Blackboard Policies

Accessing the Blackboard System

User Accounts

- All Towson University Faculty, Staff, and Students will have access to Blackboard. Accounts for Faculty & Staff are created after all HR paperwork has been completed. Student accounts are created when accepted into Towson.
- Faculty, Staff, and Students will use their Towson NetIDs to access Blackboard. Towson email accounts will be the default email account in the Blackboard system.
- If a faculty member has a guest lecturer, a guest account can be created. Guest accounts will be created by the Blackboard Administrator only and will be removed immediately following the lecturer’s obligation. These accounts will need to be requested by the Faculty member of the course site.
- All users will follow the Guidelines for Responsible Computing.
- Faculty & Staff accounts are removed when they depart the university. When a student is not enrolled in a Towson course for 6 consecutive semesters, their account will be removed from the system.

Course Sites

Creation

- All courses that exist in PeopleSoft will be created in Blackboard 190 days before the start of the semester. Courses created in PeopleSoft within the 190 day window before the start of the semester will be created in Blackboard automatically.
- Instructors have the option of having course enrollments merged into one Blackboard course site. To merge your course sections, complete the online Course Combine Request Form found on the Towson Blackboard page at https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/combineresquest.html.
- Courses cannot be created before the 190 day window. If an instructor needs a course site before this time frame, they may request a shell course at https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/courserequest.html.

Course Availability

- By default, all course sites will be set to Unavailable. It is the instructor’s responsibility to make the course available to students. (Control Panel > Customization > Properties > Course Availability or Qwickly Module > Course Availability > Toggle switch to on)
- All courses will be made unavailable 1 month after the semester is complete. If a student needs to finish a grade of Incomplete after this time, faculty will need to make the course available again.
Course sites being used during the current semester must have the current semester code in their Course ID and Course Name. Auto course enrollments will be based upon these codes. If you would like to use course materials or layout from a previous semester, you will need to use the course copy feature.

Course Content

- Instructors are responsible for creating and maintaining content in their course site. Instructors will need to keep a copy of all files they add to Blackboard, either on their H Drive or OneDrive. If a file is deleted from Blackboard, it cannot be retrieved.
- Instructors are responsible for grades stored in the Blackboard course site. Instructors should save copies of their Grade Center before making changes in the course site and at the end of every semester.
- Final Grades need to be posted to PeopleSoft.

Course Quota

- Files being uploaded to Blackboard cannot be larger than 50MB. Large files can be placed on your web space and linked into your course site.

Course Retention

- It is up to the professor to make sure all files associated with their courses are saved either on their H Drive or OneDrive. If a file is deleted from Blackboard, it cannot be retrieved.
- It is the instructor’s responsibility to export and store a backup of their Blackboard Course Site. The saved file can then be restored to a course on the Blackboard environment. For export instructions, see https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/faculty/resources.html
  
  Please note: student information is not stored or saved in a course export.
- All courses that were used during the current semester will remain on the Blackboard system for 2 years after they are taught. Blackboard Administrators will remove Winter and Spring courses that are older than 2 years in October. Summer and Fall courses that are older than 2 years will be removed in February. All courses will be kept in storage for an additional 3 years.
- If an instructor requests a course be kept during the archive, the course will be moved to the DSK “Course_Keep”. This DSK will be looked at during each archive and the instructors contacted individually to keep or remove the courses.

Enrollment

- Student enrollments in Blackboard course sites will be based on the official PeopleSoft roster. Instructors should verify their Blackboard course roster with the PeopleSoft course roster and contact Blackboard support with any discrepancies.
Once registration begins, enrollments will be updated 4 times a day during Add/Drop in Blackboard until Add/Drop has ended for the semester.

Instructor enrollments in Blackboard course sites will be based on their registration in PeopleSoft. Instructors cannot be enrolled in courses on Blackboard unless their paperwork is completed and they have been listed as the instructor on PeopleSoft.

Community Sites

- Campus groups or departments may request a Blackboard community site. To request a site, complete the online Community Request Form at https://www.towson.edu/blackboard
- Community leaders are responsible for enrolling members into their community sites.
- Abuse of the Guidelines for Responsible Computing by any member of the community will result in loss of access to the community site.

Course Roles

- Instructor Role: is enrolled automatically in the courses they are teaching, with the ability to access both available and unavailable sections of the course.
- Student Role: Is enrolled automatically in the courses they are taking and deactivated in courses they have dropped. Has access to courses and sections of the courses that are available.
- Teaching Assistant/Librarian: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors but are not listed in the course as Instructors.
- Course Builder: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors in Content Areas, but has no access to the Grade Center or related areas.
- Grader: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors in the Grade Center and related areas of the course, but no edit, manage, or remove access within the Content Areas.

Upgrades and Maintenance

- Any maintenance needed on the system will be scheduled during the OTS Maintenance window, Sundays from 6:00am until Noon. When Blackboard will be unavailable for any maintenance, a message will be posted on the Blackboard Login page.
- Unplanned outages will be posted on OTS Alerts and the @tublackboard Twitter page.
- System Issues – once 3 cases for an issue have been reported, the issue will be posted to the system status tab within Blackboard. The issue will be updated there. Issues with fewer than 3 reported cases will be handled on an individual basis.
- Upgrades/Updates to the system will be conducted in the beginning of August, unless the upgrade/update needs to be performed at another time.
Communication from TU Blackboard

- All faculty emails will be sent 2 weeks before a semester begins, and 2 weeks before a semester ends. All faculty emails will also be sent approximately 1 month before the archival and removal of old courses.
- Any important notifications will be posted on the Blackboard Home page.

Support

- For assistance, Faculty, Staff, and Students should create a service request using https://techhelp.towson.edu. All service requests created during non-peak periods (beginning and end of every semester) will receive a response within 1 business day. During peak periods, response time will be within 2 business days.
- Users may call the Blackboard Support line at 410-704-5151 during business hours.
- One-on-one appointments are available to all faculty, staff, and students by going to https://tubbsupport.youcanbook.me. Departmental trainings can be scheduled using the Training form at https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/trainingrequest.html
- The Blackboard Team provides training related to Blackboard tools, features, and troubleshooting assistance. If a faculty member needs course building assistance, they should contact the Office of Academic Innovation.