



Customizing Your Blackboard Course

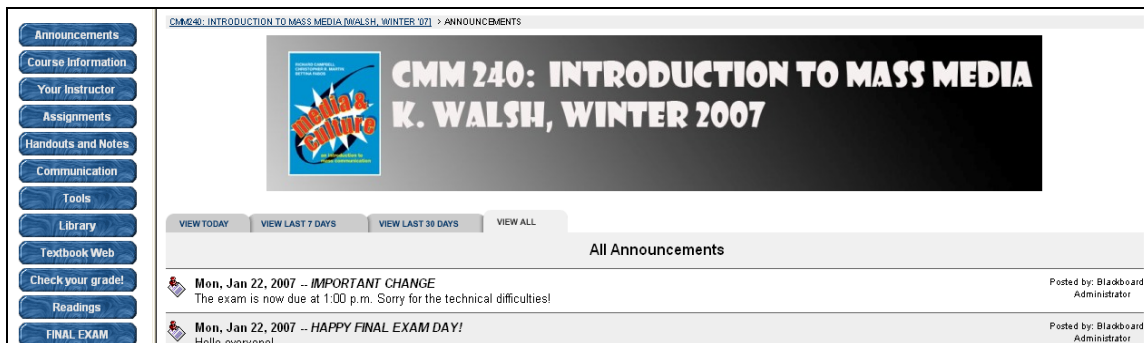
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Adding a Course Banner

A course banner is Blackboard’s name for an image that appears at the top of the Announcements Page, which is the first page students see in your course. Blackboard will accept any web-based image type (files with extensions .gif, .jpg, .png, etc.). **Tip:** You can find images on ARTstor, the libraries’ image database. Call the libraries for help with ARTstor.

To add a Course Banner to your course (see example below):

- Go to the **Control Panel**.
 - Find the Course Options area and select **Course Design**.
 - Click **Course Banner**.
 - Use the **Browse** button to upload a new banner into your course.
 - Image size should be approximately 95 x 600 pixels.
- Note: Large Banners may make it difficult to see announcements.



Customized Banner created on <http://cooltext.com/>

Note: To remove a banner, go to **Settings** → **Course Design** → **Course Banner** and select the “Remove this Banner” checkbox. Click **Submit** to save your changes.

Changing Course Menu

It is possible to customize the menu (that shows on the left) of your course. Blackboard calls these buttons the “Course Menu.” You can rename, hide, remove, or add new buttons to your Course Menu. You can even change the button style and color. Changing the button color might help to distinguish sections if you teach multiple sections of the same course.

Renaming Course Menu Buttons

To rename a navigation area, do the following:

1. Go to the Control Panel.
2. From the Course Options area, select **Manage Course Menu**.
3. Click the **Modify** button next to the menu item (button) that you want to rename.
4. Select a name from the pull-down list or type your own in the text box.
5. Check that the “Make Available for Student/Participant Users” setting is selected.
6. Click **Submit**.

Hiding Unwanted Course Menu Buttons

To remove a navigation area, do as follows:

1. Go to **Control Panel → Manage Course Menu**.
2. Find menu item (button) you want to hide.
3. Click the **Modify** button located to the right.
4. Deselect the “Make Available to Student/Participant Users.”
5. Click **Submit**. Students will no longer see this button in your course menu.

Adding new Menu Buttons

To add a new menu item or button, go to **Control Panel** and select **Manage Course Menu**.



Manage Course Menu options

Decide what kind of button you want to add. Buttons can link to content areas, specific Blackboard tools, specific course content (files), or to a website.

Here are the choices in detail:

1. **Content Area** – Creates a button that links to content ‘areas’. Content areas work like folders and you can upload course content files to them, for example, assignments, presentations, paper topics, or lab experiments.
2. **Tool Link** – Creates a button that links directly to one of the course tools listed under the Course Tools heading on the Control Panel (e.g., Discussion Board, MyGrades, or Groups.)
3. **Course Link** – Creates a link to a specific document or file already within your Blackboard course. **Note:** Be sure to upload content to a content area first, and then make your course links to individual files.
4. **External Link** – Creates a link to an external website. For example, you might want to offer your students a link to your textbook’s website, or a discipline-specific reference.

