

These are the procedures and policies related to the use of CourseWeb at the University of Pittsburgh and a familiarization guidebook for instructors who are currently teaching or plan to teach online or hybrid courses or use the CourseWeb learning management system to augment their traditional face-to-face courses.

The Course LifeCycle .....	4
Why Use CourseWeb?.....	4
How to Get Help – Resources for Faculty, Staff and Students.....	4
When and How Courses are Created and Where Course Information Comes From .....	5
Logging In to CourseWeb .....	5
My CourseWeb Tab.....	5
Before the Term Starts .....	6
Getting Your Pitt Computer Account Set Up .....	6
Verify That You Have a Blackboard-Supported Browser .....	6
Other Technical Information.....	6
Make Sure Your Course ID is Correct.....	6
Import Content If You Have It.....	6
Request Cross Listing if Desired .....	6
Request Course Materials from Your Textbook Publisher if Applicable.....	7
Familiarize Yourself with Online Help - Tip Sheets and Short Video Screencasts for Courseweb.....	7
Design Your Course .....	7
Add Your Content .....	7
The Announcements Page.....	9
Faculty Information .....	9
Include a Syllabus.....	9
Add Faculty Information.....	11
My Grades .....	12
Course Links .....	12
Organize Your Course Materials .....	18
Set Up the Grade Center .....	19
Add a Questions and Answers Discussion Board Forum .....	19
Add Other Collaborative Tools – Wikis, Blogs, Journals, Discussion Board Forums.....	19
Prepare Your Students to Use New Technology.....	19
Wiki Tool.....	20
Blog Tool .....	20
Journal Tool .....	20

Discussion Board Tool .....	20
Discussion Boards and Blogs .....	21
Add Video and Still Photography .....	22
Online Assignments .....	23
Tests, Surveys and Pools.....	23
Getting Content from an Existing Course .....	24
Add Teaching Assistants, Graders, Course Builders, and Instructors .....	24
Set Your Course Availability .....	25
During the Term .....	25
Post Announcements .....	25
Send E-mail to Your Students .....	25
Unenroll dropped students.....	26
Assign Students to Groups .....	26
Course Evaluations .....	26
Scantron Tests .....	27
After the Term is Over .....	27
Export Your Course and Save it Somewhere Outside of Courseweb.....	27
Export Your Grades .....	27
Post Your Grades in the Faculty Center Grade Roster .....	27
Make Your Course Unavailable .....	27
How to Handle the Unexpected .....	27
CSSD Help Desk.....	28
Educational Technology Services .....	29
Accessibility .....	29
Copyright and Fair Use .....	30
Library Services .....	31
Libguides.....	31
Bookstore .....	32
Guidelines and Policies .....	32

## The Course LifeCycle

### Why Use CourseWeb?

CourseWeb is the University of Pittsburgh's implementation of Blackboard Learn, an online course management system licensed from Blackboard, Inc. Instructors at Pitt use CourseWeb as an electronic extension of their classrooms. They use it to post course materials online, to facilitate discussion between students via electronic message boards, to administer assignments, tests and quizzes, and to post assessment feedback including grades.

Because CourseWeb is available to faculty, staff, and students 24 hours a day, it allows Pitt faculty and students to locate important course information and complete their coursework when and where it is most convenient. Courses can be developed from home on any computer with an Internet connection. Students can upload their papers to instructors from home or their residence hall room.

While Pitt course instructors are not required to use CourseWeb, those who do find it beneficial for themselves and for their students. CourseWeb is an excellent delivery vehicle for materials traditionally handed out in the face-to-face classroom setting, such as a course syllabus and other supplemental documents. CourseWeb can also deliver web-based content including video and audio recordings, presentation slides, and links to external web sites to students. The course template used for each new course includes sample course modules that suggest a pedagogically sound organization for course materials, including learning objectives, readings, handouts and lecture notes.

CourseWeb is useful for student-instructor communications. The Announcements page can be used to put critical information where students will see it when entering the course. When instructors post grades in CourseWeb, students can get real-time feedback on their performance directly from the system. Using a CourseWeb discussion board forum in place of traditional e-mail messaging is an organized and structured approach to course communications, particularly when the messages are relevant to the entire course population.

CourseWeb can be a useful tool for collecting and assessing student work outside the classroom, as it includes features for assigning, collecting and grading assignments online, including plagiarism detection capabilities. Assignments may be assigned to individuals or groups using a variety of collaborative tools, including wikis, blogs, journals and discussion board forums.

### How to Get Help – Resources for Faculty, Staff and Students

Online "how-to guide" tip sheets and brief instructional videos are available to anyone through the CIDDE web site at <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard>.

The CSSD Help Desk provides personalized, telephone support for faculty, staff and students at the University of Pittsburgh twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Please call them at 412-624-HELP (4357) for answers to the most commonly asked questions you may have about CourseWeb. You may also send e-mail messages to the Help Desk at [helpdesk@pitt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@pitt.edu).

Faculty and staff may attend training workshops and request one-on-one consultation on

CourseWeb and related topics through the Educational Technology Center located in B-23 Alumni Hall on the Oakland campus at 4227 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. For a listing of planned workshops, please visit the Workshops tab on [www.cidde.pitt.edu](http://www.cidde.pitt.edu). To request a one-on-one consultation, please use our online sign up form at <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/etc-appointment-request-form>.

### When and How Courses are Created and Where Course Information Comes From

Approximately two months before the start of each new term, a daily process begins to run which creates a course shell in CourseWeb for each corresponding course in PeopleSoft for the new term. If the course shell exists in CourseWeb at the time this process is run, then a course shell is not created. Enrollment information for primary instructors, teaching assistants and students is passed from PeopleSoft to CourseWeb as part of this process. This process runs each day at approximately 6:30 am. For example, if a student enrolls in the course on Wednesday, their enrollment appears in CourseWeb at 6:30 on Thursday morning (the following day). The process continues until two months before the start of the following term and then begins anew, processing courses and enrollments for that term.

### Logging In to CourseWeb

1. Open your Internet browser window.
2. In the address bar, enter [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu)
3. Enter your Pitt username and password.
4. Click the CourseWeb link under Faculty Services.

If you cannot remember your password or have difficulties logging in, please contact the Pitt Technology Help Desk at 412-624-HELP [4357].

### My CourseWeb Tab

When you login to CourseWeb, the **My Courses** course entry module is displayed on the **My CourseWeb** tab. This module lists all the courses in which you are enrolled as an instructor, teaching assistant, course builder, grader or student, as well as direct links to announcements, tasks, and calendar events for those courses. The **Tools** module on the left side of the screen can be used to send e-mail to your students or to edit your personal information. You can customize the **My CourseWeb** tab by selecting the **Add Module** button or the **Personalize Page** button. Click **Modify Content** to choose the areas you want to view. CourseWeb has drag-and-drop functionality to reorder modules. Click the **Reorder** button to change their positions on the page. Hover over the module heading bar until you see crossing arrows and by left clicking, holding and dragging you can move the module box to the desired location.

If you want to hide courses from the view in the My Courses module, click the sprocket icon in the upper right corner (the courses are not removed from Blackboard, only from your display). No one else can view your My Institution page.

To enter a course, click on its title in the My Courses module.

## Before the Term Starts

### Getting Your Pitt Computer Account Set Up

Every course in which students may register has a corresponding CourseWeb course created as part of the automated course creation process. If you are a new instructor, you will need a Pitt username and password to login to the [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu) web portal from which you may access CourseWeb. You will also need to be enrolled in the student information system, PeopleSoft, as a primary instructor or teaching assistant for the course to build and modify the CourseWeb course content. If you haven't been set up as an employee, go to [accounts.pitt.edu](http://accounts.pitt.edu), find out who your responsibility center administrator is, and ask them to set you up with a sponsored account for CourseWeb access.

