BLACKBOARD QUICK START GUIDE

Getting Help

Online@JSU
online@jsu.edu or 256-782-8172

Blackboard 24/7/365 Help
http://www.jsubbsupport.com or 877.216.7064

Bb Self Help
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor

Blackboard Collaborate
https://help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/Ultra

Bb Self Training Courses
Find in your My Courses Module within Blackboard. See
http://www.jsu.edu/online/faculty/training-tracks.html for
more information

Workshops
Workshop Calendar

Our Web Site – Other Resources
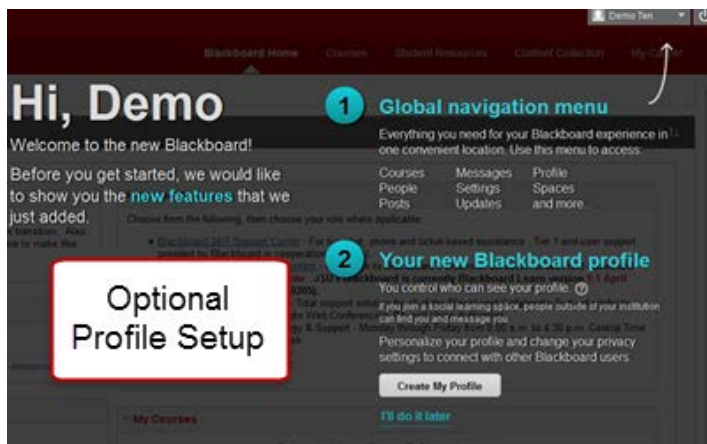http://www.jsu.edu/online/help.html

Profile and Set-up

Blackboard Login Page and System Requirements
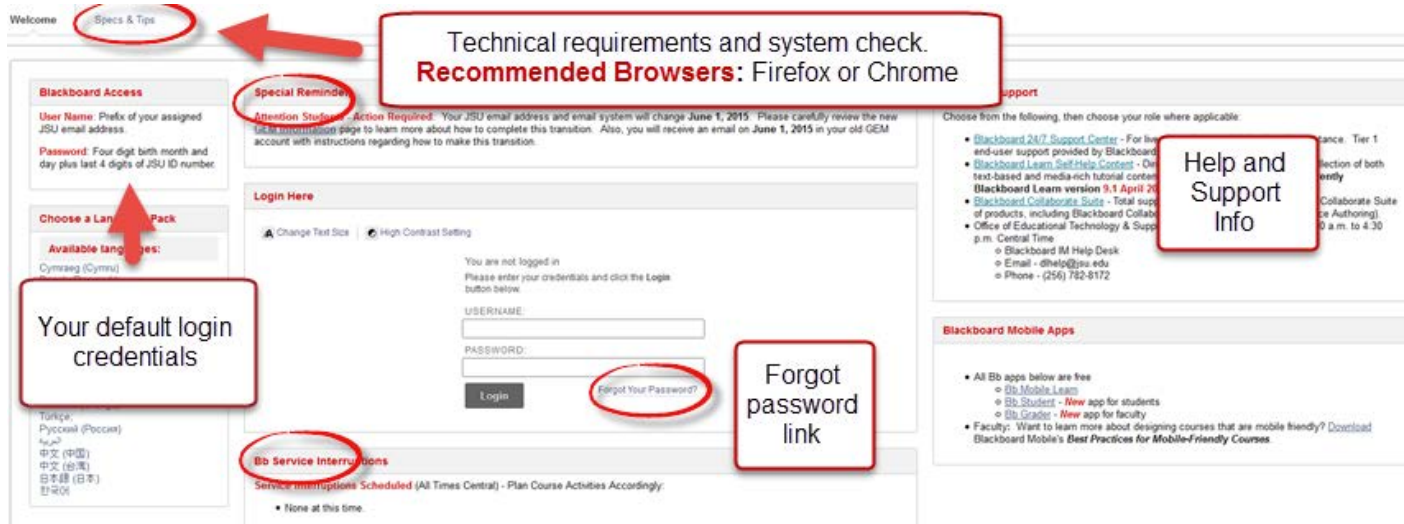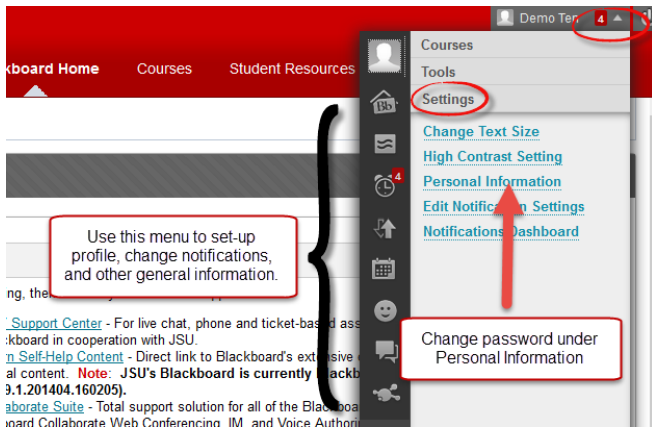

