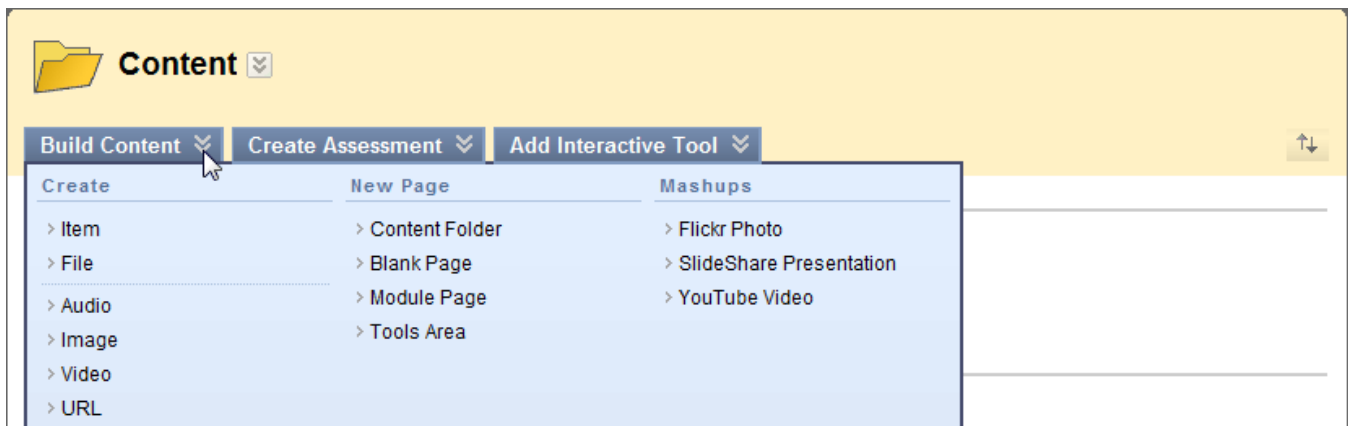


## Putting Stuff in Blackboard

Creating content has never been more centralized in Blackboard – not only are all your options on one page, they are mostly on one fly-out menu now (yes, that’s the technical term). So let’s take a look at what’s where and how to get your stuff into Blackboard, whether it’s new, coming from a previous semester’s course space, or located somewhere out there on the Internet.

### The New “Build Content” Menu

With the Edit Mode switch flipped to “On,” you will see three buttons across the top of a content area – Build Content, Create Assessment, and Add Interactive Tool. Hover your mouse over the “Build Content” button and a large menu will fly out (mostly reproduced below):



Your many options for building content are organized under three sub-menus of items that are mostly related to each other. We’ll go over several different examples of each group.

If you have used Blackboard in the past, you will probably want to use the “Item” option; this is basically the old “Add Item” page. All the options on this page are quite familiar, with one exception: under the section “Attachments,” your choices are now “Browse My Computer” or “Browse Course.” “Browse My Computer” is the same as the former “Browse” button: a dialog box will open and you can select a file from your local computer, your ESS space, etc. “Browse Course” leads to the new “Course Files” area, which we’ll cover in the next section.

Another interesting possibility under “Create” is the “File” option. This is useful for just attaching a file to a course when no extra description in the Text box is needed.

One of the new features in the current version of Blackboard is improved media handling. As you can see, there are four new options for multimedia – Audio, Image, Video and URL (the former “Add External Link”). Each of these items includes specific options for each type of media – attaching a transcript for audio, autostart/loop for video, etc. There is also a Preview option.