### Verify That You Have a Blackboard-Supported Browser

Visit the web page [Supported Browsers in Blackboard 9.1](#) to find a browser/operating system combination that has been certified by Blackboard. If you find that you have issues with rows not showing up in the Grade Center, that you are unable to add or move menu items in your course, or your students cannot submit files to assignments, it is more than likely that you or your student is experiencing a browser compatibility issue.

### Other Technical Information

CourseWeb (and Windows) uses part of a file name, called the file extension, to determine what application to use to open it. If you or your student is a Macintosh user, you may need to include a file extension with your file name so that non-Mac users can open it.

### Make Sure Your Course ID is Correct

Pitt assigns courses to specific, calendar-based academic terms. The academic term designation has four characters. The first character is the number "2." The next two characters are taken from the academic year. For example, courses beginning in August 2012 are in the first term of Academic Year 2013. In this case, the next two characters are "13." The final character denotes the season. "1" denotes fall, "4" denotes spring, and "7" denotes summer. The fall term of Academic Year 2013 has the academic term "2131."

### Import Content If You Have It

If you have taught a course using CourseWeb or Blackboard before, you may import content from it into your new course shell. Instructions for exporting your course content from one course and importing it into another are available at

<https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard>.

### Request Cross Listing if Desired

If you would like to combine the enrollments from two or more course sections into a single CourseWeb course, we can do that for you. You may want to do this so you can manage one set of content for all of your students. The form for requesting a cross listing is available at

<http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/request-course-cross-listing>.

## Request Course Materials from Your Textbook Publisher if Applicable

Many textbook publishers offer instructional materials to course instructors free of charge. These materials may include test banks, solutions manuals, instructor guides, presentation slides, and content specific to the Blackboard Learning Management System (“course cartridges”). As CourseWeb is Pitt’s implementation of Blackboard Learn, the Educational Technology center can help you implement Blackboard-specific materials into your courses.

## Familiarize Yourself with Online Help - Tip Sheets and Short Video Screencasts for Courseweb

Take a look at the materials offered at <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard> and become familiar with the capabilities of the CourseWeb system. An alphabetical list of tip sheets and short videos are listed at <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/CourseWeb-Tip-Sheets>.

## Design Your Course

A well designed course in CourseWeb includes:

- A structure that is easy to understand and navigate
- Clearly stated learning objectives, required skills and expectations
- Instructional materials, assignments and assessments that reinforce mastery of the learning objectives
- Learning activities that engage students and motivate them to participate
- Instructions and low-stakes “practice” applications of instructional technologies as preparation for higher-stakes applications of these instructional technologies
- Materials that are accessible to students with visual impairments and other disabilities (for more information, please consult the Office of Disability Services, <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drsinstructor>)

You may consult with the Instructional Design team at CIDDE for suggestions for effective course design by contacting our consultants at [teaching@cidde.pitt.edu](mailto:teaching@cidde.pitt.edu).

## Add Your Content

Here are some helpful hints to guide you when building your course in CourseWeb:

- Plan the organization of your course in advance of building it in CourseWeb. Knowing how you want to present your material to students ahead of time will save you the work of reorganizing files you have posted to CourseWeb. Group your course materials into folders and group those folders into content areas.
- DO NOT compose lengthy course materials in CourseWeb text boxes. You should compose your materials in another application and attach the file. As a matter of good computer practice, it is wise to maintain a copy of material posted in CourseWeb saved to your local computer or backed up on disk or flash drive.
- If you choose to copy and paste information from Word or another web page into your course, use the Paste from Word feature in the CourseWeb Visual TextBox Editor (VTBE) to remove extraneous formatting characters from your source material, which can cause

display problems in CourseWeb, before adding it to your course.

**1. Content Information**

\* Name

Color of Name  Black

Text

Normal 3 Arial B I U ab

abc ✂ 📄 📁 📎 🔄 🌐 📅 🖋️ A 🎨 🖌️

📄 🖌️ 📎 🔄 🌐 📅 🖋️ A 🎨 🖌️

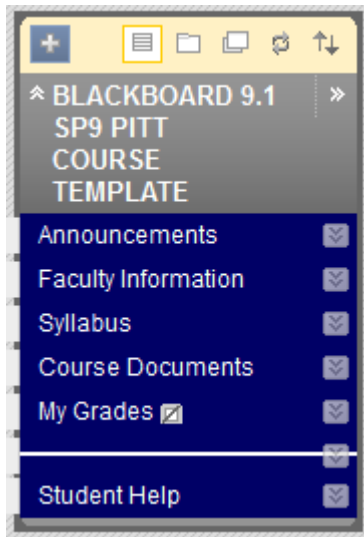
> Paste from Word  
> Flickr Photo  
> YouTube Video  
> SlideShare Presentation

- Your course is not visible to students by default. You will always be able to see your course materials, but you must take steps to make it available to students. If you have not yet made your course available to students you will see (unavailable) listed beside it in your course listings.
- Pop-up blockers can interfere with external links you post in your course. If you choose to have external links open in new windows, then warn your students to turn off the pop-up blocker software they may have installed on their home computers.
- The names of files submitted as assignments or attachments must only contain alphanumeric characters (A-Z, a-z, 1-9), "-" dash and "\_" underscores. Avoid using spaces, #, %, \$, and any other special characters.

CourseWeb gives you the ability to deliver content and tools that enhance the teaching and learning environment for your class. Once you have your Pitt account set up for CourseWeb, and have your course assigned to you as an instructor, course builder, or teaching assistant, you may add content to your course. Courses in CourseWeb remain on CSSD's server for three consecutive calendar terms (spring, summer, fall) plus the current term. If you need to keep your course materials permanently, you need to store them outside of CourseWeb as the CourseWeb system is intended for use as an instructional tool, not an archival storage facility.



The standard course template menu:



## The Announcements Page

The Announcements page is the landing page for your course. It is what your students initially see when they enter your course. It's a great place to tell your students when circumstances dictate changes to your course on short notice. Examples may include weather or event-related notices, changes in class location, changes to assignments, etc.

## Faculty Information

Faculty Information is a place where you can provide contact information for yourself and your teaching assistants. You can provide a photograph, web link and short biographical sketch, too.

## Include a Syllabus

The basic course template includes a syllabus checklist and syllabus template that you may use as a guide for creating your own syllabus. Most schools require you to submit your syllabus as an electronic document (Word or .pdf). Our recommendation is to create a syllabus document and attach it to your course under this menu item. The following items are already included in CourseWeb with the sample syllabus:

- Academic integrity policy statement and resource link
- Disability services statement and resource link
- Copyright notice and resource links
- Accessibility standards statement
- Classroom recording statement

Your students will be able to see these items, unless you delete them. You may also wish to copy and paste these statements into your syllabus, especially the academic integrity and disability services statements, which are required on all University syllabi. Your syllabus is often seen as a contract between you and your students. Students should be able to look at your course syllabus for answers to questions they may have throughout the term:

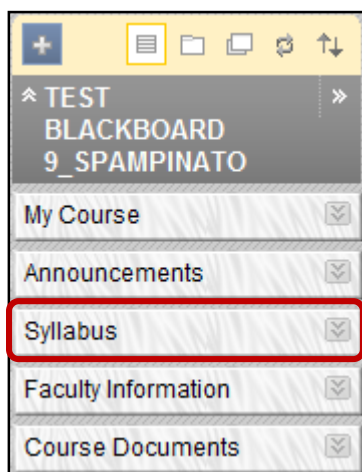
- What can students expect to learn in the course?
- What do you expect from your students with regard to class decorum, punctuality, attendance, discussion preparation and class participation?
- How do you prefer to communicate with students outside of class?
- What are reasonable expectations for your students?
- When are assignments and assessments due?
- How will grades be determined?
- What topics will be covered in each class period?

