number between the dashes. For example: BIOL110 – 1052 – LIFE SCIENCE.

What happens to each course following the end of a semester?
Blackboard courses will be retained on the server following the end of the semester. Forty-five days after each course's end date, the courses will become unavailable to the students, by default (the instructor can choose to modify this availability date). Instructors will still have access to previous semesters' courses.

How long will I have access to a previous semester's courses?
Blackboard course sites will be retained six full semesters (two years) past the current term. For example, during any Spring term, sites created for the past two Spring, Summer, and Fall terms will be on the Blackboard server, set to unavailable, and accessible to instructor and TA users. Instructors will always have access to seven semesters (one active, six previous) of courses at any given time.

Do I still need to back up the Grade Center and archive courses at the end of a semester?

An archive of every course in Blackboard will automatically be created at the end of every semester (one day after the due date for final grades).

Blackboard sites (with all of their content and student data) will be retained on the Blackboard server for just past two years after a semester ends—instructors will still have access to the courses (to refer to the Grade Center, student submissions, course resources, etc.).

Just over two years after a course is created for a particular semester, courses will be archived a second time and then removed from the Blackboard server.

Archiving a course for your own records is optional. We still encourage you to download a copy of your Grade Center to Excel – or as PDF reports – for your own records. *(see "Backing Up Grades" guide on the **Blackboard Guides** web page for additional details)*

Do I still need to bulk delete my students out of my Blackboard site at the end of a semester?

No – leave the students in the site. After the semester is over, if the need arises to refer back to what a certain student did in the course, student records will be available to instructors within Blackboard for more than two years. Additionally, sites will automatically be set to become unavailable 45 days after a course's end date, so there is no longer any need to Bulk Delete students (and their records) out of a Blackboard site at the end of the semester.

How will copying a course impact publisher's content I have already set up within a site?

Publisher content and the way it copies varies from one publisher to the next – it's best to check directly with the publishing representative to get the most reliable answer to this question.

I need access to my Blackboard site before I can build content in a publisher's site. How can I get early access to a Blackboard site to build the course?

Most publishers allow an option to copy a course site you have built within the publisher's site. If you request a blank TEMPLATE site from the TLC website *(icc.edu/tlc)*, you could pair the publisher's site to this one. Once the LIVE Blackboard sites are available to instructors, you can copy within the publisher's site and then pair the copy to the LIVE Blackboard site.

Student Enrollments

When will students begin to be enrolled within each Blackboard site?

The automated enrollment process for students will begin approximately 45 days prior to the start of each semester. Each Blackboard course site will always contain an up-to-date roster of students. Prior to a course's start date, the course will be hidden from student view, unless the instructor choses to make it available earlier.

How often are student enrollments updated within a site?

Blackboard course enrollments will be updated by an automated process running every other hour from 7 AM to 7 PM daily. If a student is added to the PeopleSoft (eServices) roster, the student should be enrolled in the Blackboard site within two hours (or early the following morning if the enrollment happens overnight).

What happens when a student drops my course?

Blackboard site rosters will match PeopleSoft (eServices) rosters. If a student is removed from the PeopleSoft (eServices) roster, the student will be removed from the Blackboard site. If a student drops before the refund date, or is dropped as a never attender, that student is removed from the eServices roster and will be removed from the Blackboard site as well. This process is reversible: if a student is dropped from a course as the result of an error, they (and their data) will reappear in Blackboard when the student is re-enrolled in the course.

What happens if a student is withdrawn from my course?

Blackboard site rosters will match PeopleSoft (eServices) rosters. If a student remains on the PeopleSoft (eServices) roster but earns a W for the class, the student will remain on the Blackboard roster but will be set to unavailable in the course and will not be able to access the course site.

Former Blackboard Course Sites

What happens to all of the Blackboard course sites/templates I have (or had prior to Jan 2018)?

