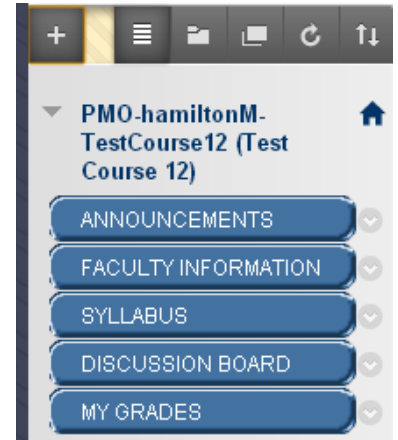


Blackboard - Getting Started

When you enter your Blackboard course you are presented with a list of buttons in the navigation menu on the left side of the page.

Instructors may modify the course menu's buttons, organization, and style. However, it is a best practice to ALWAYS have the following features at the top of your course menu and use them consistently:

- [Announcements](#) - A tool for frequent communications to students in your course.
- [Faculty Information](#) – A tool for creating a virtual business card with office hours and contact info.
- [Syllabus](#) – A content area page for posting the syllabus, class schedule, and grading policies.
- [Email](#) – A tool students may use to send e-mail to you or classmates in the course.
- [Discussion Board](#) – A communication tool for class conversation and sharing information.
- [My Grades](#) – A tool for delivering frequent and timely grade feedback to students.



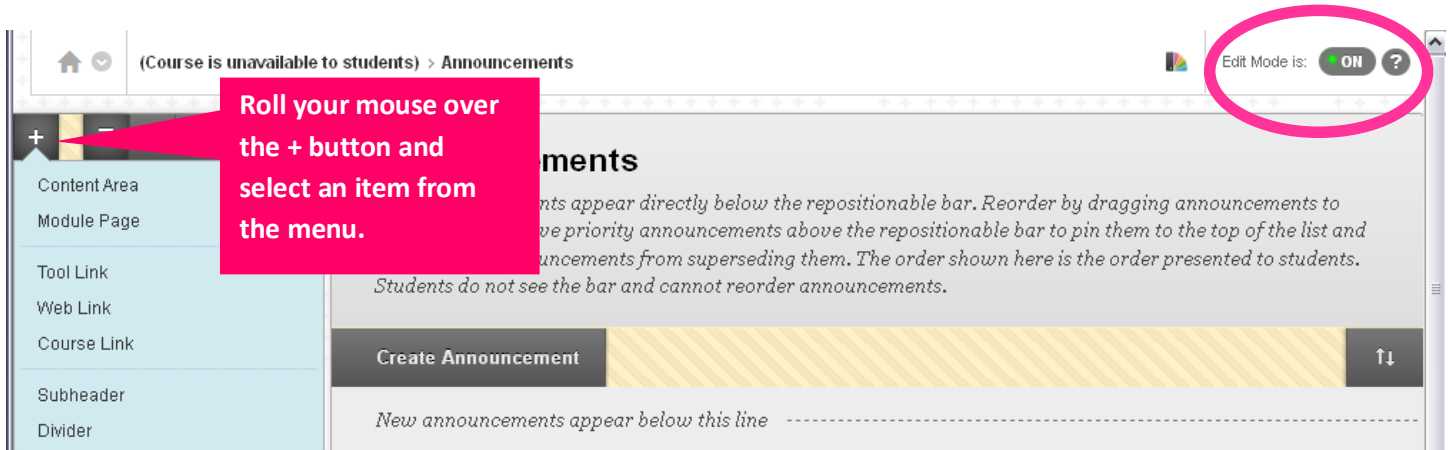
Modifications You Can Make:

- [Add Content Area buttons](#) – New pages for creating and organizing content (Example: An “Assignments” page for all assignments to be posted).
- [Add Tool Link buttons](#) – Links to Blackboard tools that you will be using in the course. (Example: A discussion board tool link that links to the Discussion Forum’s main page).
- [Add Web Link buttons](#) – Links to websites hosted outside of the course. As a best practice, always make web links open in a new window.
- **Add Sub Headers and dividers** – Headings and dividers to further organize and categorize your menu.
- **Rename, Reorganize, or Delete buttons from your menu**

On the following pages, you will learn how to add, modify, and remove menu items.

Adding New Content to Your Menu

1. First, make sure your “Edit Mode button” is set to “**Edit Mode: On**” (if it is not, click the Edit Mode button to turn Edit Mode on). Then, roll your mouse over the **+** button at the top of your course menu.
2. In the drop down menu that appears, select the item you want to create from the list. A small form will appear. Complete the form to customize the item and click SUBMIT add it to your menu.



EXAMPLE FORMS

Add Content Area

Name: LESSONS

Available to Users

Cancel Submit

ADDING A NEW CONTENT AREA BUTTON - If you are making a new content area, give the page a name.

To make the page available to students right away, be sure to check the checkbox before you click “submit”.

