Course Properties in Blackboard 9.1 Service Pack 11

Just as in earlier versions of Blackboard, version 9 allows you to change your course name, add a course description and classification, change settings for course availability and duration and select the language in which menus will be displayed in the course. These settings are accessed through the Customization section of the Control Panel. You may need to click on the expand button to display the Customization options available (figure 1).

Expand Button – Click to display additional options in this category.

Collapse button – Click to hide the options in the category.

Properties option – Click this option to change course name, classification, availability, duration, and language.

Figure 1: Expanding menus within the Control Panel and the location of the Properties Link.

Clicking on the Properties link opens the properties page (figure 2 & 3, next page). On the properties page you will find six sections that you can modify:

1. Course Name and Description – This is the name that appears in the My Courses module on the main Blackboard page. The course description is listed in the Blackboard course catalog. We have not been using this function of Blackboard because enrollments are restricted. Students

Course Properties
cannot self enroll in Blackboard courses; they must go through the Registrar's office and instructor.

2. Classification – Again these fields are used by the Blackboard course catalog.

3. Set Availability – Instructors can change the availability of their courses whenever they choose. You can make a course available before courses start so students can see the syllabus and text requirements or you can wait until the course meets for the first time so you can discuss the site contents with your student.

4. Set Course Duration – It's advisable to leave this setting to continuous, that means whenever you make the course available students can see it. Setting restrictions on duration automates the process for allowing students to access the course and then later restricting access. A problem that we've seen is setting the dates too restrictively and forgetting the setting. In these cases, students call the HUB reporting that their courses mysteriously "disappeared," resulting in delays making the content available to the students as we try to reach the instructor to change the setting.

5. Categorize Course - Again these fields are used by the Blackboard course catalog.

6. Select Language Pack – Language instructors may want to change the language that is used for buttons and other system supplied text.

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Figure 2: Course properties – first two sections
3. **Set Availability**

   *Make this course available to users?*

   - Make Course Available
     - Yes
     - No

4. **Set Course Duration**

   *Duration*

   - Continuous
   - Select Dates
   - Days from the Date of Enrollment

5. **Categorize Course**

   ![Diagram of categorization options]

6. **Select Language Pack**

   *Select the Language Pack that will be used for buttons, titles, and other text supplied by the system. Enforcing the L individual users’ language choices.*

   - Language Pack: System Default
   - Enforce Language Pack

7. **Course Files**

   Course Files Default Directory: courses\Test\SP11

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**Figure 3: Course Properties – last five sections**

Make the necessary changes to each section – Sections pertaining to the course catalog can be left as is. Once you are satisfied with the settings, click on the submit button at either the top or bottom of the page to apply the changes.
**Enrollment options**
Under the Customization section of the Control Panel, there is a link for Enrollment Options. Blackboard has several options for enrolling students in Blackboard sites. They can be automatically added from a student information system, manually added by a system administrator or instructor, batch enrolled by the system administrators or self enrolled. At Assumption we do not enable self-enrollment in academic courses, they must go through the Registrar's office and instructor. As we implement a new student information system and portal information from the Registrar's office will automatically be passed to Blackboard. For academic courses you will not need to alter this setting.

If however, you use Blackboard for a student organization or committee you may want to explore the self-enrollment option with the IT staff supporting Blackboard.

**Guest and Observer Access**
A final setting under the Customization Section of the Control Panel is Guest and Observer Access. By default Guest and Observer access is turned off in all courses. Guests are any non-enrolled users. Instructors may permits non-enrolled users to view their courses by enabling this option. Users search the Blackboard catalog and select a preview option to see your course. Observers are members of the faculty or administration who have been assigned to oversee students experiencing academic difficulty. When an instructor grants Observer access, that individual will be able to view observed students grades and course materials.

To allow Guest or Observer access click the yes radio buttons on the Guest and Observer Access page for the group to have access (figure 4).

Figure 4: Guest and Observer Access page.

Once you've made the desired settings selection, click the submit button at the top or bottom of the page to apply the changes.