

Semester Check List for Instructors Teaching Online or Blended Sections

Before each semester begins, update your Blackboard course site and get organized. Here are some details to look at:

Course Materials

- ☐ Access the Instructor Manual, if provided, noting the course's when's, how's and why's.
- ☐ Skim through the course site, reviewing the course materials and assigned readings.

Syllabus and Semester/Course Schedule

- ☐ Finalize your first day handouts such as your syllabus, course schedule/calendar with due dates – be sure these are for the current semester.
- ☐ Confirm that the Bb site links to the standard "Washtenaw Community College Student Support Information" which has WCC's netiquette, plagiarism and other rules/policies clearly stated.
- ☐ Establish start and due dates with times for student activities (Discussion Boards, Blogs, Assignments, Tests, Exams, etc.) and set up your Blackboard course site accordingly.
- ☐ Suggest a study schedule to help students manage workflow of the class.

Staff Information

- ☐ Post your name, office location, phone number, email address, virtual and on-campus office hours.
- ☐ Personalize the course site by adding your brief bio and photo.

Grade Book

- ☐ Confirm that the grade book is set up correctly – are the right columns displaying? Calculating correctly? If you are using running totals are they correct? If you are using External Grade is it set on the right column?
- ☐ Is the Grade Book doing what you want and need it to do? Does this match what is on the syllabus and course calendar/schedule?

Announcements

- ☐ Create and post personalized "welcome" and "need help" announcements.

Check Integrity of Blackboard Site *using the Editing Off mode

- ☐ Take a full tour of the Bb course site to be certain that students can locate all content, assignments and assessments. Can students find the Bb Help information?
- ☐ Check the dates and times of all items to confirm that they match what is on your syllabus and schedule/calendar.
- ☐ Confirm that all course documents and materials (including video lectures) will open correctly and external links are accurately linking to valid webpages.
- ☐ Are all discussion board postings from prior semester removed?

Get Organized

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with all relevant dates for the semester and make note of these so that you don't miss WCC deadlines – such dates include but are not limited to deadlines for attendance verification, faculty drop, mid semester grades, withdraw, and final grades. You can find these outlined within Faculty Services of MyWCC and there is also a link below the "Washtenaw Community College Student Support Information" in the Syllabus/Schedule area.
- ☐ Schedule your time to manage the online classroom and your students.
- ☐ Need to brush up on some Blackboard skills? Go to www.wccnet.edu/blackboard for the Training Schedule and Blackboard Support information. Or, contact Nancy Collison ncollison@wccnet.edu

Throughout the semester, stay engaged with the students in your online classroom...

Announcements

- ☐ Create and post regular and engaging announcements (ideally every 3 to 4 days), such as:
 - Encouragement in preparing for an upcoming quiz or test.
 - Notice that test is available now and answers to tests are available now.
 - Reminder of activities, exercises, enrichment material and related current events.

Assignments

- ☐ Check to make sure the assignments are truly available for correct dates and times.
- ☐ Confirm if you have set to allow one or multiple attempts.

Tests

- ☐ Verify that each test/quiz/exam is available during the correct date and time.
- ☐ Modify each test's options such as availability, feedback and presentation if needed.

Discussion Boards, Blogs and Wikis

- ☐ Ensure Discussion Boards are available with clear, concise instructions; create forums if necessary.
- ☐ Facilitate meaningful discussions that achieve course objectives.
- ☐ Remind students of the posting rules (if needed) and netiquette.
- ☐ Summarize Discussion Boards as appropriate.
- ☐ Create the Wikis where appropriate; **they do not copy** when the site is created each semester.

Groups

- ☐ Create groups if required/desired and assign your students to the groups.

Grade Center

- ☐ Enter grades in a timely manner so that students are up-to-date on their progress.
- ☐ Add comments to communicate and provide feedback for all students.
- ☐ Check regularly and clear any locked student items; let the student know when you have cleared an item.

Emails

- ☐ Is your WCC email activated? As per Board Policy, your WCC email is required for all student interactions.
- ☐ Within the first few days of the start of class, each student should receive an email from you – keep open, personal and frequent communication flowing regularly. Ideally, this is every 3 to 5 days.
- ☐ Develop stock emails for reminders such as checking grades, course withdraw notice, due dates, upcoming tests/exams and extra credit.
- ☐ Send encouraging and personal emails to students who are falling behind AND who are doing great.

Close out the semester...

Submit grades by due date!

- ☐ Grades are usually due at noon a few days after the end of the semester – submitting on time is mandatory as students need these grades for transcripts, financial aid, transfers, and other activities.

Grade Center

- ☐ Download the grade book to your computer to save records of grades; you may also wish to print it.

Make the site unavailable

- Contact the Blackboard Help Desk if you need assistance with this.

As you work through the semester, add to this list and personalize it so that you can have a custom checklist that is complete and relevant to the course you are teaching. **KEY: be as engaged in the online classroom as you would like each student to be...model this behavior for a successful online experience!**