

Blackboard™ Policies and Procedures

The Eller College of Management, University of Arizona

Introduction

This document is intended to serve as a set of guidelines for decision-making related to the use of the Blackboard™ (Bb) course management system software licensed by the Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona. These policies apply only to the use of such software residing on and accessed from servers located at the Eller College of Management.

This document is intended to reside solely online for ease in usability and access, as well as to ensure its currency. Do not rely on printed copies of this document without first verifying their accuracy against subsequent updates. Changes to these policies will be reflected in the “Last Updated” date listed at the end of the document.

Access

Access to Bb course management software, materials, and affiliated online tools will be granted as follows:

One User Account

All Eller College of Management students, faculty members, and staff are allocated one Bb account each that will be used for all of their Bb activities. Even if these individuals are not involved with a course or organization that is currently utilizing Bb, they will be able to use the calendar, task, organization sites, and other tools/features that are course-independent. Student access to Bb will be attained using a University of Arizona NetID as your user name and your student identification number as your password. Faculty member access to Bb will be attained using a University of Arizona NetID as your user name and your employee identification number (EID) (in most cases) as your password.

Exceptions

A limited number of users who are not officially affiliated with the Eller College of Management (guest discussants or mentors) may each be provided an account that is a Blackboard-only username and password, at the request of a “sponsor” (faculty or staff member). These accounts (referred to as “exceptions”) are considered temporary, but are renewable on an annual basis, with the approval of the Eller College of Management sponsor. Such accounts are assigned only to individuals who are working with Eller College of Management faculty/staff on officially recognized activities on the Bb system (i.e., those included under the institution’s license for Bb).

Guests

The Eller College Bb system will NOT allow guest accounts in general, but an instructor may request a guest account be setup for a specific course. Guest accounts will be set up on a case by case basis.

Student Access

Students who are registered for classes with Bb components will be given full access to those course sites not later than the first official day of classes for each semester (given that course sites are requested no later than 24 hours in advance). Instructors may, at their discretion, provide full access to their course site(s) to currently enrolled students who are not yet registered for the course, or who are in the process of adding the course to their schedule. As students add courses to their schedule, after classes begin, they will be automatically added to the appropriate Bb rosters (“enrolled”), typically within 48 hours. Students who drop courses will not be automatically removed from the course.

Length of Access to Course Site

At the end of a given semester, course sites will remain viable for no less than ten calendar days after the last day of finals week. Course sites will not be available to students past the day before classes begin for the following semester. For example, if final exams end on May 16th and summer session begins on June 3rd, Bb course sites will be available to students at least until May 26th, but no later than June 2nd. Faculty members may request that students continue to have access to a course site beyond these dates. Reasons for extending course access may include providing access for students who are finishing “incompletes” or the continuation of an online discussion. In general, retaining Bb course sites beyond the usual cut-off date will be discouraged, due to potential confusion generated for students, increased work created for Eller IT staff, and possible copyright concerns.

Acceptable Use

Sites on the Bb server are managed with the goal of reducing faculty and instructor time and effort needed to utilize online tools and materials, and improving server performance by eliminating redundant or unnecessary demands on the database.

Courses Kept on the Bb Server

To meet the goal of using server space efficiently, the only course sites that will be maintained on the Bb server are those in use during the current semester, and course sites that will be used in a future semester. These could include previously used course sites that will be “recycled” for use with another group of students, or course sites that are in development.

Course Size Limitations

At this time, there is no limitation on the size of Bb course sites. The Bb Administrator will work with faculty and instructors whose Bb sites contain extremely large files (video clips, for example) to provide advice and assistance to help them compress files in order to utilize space as efficiently as possible.

End of Semester Notification and Bb Site Deletion

At the end of each semester, all Bb faculty and instructors will receive an e-mail message detailing their options for re-using or deleting course sites. Courses not recycled for re-use (see *Course Archives* below) will be deleted no sooner than ten calendar days after the last day of final exams.

Course Archives

Prior to deleting or recycling the semester's course sites, an archived copy of each course will be made. These copies will be retained for later retrieval, if this becomes necessary, but instructors will be reminded to print out the gradebook and any other documentation of student work in the event of a future grade dispute. Retrieving these records from the archive is a time-consuming and imperfect process, and should be considered a last resort for retroactive grade information. Once a course site has been archived, it will only be retrieved upon request of the original instructor who created/offered it (usually the instructor of record). The exception to this would be if the Bb Administrator received permission from the original instructor to make the archived course materials available to another instructor/staff member.

Recycling Courses for Future Use

Each semester, instructors will be given the option to retain their Bb course sites for re-use in a later semester. The Administrator will copy these course sites, and rename them with the appropriate (future) semester designations (e.g., Introduction to Computing, Spring '05) so that instructors will recognize them in their *My Courses* list, and change the course ID number to enable search and retrieval (by semester) from the course listings (e.g., MIS_111_001-051). The roster will be emptied, the gradebook cleared of names and scores, and the discussion boards deleted. Until the semester when the course returns to active use, the instructor(s) and/or their designee will be the only individual(s) with continued access to the site.

