

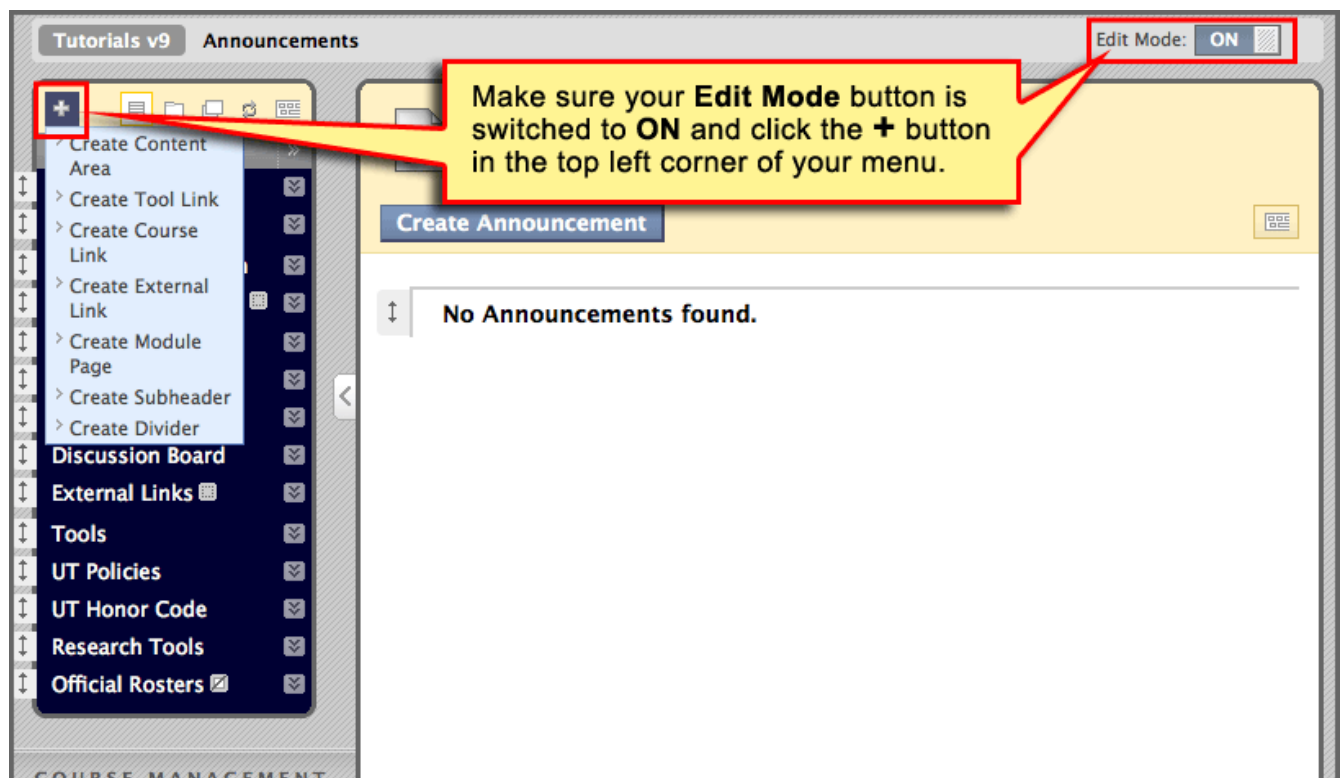


What's New in Blackboard 9.1?

New and improved Graphical User Interface (GUI)

The Blackboard 9 Graphical User Interface (GUI) has a new look-and-feel and is rich with Web 2.0* features. It looks sleeker, requires fewer clicks, and is faster and easier to navigate. Some of the new features include drop down menus, course menu customizations, Instructor's Edit Mode button, drag-and-drop ability, easy content reordering capabilities, contextual help options, better accessibility features, and a Control Panel integrated within the course menu. All of these improvements have significantly reduced the time needed to administer and manage a course site, thereby allowing instructors to spend more of their valuable time on the pedagogical aspects of their courses. Overall, Blackboard 9 is an improved tool over Blackboard 8.