Your students should be able to preview the course structure, subject matter, skills and expectations just from the elements of the syllabus, itself.

As the instructor you should be aware that your syllabus represents you and may say much more than you might think. Attention to detail is very important.

Here's how to add your syllabus (or any other document) to your course:

- Click on the name of the content area into which you want to add files.



- Once inside the content area, notice the **Action Bar** along the top.



- Click on the chevron icon next to the **Build Content** button
- This opens your options for adding content.
- Select **Item** from the drop-down menu





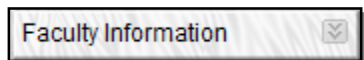
- In *Content Information* on the Create Item screen, type a name for the item in the **Name** field and add any desired text.
- In *Attachments*, select **Browse My Computer** to locate your syllabus file on your local computer or flash drive.



- Click on your file name and select open.
- Click the **Submit** button.
- Your syllabus file will appear under the **Syllabus** Content Area

## Add Faculty Information

- Under the Course Menu, click on **Faculty Information**.



- Click on the chevron icon next to the contact you wish to edit and choose Edit from the drop-down menu.
- Fill out the **Profile Information** including the Contact Name, Email, Phone, Location, Office Hours and Notes.
- Under *Options*, choose **Yes** to: "Make the Profile Available". In addition, you may attach an image of yourself by pressing **Browse** to find the image on your computer or flash drive.

A personal link to your webpage may also become available to your students by copying and pasting the link into the **Personal Link** field.

- Click the **Submit**  button once you are finished.

### My Grades

The template course includes a link to the student grade center view, “My Grades.” CourseWeb includes many tools to facilitate asynchronous online instruction, including My Grades. As My Grades is of particular interest to many students, it makes your course “sticky,” giving them a reason to come back to your course more frequently than they might otherwise visit.

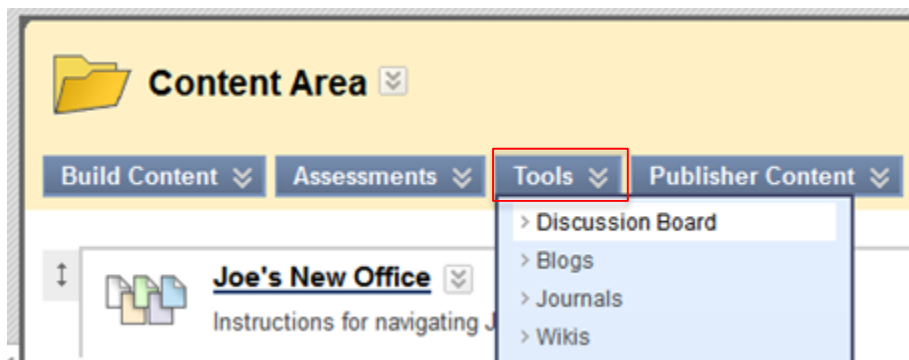
Please note: There isn’t a direct connection between the grade information you enter in your CourseWeb courses and the PeopleSoft system where official grade records are maintained for the University Registrar. My Grades is used to help you and your students keep track of their grades. At the end of each term, you must manually enter your students’ final grades into the PeopleSoft system via the **Faculty Center Login** link found at [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu).

### Course Links

If you use discussion board forums, blogs, journals and/or wikis in your course, you may want to add Course Links to direct your students to the specific objects you create with these tools rather than links to the tools themselves.


Example:

Deploy one of these tools in your course using the Tools button in a Content Area:



In this example, we choose Discussion Board from the drop-down menu.

Click on the Create New Forum button in the form that appears:

**Create Link: Discussion Board**

Adding a link to a Discussion Board forum places the forum in the Content Area. This creates a streamlined experience where users interact with each other in the same area where they discover content. A link can connect to an existing forum or a new forum can be created and linked. [More Help](#)

Cancel Next

**1. Create Link: Discussion Board**

Link to the Discussion Board page or create a new Discussion Board forum. Creating a link to a forum here and making it hidden will make the forum hidden as well.

☒ Link to Discussion Board Page

Create New Forum


Create New Forum

**2. Submit**

Click **Next** to continue. Click **Cancel** to quit.

Cancel Next

Enter the relevant information about the forum:



## Create Forum

Forums are made up of individual discussion threads that can be organized around a particular subject. Create Forums to organize discussions. [More Help](#)

\* Indicates a required field.

Cancel Submit

### 1. Forum Information

\* Name

Description Text Editor is: ON

Normal 3 Arial B I U abc x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup> | [List Icons] [Link Icon] [Image Icon] [Table Icon] [Code Icon] [Undo Icon] [Redo Icon] [Find Icon] [Help Icon]

abc [Image Icons] | [Math Icon] [Code Icon] [Link Icon] [Image Icon]



This is a forum for posting questions where the answers may be of interest to multiple students in the course.



Path: [body](#)

**2. Forum Availability**

Available ☒ Yes ☐ No

Enter Date and Time Restrictions

☐ Display After      
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

☐ Display Until      
Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

**3. Forum Settings**

☐ Allow Anonymous Posts

☐ Allow Author to Delete Own Posts

☒ All posts

☒ Only posts with no replies

☐ Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts

☐ Allow Post Tagging

☒ Allow Users to Reply with Quote

☒ Allow File Attachments

☒ Allow Members to Create New Threads

Subscribe

☐ Do not allow subscriptions

☐ Allow members to subscribe to threads

☒ Allow members to subscribe to forum

☒ Include body of post in the email

☐ Include link to post

☐ Allow Members to Rate Posts

☐ Force Moderation of Posts

Grade

☒ No Grading in Forum

☐ Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible:

☐ Grade Threads

Alignments

☐ Forum alignments


☒ Thread alignments

**4. Submit**

Click Submit to proceed. Click Cancel to quit.

At this point, when you hit the Submit button, you will have created the discussion board forum, but your students may not have a path to access it.

Optionally, you may create a link in your course to a discussion board forum in your content area (click on the **Next** button):

**Create Link: Discussion Board**

Adding a link to a Discussion Board forum places the forum in the Content Area. This creates a streamlined experience where users interact with each other in the same area where they discover content. A link can connect to an existing forum or a new forum can be created and linked. [More Help](#)

[Cancel](#) [Next](#)

**1. Create Link: Discussion Board**

Link to the Discussion Board page, link to a specific Discussion Board forum, or create a new Discussion Board forum. Creating a link to a forum here and making it hidden will make the forum hidden as well.

☐ Link to Discussion Board Page

☒ Select a Discussion Board Forum

Select a Discussion Board Forum

----Select forum below----

Questions and Answers

[Create New Forum](#) [Create New Forum](#)

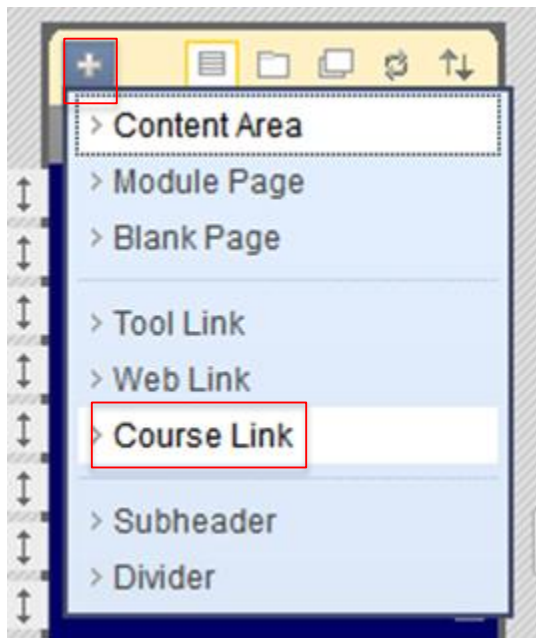
**2. Submit**

Click Next to continue. Click Cancel to quit.