The steps for adding a button are much the same for each type of button:

1. Select button type you wish to add: Content Area, Tool, Course Link, or External Link.
2. Tool Link Only: Select a tool from the dropdown menu (see illustration below).
3. Fill in the **Name** (this will be the name of the menu item or button). If you are adding an External Link (website), you will also need to type in the web address in the **Target** box.
4. Select “Available for Student/Participant Users”. This allows students to see it.
5. Click **Submit**. You will now have a new button on your Course Menu.
6. If you created a new Content Area, you are ready to add files/content to it. If it is a new tool, clicking on the button should point link directly to the tool.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add New Area". The first section, "1 Set Area Properties", contains a "Type" dropdown menu which is open, showing a list of tools. The "Name" field is marked with an asterisk and "Required Field". Below the "Name" field is a checkbox labeled "Available for Student/Participant users" which is checked. The second section, "2 Submit", contains a "Submit" button and a note: "Click Submit to finish. Click Cancel to quit." A small warning message on the right side of the dropdown menu reads: "Characters may cause problems with the button Menu style. Design to change Menu style."

Adding a Tool Button to Course Menu

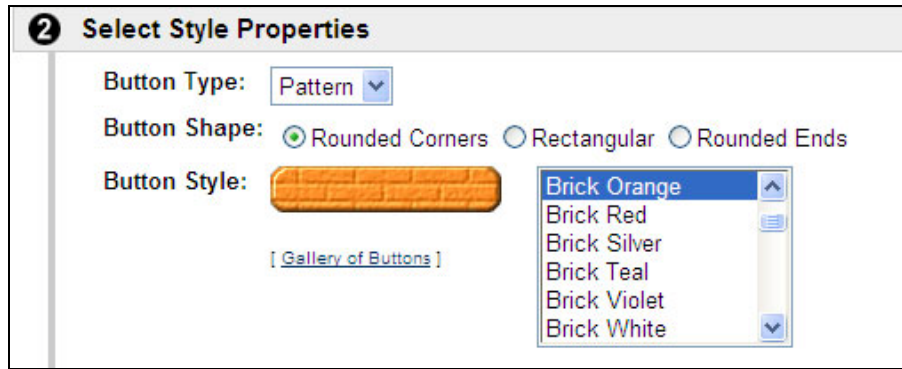
Changing Button Style – Text (default) or Image

You can also change the style of your Course Menu buttons. To change button style:

- Go to the **Control Panel**.
- From the Course Options area, select **Course Design**.
- Click **Course Menu Design**.
- Select the button type you wish to use: text or buttons.

If you elect to use buttons, you can change the color and style of buttons:

- In the **Style Properties Menu**, select button type, shape, and style.
- Click **Submit** to finish.
- Note: there are different color options for each category of button types. Depending on the *Button Type* you selected (solid, patterned, or striped), the available colors may differ.

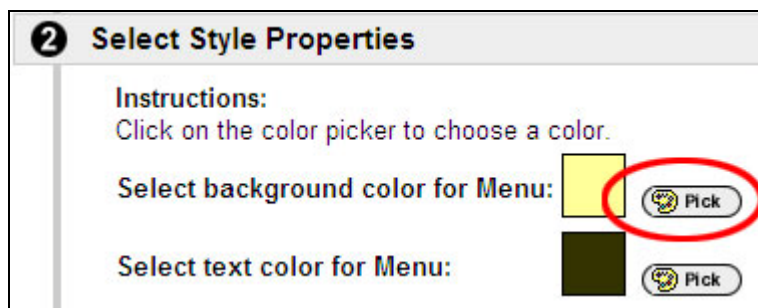


Selecting the Style of the Default image buttons

The **Gallery of Buttons** provides a preview of all the possible image button colors and patterns. To select a style using the Gallery, click on the button style name and then click **Submit**.

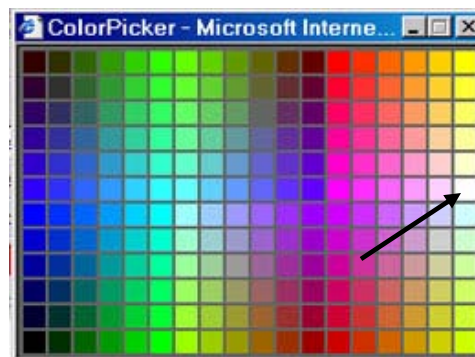
If you elect to use text buttons, you must change the text color and background:

- You may change the color options for your buttons.
 - Click on **Pick**. The color picker opens.
 - Click on the desired color.
- Background color refers to the background for the text.
- Highlight color refers to the text itself.
 - Click on **Pick**. The color picker opens.
 - Click on the desired color.
- Click **Submit** to finish.



Using the Color Picker to select colors for text buttons

As an FYI, the white color in the picker doesn't appear to be white on the palette because the default white is actually slightly grey (see illustration).



