

Reusing Your Blackboard Course Site

An overview of copying Blackboard sites and performing course maintenance for a new semester

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Blackboard

New to Blackboard? New to ODU?

Learn how to edit (and copy) your course sites in CLT's Blackboard workshops. Online and self-paced workshops are offered.

Register at clt.odu.edu or email clt@odu.edu.

Center for Learning and Teaching
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A

Before You Copy

More often than not, instructors copy content and settings into their new Blackboard site from a prior semester. Course copying duplicates materials and menus, so it's best to remove the new site's default menu, to prevent having two sets of the same links.

1. Log into Blackboard (www.blackboard.odu.edu)
2. Go to **Courses**
3. Locate your new course site (e.g., search for 202110...)
4. Open the new course site
5. Set **Edit Mode is:** to **ON** (upper right menu)

Delete Default Course Menu Links (New Site)

1. Go to the Course Menu
2. Leave **Home Page** as is
3. Click each menu link's options arrow (hover for the arrow to appear)
4. Select **Delete**
5. Click **Delete this menu item**
6. Click **Delete**, when prompted again

Repeat these steps for the remaining menu links that you will copy in from another course. For example, delete the blank Assignments link before copying in Assignments. If you won't use a menu link, like Orientation, also delete it.

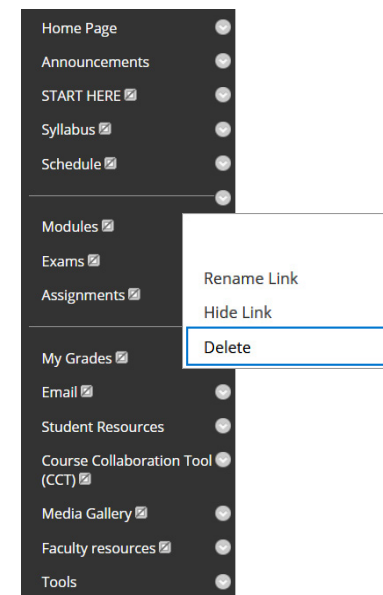
Reference: [Course Menu](#)

Blackboard Course Access

You are given instructor access to Blackboard sites based on Banner (the ODU system). If you aren't correctly assigned as the instructor, **contact your department or program coordinator** immediately.

New faculty and adjuncts won't see old Blackboard sites at first. Again, contact your department to be added as a TA or to find out which Blackboard site to reuse.

Delete Blank or Unused Links



Copy Your Old Course Site

Perform the Course Copy process in the prior Blackboard site. New faculty and adjuncts must request access to the old site first. The prior instructor can add you as a TA to their site, or contact your department.

1. Open the old course site (e.g., 202020_SPRING...)
2. Go to **Control Panel**
3. Expand **Packages and Utilities**
4. Select **Course Copy**
5. On the Copy Course page, go to **Select Copy Options** section
6. By **Destination Course ID**, click Browse
7. Locate your new course on the Courses pop-up (search by CRN, if needed)
8. Click **Submit**
9. Under Select Course Materials, click **Select All**
10. (Optional) Uncheck Announcements, unless you will reuse the previous term's announcements
11. Under **Discussion Board**, select "Include only the forums, with no starter posts" to prevent copying old student posts
12. Click **Submit**
13. Wait for the confirmation notification



It may take up to **24 hours** for the course copy to complete. Do not submit duplicate Course Copy requests while waiting, because your site will end up with twice the content and menus.

Reference: [Copy Courses](#)

Assignments & Tests

Choose "Select All" during the first Course Copy, because assignments and tests require multiple areas:

- Grade Center columns
- Content areas
- Tests, Surveys, and Pools

If you must re-copy exams or assignments, then individually select those areas.

Teaching Two Sections

If you have multiple Blackboard sites for a course, Course Copy into one section, prepare it, then copy the new site into other sections—this saves time and effort.