[Cancel](#) [Next](#)

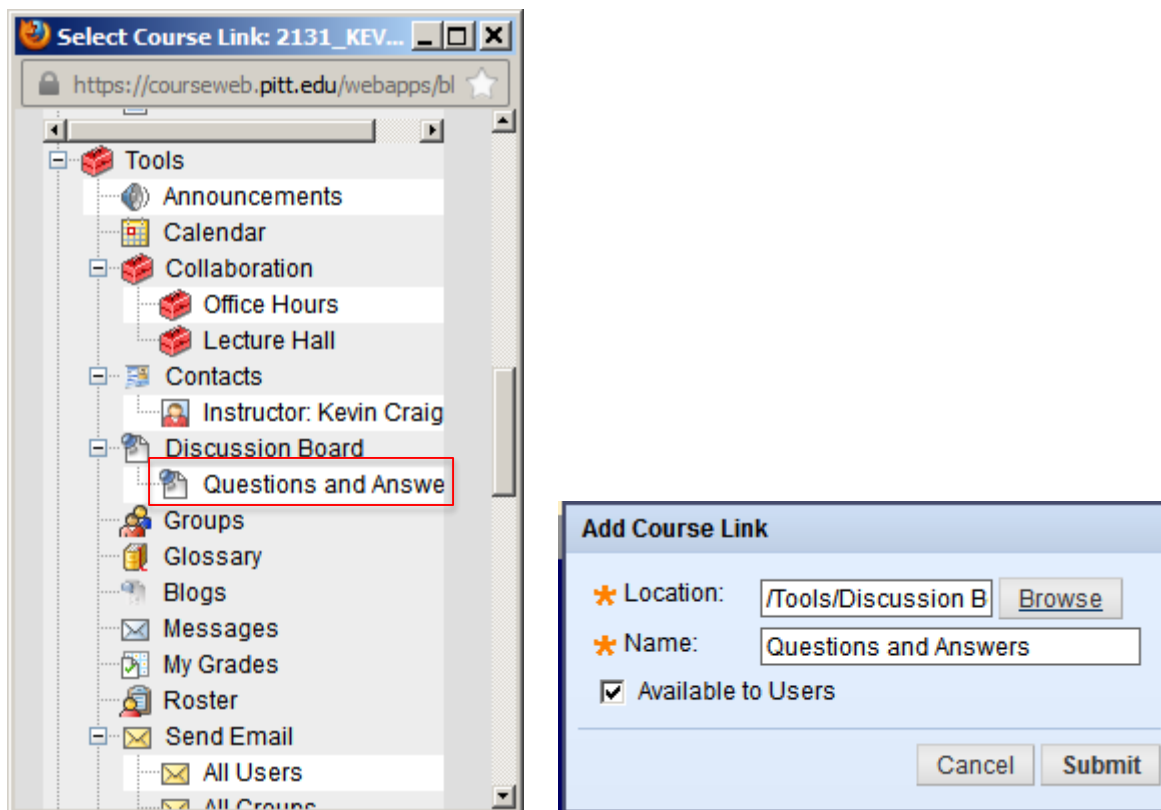


Alternatively, or in addition, you may create a link to your forum directly in your course menu on the blue box with the white “plus” in it to launch the menu of menu item types to add, and then choosing **Course Link**.

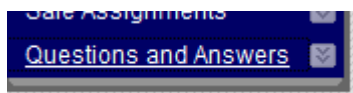


An Add Course Link form will appear. Browse for the location in your course where your forum is located and check the box next to “Available to Users.”

A screenshot of the 'Add Course Link' form. The form has a title bar that says 'Add Course Link'. Below the title bar, there are three fields: 'Location:' with a text box and a 'Browse' button, 'Name:' with a text box, and 'Available to Users' with a checkbox. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Submit'. Above the form, there is a green banner that says 'Success: Forum Qu'.



Click on the Submit button to add the course link to your course.



## Organize Your Course Materials

One of the keys to student success is a well-organized set of course materials. You want to organize your online course presence so your expectations are clear and students can easily find what they need to succeed. Successful online organization of a course reflects good course organization. You may wish to consult with one of our instructional designers regarding your course organization, before you begin to build the online component of your course. You can contact one at [teaching@cidde.pitt.edu](mailto:teaching@cidde.pitt.edu). The initial course shell that is provided to you includes a content area called "Course Documents." Course Documents includes a sample course module which you may use as a template for developing content for your course on a topic-by-topic or week-by-week basis. This template includes the following sections which you may select from and add to:

- Introduction
- Learning Objectives
- Lecture Notes
- Handouts
- Exercises
- Sample Tests

- Related Readings

Once you have developed your content in Course Documents, you may add Course Links to your course menu that point to specific course modules. This is particularly handy if you want to copy parts of your course from one course to another. You may copy individual folders from within content areas from one course to another but you cannot copy entire content areas, themselves, from one from one course to another.

### Set Up the Grade Center

The CourseWeb Grade Center is the first place your students will look for their grades in your course. If they don't find it there, they will try to contact you directly with e-mail messages, phone calls and perhaps even text messages. You may avoid a lot of these interruptions if you post their grades in your course's Grade Center. Placing a link to My Grades (the student view of the Grade Center) in the menu of your course will give your students a reason to visit your course more often. Once you have your course materials, a syllabus and a schedule in place for your course, the next logical step is to set up your grade center with each of the items you intend to measure your students' performance with. You may even set up weighted grade calculations so your students have an estimate of their course grade as the term progresses.

### Add a Questions and Answers Discussion Board Forum

One technique for answering questions for many students at once is to create a course discussion board forum where students may post questions of general interest to the class. The instructor (or other students) may then post answers to these questions. If the forum is set up to allow subscription, then those who subscribe to the forum receive e-mail messages including the body of the post whenever a posting is made to it.

### Add Other Collaborative Tools – Wikis, Blogs, Journals, Discussion Board Forums

CourseWeb includes features to facilitate collaborative work within teams of students and between students and instructors. These include wikis, blogs and journals. Wikis, blogs and journals are used in online and hybrid instruction specifically because they allow interaction at a distance; the collaborators use online tools to share and interact through their use.

### Prepare Your Students to Use New Technology

Successful use of these tools is largely dependent upon the skills of those who are called to use them. While today's students may be able to text 80 words per minute and can organize large events on Facebook in a very short period of time, they need an opportunity to learn and practice the use of wikis, blogs, journals, and even online tests and assignments before they have graded items associated with them.

Examples:

- If you are planning to use the wiki tool for a course project, give your students an opportunity to use the wiki tool to create a course roster, with each student contributing a short biography page with a favorite photograph on it. The students will learn how to use the tool before they have to do anything with it with a grade attached.
- If you are giving your students an online test, give them a practice quiz a few days ahead

of the main event with problems of the same format and structure as the questions you will be giving them later. Give them a link to our tip sheet, <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/OnlineChecklistForStudents.pdf>, for them to use as a guide to make sure that they have the right working environment for an online test.

- If you are giving your students an assignment that they will be submitting using the Assignment tool, be sure to review the CourseWeb file naming requirements with them. These are documented on the CIDDE web site at <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/AssignmentToolFileNamingConventions.pdf>.

One particularly nice thing about online collaboration tools (wikis, blogs, journals) is that instructors can view them and provide feedback while their work products are “in process.”