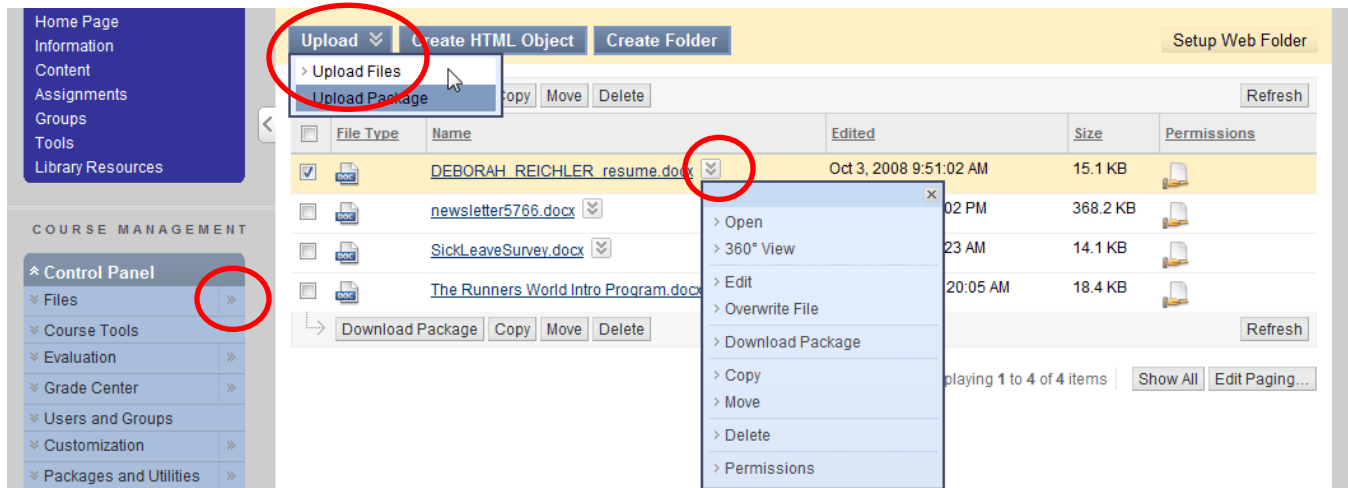
The “New Page” sub-menu contains several options which are familiar from previous versions of Blackboard, such as Folder and Course Link.

Completely new for 2010 is the “Mashups” area, which enables you to quickly and easily add content from YouTube, Flickr and Slideshare to your course spaces. Each of these tools begins with a Search bar and allows a Preview of any item before selecting it. Blackboard handles creating a viewer for any of these media (which means, for example, that you no longer have to worry about leaving space for the controls of a video clip). More social media sites coming in the future!

The "Create Assessment" menu now contains links for adding Tests, Surveys, Assignments, Self and Peer Assessments, and SafeAssignment (the anti-plagiarism site). The "Add Interactive Tool" menu contains links for adding such tools as blogs, wikis and discussion boards, and also the link for the Sign-up List tool we use for scheduling appointments.

## Where Did It Go?

In previous versions of Blackboard, you would upload your files and then really have no way of accessing them again. In the new version, all of your content files are now visible to you in the "Course Files" area and can be edited, replaced, and retrieved. Under "Control Panel," click the double-arrow symbol **TO THE RIGHT OF THE WORD "FILES"** (see below). This will bring you to the "Course Contents" page, which presents information about all files in your course space.



If you click the Upload button and select "Upload Files," you will see the new "drag-and-drop" window for moving files directly from your local computer to the Blackboard server. This will be very convenient for moving a number of files at the same time from your computer (or ESS space) to the Blackboard course space. You can also choose to upload a zipped package of files (Blackboard will unpackage them into this content area, maintaining the folder structure).

Then, when you are on a Content page (see previous section), pick "Create Item" or "Create File" and select the "Browse Course" option under "Attachments," you will see all the files you have uploaded to this area and can select one (or more). You can also change the name of a file if needed when it is linked from a content area.

If you click the double-arrow symbol to the right of an individual file's name, a small menu will pop up with additional options for that file, including the ability to overwrite it with a new version. The "Permissions" option will show who has access in your course to this file. You can quickly check the validity and availability of links to all your course content by using the Check Course Links tool in the Packages and Utilities sub-menu under the Control Panel.

