Students’ Guide to

New Blackboard Features for Spring 2013

Starting in the Spring 2013 semester, there will be a few new features in Blackboard that should make it easier for you to communicate with your instructor and classmates, stay on top of your grades and course work, and add content to Blackboard. These changes include:

• My Blackboard profiles that put a face with user posts
• A better way to track new Blackboard posts and updates
• A new look for My Grades
• A new and improved text editor for composing in Blackboard
• The ability to record video directly to Blackboard

The first time you log into Blackboard this Spring, you will be prompted to set up your account to make use of these new features.

Keep reading for screenshots and tutorials for these updates.
My Blackboard Profile

Get to know your classmates by reviewing their profile cards, which appear whenever they post to Blackboard. Just click on someone’s picture to view their profile.

To set up your profile:

1. Click to open the My Blackboard navigation menu at the top right of your screen.
2. Click on the silhouette icon to upload a photo, add your major, and write a short bio. You can also choose privacy settings and integrate your Twitter and Facebook accounts with your Blackboard profile.

*A note of caution:* First consider whether your social media accounts are appropriate for an academic setting before linking them.

This video tutorial reviews how to set up your profile:
My Blackboard Posts and Updates

Use the new My Blackboard navigation menu to quickly find the information that needs your attention in all of your courses.

**Posts**: This area allows you to review all of the most recent posts and replies to the discussion board, wikis, blogs, journals, and group tools in one place for your convenience.

**Updates**: This area notifies you of key dates and information, like when work is due in Blackboard, a grade has been updated, or a new announcement is posted.

This video tutorial reviews the features of these tools:
http://ondemand.blackboard.com/r91/movies/bb91_myblackboard_global_nav.htm
A New Look for My Grades

See all of your grades in one place, sorted by categories that make it easier to review your latest grades.

Click on My Grades in the My Blackboard navigation menu to navigate between your grades in all of your courses.

Your grades are now separated into the following categories:

- Current grade (your total grade to date)
- Graded items
- Submitted items that are not yet graded
- Upcoming items not yet submitted

Also, you must now click the comments link to view your instructor’s feedback on your graded assignments. Click on your numerical scores to see more detailed results about your graded assignments.

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New Text Editor: Say Goodbye to Formatting Problems!

With Blackboard’s new and improved text editor, you can now look forward to:

- Better results when copying and pasting from Microsoft Word directly into the editor.
- Viewing the editing window in full screen mode, which helps with composing new content.
- It’s now easier to embed images, audio, and video content, size it to your preferred dimensions, and preview it first to make sure it displays properly.

Some of the buttons have been changed, but you still have access to all of the formatting tools that you are used to, as well as some helpful new features. If you ever need to know what each icon means, click the button (highlighted below).

Check out this video for a preview of the editor in action: [http://youtu.be/zMB365sPIEA](http://youtu.be/zMB365sPIEA).
Recording Video Directly to Blackboard

You can now quickly and easily record and post video directly to Blackboard.

You can use this feature to post video responses to discussions, video blogs, or a video reflection, just to list a few ideas.

To begin, click on the web cam icon in the text editor. This feature is integrated with YouTube, so you will need to have a YouTube or Google account to record video. You’ll also need a webcam.

By default, your videos are only accessible to your instructor and classmates (or those with a direct link to the video), so you won’t have to worry that the videos will be publicly accessible.

**Tip:** Ask your instructor if this is a tool that you can use to participate in your courses before you begin making videos.

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