Transferring Course Sites

Instructors may elect to transfer their course site and its materials to another faculty member or instructor, or give other faculty members access to their course site. Course sites will not be re-assigned to a new instructor for re-use without written permission from the original instructor. If a faculty member leaves the Eller College of Management for other employment, they may request a copy of their course site(s) or request that a

copy of their site be transferred electronically to their new institution, where it may be usable (within technological limits).

Requesting a Bb Course Site

Any faculty or instructional staff member may request that a Bb course site be established for their use. Course name and number, instructor name, and course line number are required to set up a course site. Before the site will be made available, however, the instructor (or his/her GTA) should attend an orientation workshop to become familiar with the Bb software. This is done to reduce the number of support calls made to the Administrator and to provide constructive teaching ideas for using Internet resources and instructional development advice for online teaching. Individuals who have experience working with Bb at other institutions may have this prerequisite waived, although it is recommended that they meet with a Bb administrator to discuss the course management protocols that are specific to the Eller College of Management.

Non-instructional Uses

The Bb system is maintained for instructional use (i.e., to support courses offered by the Eller College of Management). Organizational sites may be setup on Bb after a written request and only with the Bb Administrator's approval.

Gradebook Information

The Bb Online Gradebook is a tool designed for the convenience of students and faculty. Thus, it is not an official record of student grades, nor should it be considered a legally binding record of student scores. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to periodically print out a copy of the Online Gradebook, and to print a final copy for their records after the semester ends. In addition, faculty members are strongly encouraged to post student grades only in the secure Bb gradebook.

Information Security

The Bb user database is populated with information downloaded from the UA SIS system, thus allowing users to login with an already-familiar username and password. The security of these systems is of paramount importance in maintaining a reliable and trusted resource for virtually available instructional materials and tools.

Controlling Access to Student Information

As with other university records, faculty are cautioned to take care that student information (including, but not limited to, grades, test scores, usernames, or ID numbers) be closely guarded. As noted in the Gradebook Information section above, grades should not be posted so that students may see scores belonging to anyone but themselves (for example, in a spreadsheet uploaded to the course site).

E-mail Address Display

All Bb users have the option to disable the display of their e-mail address within Bb. Due to system design, the one exception to this is the Discussion Forum areas, where the user's e-mail address will appear unless messages are posted anonymously. It is anticipated that this disparity will be rectified in later software release. Instructions for disabling this, or for enabling the display of other directory information within the Bb system, are included in the Student's Guide to Blackboard (found Under Student Manual, under the tools area of a Bb site).

Copyright Issues

Faculty are strongly encouraged to respect the property of others by obeying copyright law and requesting permission, when appropriate, before using the work of others.

Posting Copyrighted Materials

Copyright law and Fair Use Guidelines allow faculty to provide access to copyrighted materials using the Bb system, and information regarding these uses and legal constraints on such uses can be found at

<https://sitelicense.arizona.edu/copyright.shtml>
<http://www.ltc.arizona.edu/policies-copyright.htm>, and
<http://policy.web.arizona.edu/acceptable.shtml>.

Linking to External Sites from Bb

The Bb software provides an easy-to-use interface for integrating links to other Websites into course materials. Instructors are encouraged to link to other sites, rather than attempting to integrate the desired materials directly into the Bb course site. This alleviates copyright concerns and also retains the integrity of the materials (and associated links) in their original environment. It is the responsibility of the instructor to confirm that links from Bb to external sites are viable. It is possible to link to a Bb course site directly from Websites external to Bb. Users will be prompted to log in with their recognized UA NetID to prevent unauthorized access to materials residing in Bb.

Intellectual Property

The University of Arizona and the Arizona Board of Regents recognizes the intellectual property rights of faculty, staff, and students and can be found at

http://vpr2.admin.arizona.edu/Interim_IPP/IP-UA-interim.pdf and
http://www.abor.asu.edu/1_the_regents/policymanual/chap6/6-908.pdf.

Ownership of Course Sites

Instructors who create Bb course sites retain all rights to those materials, including the right to request and receive an archived copy of the site in digital format. Use of the site and access to its materials and tools are determined by the instructor, and these rights may be reassigned by that individual.

Student-Created Materials on Bb

Instructors may choose to post student work (or expect students to post their own work) on the Bb course site. Students must be informed of this (preferably in writing) at the beginning of the course. They must also be told if their work will be retained in the course site beyond the duration of the semester and whether others will have access to it. No evaluative commentary or grade information from the instructor may be included with student work if the work includes information identifying its creator. Students retain all rights to their work. These policies also apply to student-posted messages in a *Discussion Forum*.

System Management Data

Information regarding Bb system performance or usage is considered the property of the Eller College of Management. Information regarding specific Bb sites or individual accounts will be held in confidence, although data may be gathered and presented in aggregated form by college staff members for professional development activities , such as conference presentations and/or scholarly/industry publication.

Last updated: December 2006