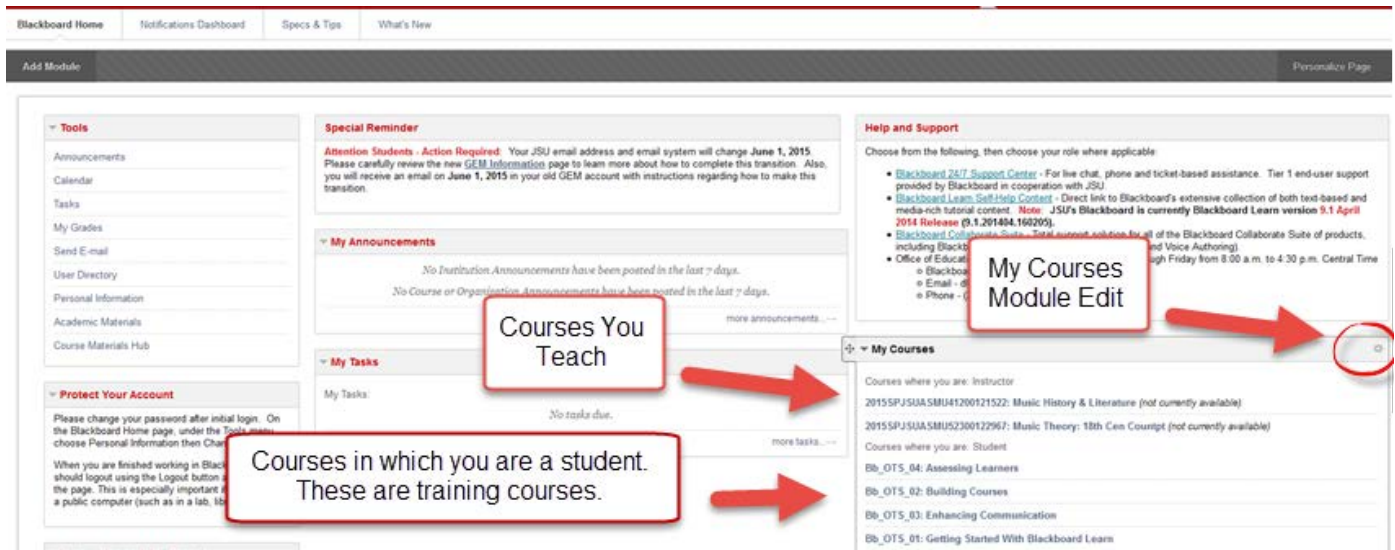### Set-up and Navigation

Upon first login, you will see-

Set-up your profile or dismiss the notice.

In the user dashboard, find many interactions with your personal settings, courses, and set-up.

The My Courses Module is the easiest way to access courses. Use the settings to select which courses are visible.
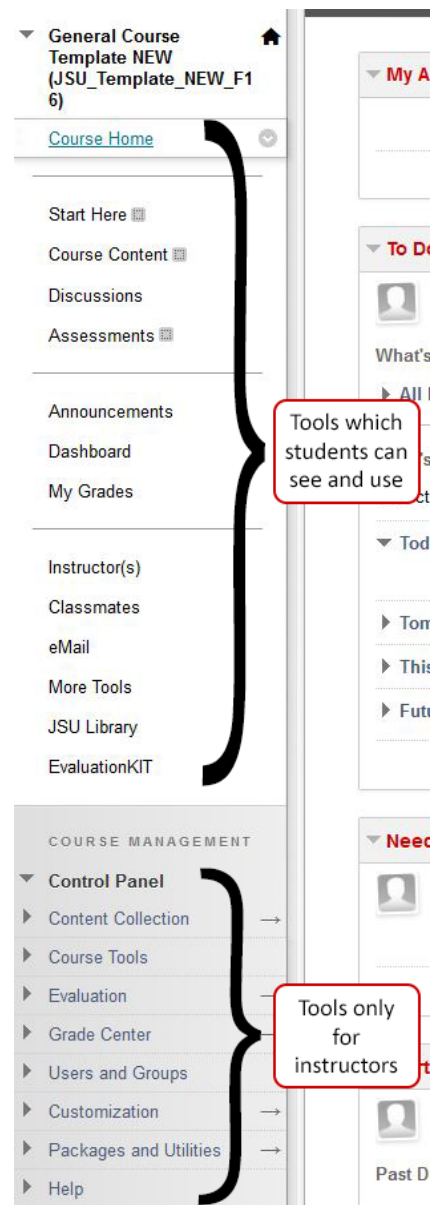

