



The Blackboard Control Panel

As a GTA you have access to the Blackboard Control Panel – the “driver’s seat,” so to speak. Below is a default Control Panel and a brief overview of its functions. More details are discussed during our “**All About Blackboard**” sessions and online at <http://citl.gwu.edu/bbtour>.

A. Settings

It is advisable to modify the default menu to “fit” your particular course. For example, if your course does not have a project, the “Project” default item should be deleted. Other Settings options allow instructors to add or delete menu items as necessary, change menu design and color, or insert a banner. When the semester ends, the course can be exported for reference, when the course is offered again in the future.

B. Content

After modifying the course menu, you will notice changes in the Content Areas section of the Control Panel. These Content Areas appear in the course menu and contain files and assignments. For example, one can upload an Adobe Acrobat PDF version of the course syllabus to the “Syllabus” Content Area, for ease of use by all students. Tests or surveys created - in Section D - will be made available to students in the Content Areas.

C. Communication

Announcements - seen by students upon entering Blackboard - can be an effective way to alert students to new content and helpful resources. Blogs and Wikis can support group projects and discussions. Collaboration (aka: Chat) is useful for “virtual” office hours. Discussion Boards allow students to respond to questions outside of class. GW’s iTunes U resource is available via More Tools.

D. Assessment

Test Manager is your tool for creating tests or quizzes in a variety of formats. Surveys are another useful assessment tool for informal mid-semester evaluations on how the course is proceeding. Instructors also can grade assignments from within the new **Grade Center** tool. For more information, visit <http://citl.gwu.edu/bbtour/>; attend one of our workshops; or call 202-994-0485.

E. Assistance

The CITL staff is glad to assist you. Answers to many commonly-asked questions can be found in the online manual and on <http://citl.gwu.edu/bbtour>. You also may contact us on 202-994-0485 or visit our Instructional Technology Lab (Gelman B05a) during walk-in hours: Mon & Tues, 10am -3pm; Wed & Thurs 1-6pm.