

# Blackboard

## Quick Reference Guide



# TAMUT

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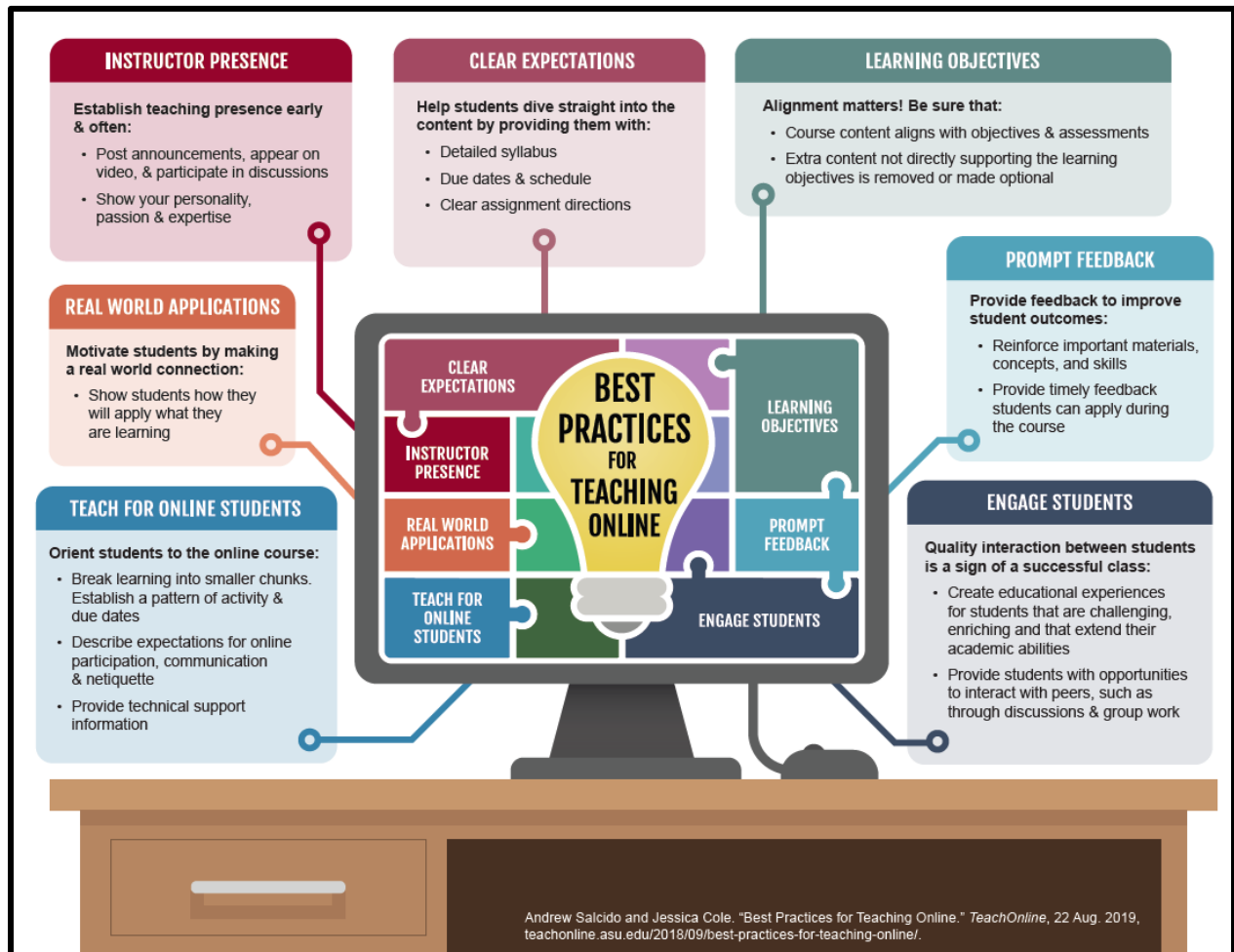
# TAMUT Quick Reference Guide for Blackboard

## Introduction

If you're unfamiliar with Blackboard, this Quick Reference Guide (QRG) can help get you started. The QRG contains step-by-step instructions and video tutorials of several essential functions you'll need to know about when using Blackboard for your online, web-enhanced, or face-to-face class. The title for each set of instructions is a hyperlink to the video – click them to view the tutorials.

Texas A&M University-Texarkana is a Quality Matters Member. Quality Matters, a national standard, is both a rubric and a process for creating quality online courses. TAMUT hosts several Quality Matters workshops each year. For more information about Quality Matters' workshops and other Blackboard workshops, contact [learningtech@tamut.edu](mailto:learningtech@tamut.edu).

