

Basic Instructor Manual Blackboard 9.1

Instructor manual – July 2017

Applications management Blackboard, Student and Educational Affairs (SEA), Leiden University

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Many thanks to: Ecole – Faculty of Humanities

Introduction

Blackboard is the online learning environment for Leiden University. A learning environment is a web-based tool designed to help manage and improve student learning. It can be used as a communication platform between student and instructor. This manual contains basic information about Blackboard.

Blackboard is compatible with most web browsers. Please check the latest requirements at [supported browsers](#).

TIP: If you experience difficulties when working with Blackboard in your browser, please try another browser.

1. Blackboard Navigation

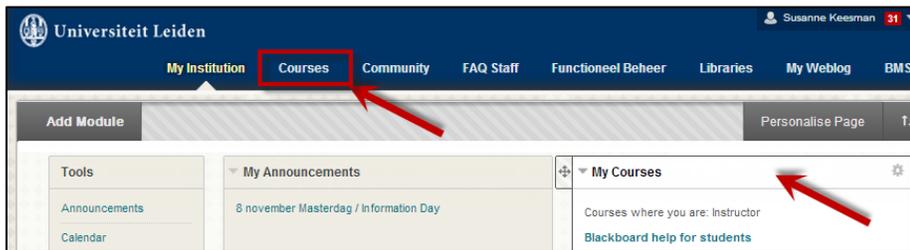
1.1 Access to Blackboard

1. Go to: <https://blackboard.leidenuniv.nl/>
2. Enter your Username and Password
3. Click **Login**. You will now be redirected to your personal Blackboard Home Page.

Note: No valid user credentials? Please contact the Blackboard helpdesk at your faculty.

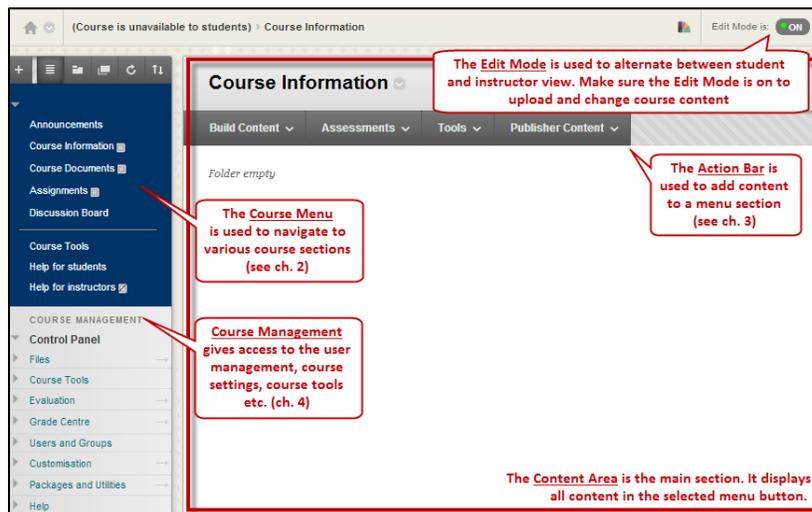
1.2 Access to your course

After logging in you are redirected to the My Institutions page. The courses in which you are enrolled as an instructor will be displayed on the right in the module called My Courses. Alternatively, click the tab Courses next to My Institution (image on next page). To open a course, click on its title.



1.3 Edit Mode and Course Components

Once you have accessed a course you will see the five areas highlighted in the image below. The Edit Mode (upper right corner) is necessary to edit course content. Make sure it is set to **On**.



2. Editing the Course Menu

Most courses are created from a template with menu items for Announcements, Course Information, Course Documents and Assignments. In the following paragraphs you learn more how to edit the course menu.

Please note: it is important to decide on a course structure and layout before uploading content as it takes a lot of time to move content when it is already uploaded.

2.1 Icons in the Course Menu

Once the Edit Mode is On, various icons will appear in the course menu that allow you to add or modify the Menu. The image to the right highlights the icons that are displayed below.



Add a menu item: A menu item can be added by clicking the plus in the upper left corner of the course menu. Chapter 2.3 explains how this works and what kind of menu items can be added.