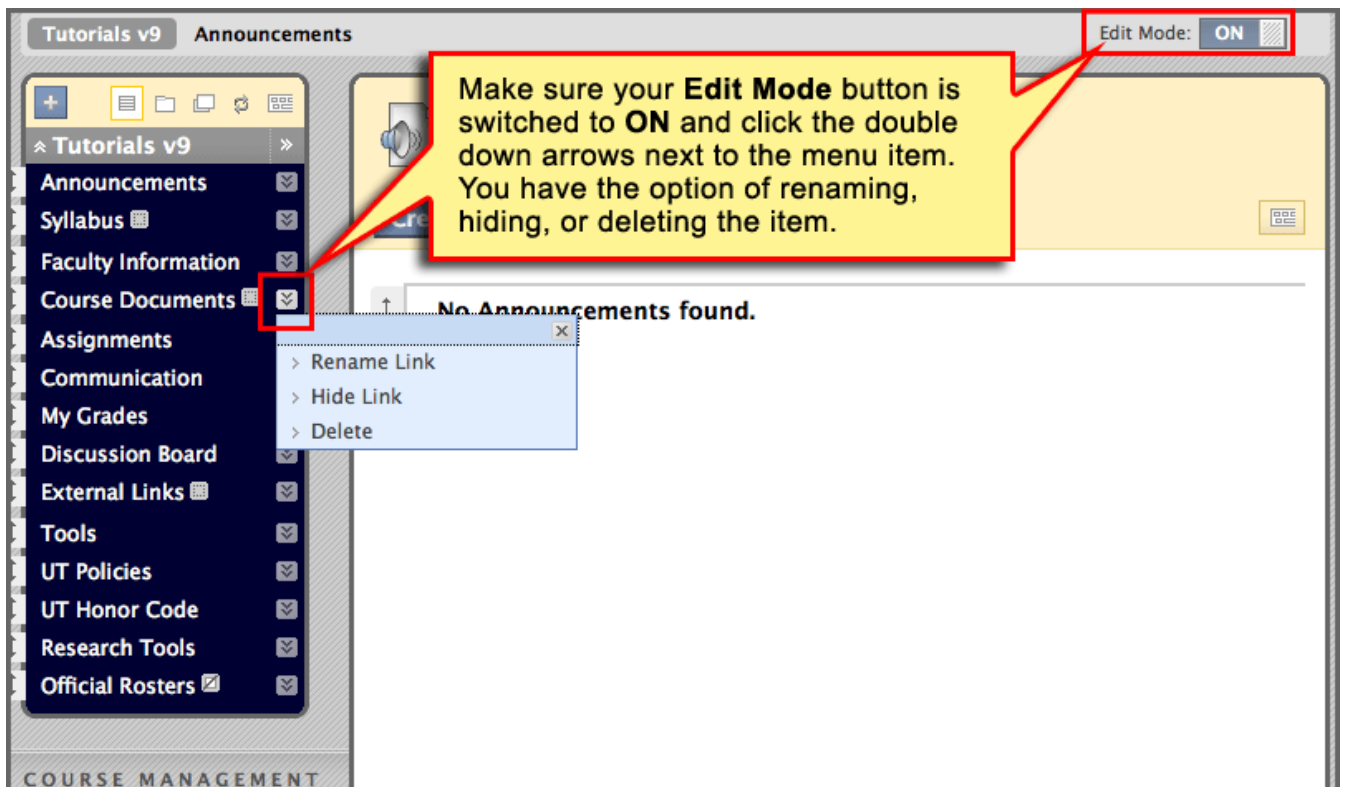
*The term "Web 2.0" (2004-present) is commonly associated with web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design, and collaboration on the World Wide Web. Examples of Web 2.0 include web-based communities, hosted services, web applications, social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis, blogs, mashups, and folksonomies. A Web 2.0 site allows its users to interact with other users or to change website content (Source: [Wikipedia](#)).