You may wish to adjust which courses are shown and how they appear. Click on the edit gear in the upper right corner of the My Courses Module.
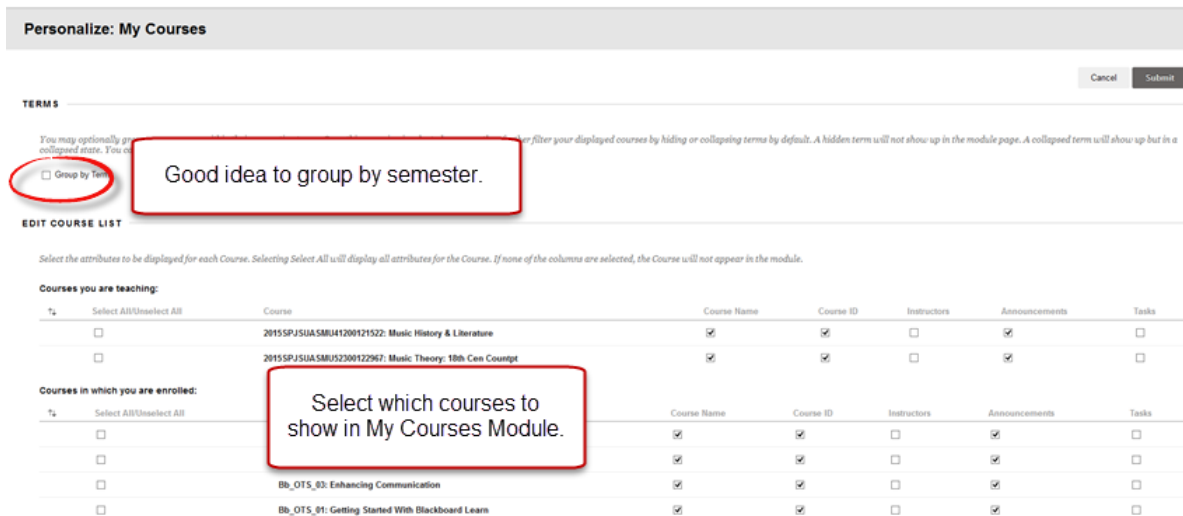
Course Navigation

The left course menu is your main navigation tool for creating content and accessing tools. Spend some time looking at your options in the many tools located throughout the Control Panel.

Creating Course Content

Content Types

You can upload and create access to many types of content. Using the Course Menu and/or Content Areas, you establish links to files, websites, and other areas within Bb.

**Commons file types** - Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.

- **Word -** .docx
- **PowerPoint -** .pptx
- **Excel -** .xlsx
- **Adobe Acrobat Reader -** .pdf
- **HTML**
- **Web Links**
- **Images**
- **Videos -** best to not upload directly to Bb. Link or embed instead. Ask Online@JSU for help if needed.

NOTE REGARDING FILE SIZE- Large files (videos, images, and some PowerPoints) not only exhaust the system storage space, but they are also difficult for your students to download. There are many options for reducing this load to ensure you and your students a better experience. Please check with Online@JSU for help with large files.

Upload a Syllabus

At a minimum, plan to upload a syllabus for your course. Students are accustomed to checking Bb for this information, and it helps you make sure they always have a copy of your course syllabus. There is a place ready to go for your syllabus. You may upload a Word document, PDF, or other types of content for your syllabus.