Drag and Drop: You can easily change the menu order by using the drag and drop function. When you grab the item at the symbol shown left you can easily drag it to the desired location, and drop it in another place in the course menu (see chapter 2.4).



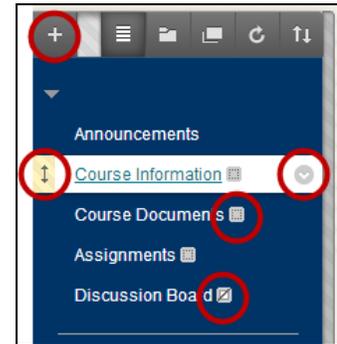
Options for Menu item: Clicking the arrow behind the course item name gives you a menu with options for that specific course menu item. Use this arrow for instance to change the visibility of a menu item (see chapter 2.5).



No content button: Menu items without content can be recognized by this symbol. These menu items will be automatically invisible for students, so they will never land on an empty page.



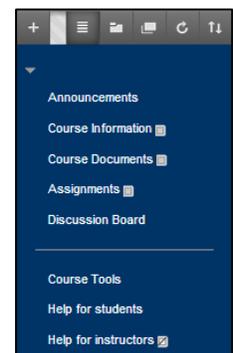
Hidden menu items: It is also possible to hide menu items for students that do contain content. You can recognize hidden menu items by the symbol shown on the left. In chapter 2.5 is explained how to make menu items visible or invisible.



2.2 What content will students expect to find in your course?

Most faculties work with a default course template. So most Blackboard courses have the same lay-out. Students will expect to find certain information in your Blackboard course behind certain menu items. The following list explains what each area is used for (if used at your faculty):

- **Announcements:** is the home page of your course. Here, you can place announcements, welcome messages, notifications and reminders.
- **Course Information:** can be used to place general information regarding the course, like course description, teaching objectives, literature information, weekly schedule, etc.
- **Course Documents:** can be used to place documentation provided by the instructor, like PowerPoint presentations, hand-outs etc.
- **Assignments:** is the page to place (digital) assignments, tests and surveys.
- **Discussion Board:** is an option for enrolled students and instructors to enter into discussion.
- **Course Tools/Tools:** Under this button, students will find links to various course tools. Examples of course tools are My grades, Wikis, Blogs and the option to send emails.

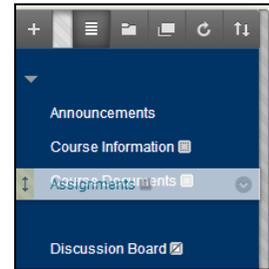


2.3 Changing the order of the Menu items: using Drag and Drop

Changing the order of menu items can be done quite easily by using the drag and drop function.

1. Move the mouse pointer to the arrow at the left of your menu button.
2. Click on the arrow and keep the mouse button depressed.
3. Move the menu item to the desired place.
4. Drop the menu item on the desired place by releasing the mouse button.

Drag and drop can be used to relocate various items in your course, for instance Course Content, Announcements etc. This can only be done when the **Edit Mode** is **On**.

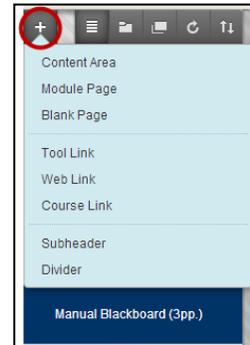


2.4 Adding Menu items

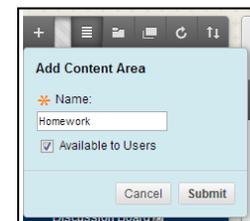
To add a menu item, follow these steps:

1. Click the grey **plus**
2. Pick the desired course menu item you want to add
3. Fill in the form that appears (see below)
4. Click **Submit**.

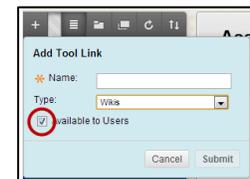
The new Menu item will appear at the bottom of the course menu. It can be moved to the desired location using drag and drop. Below is a list with an explanation of the seven options. It explains what has to be filled into the form that might appear in step 3.