Three fundamental principles of navigating and utilizing Blackboard 9

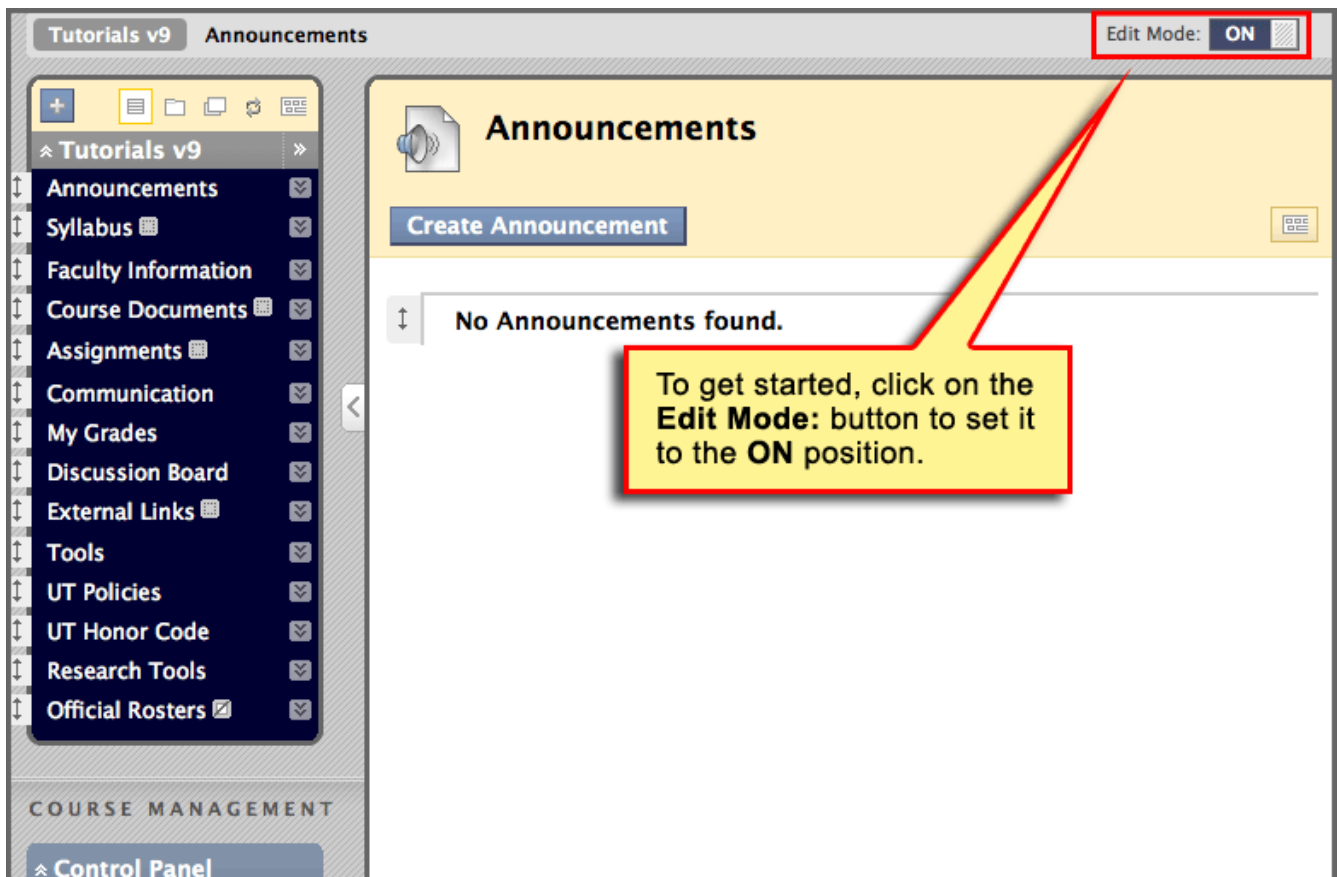
The following three principles make Blackboard 9 very user friendly in comparison to the older version of Blackboard (version 8). You will notice that in addition to the many upgrades, Blackboard 9 also has maintained all of the functionality of previous versions of Blackboard. However, some of the ways of processing requests and tasks in a course site have changed. To serve users better and make navigating faster, many parts of Blackboard have been retooled, relocated, and rearranged. The following are the three fundamental principles of navigating Blackboard 9:

- Turn on the Edit Mode switch (this will enable many navigation and editing tools).
- Look for the "Chevron" (double drop-down arrow next to many items) to find options for a given item.
- Drag and drop the "double-headed" arrows to rearrange the order of items.