The process for uploading your syllabus is the same for other places in Bb where you might want to add content. To get started, click on the Start Here Content Area.
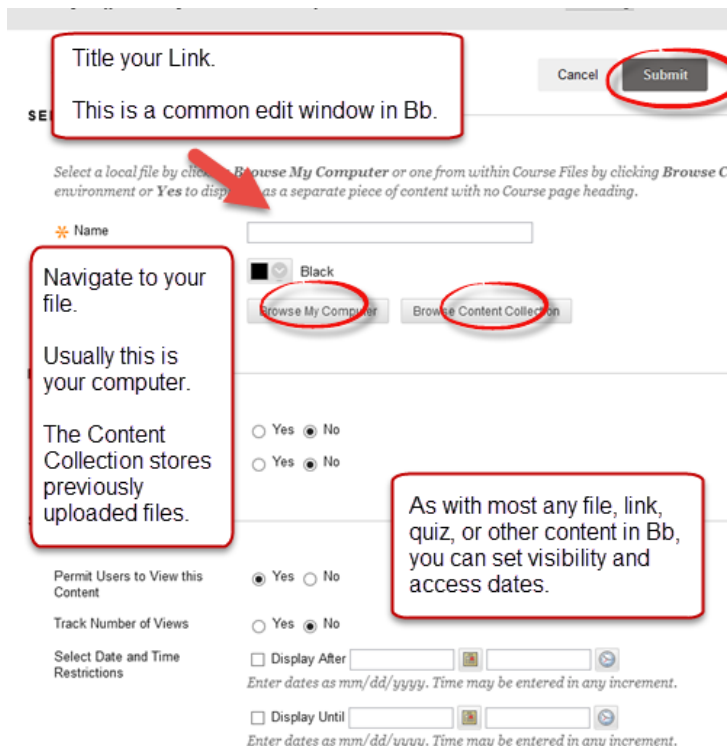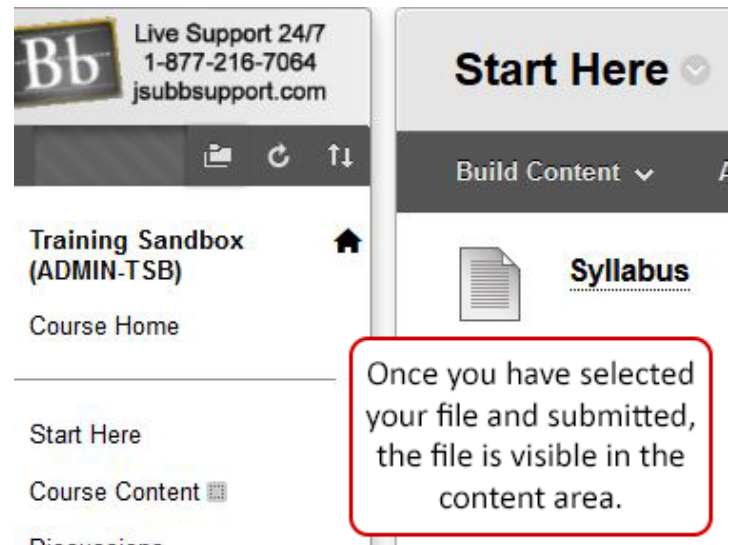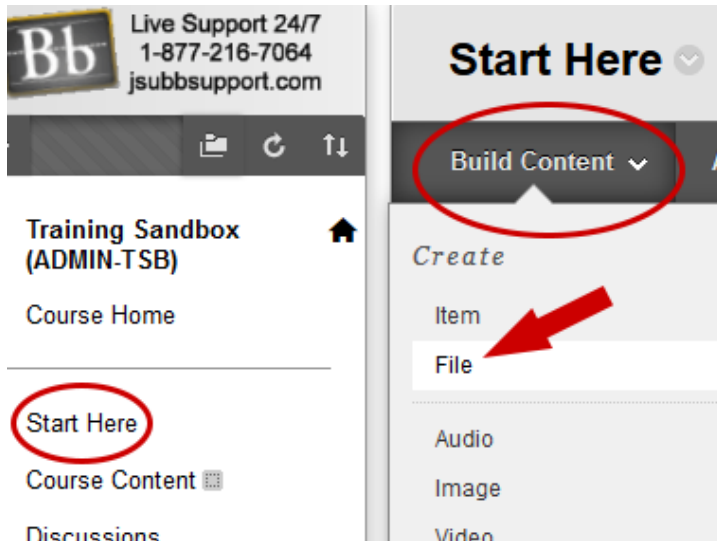
Menu Items and Content Areas

You may add, remove, rename, or hide menu items as you desire. Each Menu Item has a specific use and style of creating content. Most times, you will want to create a Content Area, but try the other types too.
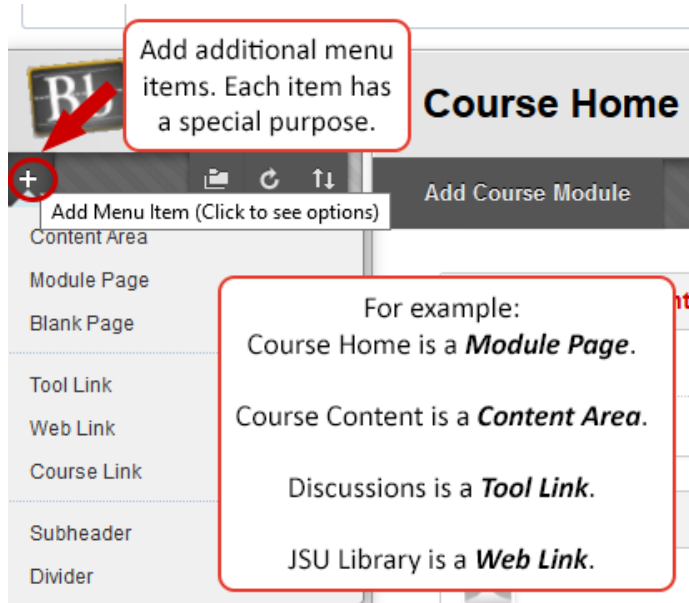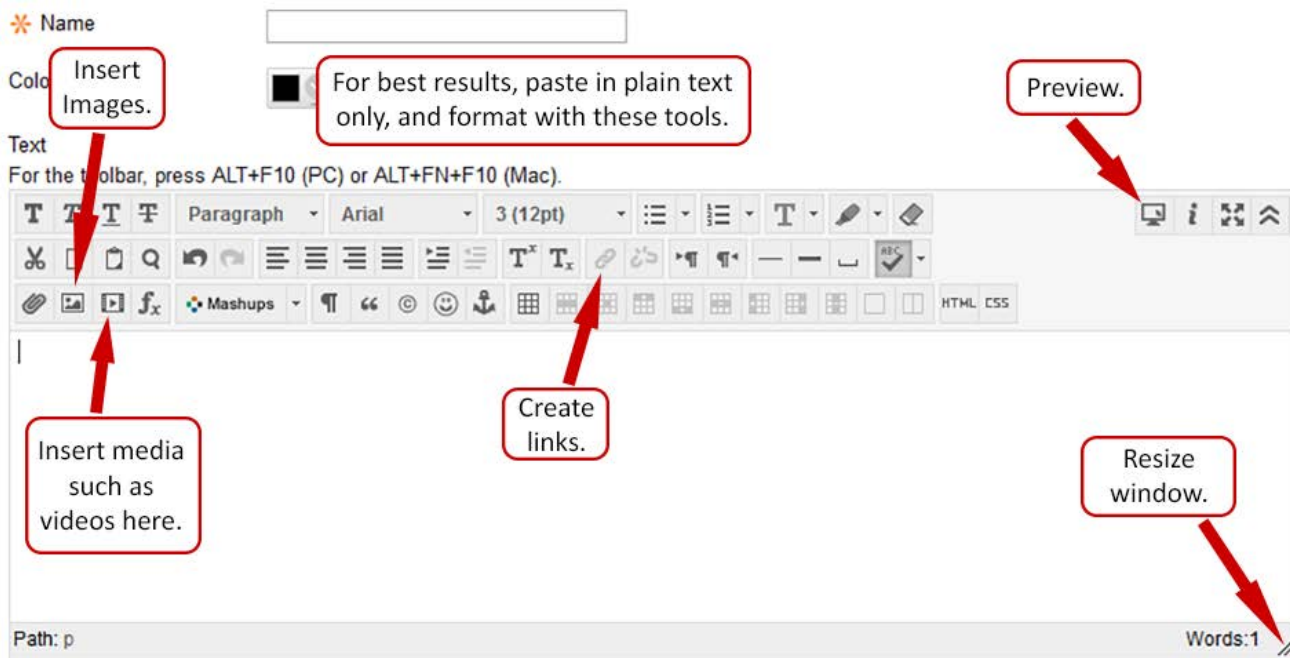