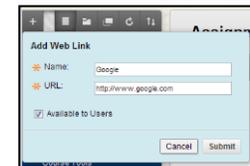
Create Content Area: creates a menu item in which you can place content items (e.g. Course Documents). Walk through the steps above. The form that is displayed on the right will appear at step 3. Fill in a **Name** and make the area **Available to Users**.



Create Tool Link: provides a direct access to a certain Tool (e.g. Discussion Board). Walk through the steps above. Fill in a name for the menu item, select the kind of tool it has to link to and make the form available.



Create Web Link: contains a hyperlink to an external website on the internet. Walk through the steps at the beginning of this paragraph. The form that is displayed on the right will appear at step 3. Fill in a display **Name** and the **URL** of the website and make the form **Available to Users**.

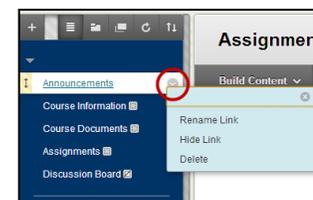


Create Subheader/Divider: helps to organize the course menu. For a divider (straight line that can be used to create sections in the Course Menu), no form will appear. To create a Subheader or a Divider, walk through the steps explained at the beginning of this paragraph. When creating a Subheader, a form will appear at step 3. Fill in the **Name** and click **Submit**.

2.5 Managing menu items: edit, remove, visible and invisible

To display the options for editing a menu button, click on the chevron. In Blackboard a menu item is a Link.

- **Rename Link:** Use Rename Link to change the name of your item.
- **Hide Link / Show Link:** Make a menu item visible or invisible for students.
- **Permit / Deny Guests:** Makes a certain menu item visible or invisible for guests.
- **Delete:** Removes a menu item.



Note: When deleting a menu item you are notified about the number of 'children', i.e. items, folders, and subfolders, that you are going to remove. Although the menu item will be deleted, the underlying content (files) remains available in the course's Files section in the Control Panel.

3. Course content: Filling your course with content

This section discusses how to fill your course with content. It is important to know the difference between **Course Content** and **Course tools**. Items designed for course content will lead to a page where you can upload your files, for instance the item Course Information and Course Documents in the template (see chapter 2.2). Besides this, Blackboard offers an extensive selection of Tools that can be put to use in your course. It is possible to make a link to these tools in the course menu (such as Announcements and Discussion Board) or in a certain Content item (for instance Wikis and SafeAssign).

Note: Before you enter any content, check if your content meets the copyright regulations. See the final chapter of this manual.

3.1 Creating an Announcement

Announcements is the home page of your course. Here, you can place welcome messages, notifications and reminders. Often, these are short references to new or modified items elsewhere in the course, or notifications about the absence of an instructor etc.

1. Navigate to **Announcements** in the Course menu.
2. Choose Create Announcement.



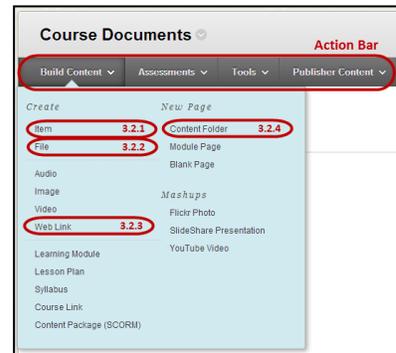
A form will now appear you have to fill out in order to place the announcement:

3. In step 1, enter a *Subject* and *Message* text.
4. In step 2, select duration options. By selecting *Date Restricted* instead of *Not date restricted* (posted immediately), it is possible to let Blackboard place the announcement after and/or until a certain time and date.
5. To send the announcement to all enrolled users (students, instructors etc.) by e-mail, check the box of *Email Announcement*. If you do not choose this option, students will still see the announcement when logging in.
6. If desired, make a link to a location elsewhere in the course. To do so, search and select the location using **Browse...**
7. Finally, click **Submit**. The announcement will now be displayed in your course. To delete an announcement, see section 3.4.