Edit Mode: On/Off

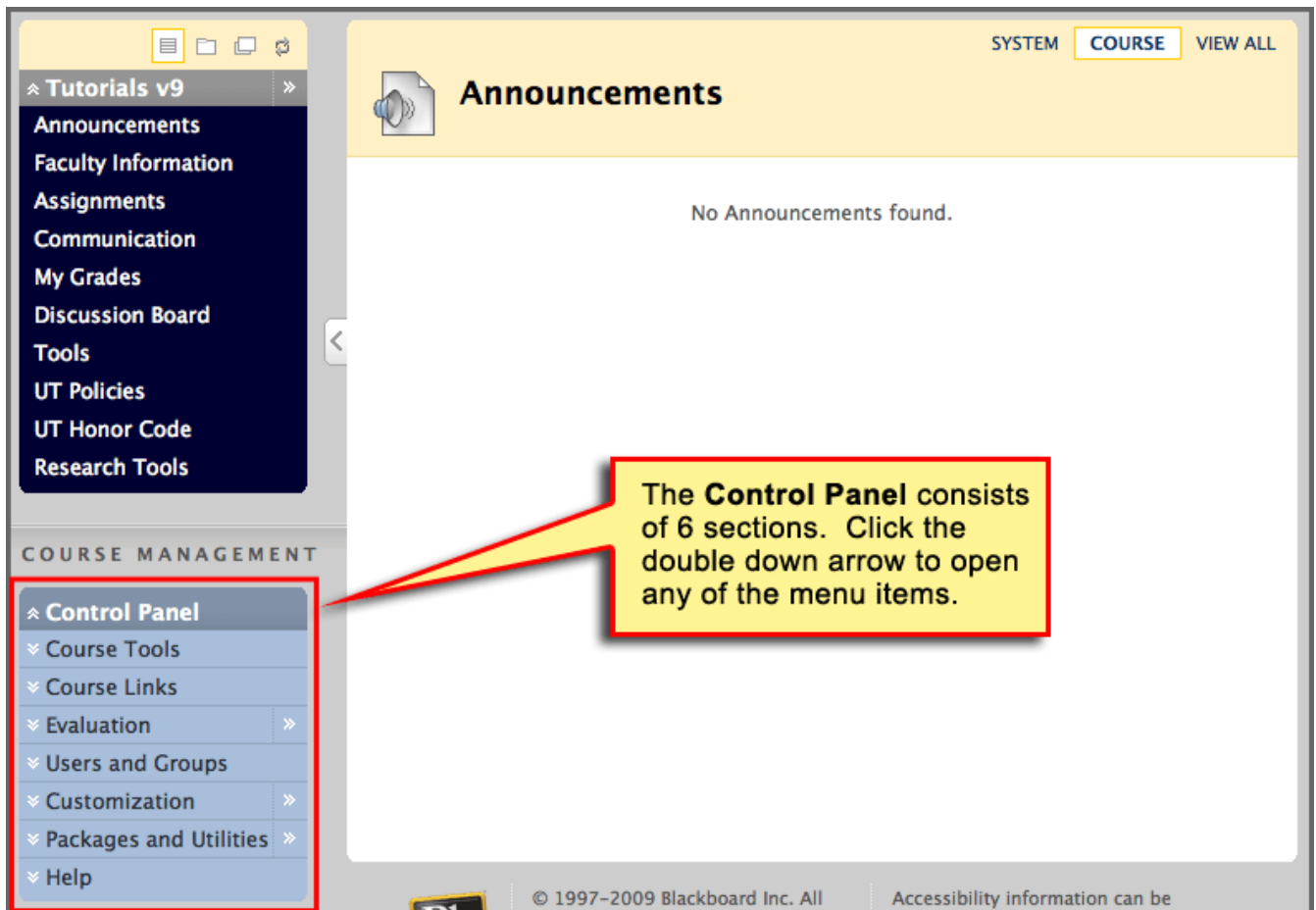
The Edit Mode in Blackboard 9 is similar to "Edit View / Display View" in Blackboard 8. However, whereas Edit View allowed for a more limited functionality while avoiding the use of the Control Panel, Edit Mode in Blackboard 9 opens up all the doors to editing, modifying, and managing content in Blackboard. The Edit Mode switch (located in the top-right corner of any Blackboard course page) allows Instructors to make changes to content from within the Course view instead of navigating through the Control Panel. The Edit Mode toggles On and Off, and must be "ON" in order to allow instructors to access the editing tools. The toggle appears in the navigation bar in each Course area and any subfolders. The Edit Mode toggle is displayed to users with a role of Instructor, TA, and Course Builder. To edit/manage content in your Blackboard course site, toggle Edit Mode to On. To view course content as a student would see it, toggle Edit Mode to Off.



The screenshot displays the Blackboard 9 interface for a course titled "Tutorials v9". The top navigation bar shows "Tutorials v9" and "Announcements". In the top right corner, the "Edit Mode: ON" button is highlighted with a red box. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with items such as "Announcements", "Syllabus", "Faculty Information", "Course Documents", "Assignments", "Communication", "My Grades", "Discussion Board", "External Links", "Tools", "UT Policies", "UT Honor Code", "Research Tools", and "Official Rosters". Below the sidebar is the "COURSE MANAGEMENT" section with a "Control Panel" button. The main content area is titled "Announcements" and features a "Create Announcement" button. Below this, a message states "No Announcements found." A yellow callout box with a red border points to the "Edit Mode: ON" button and contains the text: "To get started, click on the **Edit Mode:** button to set it to the **ON** position."

Integrated control panel and course management tools

In Blackboard 8, the Control Panel was the gateway to managing and customizing a course site. An instructor had to go through the Control Panel in order to make changes. Since Blackboard 9 is designed to minimize the time spent on managing and customizing a course site, there is no longer a separate page for the Control Panel. Rather, the former instructor control panel functions are directly available on the same page as the course Home Page (and on all other pages), below the familiar course menu. Some of the former Control Panel functionality has been absorbed into other areas (for example, the ability to add announcements and edit the course menu directly from the course home page). All the tools that used to be on the Control Panel are now located within a sub-menu under Course Management (which is a part of the main course menu). This natural integration of the former Control Panel into a set of tools under the Course Management heading inside a course is a welcome improvement in the course management workflow.