Add Tool Link

Name: DISCUSSION BOARD

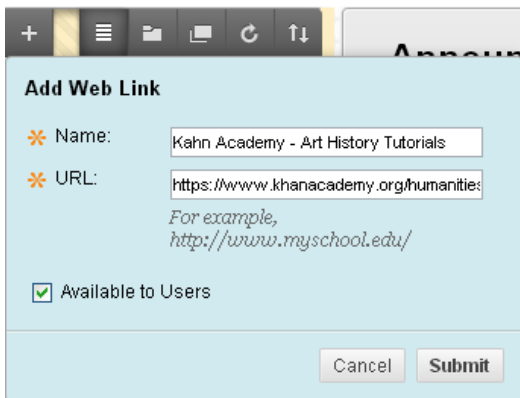
Type: Discussion Board

Available to Users

Cancel Submit

ADDING A TOOL LINK BUTTON - If you are making a Tool Link, give the link a logical name. Then, choose the correct tool from the list of tool types.

To make the tool link available to students right away, be sure to check the checkbox before you click “submit”.



ADDING A WEB LINK BUTTON- If you are making a WEB Link, give the link a logical name. Then, paste the website’s URL address in the URL field.

To make the link available to students right away, be sure to check the checkbox before you click “submit”.

Renaming, Hiding, and Deleting Menu Items

With “**Edit Mode: On**”, click the gray circle-arrow button next to the menu item. This will bring up a context menu of options for managing the item. You have the option of renaming, hiding, or deleting the item from your menu.

Content or tools that you have in your menu that you do not want to use or do not want to make available to students yet can be hidden from their view.




If you click “Rename a Link”....



A small text field will appear. Type the new name in the field and click the checkmark icon to save this new name.

If you click “Hide Link”

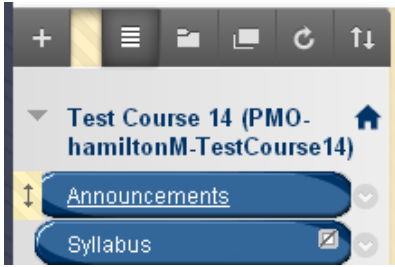



A  icon will appear on the right edge of the button to indicate that this button is not visible to students. Hidden buttons can be restored by selecting the SHOW LINK option that appears in the hidden button’s context menu.

If you click “Delete”....

You will be prompted to confirm deletion. The button and all its contents will be PERMANENTLY deleted from your course menu.

Showing Hidden Menu Items to Students





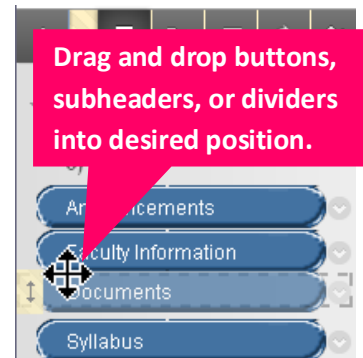
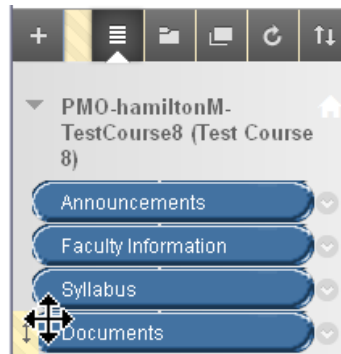
When a *hidden* icon  appears on the far right edge of a button, it means that students cannot see this button in your course menu. A hidden button can be shown to students at any time by following these steps.



Click the circular gray arrow button next to the button containing the hidden symbol. Select **SHOW LINK** from the menu options that appear. This will make the button visible to students and remove the hidden icon from the button.

Moving/Re-ordering Menu Items through Drag and Drop

1. With **“Edit Mode: On”**, roll your mouse over the button you want to move.
2. A **highlighted arrow icon**  will appear on the left-edge of the button and your mouse will transform into a cross-hair  symbol.
3. Click and hold your left mouse button down on the highlighted arrow icon to drag and drop the button to a new position in the menu where you want the button to go.

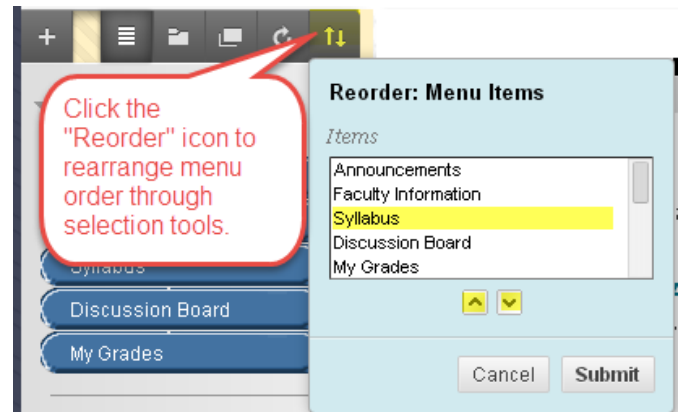


Drag and drop buttons, subheaders, or dividers into desired position.