Note: New Announcements appear directly below the repositionable bar (recognized by the text '*New announcements appear below this line*'). Reorder by dragging Announcements to new positions. Move priority Announcements above the repositionable bar to pin them to the top of the list and prevent new Announcements from superseding them. The repositionable bar is not visible for students.

3.2 Building Content

Blackboard offers an extensive amount of options to build various types of course content. Once the Edit Mode is 'on', every menu button for Course Content will show the following buttons in the (grey) **Action Bar**. The following image shows all the possible content items that can be created, ordered in three categories: Create, New Page and Mashups. In this Basic Instructor Manual, we will cover four basic functions that Blackboard offers under **Build Content**. These functions are highlighted in the image on the right with a reference to the respective subsections.



3.2.1 Creating Items

Items are general pieces of content: any type of file, text or image that appears to users in a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan or folder is an item. Items can be recognized by this icon . To create an item, walk through the following steps:

1. Open the menu item in which you want to place an Item, e.g. Course Information.
2. Click **Build Content** in the action bar.
3. Click **Item** (category: *Create*).

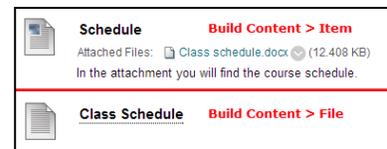
A form will appear that you have to fill out. This is displayed in the image on the right.

4. Enter a **Name**.
5. Enter your **Text** in the Text box. If desired, use the Visual Text Editor (see chapter 3.3).
6. It is possible to upload a file such as a PDF or PowerPoint. To do so, click **Browse My computer** or drag the file from your computer.
7. In Section 3 you can choose special options for the item.
 - a. *Permit users to View this Content* makes sure that the item is visible (yes) or invisible (no) to students.
 - b. *Track Number of Views* will record the number of times the Item is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom.
 - c. *Select Date and Time Restrictions* can be used to make items visible for a certain period.
8. When finished, click **Submit** to upload the item.

3.2.2 Uploading Files

Uploading files can be done in two ways. The difference is an aesthetic one and is displayed in the image on the right. Option 1 is to upload a file while creating an Item (as explained above). Option 2 is:

1. Open the menu item in which you want to place an Item.
2. From the action bar, select **Build Content > File** (category: *Create*). You will now have to fill out a form.



3. In step 1, **Browse** for the file you want to upload and enter a Name.
4. In step 2, select **Open in New Window: Yes** (see note below).
5. In step 3, optionally enter Date and Time restrictions.

6. Finally, click **Submit**.

Note: When uploading an attachment, always set **Open in New Window** to Yes to reduce open/download problems for students.

3.2.3 Uploading media files

When you want to add audio to your course, please upload them as mp3 files. You can use one of the many free on-line available conversion tools to save your WAV file to an mp3 file, e.g. Audacity. It is available for Windows, Mac and Linux, and distributed by the ISSC.

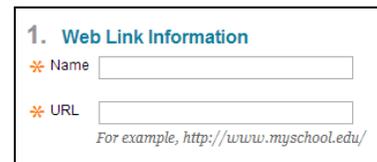
Please use Kaltura to add video to your course. An extended manual is available: *Manual Kaltura through Blackboard - Instructor*.

3.2.4 Creating a Hyperlink

Add a Web Link to a Content Area to provide a quick access point to relevant materials.

1. Open the menu button in which you want to place the Web Link.
2. From the action bar, select **Build Content > Web Link**.

Fill out the form that appears. It is very similar to the one shown whilst creating an Item.



1. **Web Link Information**

* Name

* URL

For example, <http://www.myschool.edu/>

3. Enter a **Name** and the **web page** of the hyperlink
4. If desired, enter a **Description** of the link in section 2.
5. Section 3 allows you to attach a file.
6. In section 5 you can choose special options for the item.
 - a. *Permit users to View the Content Item* makes sure that the item is visible (yes) or invisible (no) to students.
 - b. *Track Number of Views* will record the number of times the Item is viewed.
 - c. *Select Date and Time Restrictions* can be used to make items visible for a certain period.
7. Finally, click **Submit** to create the hyperlink.