## Wiki Tool

A wiki is a collection of web pages that may be created and edited by a collection of users. The most famous example of a wiki may be Wikipedia, an online knowledge base maintained by a large number of volunteers. Wikis in CourseWeb may be created and maintained by all users in a course or specific sets of course members called “groups.” Wikis may optionally have grades assigned. Wikis allow both instructors and students to easily create simple web sites; allow instructors to track and assess group work; provide a place to store and share resources; and allow students to collaborate asynchronously, online.

## Blog Tool

The word “blog” is short for “web log.” A blog may take a variety of forms. The most general use of a blog is an online diary or journal, either shared with all members of a course for writing and review, or shared just for review. Blogs often contain links to other web sites, including other blogs. Options exist in CourseWeb to allow visitors to leave comments. Blog entries are arranged chronologically, with the most recent postings on top.

## Journal Tool

Journals are tools for individual self-reflection. Only students and their instructors are able to write comments on their journal entries; however, journals may be made “public” by instructors so that all course users can read all posted journal entries. You should notify your students in advance if you plan to do this. Group journal entries may be created and read by all members of a group (and the instructor).

## Discussion Board Tool

The Discussion Board area is an online message board; it allows you and your students to have extended conversations and exchange ideas on specific topics over a period of time. There may be multiple forums on a discussion board, and multiple threads of dialogue on each forum. Forums and, less often, threads may be graded objects in CourseWeb. Each forum represents a particular broad subject of discussion, week of class, or group of users. Forums are further broken down into threads. Each thread is a collection of posted messages constituting a conversation about a more particular subject. For instance, a forum about the United States

Constitution may contain a thread about the pursuit of happiness, and another thread about the First Amendment:

[List View](#)
[Tree View](#)

## Forum: United States Constitution

Organize Forum Threads on this page and apply settings to several or all threads. Threads are listed in a tabular format. The Threads can be sorted by clicking the column title or the caret at the top of each column. [More Help](#)

[Create Thread](#)

Thread Actions	Collect	Delete
Date	Thread	Author
11/16/12 2:39 PM	<a href="#">The First Amendment</a>	Student_01 Student_01
11/16/12 2:34 PM	<a href="#">The Pursuit of Happiness</a>	Kevin Craig

Displaying 1 to 2 of 2 items | [Edit Paging...](#)

Some suggestions for Discussion Board use include:

- Quantify the amount of Discussion Board participation you expect from students and give them concrete deadlines. For example, require them to begin one thread per forum or to contribute two substantive replies to existing threads per week, to be posted by a specific time on a specific date.
- Moderate online discussions or have a student administrator moderate them for you. Online discussions could devolve into arguments or stray from the subject at hand.
- Giving students administrative rights allows them to remove other students' posts. Only give administrative rights to those students whom you have designated as discussion moderators.
- Consider carefully whether to allow users to post anonymously or remove/edit their own posts.
- Create a forum for general questions about your course or for specific problems students are having with Blackboard.
- Enable and explain the subscription feature for forums. The option to "include the body of the reply" with the link is very useful.

You can create a new discussion board forum from the Control Panel or in a course content area. Only instructors can create a new forum. A student can create a thread in any forum, as long as the instructor has enabled that feature in the forum options.

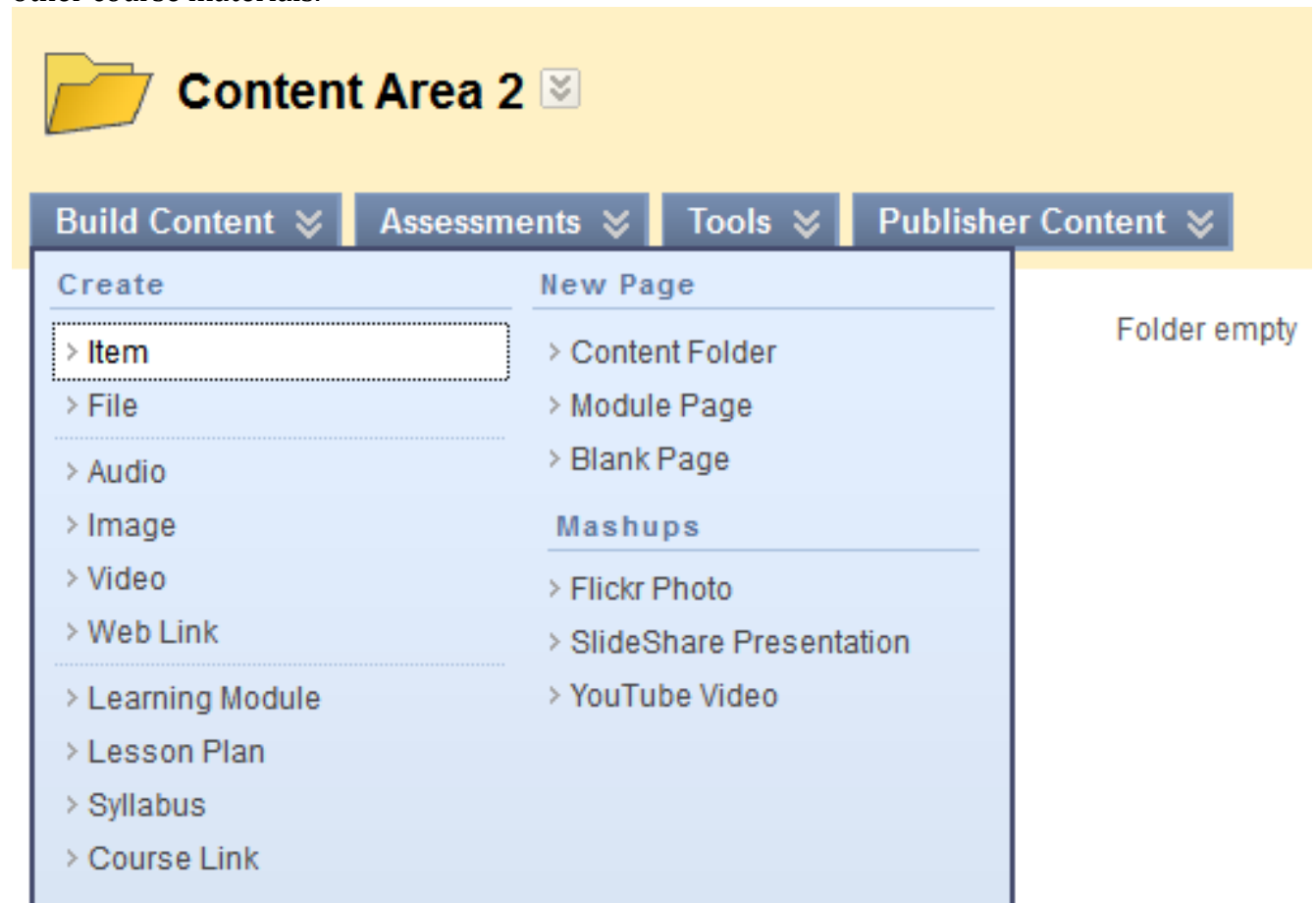
## Discussion Boards and Blogs

You may want to use a blog as an instructor if you want to promote networking and knowledge sharing between your students, or simply want to share instructional tips with them. Blog assignments can be used to promote creative writing, sharing of course-related resources, and reflective writing. While blogs and discussion boards both provide platforms for their users to

post messages that other users may respond to, discussion posts are organized by topics whereas blogs are organized chronologically. A discussion board is used to generate dialogue; a blog is intended for posting ideas, thoughts and articles.