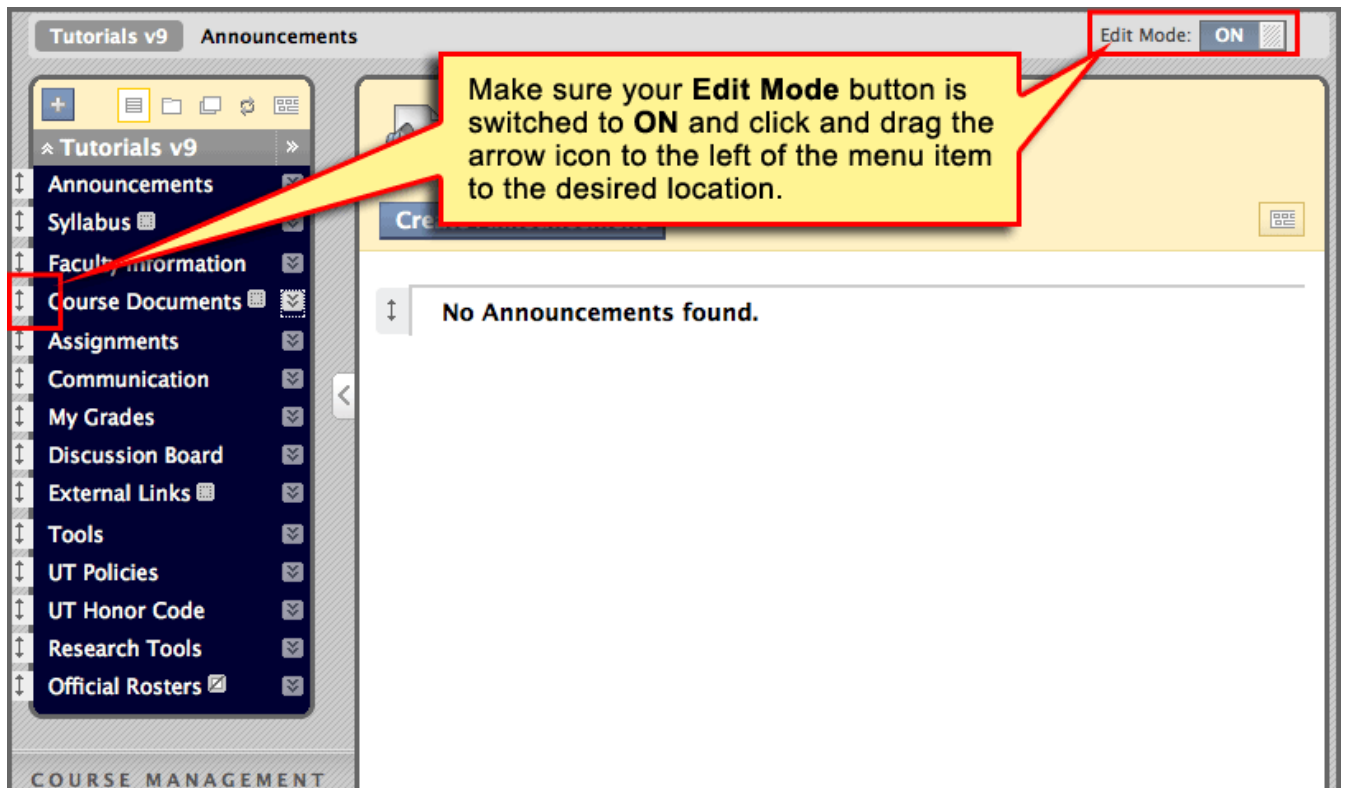


The screenshot displays the Blackboard 9 interface. On the left, a dark blue sidebar menu is open, showing a list of course management tools: Announcements, Faculty Information, Assignments, Communication, My Grades, Discussion Board, Tools, UT Policies, UT Honor Code, and Research Tools. Below this sidebar, a 'COURSE MANAGEMENT' section is visible, containing a sub-menu with the following items: Control Panel, Course Tools, Course Links, Evaluation, Users and Groups, Customization, Packages and Utilities, and Help. A red box highlights the 'Control Panel' item in this sub-menu. A yellow callout box with a red border points to the 'Control Panel' item, containing the text: 'The **Control Panel** consists of 6 sections. Click the double down arrow to open any of the menu items.' The main content area of the page is titled 'Announcements' and displays 'No Announcements found.' The top right of the page shows 'SYSTEM' and 'COURSE' tabs, with 'COURSE' selected. The footer includes copyright information: '© 1997-2009 Blackboard Inc. All' and 'Accessibility information can be'.

Course menus

In Blackboard 8, an instructor had to access the Control Panel and customize a course menu through a multi-click process. In Blackboard 9, instructors can edit and organize their Course Menu and can, in Edit Mode, drag-and-drop the Menu's items to change their order right on the Home Page or any other page. In other words, customizing a course menu in Blackboard 9 is done on-the-fly and almost instantaneously. Drag and drop, and voila! You're done!

Course Menu items that contain no content are automatically hidden from the students' view, but are always visible to the Instructors in Edit Mode. This helps direct students to areas of the course where there is material for them to see. Once content is added to a Course Menu item (e.g. when a syllabus is uploaded or other content is added into a content area), Blackboard automatically makes that Menu item visible to the students.