C

Update Your New Course Site

Confirm the content, assignments, tests, and Grade Center copied correctly into your new Blackboard site. Then update the settings for the new term, as applicable:

Verify menu links and content aren't hidden (use [Student Preview](#))

Change [Assignment](#) and [Test](#) due dates and availability

Add [Announcements](#) or edit/delete copied ones

Clear prior student activity from [Discussion Boards](#), Groups, Blogs, or Wikis

Clean out the [Grade Center](#)

Adjust Date Management (Due Dates/Availability)

The content and assignments in Blackboard may be hidden from students until you change all dates to the new semester. Remove date restrictions, if they're unneeded.

1. Open your new course site (e.g., 202110_FALL...)
2. Go to **Control Panel**
3. Expand **Course Tools**
4. Click **Date Management**
5. Under SELECT DATE ADJUSTMENT OPTION, select "**List All Dates For Review**"
6. Click **Start**
7. When Date Management Progress displays 100%, click **Next**
8. Review and revise all **Due**, **Starts**, and **Ends** availability dates
9. Click the **Edit Dates** icon (pencil)
10. Click the **Submit** icon (green checkmark)

NOTE: If you can't edit availability from Date Management, go to the assignment or exam itself to remove date restrictions, including Display After, Display Until.

Reference: [Date Management](#)

Copied Blackboard Tools (if applicable)

Clear the Discussion Board

If you chose "Include starter posts for each thread in each forum (anonymized)" during Course Copy, delete old student posts from discussion forums.

Reference: [Manage Old Discussion Posts](#) (College of DuPage)

NOTE: Clear out Group Discussions, Blogs, and Wikis, as well.

Fix Respondus LockDown Browser (online tests)

1. Go to **Control Panel**
2. Expand **Course Tools**
3. Click **Respondus LockDown Browser**
4. Review the list of tests
5. Click **Fix It** by tests displaying "error"
6. Exit the Dashboard

Reference: [Respondus Lockdown Browser](#)

Synchronize SafeAssign (online papers)

1. Go to **Control Panel**
2. Expand **Course Tools**
3. Click **SafeAssign**
4. Click **SafeAssign Items**
5. Click **Synchronize this course** (in the upper right)

Reference: [Use SafeAssign in Assignments](#)

Clean Out the Grade Center

1. Go to **Control Panel**
2. Expand **Grade Center**
3. Click **Full Grade Center**

Remove unneeded or duplicate columns:

4. Go to **Manage**
5. Select **Column Organization**
6. Delete duplicate "**Total**" and "**Weighted Total**" columns (keep the copied, configured ones)
7. Delete or hide unused assignments, tests, etc.
8. Click **Submit**

Reference: [Grade Columns](#)

Calculated Grades

Confirm your Total or Weighted Total columns are correctly configured. Organize assignments and columns into Categories for easier management, too.

Also, set which Total or Weighted Total displays to students:


1. Go to the column
2. Click its Options arrow
3. Select **Set as External Grade**
4. (green checkmark appears)

Reference: [Calculate Grades](#)

D

Make Your Site Available to Students

Release your course site several weeks or days before the semester, so that students can order textbooks and prepare for the course's technology requirements well before the first class or activity.

Select the lock icon  (upper right menu) to make the course visible, or:

1. Go to **Control Panel**
2. Expand **Customization**
3. Click **Properties**
4. Change **Make Course Available** to "Yes"
5. Click **Submit**

Student Preview

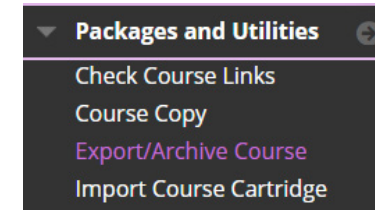
Use Student Preview mode to confirm students can also access content and assignments. If menu links or items are hidden, set each one to "Make Available."



Reference: [Student Preview](#)

Backup Your Blackboard Site

ODU can't recover deleted Blackboard sites or content. For your records, please **export the prepared course site** at the beginning and end of the term.



Reference: [Export and Archive Courses](#)