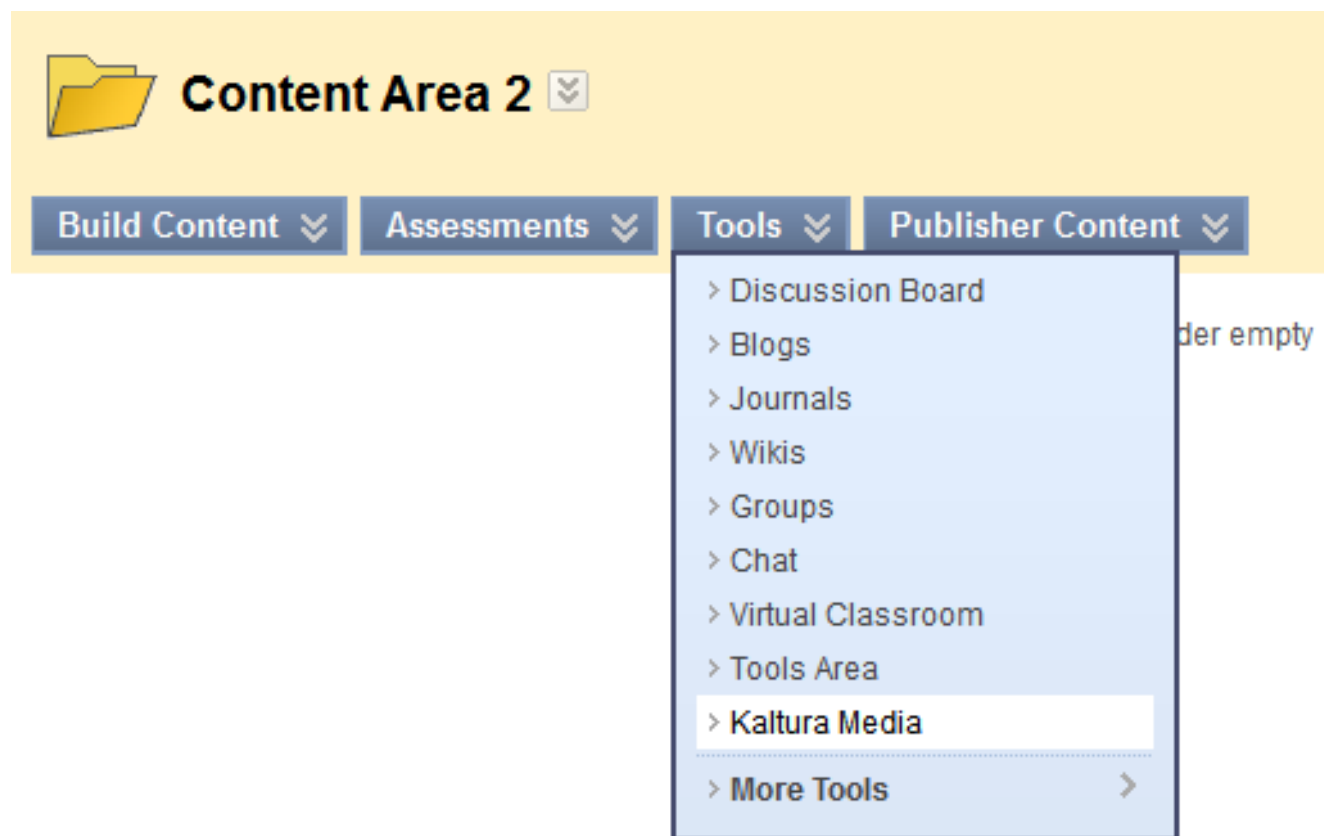
## Add Video and Still Photography

Video recordings may add a new dimension to your course. It is easy to embed YouTube videos, SlideShare presentations and Flickr photographs into your CourseWeb course to augment your other course materials.



The screenshot displays the CourseWeb interface for 'Content Area 2'. At the top, there is a yellow folder icon and the text 'Content Area 2' with a dropdown arrow. Below this is a navigation bar with four tabs: 'Build Content', 'Assessments', 'Tools', and 'Publisher Content', each with a dropdown arrow. The 'Build Content' tab is active, and its dropdown menu is open, showing two columns of options. The left column, titled 'Create', includes: '> Item' (highlighted with a dashed border), '> File', '> Audio', '> Image', '> Video', '> Web Link', '> Learning Module', '> Lesson Plan', '> Syllabus', and '> Course Link'. The right column, titled 'New Page', includes: '> Content Folder', '> Module Page', '> Blank Page', a section header 'Mashups', '> Flickr Photo', '> SlideShare Presentation', and '> YouTube Video'. To the right of the menu, the text 'Folder empty' is visible.

The Kaltura Media tool may be used to add streaming video into your course. A best practice is to use a short video segment at the beginning of your course to introduce yourself and the course materials.



### Online Assignments

File names used with CourseWeb courses must conform to UNIX file naming conventions:

- Letters, numbers, dashes, periods and underscore characters are OK to use
- Special characters, including “#”, “/”, “\”, “@”, “\$”, “%”, “&”, “!”, “\*”, “<”, “>” and “|” may cause problems and are best avoided by students and instructors when naming assignments and attaching files in CourseWeb.

### Tests, Surveys and Pools

Assessments include online quizzes and tests. There are 17 different question types available in CourseWeb including Multiple Choice, True/False, Essay, Short Answer, Hot Spot, Calculated Formula, and Matching to name just a few. An assessment links a specific student's answers or responses to that particular student.

Surveys are similar to assessments in terms of question types. Unlike an assessment, however, a survey does not link a specific student's answers to that particular student. The Grade Center will only show that a student has taken a survey. Survey results are summarized on one webpage



that collects responses to each question.

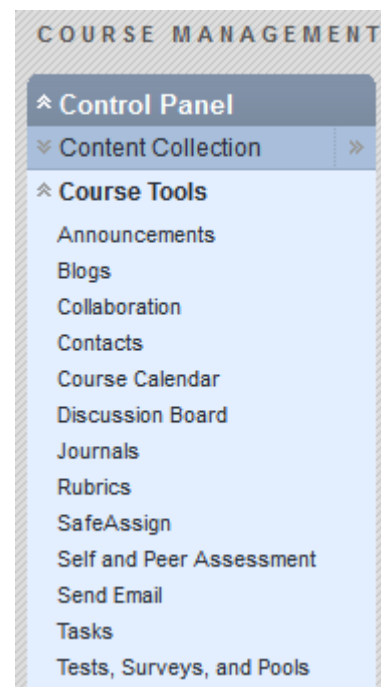
Assessments and surveys are automatically added to the Grade Center. Tests with objective question types, such as multiple choice, are automatically graded. Other types such as essays require manual grading.

Tests, surveys, and question pools that tests and surveys draw upon can be managed using the Tests, Surveys, and Pools Course Tool. An assessment can draw questions from a pool in one of two ways: randomly selecting questions for each student or by copying specifically selected questions from the pool into the assessment. A survey can draw questions from a pool by copying specifically selected questions from the pool into the survey.

Tests and Surveys can be deployed in a content area for the student to take. Pools cannot be deployed.

Here are some tips for using online testing in your course:

- Limit the time allowed for each test by using the Set Timer feature with Auto Submit turned on, so students who haven't done the preparatory exercises won't be able to complete the assessment.
- Ask questions that assess a student's mastery of specific skills
- Give different question sets to different students – use the Random Block feature
- Limit the times when an online test is available
- Randomize the questions themselves, give them one at a time and prohibit backtracking
- Provide an online practice test that students may use to establish that their browser is compatible, their data connection is solid and their computer is functional before they start the one that counts.
- Refer your students to the CIDDE [Online Exam Checklist for Students](#).