The screenshot displays the Blackboard 9 Course Management interface. On the left, a vertical sidebar titled "Tutorials v9" contains a list of course menu items: Announcements, Syllabus, Faculty Information, Course Documents, Assignments, Communication, My Grades, Discussion Board, External Links, Tools, UT Policies, UT Honor Code, Research Tools, and Official Rosters. Each item has a small arrow icon to its left. A red box highlights the "Course Documents" item and its arrow icon. A yellow callout box with a red border points to the arrow icon and contains the text: "Make sure your **Edit Mode** button is switched to **ON** and click and drag the arrow icon to the left of the menu item to the desired location." In the top right corner, the "Edit Mode" button is shown as "ON" with a checked checkbox, also highlighted by a red box. The main content area on the right shows a "No Announcements found." message.

Course tools

Course Tools and Communications Tools in previous versions of Blackboard have been combined to form a single Course Tools area that is a part of the Course Management menu in Blackboard 9. This provides instructors easier control over the tools that they want to enable and disable.

It is very important to note that students no longer have a Course Tools panel/link, so if an instructor removes/hides the "Tools" link from the course menu, students will no longer have access to the Tools Area (which will include the following):

- Announcements: Create and view Course Announcements.
- Blogs: Create and manage blogs for Courses and Course Groups.
- Collaboration: Create and manage Virtual Classroom and Chat sessions.
- Contacts: Instructors can post contact information about themselves and others.
- Course Calendar: Track important events and dates through the Calendar.
- Discussion Board: Create and manage Forums within the Discussion Board.
- Elluminate Live!®: Elluminate Live!® is a virtual environment optimized for learning. Whether you have a small group of students or a large class, Elluminate Live! can allow you to have a virtual classroom space to hold your class.
- Glossary: View a list of important terms and their definitions.
- Groups: Create and manage formal groups of students to collaborate on work.
- Journals: Create and manage journals that can be assigned to each user in a group for the purposes of private communication with the instructor.
- My Grades: Shows detailed information about your grades.
- Quota Usage: Get quota information for your course site.
- Reserves and Library Resources
- Rubrics: A Rubric is a tool that lists evaluation criteria for an assignment. Instructors can use Rubrics to explain their evaluations to students.
- Self and Peer Assessment
- Send Email: Send email messages to different types of users and groups in your course site.
- Roster: View a list of users enrolled in the Course.
- Tasks: Use tasks to keep track of work that must be completed. Each Task has a status and a due date.
- User Manual: View the User Manual.

COURSE MANAGEMENT

^ Control Panel

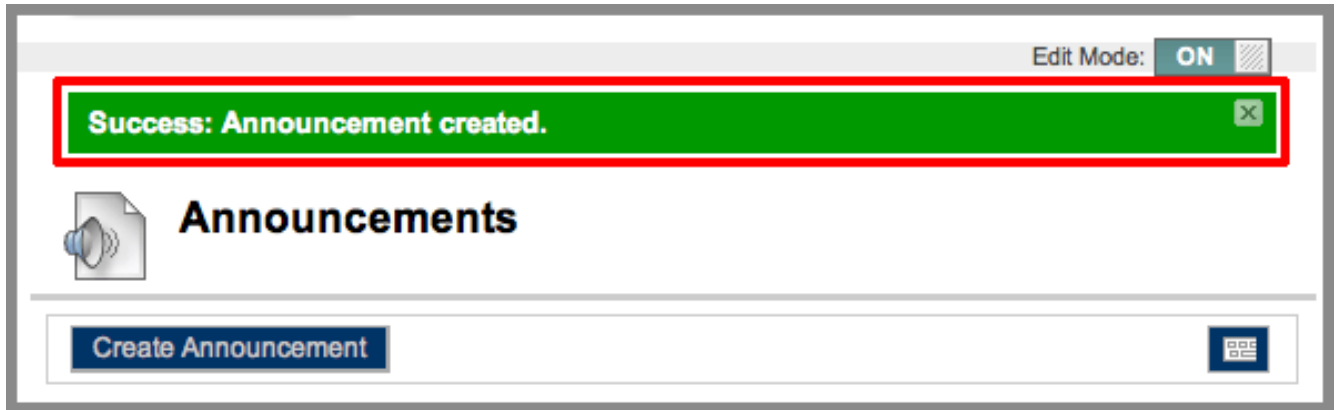
v Files >>

^ Course Tools

- Announcements
- Blogs
- Collaboration
- Contacts
- Course Calendar
- Discussion Board
- Illuminate *Live!*
- Glossary
- Journals
- Quota Usage
- Reserves and Library Resour
- Rubrics
- Self and Peer Assessment
- Send Email
- Tasks
- Tests, Surveys, and Pools
- Wikis