A quick internet search will yield hordes of best online teaching practices, such as the following infographic.



## Blackboard

Log into [Blackboard](#) using your EagleID Credentials (the same thing you use to access your Outlook email and campus computer).

The Course Menu is located on the left; ideally, it should contain the following items. See the Videos Tutorials and Step-by-Step Instructions below. A course menu graphic follows this section.

- **START HERE** – start here is a Content Area and should contain your syllabus and instructor introduction, and contact information. It would also be an appropriate place for a course schedule or calendar.
- **Learning Content** – This is a Content Area and should contain your course content. Content can be divided into weeks using folders or modules,
- **Announcements** – Announcements is Tool Link and is used to send communications to all students in the course.
- **Course Messages** – Course Messages is Tool Link. It is similar to email, but the messages are sent and received within the course. These messages do not go to addresses outside the course.
- **Discussion Board** – the Discussion Board is Tool Link. It is used to create discussion conversations between the instructor and students, or only between students. The Discussion Board is an excellent place to ask students to introduce themselves to you and the rest of the class. It can also be used for graded discussions on any topic.
- **Zoom** – Zoom is a Tool Link. Zoom is a web-conferencing platform. It can be used for synchronous class meetings and virtual office hours. Zoom can also be used to record lectures. Zoom has a whiteboard, polling capability, and screen sharing options.
- **My Grades** – My Grades is a Tool Link. This is where students check and keep up with their grades. It should not be removed from the Course Menu.
- **Support** – Support is a Content Area. It contains information for students about various support services offered by TAMUT. Support should have four folders: Technical Support, Academic Support, Institutional Support, and Disability Services. It should not be removed from the Course Menu.
- **Course & Instructor Evaluation** – Course and Instructor Evaluation is a Tool Link. It is used for anonymous end-of-course surveys for online and web-enhanced courses and some face-to-face courses. It should not be removed from the Course Menu.

Course Menu Example – created using the above guidelines.


The screenshot shows a course menu interface. At the top left is the 'EAGLES' logo. Below it is a navigation bar with a home icon and a checkmark, followed by the word 'Announcements'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a course menu for 'Linda Scott Test Course' with a home icon, listing: START HERE, Learning Content, Announcements, Course Messages, Discussion Board, Zoom, My Grades, Support, and Course and Instructor Evaluation. The right column features a large 'Announcements' header, a paragraph of text explaining announcement priority, a 'Create Announcement' button, a dashed line indicating where new announcements appear, and a 'Welcome!' announcement posted on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at 8:49:39 AM CST. A purple and green logo is partially visible at the bottom right.

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Video Tutorials and Step-by-Step Directions

## Add a Content Area to Your Course Menu (START HERE and Learning Content)

If the Content Areas labeled START HERE and Learning Content are not included on your Course Menu, follow these steps to add a Content Area to your Course Menu:

- a. Hover over the Add Menu Item option. It's the white + sign  located in the maroon box above the Course Menu.
- b. Click Content Area (it's the first item in the list).
- c. Type the name of your content area in the Name field (for this practice, type START HERE), check the Available to Users box, and click submit. The START HERE content area appears at the bottom of the Course Menu.
- d. You can move START HERE up on the Course Menu by hovering over and to the left of START HERE and left-clicking the arrow in the orange(ish) box, and dragging it up. Be sure to hold the left click until START HERE is where you want it placed, then release the mouse.
- e. Repeat these steps and add a Content Area labeled Learning Content.

Now, let's add some content to your Content Area. (Locate your Syllabus file on your computer to practice this step.)

## Add an Item or File to a Content Area

- a. Hover over and click the words START HERE. Notice that an area called START HERE opens, and you can see four options: Build Content, Assessments, Tools, and Partner Content on a maroon bar. IMPORTANT: As we advance, this step will be called Open a Content Area in all directions.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Create options, click Item.\* A Create Item field opens. There is a Name field and a Text field.
- c. In the Name field, type Syllabus. In the Text field, type a short message about the syllabus.
- d. Scroll down to Attachments and click Browse Local Files. Locate your syllabus, click on it to select it, and click Open. You should see your syllabus file name just under File Name. Click the maroon Submit button in the lower right.
- e. START HERE reappears, and your Syllabus file with a short description should be visible.
- f. \*Under Item, there is a File option. Adding a File follows the same steps as adding an Item. The only difference between Item and File is that Item has the Text field and File does not.