## Getting Content from an Existing Course

You may export materials from an existing course (see <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/ExportingYourCourse.pdf>), perhaps one that you previously taught, and import it into another course (see <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/ImportingYourCourse.pdf>). As an instructor using CourseWeb, it is your responsibility to export your course materials at the end of the term and save them if you intend to use them in courses beyond the course retention period. CourseWeb is not intended to be the archival record of a course. CourseWeb retention policies are aligned with University policies for academic record retention and designed to maintain system capacity and performance. For more information on Pitt's CourseWeb retention policies, please visit [http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/courseweb\\_retention\\_guidelines](http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/courseweb_retention_guidelines).

## Add Teaching Assistants, Graders, Course Builders, and Instructors

The User and Groups Menu contains functions related to the enrollment and group affiliation of



the students and other CourseWeb users in your course. You can use this area to view the class roster and create student groups. Students, primary instructors and teaching assistants are automatically enrolled on a daily basis as courses are created based on information stored in the PeopleSoft system. If you change the role of a student, primary instructor or teaching assistant in your CourseWeb course, it will be overwritten by the corresponding information in PeopleSoft each day.

Each user enrolled in a CourseWeb course has a course role. These roles define course access rights.

- Teaching Assistants (TA's) have access to nearly all functions in the Control Panel, including the Grade Center. TA's cannot make a course available or unavailable and they cannot enroll other users in the course.
- Course Builders can use most areas of the Control Panel but do not have access to student grades.
- Graders have access to all functions in the Assessment area, as well as course Announcements, and the Course Calendar.

### Set Your Course Availability

By design, courses are initially created in a state unavailable to the students who are enrolled in them. This way, you may make any changes that are necessary before "turning it on" for your students. When you are ready to make your course available, please follow these steps:

1. Click on your course (in My Courses)
2. Click on Control Panel (in the left menu bar)
3. Click on **Customization**
4. Click on **Properties**
5. Select the "Yes" radio button for "Make Course Available" under section 2, *Set Availability*
6. Click on the **Submit** button

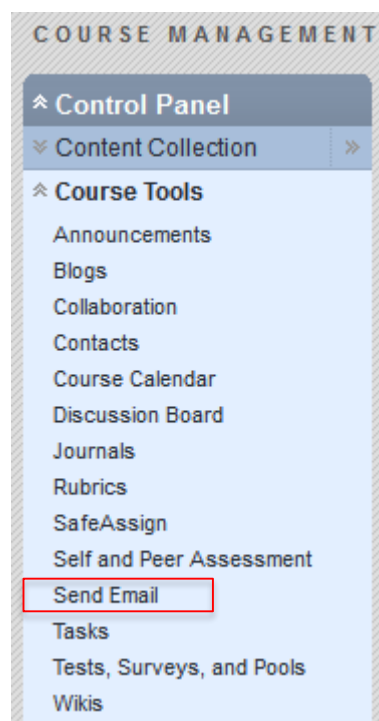
### During the Term

#### Post Announcements

The landing page of every course is the Course Announcements page by default. Posting announcements to your students on the Announcements page may be a very effective way to get a time-critical message to students in your course. Announcements that students like to see in their courses include information about changes in course schedules or meeting locations; information about the course textbook and related materials; and reminders about upcoming assignments, tests, discussions and lectures. It is often the first place that students will look when the weather is threatening or campus life is disrupted by major events. You also have the option to send an e-mail notice to your students about the announcement.

#### Send E-mail to Your Students

Blackboard provides a number of e-mailing options. You can email an individual student, a select group of students, or your entire class from the Send Email tool under Course Tools in the Course Management menu:



If you created student groups with the Manage Groups feature, then you can also email a single group or a selection of groups. Any email you send from CourseWeb appears as if it came from the email address associated with your CourseWeb account. You receive a copy of any message you send in your Pitt email account. ALL email accounts in CourseWeb are Pitt email accounts, i.e., username@pitt.edu. These accounts can be forwarded to other email accounts. Please remind your students that they are responsible for checking their Pitt email accounts or forwarding Pitt email to an account they do check by going to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>.

## Unenroll dropped students

Course enrollments are automatically passed from the student information system (PeopleSoft) to CourseWeb on an additive basis. For example, if a student registers for your course, this information is recorded in PeopleSoft and then at 6:30 am the following morning, it is replicated in the corresponding CourseWeb class section. Unfortunately, if a student drops a class or transfers to a different course section, there isn't a corresponding process to take them out. You need to do this manually. Instructions for removing students from your CourseWeb course may be found at <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/RemovingAUserFromYourCourse.pdf>.

## Assign Students to Groups

Many instructors divide their class into groups to work on class projects or to discuss class material. Assigning students to a group in your CourseWeb course gives that group its own area in your course to collaborate online. You may enable a discussion board, a chat room, a file sharing feature, email, journals, blogs and tasks for each group to facilitate their work in your course.

Groups can be created one at a time or in a batch based on criteria such as the total number of students in a group or the total number of groups. Students can be added manually or set up for student self-enroll.

We recommend that you do not do this until after your class enrollment is stable, after the add/drop period has passed and you have removed those students who have dropped your course from your course roster.

## Course Evaluations

Student evaluations of teaching are often required by academic departments. They must be scheduled at the beginning of the term. For more information, please reference the Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching web site at <http://www.omet.pitt.edu/>.

## Scantron Tests

The Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching (OMET) offers an exam scanning and scoring service to instructors at the University. They provide answer sheets and scoring services at no charge to faculty and teaching assistants. Scoring results are e-mailed to the client in Excel and .pdf format. A [documented procedure](#) has been developed to import scoring results into the CourseWeb grade center.

## After the Term is Over

### Export Your Course and Save it Somewhere Outside of Courseweb

Per our current retention policies, course materials in CourseWeb will remain available in production for the current term plus the three previous consecutive academic terms, and then will be removed if no students in the course have been assigned “G” or “I” grades. It is the instructor’s responsibility to retain their course materials outside of CourseWeb if they wish to use them beyond this period. Instructions for exporting course materials may be found at <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/ExportingYourCourse.pdf>.

### Export Your Grades

Grade information may be exported to an Excel-readable format using the “Work Offline” feature in the CourseWeb Grade Center. Please see <https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/bb9/DownloadingGradesFromTheGradeCenter.pdf> for details.

### Post Your Grades in the Faculty Center Grade Roster

Your grade roster in PeopleSoft is the grade repository of record for the University. At the conclusion of each term, instructors must log in to the Faculty Center through the my.pitt.edu portal and post their students’ grades in PeopleSoft as instructed by their academic departments.

### Make Your Course Unavailable

Once your course is complete and your grades are posted in PeopleSoft, it is a best practice to make your course unavailable, particularly if you have information in your course that you don’t wish to be public, by following these steps:

1. Click on your course (in My Courses)
2. Click on Control Panel (in the left menu bar)
3. Click on **Customization**
4. Click on **Properties**

Select the “**No**” radio button for “Make Course Available” under *Set Availability*

### How to Handle the Unexpected

If you can’t add content	Be sure to turn Edit Mode on.
--------------------------	-------------------------------