Inline confirmations

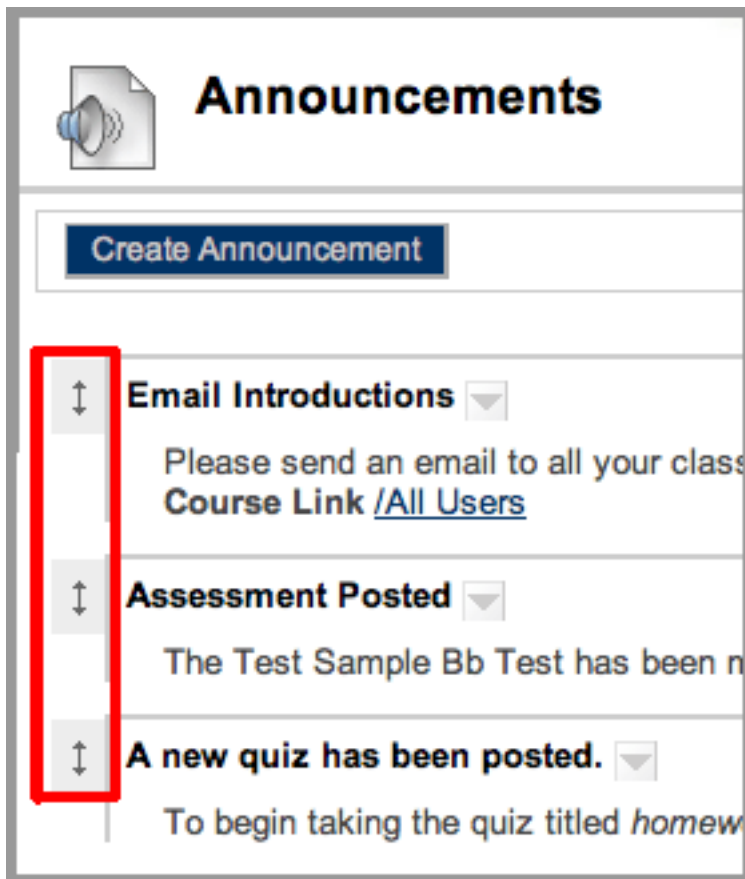
Instead of displaying a separate receipt page every time a user completes an action (as in Blackboard 8's old OK page), Blackboard 9's confirmations display on the same page on which the user was working. At the top of the page you will see a message in green confirming your Blackboard commands, making it faster and easier to use the tool as opposed to waiting for it to work.



Announcements

Instructors can now change the display order of their announcements, thereby allowing priority ordering (in previous versions of Blackboard Announcements would display by date, with the latest at the top). The increased flexibility, provided with new reordering capabilities, ensures that students are getting the most important information and are not missing announcements due to date filters.

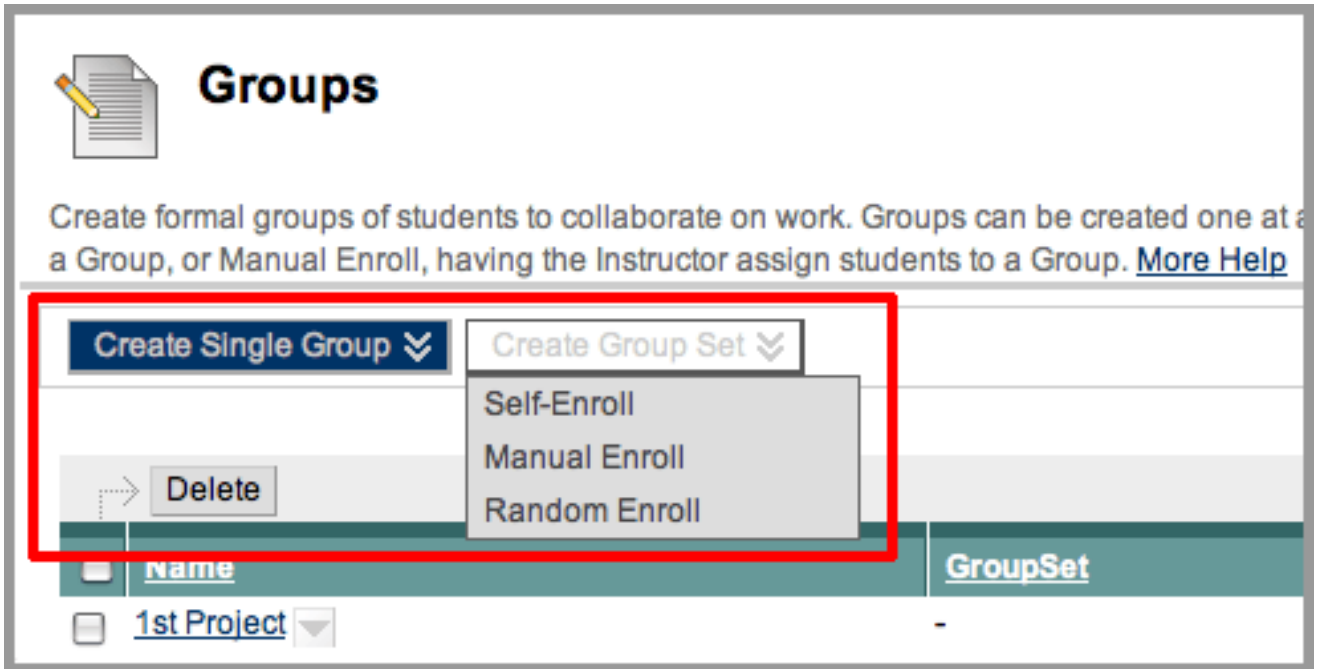
Please note: In Blackboard 9, email notifications for announcements include a link to the announcement but do NOT include the full body of the announcement text.