**Add an Audio File to a Content Area** (A transcript of your audio file is required for ADA compliance.)

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Create options, click Audio. A Create Audio field opens. There is a Name field.
- c. Type the name of the audio file in the name field.
- d. Click Browse Local Files
- e. Navigate to the Audio File, click on it to select it, then click open. You should see your Audio file name just under File name.
- f. Under Audio Options, click Browse, navigate to the transcript file, click on it to select it, then click open. You should see your transcript file name.
- g. There are three other audio options: Autostart, Loop, and Add alignment. Autostart will cause the audio file to begin playing automatically when a student opens it. Loop will cause the audio file to play continuously until the student closes it. We do not use Add alignment.
- h. Click Submit.

**Add an Image File to a Content Area**

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Create options, click Image. A Create Image field opens. There is a Name field, an Alt Text field, and a Long description field.
- c. Type the name of the image file in the name field. Type a short description in the Alt Text field – ADA requires Alt Text. If desired, type a long description.
- d. Click Browse Local Files.
- e. Navigate to the Image File, click on it to select it, then click open. You should see your Image file name to the right of File name.
- f. There are other image options: Dimensions (choose Original), Border (if desired), Leave URL blank, select open in a new window if desired. We do not use Add alignment.
- g. Click Submit.

**Add a Web Link to a Content Area** (Video is purposely skipped – do not use this option to add video.)

- a. Have a copy of the web link URL ready.
- b. Open a Content Area.
- c. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Create options, click Web Link. A Create Web Link field opens. There is a Name field, URL field, and Text field.
- d. Type the name of the Web Link in the name field. If desired, type a description in the Text field. Paste the web link URL in the URL field. Disregard the Tool Provider box.
- e. There is an attachment option if desired.

- f. Click Submit.

#### Add a YouTube Mashup to a Content Area

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Mashup options, click YouTube Video. A Search for a YouTube Video field opens. There is a search field, a Language field, and a Go button.
- c. Type the desired search term, followed by ,cc in the Search field and click Go. Adding ,cc ensures you will find Closed Captioned videos, an ADA requirement.
- d. A list of videos opens. Click Select on the desired video. A Create Mashup Item window opens. The Name box should be prefilled. There is a Description field – type a description if desired.
- e. Scroll to Mashup Options. Thumbnail and Show YouTube information are defaulted, and leaving them as-is is fine. If you want the YouTube video address to be shown, check that box.
- f. There is an attachment option if desired.
- g. Under Standard Options, Permit Viewers to View this Content should be checked. Use the other fields if tracking or date restrictions are desired.
- h. Click Submit.

#### Add a Hoonuit Mashup to a Content Area

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the Mashup options, click Hoonuit. A Configure Tool: Hoonuit page opens. There is a Name field and a Description field.
- c. Type the name of the desired Hoonuit tutorial. Type a description if desired.
- d. Scroll to Services and select the desired Grade Center options.
- e. Scroll to Options. Permit Viewers to View this Content should be checked. Use the other fields if tracking or date restrictions are desired.
- f. Disregard Select groups.
- g. Click Submit and Select Training.
- h. A window labeled the name you provided in step c will open. There is a Search All Content field. Enter the desired search term.
- i. Select the desired tutorial by clicking the +Content button.
- j. A window containing the tutorial resources and assessments will open – all of them will be selected by default. You can leave them as-is or scroll through the options and deselect them as desired.
- k. Click Submit.
- l. Submission Successful! will appear. Click Back to Course. Disregard the Hoonuit button to add more tutorials – if more tutorials are desired, return to step a.



### Add an Assignment to a Content Area

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover over and click Assessments. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears.
- c. Select Assignment. A Create Assignment page opens. There is a Name field and an Instructions field.
- d. Type the assignment name in the Name field and, if desired, instructions in the Instructions field.
- e. If desired, attach files in the Assignment Files section.
- f. Add the Due Date.
- g. Next, in the Grading options, add the Points Possible. If desired, add a Rubric. Click Submission Details, Grading Options, and Display of Grades to complete those fields.
- h. Under Availability, check Make the Assignment Available. Use the other fields if tracking or date restrictions are desired.
- i. Click Submit.