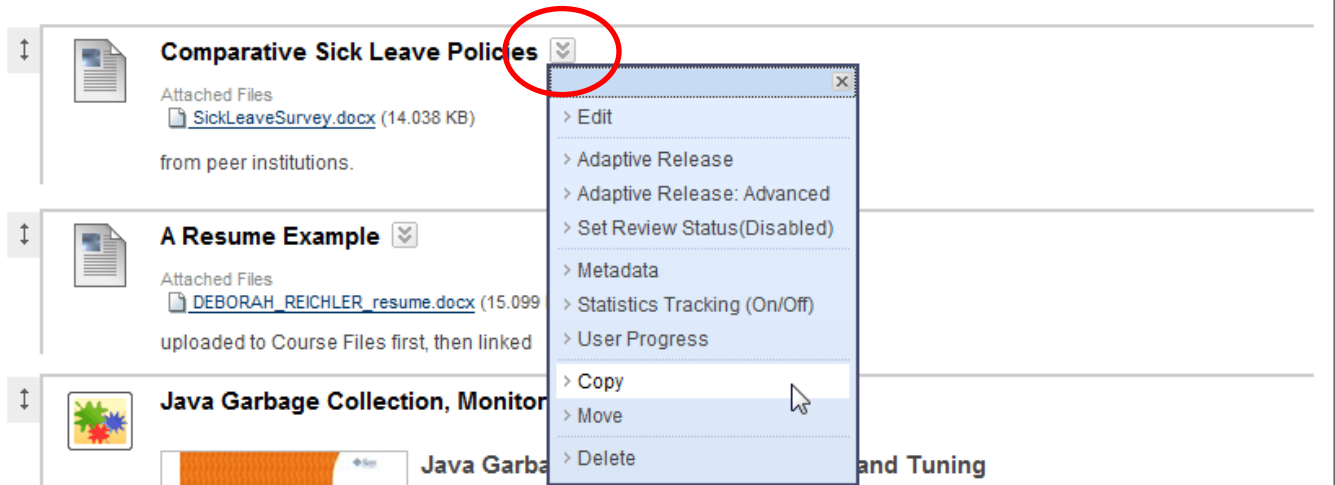
You can also select all the files in the Course Contents area (or as many as you desire) and then click the "Download Package" button, which will give you a zipped file of all the files in your course, in their original format (Word, PDF, etc.). This is handy if you need to take your files elsewhere.

Finally, the "Setup Web Folder" button allows you to create a direct link from your local computer to the storage space for this course on the Blackboard server. This will appear (in Windows 7) on the same window as local drives, networked drives, peripheral devices, etc. You will then be able to access files directly without going through Blackboard. There are instructions on this page for setting up this folder in Windows 7/Vista/XP and the Mac OS.

## How to Copy or Move Items from One Course to Another or Within a Course Space

You have several options for moving or copying course material from one course to another or within a course space; which one to use will depend on how much material you need to copy at once. It may be more efficient to move everything from an old course and then delete a few items.

First, let's start with copying or moving a single item, either within a course or from one course to another. Make sure that Edit Mode is switched to "On," and then click the "chevron" next to any item. Among the options listed will be copy and move.

