

Blackboard Policies

Accessing the Blackboard System

User Accounts

- All Towson University Faculty, Staff, and Students will have access to Blackboard. Accounts for Faculty & Staff are created after all HR paperwork has been completed. Student accounts are created when accepted into Towson.
- Faculty, Staff, and Students will use their Towson email address to access Blackboard. Towson email accounts will be the default email account in the Blackboard system.
- If a faculty member has a guest lecturer, a guest account can be created. Guest accounts will be created by the Blackboard Administrator only and will be removed immediately following the lecturer's obligation. These accounts will need to be requested by the Faculty member of the course site.
- Towson Guest accounts do not automatically get access to Blackboard. If Blackboard access is needed for a Towson Guest account, please include that in the information when requesting the guest account.
- All users will follow the Guidelines for Responsible Computing.
- Faculty & Staff accounts are removed when they depart the university. When a student is not enrolled in a Towson course for 6 consecutive semesters, their account will be removed from the system.

Course Sites

Creation

- All courses that exist in PeopleSoft will be created in Blackboard 180 days before the start of the semester. Courses created in PeopleSoft within the 180-day window before the start of the semester will be created in Blackboard automatically.
- Instructors have the option of having course enrollments merged into one Blackboard course site. To merge your course sections, complete the online Course Combine Request Form found on the Towson Blackboard page at <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/combinerequest.html>.
- Courses cannot be created before the 180-day window. If an instructor needs a course site before this time frame, they may request a shell course at <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/courserequest.html>

Course Availability

- By default, all course sites will be set to Unavailable. It is the instructor's responsibility to make the course available to students. (Courses Page > Ellipses > Open Course)

- All courses will be made unavailable 1 month after the semester is complete. If a student needs to finish a grade of Incomplete after this time, faculty will need to make the course available again.
- Course sites being used during the current semester must have the current semester code in their Course ID and Course Name. Auto course enrollments will be based upon these codes. If you would like to use course materials or layout from a previous semester, you will need to use the course copy feature.

Course Content

- Instructors are responsible for creating and maintaining content in their course site. Instructors will need to keep a copy of all files they add to Blackboard, either on their H Drive or OneDrive. If a file is deleted from Blackboard, it cannot be retrieved.
- Instructors are responsible for grades stored in the Blackboard course site. Instructors should save copies of their Grade Center before making changes in the course site and at the end of every semester.
- Final Grades need to be posted to PeopleSoft.

Course Quota

- Courses will have a quota of 10GB. Instructors will receive an email notification if their course reaches 9GB. Individual files uploaded to Blackboard cannot be larger than 2.5GB. Files larger than 2.5GB will need to be added to your OneDrive and linked to your course site.
- It is the instructor's responsibility to keep the course site quota low. If an instructor receives the notification that they are over their course quota, they can view and delete unused files from their course. (Content Stream > Ellipses > Unused Files)

Course Retention

- It is up to the professor to make sure all files associated with their courses are saved either on their H Drive or OneDrive. If a file is deleted from Blackboard, it cannot be retrieved.
- It is the instructor's responsibility to export and store a backup of their Blackboard Course Site. The saved file can then be restored to a course on the Blackboard environment. For export instructions, see <https://techhelp.towson.edu/TDClient/1879/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=141808>
Please note: student information is not stored or saved in a course export.
- All courses that were used during the current semester will remain on the Blackboard system for 2 years after they are taught. Blackboard Administrators will remove Winter and Spring courses that are older than 2 years in March. Summer and Fall courses that are older than 2 years will be removed in October. All courses will be kept in storage for an additional 3 years.

Enrollment

- Student enrollments in Blackboard course sites will be based on the official PeopleSoft roster. Instructors should verify their Blackboard course roster with the PeopleSoft course roster and contact Blackboard support with any discrepancies.
- Enrollments are updated every hour.
- Instructor enrollments in Blackboard course sites will be based on their registration in PeopleSoft. Instructors cannot be enrolled in courses on Blackboard unless their paperwork is completed and they have been listed as the instructor on PeopleSoft.

Organizations

- Campus groups or departments may request a Blackboard Organization. To request a site, email blackboard@towson.edu.
- Organization leaders are responsible for enrolling members into their organization sites.
- Abuse of the Guidelines for Responsible Computing by any member of the organization will result in loss of access to the organization site.

Course Roles

- Instructor Role: is enrolled automatically in the courses they are teaching, with the ability to access both available and unavailable sections of the course.
- Student Role: Is enrolled automatically in the courses they are taking and deactivated in courses they have dropped. Has access to courses and sections of the courses that are available.
- Teaching Assistant/Librarian: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors but are not listed in the course as Instructors.
- Course Builder: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors in Content Areas, but has no access to the Grade Center or related areas.
- Grader: Is added to the course manually. Has the same access as Instructors in the Gradebook and related areas of the course, but no edit, manage, or remove access within the Content Areas.
- FACET Reviewer: Has access to the content area and all content, but no access to the Gradebook, or to edit any content.

Upgrades and Maintenance

- Blackboard will be updated on the first Thursday of each month unless otherwise stated. Please note that Towson University has no control over these dates and they are subject to change.
- For a list of new features and upcoming update dates, please see <https://wp.towson.edu/bbstatus/blackboard-saas-monthly-updates/>.
- Unplanned outages will be posted on OTS Alerts and the @techattu Twitter page.

- System Issues – once 3 cases for an issue have been reported, the issue will be posted to the system status tab within Blackboard. The issue will be updated there. Issues with fewer than 3 reported cases will be handled on an individual basis.

Communication from TU Blackboard

- All faculty emails will be sent 1-2 weeks before a semester begins, and 1-2 weeks before a semester ends. All faculty emails will also be sent approximately 1 month before the archival and removal of old courses.
- Any important notifications will be posted in the Blackboard environment.

Support

- For assistance, Faculty, Staff, and Students should create a service request using <https://techhelp.towson.edu>. All service requests created during non-peak periods (beginning and end of every semester) will receive a response within 1 business day. During peak periods, response time will be within 2 business days.
- Users may call the Blackboard Support line at 410-704-5151 during business hours.
- One-on-one appointments are available to all faculty, staff, and students by going to <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/BOOKINGSOTSBBSUPPORT@tu.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>.
- Departmental trainings can be scheduled using the Training form at <https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/trainingrequest.html>
- The Blackboard Team provides training related to Blackboard tools, features, and troubleshooting assistance. If a faculty member needs course building assistance, they should contact the Faculty Academic Center of Excellence at Towson (FACET).
- All Instructors are automatically enrolled in the Blackboard Community site (Faculty Resources for Bb Ultra). This site will include information to find support, instructor resources and the Blackboard Pop-Up schedule.

Integration Request

- All Blackboard integration requests can take up to 6 months to process. Integration requests should be requested at least one semester before they are needed.
- Integrations must be approved by the Office of Information Security, OTS Accessibility, and Blackboard Administration prior to implementation.
- For more information and to submit a request <https://wp.towson.edu/bbstatus/integration-requests/>