### Add a Test to a Content Area


- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover over and click Test. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears.
- c. Select Test. A Create Test page opens. There is a Create a New Test and Add an Existing Test option.
- d. To Create a New Test, click the Create button.
- e. A Test Information page opens. There is a Name field, a Description field, and an Instructions field. Fill those in and click submit.
- f. The Test Canvas with the test name opens. There are three options. Create a Question, Reuse Question, and Upload Questions.
- g. Hover over Create Question. A light blue dialog box appears with question type options. For this exercise, choose Multiple Choice. A Create/Edit Multiple Choice Question page opens. There's a Question Title field and a Question Text field. Type a question in the Question Text field.
- h. Scroll to Options. There are four: Answer Numbering, Answer Orientation, Allow Partial Credit, Show Answers in Random Order. Click the drop-down caret to select the numbering format and orientation. Check the boxes for the credit and order as desired.
- i. Scroll to Answers. Click the drop-down caret next to Number of Answers and choose a number from 4 – 100. FYI: most multiple-choice questions have 4 or 5 choices. The number of answer choices you pick determines the number of Answer fields.
- j. Type your answer selections in the Answer field boxes. Bubble in the circle next to the correct answer.
- k. There are three more sections: Feedback, Categories and Keywords, Instructor Notes. You can type messages for the test-takers in feedback for correct and incorrect answers. Use Categories and Instructor Notes if desired.

- l. Click submit and Create Another until you have created all the desired questions. Then, click Submit. A Test Canvas page will open. In the upper left, you will see, Description, Instructions, Total Questions, and Total Points.
- m. You can edit the point value by clicking inside the Points box to the right of each question. Change the point value as desired and click submit. The Total Points in the upper left will update accordingly. Do this until the desired point value is reached. Scroll to the bottom and click OK in the lower right.
- n. The Create Test page will open. The name of the test should be in the Add an Existing Test box. Click on the test name and click Submit.
- o. The Test Options page will open. The Name of the test will be in the Name field, but you can edit it if desired. If desired, type a description of the test or any information you'd like the test-taker to know.
- p. Scroll to Test Availability. Select Yes under Make available to students. If desired, select Yes for an announcement to be sent to students. If you desire multiple or unlimited attempts, make your selections. Do not select Force Completion. Next, choose to set a timer if desired. Then, choose your display dates.
- q. Skip Test Availability Exceptions – for more about this, contact Julia Allen or Linda Scott.
- r. Scroll to Due Date. Select your Due Date. If desired, select Do Not Allow Students to start the test after the due date has passed.
- s. Scroll to Self-Assessment Options. Check Include this Test in Grade Center score calculations.
- t. Skip Show Test Results and Feedback to Students for more about this, contact Julia Allen or Linda Scott.
- u. Scroll to Test Presentation. Leave All at Once selected and don't select prohibit backtracking. If desired, click Randomize Questions.
- v. Click Submit, and your test will be visible in the Content Area you started in.

**Add a Content Folder to a Content Area** (Module Page and Blank Page are not recommended.)

- a. Open a Content Area.
- b. Hover and click Build Content. A light blue dialog box with a variety of options appears. Under the New Page options, click Content Folder. A Create Content Folder page opens. There is a Name field and a Text field.
- c. Enter the name of the folder in the Name field. Add text as desired in the text box.
- d. Scroll to Standard Options. Permit Viewers to View this Content should be checked. Use the other fields if tracking or date restrictions are desired.
- e. Click Submit.
- f. To add content to your folder, click the name of the folder. A page labeled with the name you gave your folder will open. You can add content to your folder by following the steps outlined above.

**Add a Tool Link to a Content Area** (Announcements, Course & Instructor Evaluation, Course Messages, Discussion Boards, My Grades, Zoom, etc.)

- a. Hover over the Add Menu Item option. It's the white + sign  located in the maroon box above the Course Menu.
- b. Scroll down and click Tool Link to open the Add Tool Link dialog box.
- c. Under Type, click the drop-down caret next to the word Achievements. Scroll to the desired tool and click to select it. For practice, choose Course Messages.
- d. Type Course Messages in the Name field, check the Available to Users box, and click Submit. The Course Messages Tool Link appears at the bottom of the Course Menu.
- e. You can move Course Messages up on the Course Menu by hovering over and to the left of Course Messages, left-clicking the arrow in the orange(ish) box, and dragging it up. Be sure to hold the left click until Course Messages is where you want it placed, then release the mouse.

As mentioned earlier, Learning Technologies presents workshops throughout the year. For more information, contact [learningtech@tamut.edu](mailto:learningtech@tamut.edu). If there are other tutorials or how-tos you'd like to see added to the QRG, please let us know. For support with any TAMUT technology platform, software, or hardware, please contact the IT Service Desk.

## **IT Service Desk Contact Information & Hours of Operation**

Call: 903.334.6603

Email: [isite@tamut.edu](mailto:isite@tamut.edu)

Submit a Support Request: [iSITE](#)

Monday – Thursday.....8:00 a.m. – 8:45 p.m.  
Friday.....8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday.....9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.