Moving/Re-ordering Menu Items through Reordering Tool

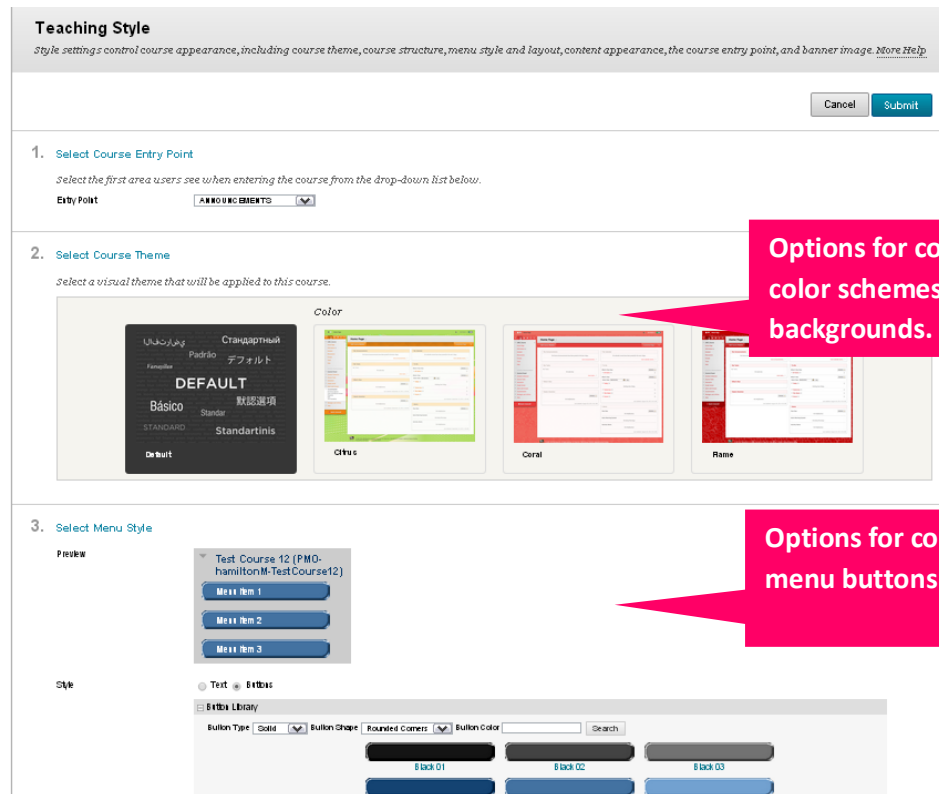
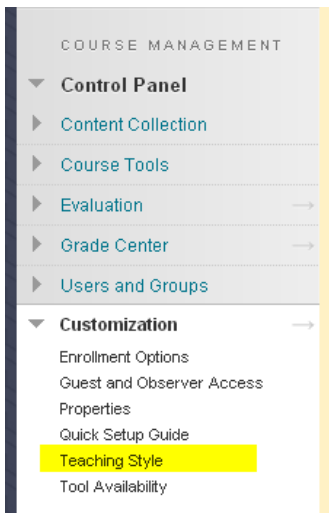
If you have trouble reordering menu buttons through drag and drop with your mouse, you may try this method instead.

1. Above your course menu, locate and click the **REORDER** icon.
2. In the **REORDER MENU** that appears, select a menu item from the list and then click the up or down arrow to move the selected menu item up or down in the list.
3. Click **SUBMIT** to save your changes.



Customizing Course Menu Style

You may choose a course design theme and customize your menu style using the “Teaching Style” tool, found in your course’s Control Panel.



Options for course color schemes and backgrounds.

Options for course menu buttons or links.

When styling your course menu buttons, be sure to pick **simple patterns** and **high-contrast** color combinations for ease of student accessibility and to minimize eye-strain.



REVIEWING AND SETTING YOUR COURSE'S ENTRY POINT

A course's entry point is the first page that students see when accessing your course. In newly created courses, the course entry point is set to the Announcements tool link in your course menu.

On the "Teaching Style" page in your course's Control Panel, you can easily check and re-set your course's entry point. When you are viewing the "Teaching Style" page, scroll down to **SELECT COURSE ENTRY POINT** and choose an entry point from the drop-down menu:

SELECT COURSE ENTRY POINT

Select the first area users see when entering the course from the drop-down list below.

Entry Point Announcements ▼

PLEASE NOTE

Only set a course's entry point to a tool link, module page, or content area. Never set a course's entry point to a web link!

If you set your course's entry point to a web link, when you and students enter the course, you will see a page similar to this when entering the course:

MATC Employee Student Courses Academic Resources Student Support Community

Faculty Support Website

The content below is outside of the Blackboard Learn environment.

External URL: http://edtechnews.matc.edu/bb_support/

The target page can not be opened within the content frame due to security reasons. Click the link below to open the page in a new window.

http://edtechnews.matc.edu/bb_support/

Course Menu Missing!

In this example, note that the course menu and control panel become inaccessible.

If this occurs in your course, please [contact Blackboard Faculty Support](#) for assistance in correcting the course's entry point.