The screenshot displays the Blackboard Announcements interface. At the top left is a speaker icon, and to its right is the heading "Announcements". Below this is a blue button labeled "Create Announcement". A list of three announcements follows, each with a reordering handle (a vertical double-headed arrow) on the left. The first announcement is titled "Email Introductions" and includes the text "Please send an email to all your class" and a link "Course Link /All Users". The second is titled "Assessment Posted" and includes the text "The Test Sample Bb Test has been n". The third is titled "A new quiz has been posted." and includes the text "To begin taking the quiz titled *homew*". A red rectangular box highlights the reordering handles for the first three announcements.

Group Creation Made Easier

In Blackboard 9, instructor can create any number of groups at once (as opposed to the single group creation process in Blackboard 8). Furthermore, students can randomly be assigned to groups, manually assigned by the instructor, or asked to sign-up for a group themselves. Additionally, students can create their own self-enrollment groups, although instructors have the option of modifying or restricting access to these student-created groups.



The screenshot displays the Blackboard 9 'Groups' interface. At the top left is a document icon with a pencil. The title 'Groups' is prominently displayed. Below the title is a descriptive paragraph: 'Create formal groups of students to collaborate on work. Groups can be created one at a time, or as a GroupSet, or Manual Enroll, having the Instructor assign students to a Group. [More Help](#)'. A red rectangular box highlights the 'Create Single Group' button (with a dropdown arrow), the 'Create Group Set' button (with a dropdown arrow), and the dropdown menu for 'Create Group Set' which lists 'Self-Enroll', 'Manual Enroll', and 'Random Enroll'. Below this, there is a 'Delete' button with a dashed arrow icon. The bottom of the screenshot shows a table header with columns 'Name' and 'GroupSet'. The first row contains the text '1st Project' under the 'Name' column and a hyphen '-' under the 'GroupSet' column.

Blogs, Journals, and Wikis

Blogs, Journals, and Wikis provide students and instructors with a social learning tool for expressing their thoughts and reflecting on their learning, either privately with just the instructor or with other students in the course. In either case, both blogs and journals are only restricted to a particular course and are not available to the outside world. These tools empower all course users to create and share ideas, while instructors maintain the ability to edit or remove any inappropriate material. There are three types of blogs; two types of journals; and two types of Wikis in Blackboard.

Individual Blogs provide each student with his or her own area to publicly share thoughts and work with others in the course and to receive comments and feedback on entries.

Course Blogs allow all users in the course to share their thoughts and work in one common area that everyone can read and comment on. All entries are posted to the same page to help promote collaboration among all course members. Users can add entries and comment on entries anonymously to maintain privacy.

Group Blogs allow groups of students to collaboratively post thoughts and comment on each others' work while all other users in the course can view and comment on their entry.

Individual Journals allow students to record their course experiences and what they are learning. These thoughts can be a private communication between a student and the instructor or shared with everyone in the course. Journal entries can be commented on by the author and the instructor. Others are able to read public Journals, but they cannot comment on them.

Group Journals allow groups of students to reflect collaboratively on their course work and comment on their fellow group members' findings. To maintain privacy, Journal entries may be added anonymously by group members.

Course Wikis are created by the Instructor and any course member can add pages, unless the Instructor intends to be the sole author and use the Wiki as course content. Please note that there is a 1000 character text limit for each wiki page.

Group Wikis are enabled by the Instructor and can be read by all course members, but a user must be a member of the Group to edit a page or make a comment on a Group Wiki page. The Instructor can change the default setting to allow only Group members to view a Group Wiki.

In each of these cases, users create entries, which are added to their Blog, Journal, or Wiki. The entries can be saved as drafts or published and then edited

later. When entries are added to the Blog, Journal, or Wiki, they are added automatically to an index organized by date. A "New" indicator is displayed on entries and comments that the user has not yet displayed. Entries also can be marked as "New" again to create a reminder.

What is the difference between a Blog, a Journal, and a Wiki?

A Blog is a commentary by an individual or set of individuals that is for public consumption and comment. A Journal is an on-going reflection or record of events by an individual or set of individuals.

Blogs

Blogs are an open communications tool for Students to share their thoughts. [More Help](#)

Create Blog

Display Blogs

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name	Type
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>World History Blog</u>	Individual

Context menu options: Open, Edit, Delete