Selecting the color white on the Color Picker

Adding a Faculty Picture

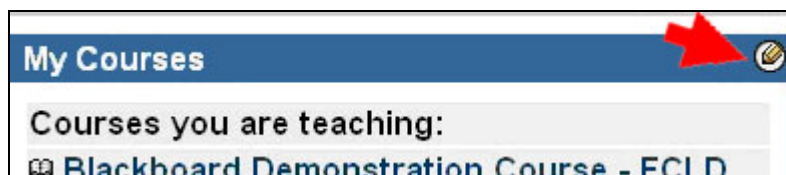
Blackboard will accept any web-based image type (files with extensions .gif, .jpg, .png, etc.). To add a picture of yourself to your Faculty Information area:

- Go to the **Control Panel**.
- Under **Course Tools**, click on **Staff Information** (it will have this name regardless of what you have named it on your course menu).
- Click on **Add Profile** if you have not already done so or the **Modify** button (if you already have a profile). Complete the information (only email is required).
- Scroll down to *Options*.
 - Select to make profile available.
 - Use the **Browse** button to locate the image/picture file on your computer. It must be a jpeg, png, or gif file format.
 - Image size should be approximately 150 x 150 pixels.
 - Add a website address (URL) to a personal website if you wish.
 - Click **Submit**.

Hiding Old Courses in My Blackboard

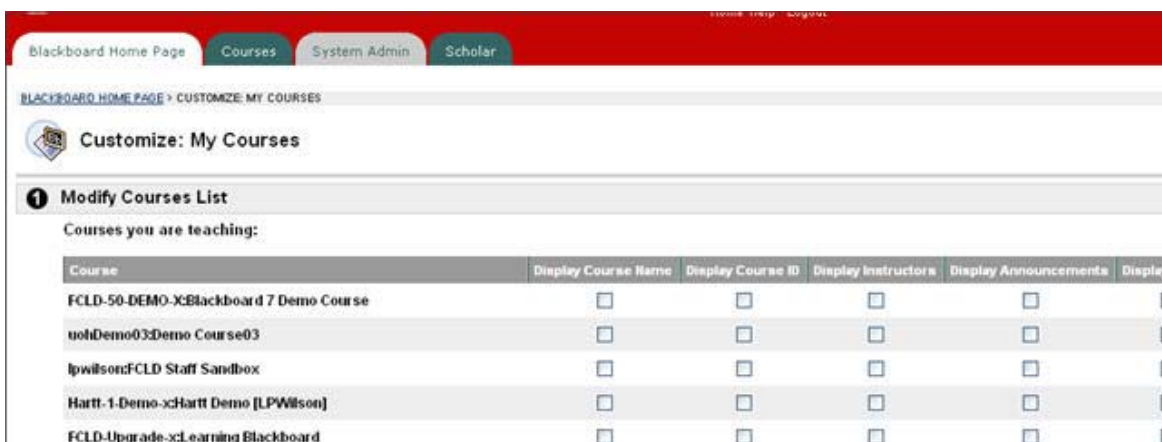
You may want to hide older versions of courses so you don't mix them up with the current term. Here's how to hide them, but still retain access to them when needed.

- Log into Blackboard. You are now on your Blackboard Home Page.
- Click on the tiny pencil next to the module that says "My Courses."



Pencil Icon under "My Courses"

- Deselect the **Display Course Name** box next to any courses you don't want to see when you log into Blackboard. Be sure to deselect **Display Course ID** and all other boxes associated with the course, as well. Reselect them if you need access to them again.
- Click **Submit**.



Editing your course view

Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford

Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)

FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology- related equipment including: PCs, Macs, scanners, and projectors as well as support staff. Faculty wishing to use the lab may contact FCLD.

Phone: 768-4661

Email: fcld@hartford.edu

Website: <http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/fcld/>

Information Technology Services (ITS)

ITS Help Desk – Computing Center

For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, printer not working, Banner, Facebook, and grades).

Phone: 768-5999

Email: its@hartford.edu

Website: <http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/its/>

Media Technology Services (MTS) – Harry Jack Gray Center 111A

Faculty should contact MTS for assistance scheduling or implementing classroom technology (2-way video classrooms, Smart Podiums, COWS, laptops, etc.) or for scheduling and instruction for a wide variety of media equipment and resources like LCD data projectors, CD/cassette players, TVs and VCRs, digital video, and more.

Phone: 768-4643 (Main) or 768-4662 (Tech Line)

Website: www.hartford.edu/mts