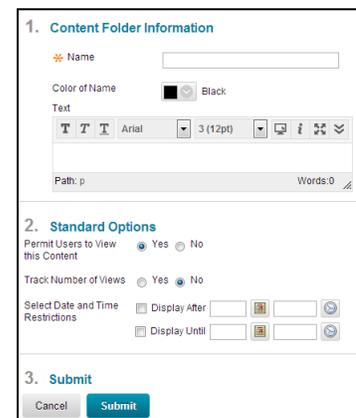
3.2.5 Creating a Folder

A Content Folder is a way of organizing content items, by grouping related materials. Using folders to organize content items can make materials easier to find and reduce the length of a Content Area page. To create a folder, follow the following steps:

1. Navigate to the Content Area in which you want to place a folder.
2. From the **Action Bar**, select **Build Content > Content Folder** (under *New Page*).

Fill out the form that appears:

3. In section 1, enter a **Name**, and, if desired, a (short) summary of the content that can be found in the folder in the field **Text**.
4. Section 2 allows you to choose options:
 - a. *Permit users to View the Content Item* makes the item visible (yes) or invisible (no) for students.
 - b. *Track Number of Views* will record the number of times the Item is viewed.
 - c. *Select Date and Time Restrictions* can be used to make items visible for a certain period.
5. Finally, click **Submit** to create the Folder.



1. **Content Folder Information**

* Name

Color of Name

Text

Path: Words: 0

2. **Standard Options**

Permit Users to View this Content Yes No

Track Number of Views Yes No

Select Date and Time Restrictions Display After

Display Until

3. **Submit**

Cancel Submit

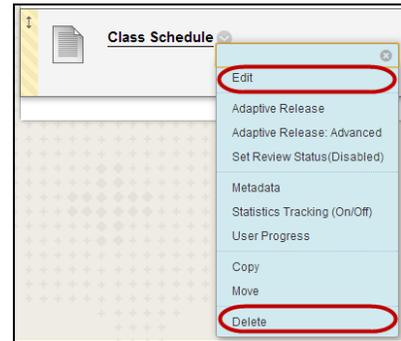
3.4 Content in menu buttons: order, edit, and delete

It is possible to edit, reorder or delete created content items.

1. You can manage the **order** of items in menu buttons easily by using drag and drop (see chapter 2.3).

To move or delete content Items:

2. Click the chevron behind the content item ().
3. Choose **Edit** to change the content text or options. You will see a form similar to creating a Content Item.
4. Choose **Delete** to delete the specific item. You will be asked to confirm your action before deleting the content from the course permanently.

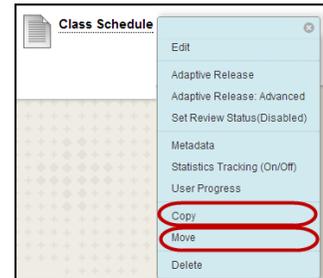


Note: Deleted files will remain available via the course's Files section in the Control Panel. To really delete a file from a course, you also have to remove the files from the Files section.

3.5 Copy or Move Course Content

Many Content Items, including Links, URLs, Content Folders, Learning Modules, Offline Content and Tools can be moved between menu buttons or folders inside the course and in between Courses. To move content to another Course, the user must be enrolled as an Instructor in both Courses. Copying content will make a copy of the content in the destination folder. Moving content deletes the content from the original location.

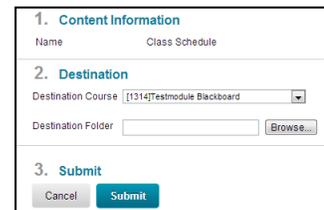
1. Click the **chevron** behind the content item ().
2. Choose **Copy** or **Move**.



The form that appears will be similar for both options.