After you create a Content Area menu item, you will have options for adding various types of content to that area on the right.

This is a Content Area:
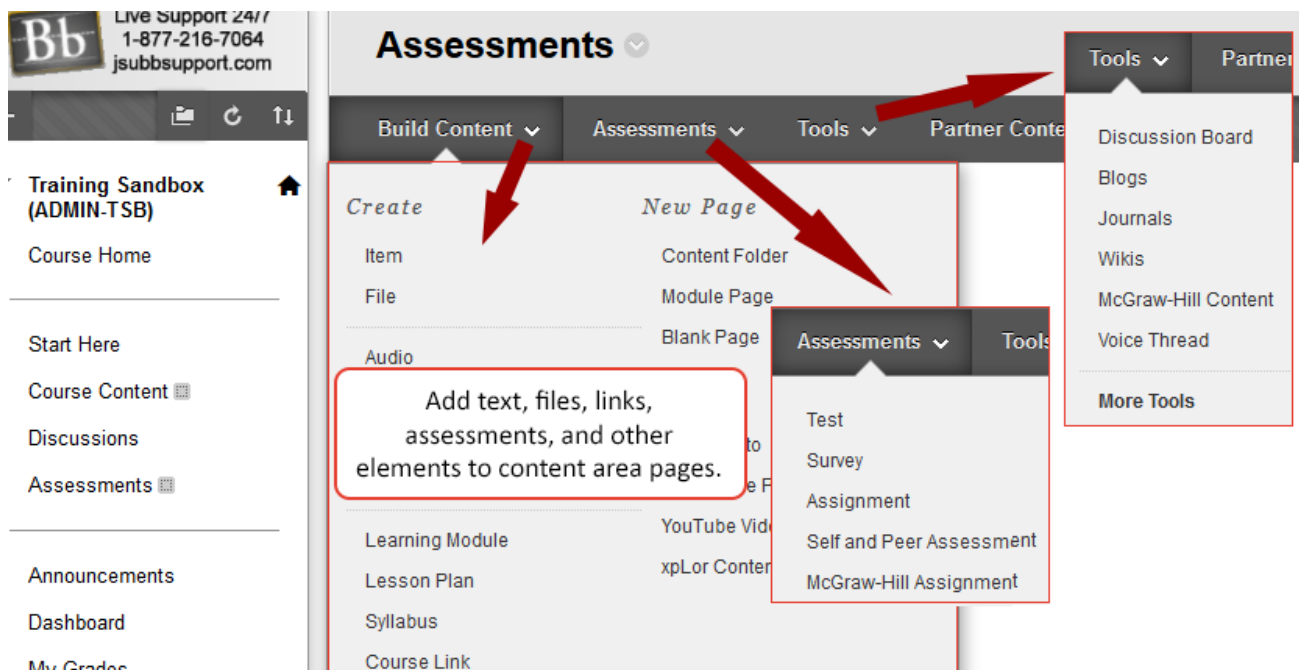
Throughout Bb, you will have the opportunity (or requirement) to add content directly into an editor window. This editor allows you to format and add other content such as media and images to your content.
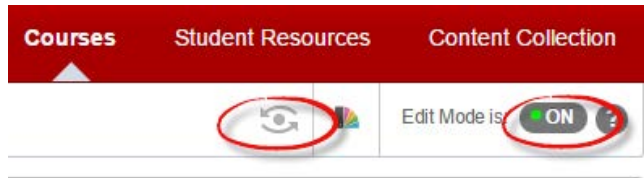