If your students can't see your content	Make sure that the course is available, the menu item link is shown, and you have permitted users to see the content.
If all you can see is your Announcements page	Click on the ">" (show course menu) button at the left edge of your browser window.
If your buttons don't work, your menu items look strange or your grade center won't load	Be sure that you are using a web browser that is Blackboard-certified to work with your computer's operating system.
If your grade center calculations look suspicious	Be sure that you don't have duplicate categories defined in your grade center, that your grade center columns are associated with the categories used in your weighted calculations, and your points assigned to each grade item are correct.
If your students can't post content	Have you provided them with a link to follow to your selected tool? Remember, we don't make the Course Management features available to students. Be sure that they are using web browser software that is Blackboard-certified to work with their computer's operating system.
If you are getting an error when you try to add a file to your course	Your course may be over its quota. Files added to your course become part of its content collection. When you remove an item or file from your course content, you are only removing a link to it. Go to your course content collection and remove files there. If you are adding video content to your course, please consider using the Kaltura Media tool. The Kaltura Media tool places video content on a streaming media server outside of CourseWeb and is therefore not included in your course quota calculations.
If you have students in your course that have dropped the class	Students, principal instructors and teaching assistants that are added to your course in PeopleSoft are automatically <b>added</b> to your CourseWeb course each morning. There isn't an automatic feature to <b>remove</b> them.
If you need to combine two sections into one	This is called cross-listing, and we have a form for that: <a href="https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/request-course-cross-listing">https://www.cidde.pitt.edu/request-course-cross-listing</a>
If you need someone to explain all of this to you	Register for and attend one of our workshops at <a href="http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/#tabset-tab-2">http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/#tabset-tab-2</a> or make an appointment to visit one-on-one with one of our Instructional Technologists at <a href="http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/ETC%20Appointment%20Request%20Form">http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/ETC%20Appointment%20Request%20Form</a> .
When all else fails	Look for a solution on our <a href="http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard">http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard</a> support page, or contact the CSSD Help Desk at 412-624-4357

## CSSD Help Desk

**The Technology Help Desk** is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer your technology-related questions. Call them at 412 624-HELP [4357], [submit a help request online](#), or visit their [website](#). They also provide a wide variety of consulting services, help documentation, and online service forms.

## Educational Technology Services

At **CIDDE**, the **Educational Technology Services** team oversees the administration of CourseWeb (the University's course management system), the operations of the Educational Technology Center (ETC) and the administration of technology training programs for faculty and staff. Our team partners with faculty to facilitate and enhance teaching and learning through the appropriate integration of technology. ETS provides individual and departmental consulting and training opportunities for faculty and staff. Schedule an [appointment](#), or sign up for a [workshop](#) today!

**Location:** Alumni Hall, Room B23

### **Business Hours**

8:30-6:00 Monday-Thursday

8:30-5:00 Friday

**Contact Information:** 412-648-2832 / [etc@cidde.pitt.edu](mailto:etc@cidde.pitt.edu)

## Accessibility

The [Office of Disability Resources and Services](#) is available to help faculty with specific student issues and recommendations.

The [Center for Instructional Development and Distance Education](#):

- Offers closed caption decoders and assistive listening devices to the University community at no cost
- Installs and supports display devices in classrooms and lecture halls that open and display captioned content
- Installs (within 24 hours) assistive listening devices at the request of an instructor, student, or Disability Services
- Provides copies of Dragon Naturally Speaking 10 for loan
- Assists faculty and students with the creation of captions for instructional videos
- Licenses and supports streaming media applications that feature captioning

### **Accessibility Compliance Tools**

The [Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool \(WAVE\)](#) is a free web accessibility tool by WebAIM. It uses icons to indicate inaccessible material on a web page.

### **Additional Resources**

The [American Foundation for the Blind \(AFB\)](#) is committed to assisting people with vision loss and has many resources on its website regarding accessibility and assistive technologies.

[Automatic Sync Technologies](#) is one of several fee-based companies that provide video captioning and transcription services to educational institutions.

[Equal Access to Software and Information \(EASI\)](#) is a provider of online training for accessible information technology. The website contains informational resources and webinars.

[Georgia Tech Research on Accessible Distance Education \(GRADE\)](#), a research project at the Georgia Tech Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA), provides an online tutorial on accessibility. It includes ten modules with guidelines for faculty members seeking to make Word, Excel, Flash, and other file types accessible to people with disabilities.

[The Division of Information Technology \(DoIT\) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison](#) offers resources for learning about accessibility including a tutorial, Web Accessibility 101.

The [World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\)](#) is an organization that coordinates global development of Web standards. In particular, review [How to Meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#).

[Web Accessibility in Mind \(WebAIM\)](#) is a collaborative initiative between Utah State University and the Center for Persons with Disabilities and a leader in web accessibility. Videos of students with visual, hearing, and motor disabilities demonstrate various assistive technologies.

[Web Development Resources for Accessibility](#)

[Quality Matters](#) is a program for evaluating online course design according to 41 specific standards. The University of Pittsburgh is a member of this program. It is open to all University of Pittsburgh staff and faculty without additional charge.

## Copyright and Fair Use

### University of Pittsburgh Policy

- **Policy 11-02-02: Copyrights:** <http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/policies/11/11-02-02.html>  
This policy establishes the rights and responsibilities of the University and of faculty, staff, and students regarding the creation and dissemination of original works of authorship, copyright interest, and distribution of royalties.
- **Policy 10-04-01: Copying Copyrighted Material:**  
<http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/policies/10/10-04-01.html>  
This policy affirms the guidelines for making reproductions of copyrighted material, adopted by the University of Pittsburgh in compliance with the Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S. Code. [This covers library reserve use, photocopying, Interlibrary loan, classroom use and prohibits certain activities.]
- **Procedure 10-04-01: Copying Copyrighted Material:**  
<http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/procedures/10/10-04-01.html>  
This policy defines the criteria for making copies of copyrighted material without written



permission of the copyright owner, and to outline the necessary steps for requesting permission when it is required.

- **Policy 10-02-05: Computer Access and Use:**

<http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/policies/10/10-02-05.html>

This policy establishes restrictions regarding the access and use of University owned and maintained computers, computer systems, computer networks, electronic communications facilities, and other related computing facilities used to store and process data, text, and software used by the University.

- **Guidelines for University Web Pages:** <http://www.pitt.edu/~provost/webproced.html>

These guidelines are from the Provost's Committee on the University of Pittsburgh's Presentation on the World Wide Web, which develops general guidelines on Web site publication for the University of Pittsburgh and approves the design and content of the University of Pittsburgh's homepage and various subsidiaries, referred to as Top Level Pages (TLPs).

### Library Services

The University Library System's goal is to provide its faculty, staff and students with instruction that will promote learning by enabling the identification, location, evaluation, and effective use of information.

#### Libguides

LibGuides are library resource guides designed to provide research assistance, subject guides, and useful resources. Visit <http://pitt.libguides.com/> to learn more.

#### [For Students](#)

Find out how to use library resources, including article databases and the library catalog. Also find tips on subjects such as evaluating websites and get one-on-one help from a librarian.

#### [For Faculty & Instructors](#)

Learn how the ULS can help you in your teaching or research. [Request a library session](#) for your students so they can learn how to efficiently and effectively use library resources.

#### [Email](#)

Fill out our email reference form and we will answer within a few hours but no longer than 24 hours (except when the university is closed or between terms).

#### [Phone](#)

Speak with a Reference Librarian for help with simple questions. Call Hillman Reference at 412-648-3330 or [select](#) a different library location.

## Bookstore

The University of Pittsburgh Book Center is available on campus and online to supply both textbooks and classroom supplies!

Website:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~bookctr/> or <http://www.pittbookcenter.com/>

Buy textbooks online:

<http://www.pittbookcenter.com/courselistbuilder.aspx>

## Address

The Book Center  
3601 Forbes Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
412-648-1455

## Hours

Mon – Thurs - 8:30 am - 6:30 pm  
Fri & Sat - 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Sunday - Closed

## Contact

Email: [bookcenter@bc.pitt.edu](mailto:bookcenter@bc.pitt.edu)  
Phone: 412-648-1455  
Fax: 412-648-1902

## Guidelines and Policies

Specific CourseWeb guidelines and policies have been developed to administer the CourseWeb production environment. Guidelines and policies for course retention, course storage quotas, requesting organizations, and third-party components (“Building Blocks”) may be found on the web at <http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/technology/coursewebblackboard>. This page may also be reached from CourseWeb under the tab “CourseWeb Resources.”