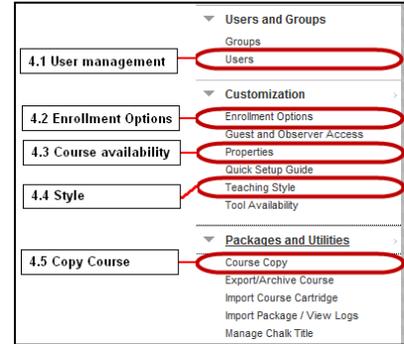
3. Select the **Destination Course**. The dropdown list will display all courses in which you are enrolled. Do not change the destination Course if you want to copy or move the content within the current course.
4. Select the **Destination Folder** by clicking **Browse**. The popup will show a list of all menu buttons and underlying folders of the Destination Course.
5. Click **Submit**.

Section 4.5 will explain how to copy all course content at once.

A form for copying or moving content. It is divided into three sections: 1. Content Information, 2. Destination, and 3. Submit. In the 'Content Information' section, the 'Name' field contains 'Class Schedule'. In the 'Destination' section, the 'Destination Course' dropdown menu is set to '[1314]Testmodule Blackboard', and the 'Destination Folder' field is empty with a 'Browse...' button next to it. In the 'Submit' section, there are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons.

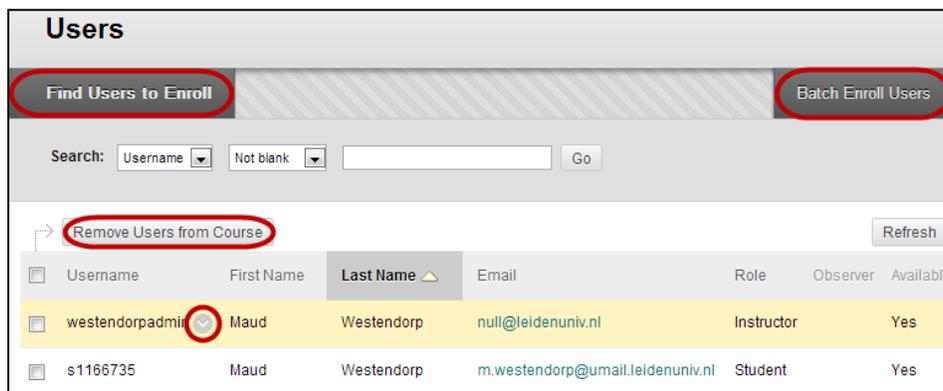
4. Course Management: The Control Panel

Each course has a **Control Panel** that can be used to access various tools. In this chapter, five of the most used Tools will be discussed. These tools are highlighted in the image to the right with a reference to the subsection in which they will be discussed.



4.1 User management

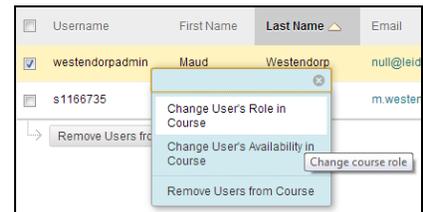
Blackboard automatically generates an overview of all enrolled users. This overview will have the following appearance. The important buttons have been highlighted:



4.1.1 Change User roles

You can change the role of a user by taking the following steps:

1. Navigate to the *User Management: Control Panel* > **Users and groups** > **Users**.
2. Click the **chevron** () behind the username.
3. Choose **Change User's Role in Course**.



A new window will appear:

4. Choose the role you want to assign to the selected user, for instance 'Student' or 'Instructor'
5. Make sure the availability of the user is **Yes** (this is the default setting).
6. Click **Submit**.

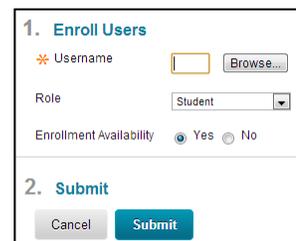


4.1.2 Add Users

It is possible to enroll students and co-instructors. To enroll users, take the following steps:

1. Navigate to the *User Management: Control Panel* > **Users and groups** > **Users**.
2. Click **Find Users to enroll**.

In the next screen select the user:



3. Fill in the username. If necessary, use **Browse** to search for the user.
4. Choose the desired **Role**.
5. Make sure the enrollment is Available (Yes).
6. Finally, click **Submit**.

4.1.3 Delete students

Note: It is often not desirable to delete students from a course, since you will also delete the student's submitted (group-)work in this course. If you are not sure if a student should be deleted, please contact the helpdesk at your faculty.