Hide unused elements

You may hide or delete unneeded menu items. Your students will appreciate the clarity. Note that empty content areas are automatically hidden from students.
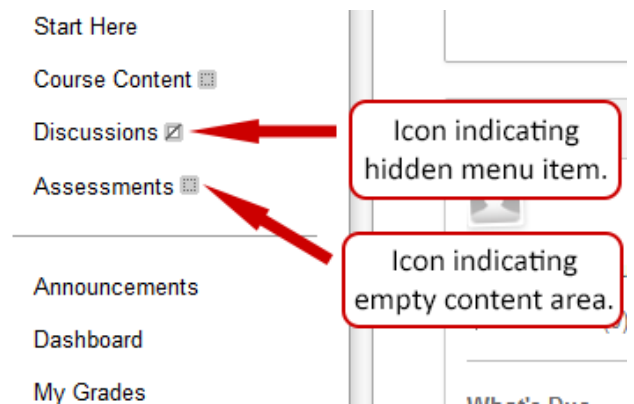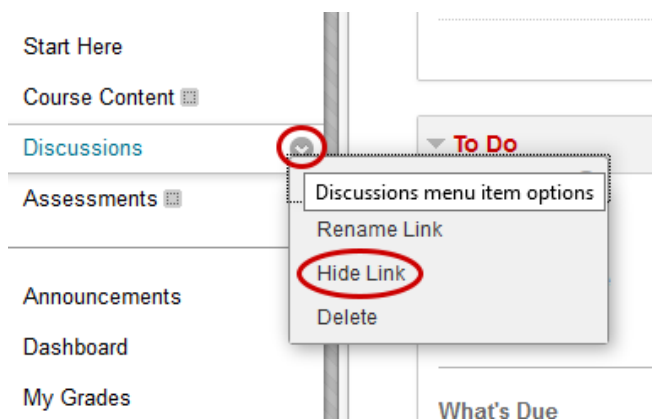
Previewing Course/Edit Mode

You have two options for previewing content. For the most accurate student view use the Preview Tool.

Turning off Edit Mode is helpful for quick checks of content and other links which otherwise are unavailable in edit mode.

Controlling Content Access

You have a lot of control over when students see content. You may restrict by date, or actions (adaptive release), and even make special access as needed for specific students.

Date Management Info

Adaptive Release Info

Special Access Info

Grades

The Grade Center can be one of the most useful tools for you and your students. You may want to use it as one of your first uses.

- Grade columns are automatically added when you create assignments, quizzes, graded forums, and other graded content elsewhere in Bb
- You can manually create columns as needed for other grades
- Hiding grade columns from your view does not hide from student view or from calculations

- **Tests** - refers to test, quizzes, and exams. They are all the same tool. You name specific tests as befits your course. Create tests from the Control Panel>Course Tools>Tests, Surveys, and Pools>Tests
- **Assignments** - a place for students to upload work such as a Word document for your review (basically a drop box). Create assignments from any content area.
- **Deployment** - tests and assignments must have a link (deployment) in some content area such as in your Course Documents. This will create link for your students to access the tool.
- **Proctoring/Security** - there are several proctoring options for you to consider. Each option should be considered carefully before requiring students to use proctoring. Options include traditional and online versions.

Create a Test

After test creation, remember to deploy (link) your test from within a Content Area.

Tests can be deployed in any Content Area, not just Assessments.

Don't be confused by identical terms used for various purposes.

Create an Assignment

Assignments can be created in any Content Area.

For originality checking, consider **SafeAssign**.

Announcements

Announcements appear in your course announcement area. Students will also receive notices in the course home page, and the main Bb page. If students have set-up their notifications, they will also receive emails and texts with your announcements.
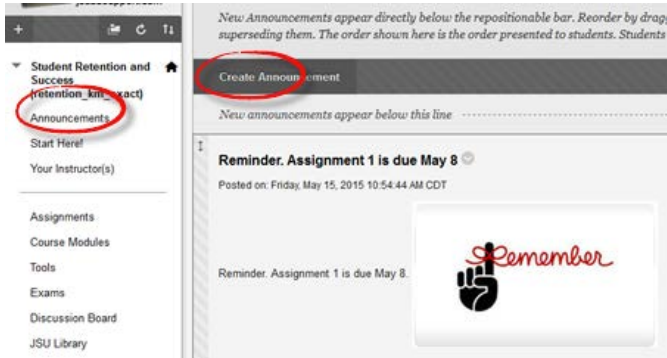
Email

