

Bellarmine University
Blackboard Policies and Guidelines

This document is intended to;

- provide consistency in decision making related to Blackboard
- enhance the reliability of the learning management system
- assist and support Blackboard usage
- save time for instructors, students, Blackboard and Help Desk support staff

Blackboard instruction

New instructors are strongly encouraged to attend a Blackboard Basics workshop to become familiar with the Bb software. The workshop will introduce instructors to the most commonly used features of Blackboard, explain our course management policies, and reduce the number of support calls made to the FDC and the Help Desk.

Course Management

Course size limitation To maintain the performance of the Blackboard system and to ensure that all courses have adequate space on the Blackboard server, each course has a ‘soft’ quota of 90 MB and a “hard” quota of 100 MB. The purpose of the soft quota is to alert instructors that they are approaching the hard quota limit.

File Upload Quota In addition to the course quota, each Blackboard course has a maximum file upload quota of 15 MB. The file upload quota means that instructors and students will not be able to upload files over the set size into Blackboard. The Help Desk is available to provide instructors with advice and instruction on methods of compressing large files.

Copying Courses The instructor of record has the ability, through the course control panel, to copy the course content from a previous semester into a course for the current semester.

Archiving courses The instructor has the ability, through the course control panel, to archive his/her courses at any time. Archiving a course does not delete the course from the system. Instead it simply provides the instructor with an off-line copy of that course in zipped format. Archived courses in zipped format may be re-imported into the Blackboard system by using the tools provided in the course control panel.

Course Retention Beginning in January 2011, Bellarmine University will begin a process for reducing the large number of courses on the Blackboard server. This process will optimize Blackboard and ensure the best performance of the system.

We recognize that many faculty re-use course materials from semester to semester, using Blackboard’s ‘course copy’ tool to move content from previous semesters into courses for the current semester.

With this in mind, courses will be retained on the Blackboard system for 2 years. The 2 year period will also provide ample time for faculty to archive past courses for their own records.

TERM	Schedule for Course Removal
Fall 2008 Spring & Summer 2009	January 2011 July 2011
Fall 2009 Spring & Summer 2010	January 2012 July 2012
Fall 2010 Spring & Summer 2011	January 2013 July 2013
Fall 2011 Spring & Summer 2012	January 2014 July 2014

TIPS: The following are tips for lowering the overall size of your Blackboard course site:

Linking to external sites from Bb. Bb provides an easy-to-use feature that creates a link to related information, documents, and videos that are posted on other websites. Instructors are encouraged to link to other sites, rather than attempting to integrate the desired materials directly into their Bb course site. This alleviates copyright concerns, retains the integrity of the materials, and also reduces the required space on the Bb server.

Drop Box. If you use the digital drop box feature of Blackboard, periodically delete the student files from the drop box area. At the end of the semester, delete all the student files from the drop box area.

Discussion Board. If possible, do not allow attachments to discussion board items. This can be adjusted by clicking on the “modify” button for any discussion forum and un-checking the “allow file attachments” option.

Posting Documents. Before posting a PowerPoint presentation, you can make it more student friendly and printer friendly by converting it to a “3-per-page handouts” version. Whenever reasonable, consider the option of posting PowerPoint handouts in black and white instead of color.

Audio/Video files in response to the increasing need for using audio and video in Blackboard courses, we’ve developed a method that will display these files in Blackboard without overtaxing the Blackboard server. A faculty-shared server space has been created for the storage of course videos. Links can be created for easy access to the stored file via email, Blackboard, or PowerPoint. (Not for movies). For instructions on using the course video server space, contact Debi Griffin.