To delete a student from your course, please take the following steps:

1. Navigate to the *User Management: Control Panel > Users and groups > Users*.
2. Check the box in front of the user. It is possible to delete multiple users at once.
3. Click on **Remove Users from Course**.



Note: It is not possible to remove another instructor from the course. If you would like to do this, please contact the Blackboard helpdesk. Make sure to mention the Course Name, Course ID and the name of the instructor that has to be removed from the course in your email.

4.2 Managing Enrollment Options

By default, students enroll themselves to Blackboard courses via the Course Catalog. This setting is generally used within Leiden University. This standard setting can be changed in two ways: you can change the Enrollment Options or create an End Date for enrollment.

If you want to change the Enrollment Options, follow these steps:

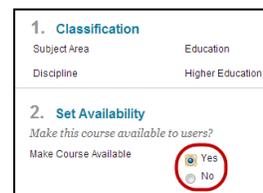
1. Click on **Customization > Enrollment Options** in Control Panel .
2. choose whether students can enroll themselves (Self Enrollment) or that the instructor adds the students (Instructor/System Administrator). You can also choose to allow students to send you an enrolment request.
3. After editing, click **Submit** to apply your changes.

4.3 Course availability

The Blackboard helpdesk at your faculty makes all courses for the new semester available at the start of the new semester. All courses of the previous academic year will be made unavailable at the end of that year.

It is possible to make a course available or unavailable yourself at any time. To do so, take the following steps:

1. In the Control Panel navigate to **Customization > Properties**.
2. In the form that appears, change the availability in section 2 under **Make Course Available**. Selecting **Yes** will make your course available and **No** will make your course unavailable.
3. Click **Submit** to save the new settings.



Note: When a course is made unavailable, this means it is unavailable *for students*. Instructors can always enter their own courses.

4.4 Managing the course appearance

To change the style, navigate to **Control Panel > Customization > Teaching Style**. The Style settings control how the Course appears to users. Settings include changing the first page users see when they open the Course, the appearance of the Menu and how Content Items appear in folders. In addition, a banner may be added to the top of the Course home page (the first page students see when entering the course).

4.5 Copy Course

Paragraph 3.5 explained how to copy or move a single Course Content Item. This subsection will discuss how to copy an entire course.

Note: You can only copy (items from) a course when you are enrolled as instructor in both the source as well as the destination course!

1. Navigate to the **Control Panel > Packages and Utilities > Course Copy**.

In the form that appears you have to select the Copy Options in section 2.

2. First, select the **Destination Course ID**. This has to be an existing course in which you are an instructor. You can enter the Course ID directly or search for it by clicking **Browse**.
3. Select the Course Content you want to copy by checking the respective boxes. Usually you do not want to copy the **Announcements** (as these are dated).
4. In section 4 it is possible to copy the Enrollments. This will result in copying all students from the current course into the new course.
5. Click **Submit**.

You will receive an e-mail when the course copy process has been completed.

2. Select Copy Options

* Destination Course ID

Select Course Materials

- Content Areas
 - Course Information
 - Course Documents
 - Assignments
 - Prologprogramma's
- Adaptive Release Rules for Content
- Announcements
- Blogs
- Calendar
- Collaboration Sessions
- Contacts
- Content Alignments
- Discussion Board
- Early Warning System Rules
- Glossary
- Grade Center Columns and Settings
- Group Settings
- Journals
- Rubrics
- Settings
- Tasks
- Tests, Surveys, and Pools
- Wikis

5. Managing your My Institution page

5.1 My Courses: shortening the list of courses

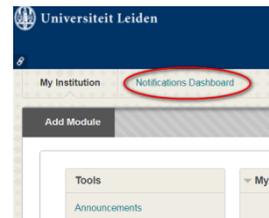
The number of courses in the *My Courses* module on My Institution page will increase in time. You can manage the overview of your courses yourself by adjusting the visibility for this module (courses will stay accessible through the tab 'My courses').

1. Click the **gear wheel** (encircled in red in the image).
2. In the next form, select which courses you want to show by checking and unchecking the box at *Course Name* and *Announcements*.
3. Click **Submit** to apply these changes.