Instructors will not lose access to any Blackboard course sites that were manually created. You may use these sites as TEMPLATE sites, if you wish. ALL Blackboard sites (existing prior to January 2018) were set to unavailable during that month. Instructors still have access to the sites, but students do not, unless the instructor changes the availability dates (Customization > Properties).
Certain Blackboard sites (such as sites for clubs, organizations, athletics, etc.) can continue to be actively used by removing the END DATE. *(see "Course Availability Dates" on the **Blackboard Guides** web page for additional details)*

Will these ever disappear completely?

At some point in the future, you may be asked to identify which of these sites are no longer needed so they can be removed from the Blackboard server.

Can I manually enroll students in a site I already have and make the blank course unavailable?

No – all instructors should use the sites that are generated through the automated processes. These are the courses students will be seeing within their Blackboard course list, and several other initiatives at the college are being linked to these sites.

Sharing Course Sites

How do I share or create a copy of my course content with another instructor?

The Course Copy tool only allows you to copy material between courses in which you have Instructor or Teaching Assistant access. If you wish to copy one of your Blackboard sites for another instructor, you could ask him/her to temporarily enroll you as Teaching Assistant in his/her Blackboard site.
Another method of transferring Blackboard content to another instructor is to create an Export File of your Blackboard site (a similar process to creating an Archive File). If you give your Export File to the other instructor, he/she can use it to import your content into his/her course.
*(see copy and export guides on the **Blackboard Guides** web page for additional details)*

Template Sites

What is a TEMPLATE site?

Prior to a semester, it will often be a good idea to develop the content for your Blackboard site somewhere other than the "live" Blackboard site that you will be using during the semester. You can request a Blackboard TEMPLATE site at any time that can be used for designing, redesigning, and managing the content you plan to use in your Blackboard course. Blackboard's Course Copy tool allows you to copy the content you set up in the TEMPLATE into the live section (or sections) that you will use during the semester.

If you make changes to a live site during a semester, it's a good idea to apply those same changes within the TEMPLATE site so that it can be copied again for a future semester. Another option – if you choose not to make changes in the TEMPLATE SITE – is to copy from a live site for one semester into a live site for a future semester. You can also request a blank TEMPLATE site, following the end of any semester, and copy from a live site into a blank TEMPLATE site to be copied again in the future.

Why would I want to use a TEMPLATE site?

There are a number of reasons that it may be a good idea for you to use a template site.
- If you teach multiple sections of the same course, maintaining a TEMPLATE course can be an efficient means of having one site that is up-to-date and ready to be copied at the start of the semester.
- If you want to begin building your Blackboard content but don't yet have access to the "live" Blackboard site that you will use during the semester, all content can be developed – and ready to be copied – within a TEMPLATE site.

How do I request a TEMPLATE site that can be copied into the LIVE blank Blackboard sites?

A request form is available on the ICC Teaching and Learning Center website *(icc.edu/tlc)*.

Merging Multiple Sections into One Blackboard Site

Can I combine multiple sections of the same course into one Blackboard site?

Some instructors who teach multiple sections of the same course prefer to manage their Blackboard content in just one Blackboard site, rather than separate sites for each section.
If you wish, you can submit a request to have multiple sections merged into one Blackboard course. A MASTER (parent) site will be created for you, and the enrollments from the separate CHILD sections will be merged into the MASTER site.

How do I request a merged course?

A request form is available on the ICC Teaching and Learning Center website *(icc.edu/tlc)*.

What happens to the individual courses when I merge them into a MASTER site?

The individual (CHILD) courses that are merged together into a MASTER (parent) site are automatically set to unavailable. The students will not see the CHILD course in which they are enrolled, only the MASTER. The CHILD sites will not disappear altogether—they will still be visible to the instructor and are a necessary part of our Blackboard automated processes.
Only the content loaded in the MASTER (parent) site will be visible to students. Instructors should build content in the MASTER site, not the CHILD sites. (In other words, the enrollments are merged into the MASTER site, not the course content.)