When you click on names in Bb, you will often find an option to email the student. If you do so, the email will go to their JSU GEM email (outside of Bb).
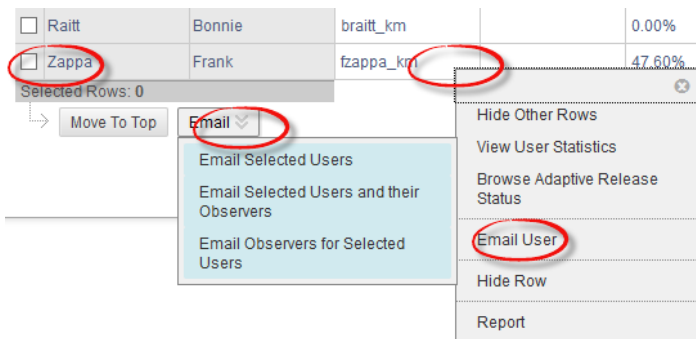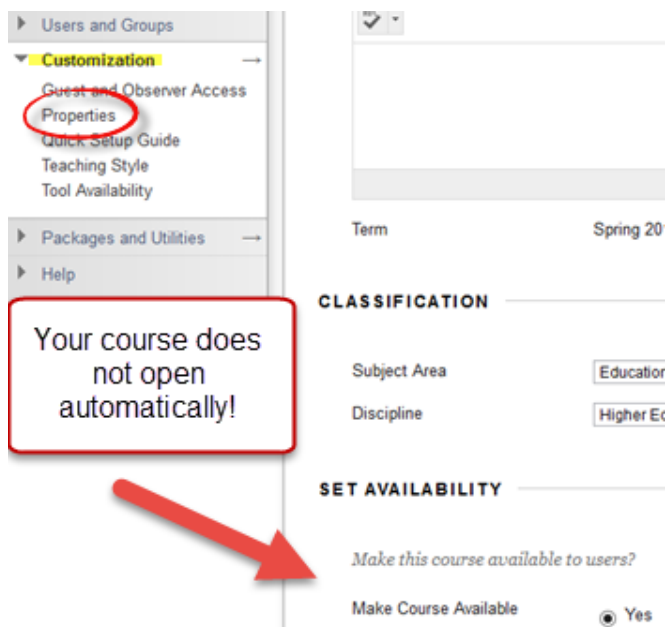
Discussions

Discussions can be an excellent communication as it allows a group conversation. Students can help you with providing answers, for example. They may also receive notifications of new messages.
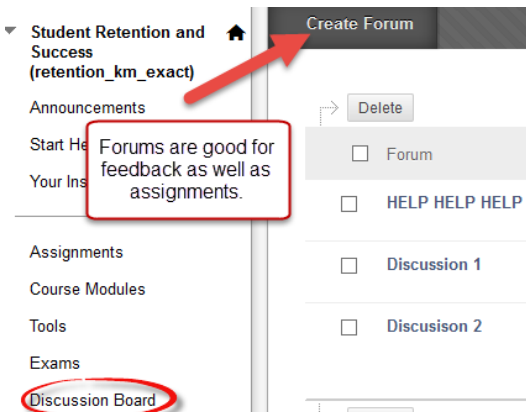
Open Course

Bb Course shells are unavailable to students by default. Open your course in the
Control Panel>Customization>Properties.
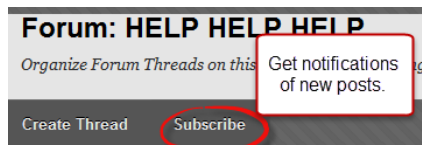
Notifications

Notifications are great for you and your students. Notifications allow users to receive outside-Bb contact to warn of new content, posts, grades, and other activity. Notifications may be via email and/or text (SMS).

