

# Blackboard Standards

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& Learning**

*St. Lawrence College*

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# Blackboard Standards

## Introduction

### About Blackboard Learn

Blackboard Learn is St Lawrence College's learning management system (LMS). Blackboard Learn is a powerful platform for both faculty and students that provides faculty-to-student communication, course content delivery, organizational tools and calendars, assignments and testing, options for online collaboration and discussion as well as a Grade Centre for calculating and tracking student grades. Blackboard Learn has the potential to make learning more effective in and beyond the traditional classroom with its many options for collaborative, social and web based teaching and learning –in face-to-face, hybrid and online courses.

### About the Blackboard Standards

St. Lawrence College is committed to providing students access to essential course materials, resources, student progress/grades and other relevant information through our College's learning management system (LMS) to support their learning. The Blackboard Standards outline the expectations for the use of the College's LMS to support the teaching and learning process and in response to student feedback about the importance to their learning of organized, consistent and timely course-related information being available and easy to find on Blackboard Learn.

### About this Guide

To support the implementation of the Blackboard Standards, the Centre for Contemporary Teaching and Learning (CCTL) is committed to providing faculty members with support, trainings and resources to for using Blackboard Learn. This Guide orients faculty to the various Blackboard features that will be expected in every course and provides step-by-step instructions on using the features. Within the 'Content and Assessments,' section faculty will also find pedagogical information to help you decide how best to organize your learning content to fit the

#### Course Menu



learning outcomes of your course as well as information so you can match the Blackboard tools to the type of assessment required for assessing your course learning outcomes.

## Implementing the Blackboard Standards: Underlying the Menu Options

With the course menu being the access point for all course content, it is important that students experience a consistent approach to how they navigate their course. It is therefore a College expectation that the course menu includes consistent headings (About This Course, Content and Assessment, and Communication) that will create a similar look and feel across all SLC courses. Click on the link to open [Creating Links on the Course Menu](#).

Below you will find information and some links to understand the various elements contained in the new course menu.

### About this Course

About this course is the first category in the Blackboard menu. This category includes the Introduction, the Blackboard Tutorial and the Course Information. To start adding content in this section, click on the link to open [Uploading Files and Building Your Course](#).

### Introduction

The Introduction link may include a Welcome Message with the professor's information.

This section may include the professor's preferred mode of communication (i.e.: email, phone, etc.) and office hours and location if available.

### Blackboard Tutorial

Students can access the St. Lawrence College Blackboard Tutorial directly from a link on the course menu. This tutorial covers everything students need to help them navigate through their course within Blackboard and have a positive learning experience. This section will also provide links to Blackboard Help Tutorial, ITS (Information Technology Support) and other key Student Support resources.



## Course Information

Faculty Members can save time and college resources by posting the Course Outline and course Delivery Schedule (Appendix A) in the Course Information section. These are official documents, and it is a College requirement that every Faculty member upload a signed PDF of the Course Outline and Appendix A in this section. Student will be able to access important course information more efficiently and print out only the necessary information. Faculty members who do not have a signed course outline can contact their School/Campus Office.

Textbook information and other information deemed necessary by the professor can also be included in this section.

## Content and Assessment

The Content and Assessment section is the most important section and can be customized based on teaching style and preferences and will vary depending on the type of course being offered such as face-to-face /technology enhanced, hybrid or fully online. This section will provide resources and links to documents, lessons, assessments, Blackboard tools, websites, media, etc. Faculty members are encouraged to post assessments and rubrics to facilitate student success, however, this section is not mandatory for fully face-to-face courses. Click on the link to open Course Structure Options.

**Please Note:** Faculty interested in using the Collaboration tools (Blogs, Discussion board, Wikis, Journals) can click on the link to open Working with Collaboration Tools.

## Communication

Blackboard Learn allows faculty members to easily connect with their students through the email, calendar and announcement tools. Faculty members are encouraged to use one or more of the communication tools provided. This section will also include the My Grades tool to make it easy for student to easily access their grades. Click on the link to open the Working with the Communication Tools.

## Email

The email tool allows faculty and student to send email to SLC mail box without launching an external email program. Emails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users. **Please note:** Blackboard Learn keeps no



record of sent or received email. When you receive or send an email, the email appears in the inbox of your external email program. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date. **Please Note:** The Course Messages tool (versus email tool) allows faculty to communicate by sending and receiving messages within Blackboard only. This tool remains in Blackboard and users must log in to check messages in their inbox.

## Calendar

You can use the Calendar to provide students with dates for course-related events. Calendar events appear to all members of the course. Common entries include meetings, instructor office hours, exams and course items with due dates. The Calendar displays a consolidated view of all your courses. Course items with due dates automatically appear in the course calendar. Only instructors may create course calendar events.

## Announcements

Announcements are brief messages for things like: recapping a week's activities, setting the stage for next week's activities, reminders for quizzes and other upcoming activities, and alerts and notices (e.g. class cancellations due to weather). Sending Announcements can be an easy way to stay in touch with your students and can be an important part of your communication strategy. To maintain a regular pattern of communication, faculty may consider posting an Announcement at least once per week. Announcements can also be sent to the students' email to ensure that students receive the information even if they do not log in to the course.

## My Grades

Although instructors can access My Grades on the Course Menu, this tool is intended for students only. The My Grades page shows the status of gradable items, such as tests, assignments, journal and blog entries, and discussion posts. The My Grades page may include item names, details, due dates, student and instructor dates of activity, posted grades, points possible, links to rubrics used for grading, and your instructor's comments about the items. For information on how students can access My Grades, see the appendix section.

**Grade Centre.** This tool can be found in the Control Panel Section under Course Management. It is a College requirement that instructors post in the Grade Centre a minimum of one mid-term and the final grade for each course they teach. For information on how to do this, click on the link to open the Setting up Your Grade Centre.



## Blackboard Support, Trainings and Resources

The Centre for Contemporary Teaching and Learning provides a repository of Blackboard Resource through the College Website as well as Blackboard Support and Trainings Sessions as outlined below. Faculty wanting Support or Training with regards to using the various Blackboard Learn features described in this guide can work with CCTL eLearning Specialists Carolle Boudreau and Elizabeth Pero.

- One-on-One Support
- Customized Program Trainings
- Course-Specific Training
- Blackboard Semester Start-Up Workshops
- Blackboard Intermediate and Advanced Training Workshops
- Learning Technology Workshops

## Blackboard Guide referred to in this document

1. Creating Links on the Course Menu
2. Uploading Files and Adding Content to Your Course
3. Course Structure Options
4. Working with Communication Tools
5. Working with Collaboration Tools
6. Setting Up our Grade Center