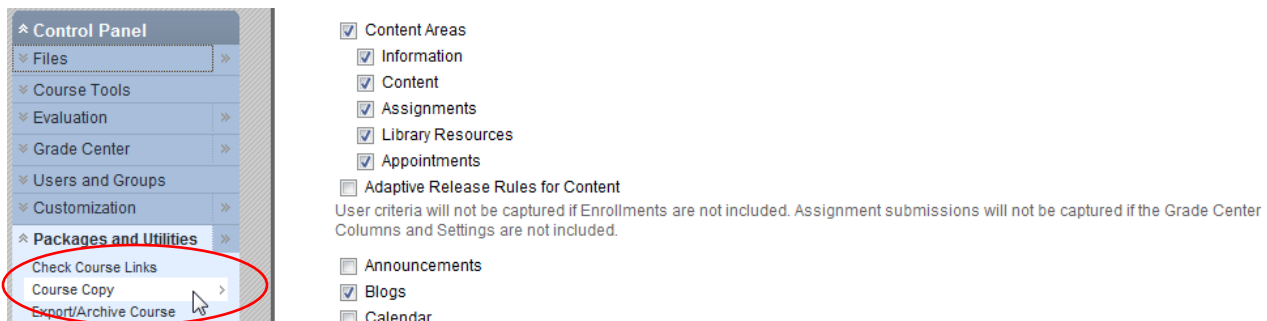


When you select Copy or Move, you will see on the next screen the options for "Destination Course" and "Destination Folder." "Destination Course" will default to the current course space, although if you click the small drop-down arrow, you will see a list of all courses in which you are an instructor and can pick another one. When you click "Browse" next to "Destination Folder," you will see a "map" of the course and can select a content area into which to move or copy the item.

Let's say that you need to move all or most of the material from a past semester's course space to the current one. In the Control Panel of the course you are copying material from, click "Packages and Utilities" to expand the sub-menu and then select "Course Copy." On the next page, when you click the "Browse" button next to "Destination Course ID," you will see a window of all the courses in which you are an instructor. Select the course you are copying to and click Submit.

Now you can check off all the course areas whose material you wish to copy to the new course. Please note that if you need to copy any tests, surveys, or quizzes, you must check the content area in which the test/quiz/survey is deployed, the Grade Center, and the Tests, Pools and Surveys area. The Settings option will copy such features as course menu organization, button styles, etc.

You do not need to include Enrollments in this operation, since we provide those automatically. There is no limit on course file size. Click Submit, and the material will be in your new course.



## Some of Those Other Content Types and Tools

There's a lot of other stuff in Blackboard ... you might want to use some of it sometime. These are available to instructors and students in the Tools area of the course menu, and to instructors under the "Course Tools" sub-menu of the Control Panel.

### Blogs

Blogs are an open communications tool for students to share their thoughts within a course. Blogs consist of entries by the owners and comments by the readers. There are three different types of blogs: course blogs (all enrolled users can post and comment); individual blogs (only the owner can post, all others can comment); and group blogs (for members of a defined group). Instructors have full access to everything and can grade blogs.

### Journals

A Journal is self-reflective tool for students. Only the student and the instructor are able to view journal entries. Students can enter text, images, links, multimedia, mashups, and attachments. Journals can be graded in the Grade Center.

### Wikis

Wikis are used to create a collaborative space within the course where all students can view, contribute, and edit content. Wikis can also be used as a resource for students to view information and content relevant to their course. Wikis can also be set up just for groups and can be graded.

### Groups

The Groups tool allows instructors to organize students into groups of any size. Instructors can provide communication and collaboration tools that only group members can access. Groups can be created one at a time or in sets. Groups can be designated as Self-Enroll, allowing students to add themselves to a group, or Manual Enroll, having the instructor assign students to a group. Groups can be connected to other areas of Blackboard, such as assignments and adaptive release.

### Discussion Boards

Discussion Boards organize conversations around specific topics in threads (much like Gmail) and can be useful for stimulating discussion outside of class. Discussion boards have a number of options, such as attachments, subscriptions, tagging, rating, and a couple of grading options.

### Online Attendance

This tool allows instructors to track attendance online and students (if desired) to see their attendance records. The tool will generate reports which summarize attendance.

### On-line Chat

This is one of the options under Collaboration. A session created with the Chat tool will open a small window which other users can join and send texts, for example, for online office hours.

### Self and Peer Assessment

This tool can be used to provide models for students to evaluate their own and others' work. The instructor can list specific questions, provide model answers, list criteria and specify how to award credit. There are a number of other options such as submission and evaluation dates, anonymous evaluation, how many submissions each student will evaluate, showing evaluation results, etc.

### Rubrics

A Rubric is a tool that lists evaluation criteria for an assignment. Rubrics can help students organize their efforts to meet the requirements of an assignment. Instructors can use rubrics to explain their evaluations to students.