Subscribe to a Forum-

Notifications for content and other information-

Bb IM

Download from within a Blackboard course. Use for live chatting with JSU support team and/or with your students. Bb IM is an instant messaging service which includes many excellent features such as screen-share, voice, video, and a whiteboard. You can use Bb IM for office hours, teaching, or private communication. Consider requiring your students to set-up their Bb IM account, and they will be automatically connected with you and all classmates. You may also use Bb IM to access live help from Online@JSU. To set-up your Bb IM account, click on the Bb IM icon in the Tools area. Follow the set-up procedures.
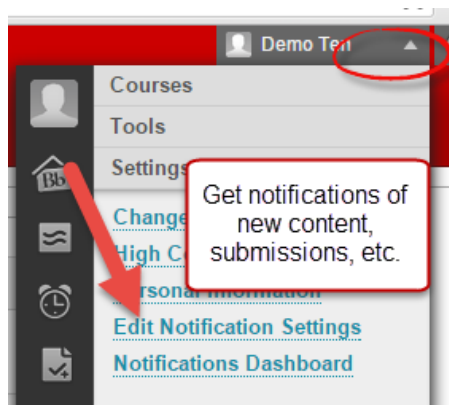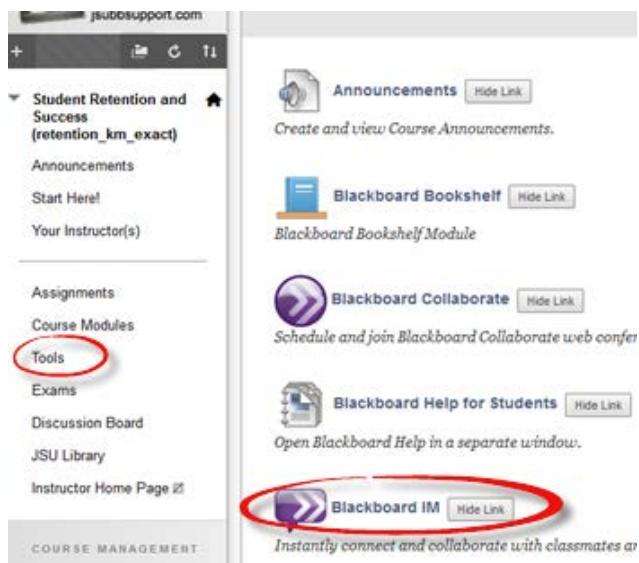

Tips and General Info

- Contextual menus - look for chevrons and hover your mouse over areas to find sub-menus with valuable actions.
- When creating certain types of graded content (Assignments, Tests, Graded Discussion Forums, etc.), an associated column is automatically added to your Grade Center.
- Copy/Paste - for neater and more reliable formatting, paste text-only into Bb Text Boxes and format using the built-in Content editor. Pasting directly from Word can lead to unintended formatting.
- Start Here - help your students get started. Create a welcome statement or clear startup instructions such as in an announcement or Start Here Module.
- Communication Plan - establish methods and instructions for keeping in touch with students. Many tools exist in Bb for this purpose.
- Practice Quiz - if using more advanced aspects of quiz taking, offer a Practice Quiz to allow students to test their technology.
- Course Packs/Outside Services - If using pre-made content such as from a publisher or third-party systems, allow students time to ensure all registrations and access codes, etc. are working for them. Contact Online@JSU for assistance in importing publisher content.
- Hide Grade Columns - hiding Grade Center columns for you does not hide them from your students. Hidden columns are also not removed from being calculated in Total Columns.
- Files deleted from a Content Area are not automatically removed from the Content Collection of the course. To remove the files completely and recover the storage space, you must also remove it from the course file storage area (course Content Collection) and empty the course Recycle Bin.
- Course Copy - if performing a Course Copy, be sure to follow guidelines in the **Course Copy Guide for Instructors**, and/or request completion from Online@JSU.

- Course Enrollment Merge - if teaching multiple sections of the same course, consider requesting a course enrollment merge A course merge should be requested before any content is built or copied into the related courses. See **Course Enrollment Merge** for more information.
- Course Quota - Each course has a maximum total size of 250MB. If you upload large files such as videos, you can easily extinguish this quota. Contact Online@JSU for help with large file sizes, or if you exceed your quota.

Course Check List

✓ Upload/Create Syllabus - A detailed syllabus should be included in the course in a clearly marked location.

✓ Create Start Here - Consider a welcome statement or clear startup instructions such as in an announcement.

✓ Set-up Communication - Include communication and collaboration mechanisms (such as discussion board forums, blogs, Bb Collaborate Ultra sessions, etc.) to ensure students don't feel alienated and to keep everyone engaged with the instructor and classmates. Include contact information for the instructor.

✓ Create Pathways - The path and steps a student should take for progression through and completion of the course should be clear, including deadlines and appropriate time lines.

✓ Highlight Technology Requirements - When requiring special technology and online accounts, be sure to include information for students and where to find instructions for downloading, installing, and using the technology.

✓ Observe Accessibility - Consider any special needs students and equitable accommodations required for ensuring their experience is not compromised.

✓ Tidy Course Menu - Hide un-used course menu items from student view. Add new items or rename items based upon your needs.

✓ Check Dates and Titles - Ensure all content dates of availability and due dates are correct for current term and that any Adaptive Release rules are relevant and accurate. Check titles for semester specific language (ex- Spring 2014 Syllabus).

✓ File Sizes - Do you have large videos, images, PowerPoints, or other files? These files will make it difficult for your students to view. Contact Online@JSU for help.

✓ Make Course Available - Make course available to students (by the first day of classes for online courses, or by relevant day when supplementing or for hybrid courses; be cautious about making courses available too far ahead of first day of classes which can make your course vulnerable to a variety of considerations in some situations).

Other

Bb Collaborate Ultra - web-conferencing sessions in Blackboard

Examity - online remote proctoring for testing

Respondus Campus Wide 4.0 (quiz creator/publisher) - create and convert quizzes for upload/download to Blackboard

VoiceThread - Video based discussion board which is integrated within Blackboard