5.2 The Notifications Dashboard

You will find the Notifications Dashboard on a separate tab on the My Institution page. You will find information about new posts and announcements as well as notifications about Blogs, Tests, Assignments, etc. you have to grade.

Students can use the Notifications Dashboard to see all new announcements, course content or assignments for all courses in which they are enrolled.



5.3 Global Navigation Menu

The Global Navigation Menu also provides information about all courses and activity on Blackboard. This menu can be accessed as a dropdown window by clicking your username in the top right corner of the screen. The Global Navigation Menu is available everywhere in Blackboard. In this menu the following sections are displayed:

- **Courses:** displays the last five courses that are recently visited.
- **Tools:** Quick access to some tools.
- **Settings:** view or modify personal settings tied to your account.



Overview of what items are due and what items have been recently graded.



Overview of all posts (discussion boards, blogs, wikis, etc.) made recently in your course.



List of notifications about recent events in your Blackboard courses.



displays notifications to alert you of any students who may be falling behind on their work.



Overview of all your blackboard calendar items, such as assignment deadlines.



opens *My institution page* on a new tab.



opens Blackboard Help.

6. Email

6.1 Send Email

Blackboard has a tool available for sending email to course users. Instructors can use this tool to contact other users. This tool is available in the Course Management part of the course: **Control Panel > Course Tools > Send Email**. In the screen that appears you can choose which users you would like to send an email, e.g. all users, all student users, all instructor users. You can also choose to select specific users by using the option 'Single / Select Users'. Attachments can be included in the email as well. A copy of the email will always be sent to the sender (to the registered e-mail address in Blackboard, see next paragraph).

6.2 Email preferences

Most users login to Blackboard with their ULCN account, the email address that is used in Blackboard will be your uMail-account by default (...@umail.leidenuniv.nl). If you want to use your faculty email address you should change preferences in [uPrefs](#). Another option is to forward your uMail address to your primary e-mail address with these instructions: [Forwarding to another email box](#).

7. Assignments and Grade Center

You can use Assignments to let students submit papers or other work. Blackboard also offers the possibility to engage in online testing. We have more extended manuals on these subjects available. Please visit the website of Humanities and take a closer look at the following headers:

- Assignments, submitting papers and anti-plagiarism
- (Peer) Reviewing papers
- Assessments: tests, surveys and pools

Note: Please note that the only *official* place for the registration of your students' grades is the student information system uSis. Point out to students that they are not entitled to rights under the grades in the Grade Center.

8. Leaving Blackboard

After you are done using Blackboard, it is important to log out (especially if you are working on a public computer). The **Log Out** is situated in the top right corner of the screen.



button

9. Important: Copyright, Plagiarism, Preservation, Code of Conduct

- Please know that Copyright law ('Auteursrecht') not only applies to hardcopy readers, but also to online materials, and consequently to the materials in your Blackboard course. This means that you must be aware of the rules that apply to articles, pdf's, PowerPoint presentations etc. that you upload to your Blackboard course. These rules are outlined on the website of the [Copyright information office](#).

For further reference, please see the site from SURF on behalf of the whole Dutch higher education sector at [Auteursrechten](#) (in Dutch).

- By law, online materials, like Blackboard course materials, must be preserved for 1 year ('wettelijke bewaarplicht'). This applies to *e.g.* submitted papers and grades of students. For administrative reasons Leiden University even keeps Blackboard courses and their full contents for 3 years on the so-called production server at <https://blackboard.leidenuniv.nl> and moves the courses for another 3 years to the archive server at <http://leidenarchive.blackboard.com>. In total, Blackboard courses are safely stored for 6 years. This also meets the demands of reviewing committees ('visitatie-commissies'). After 6 years, courses will be automatically removed, unless you indicate not to do so (please send an email to the Blackboard Helpdesk of your faculty).
- Finally, take a look at the [Code of Conduct](#) ('Gedragscode', in Dutch) for teachers and students that use ICT means of Leiden University. You may use this Code as a reference in case of any issues.