Blackboard Course Site Overview

What you need to know

OK, there are three things that you need to know about how course sites are organized in Blackboard. The Navigation tools, the Course Menu, and the Content frame.

The (1) **Navigation tools** act like a cookie trail. It's where you've been, where you can go, and it's how you get back. Instead of hitting the browser back button you can just click on a segment in a path or a "Discussion Board> Forum: Testing Thread: A new thread" at the top of the content area. So I want to get back to the main discussion board to look at other forums, but I don't want to hit back a bunch of times. I simply click on the "Discussion Board" link and I'm there! Alternatively, if you want to jump to another course you can use the "House" icon to move to other courses you are taking.

(2) **The Course Menu** is a listing of all the content areas and tools.

The (3) **Content Frame** displays the content and tools accessed through the buttons and the navigation paths.
What are all the different areas in the menu?

There are several content and tool areas in Blackboard. The names are customizable by the Instructor or the System Administrator. These are the default areas:

**Home Page**: This is a page of modules that acts like a course dashboard. You can see assignments that are due, instructor announcements, notifications of new items in the course site, and alerts about overdue items.

**Announcements**: Instructors use this to post timely information critical to your success in the course. They are usually in the Announcements module on the Home Page when you open the course you want to view. Some instructors also activate a link on the menu or may set the course to open on the Announcements page.

**Syllabus**: Generally contains the course syllabus or schedule. It may contain descriptions of large projects or other documents like the College's academic honesty statement. Assignments: the instructor can post assignments and due dates can be modified. They can view attached files given by the professor or submit assignments for their classes. This might be a separate area, or the instructor might include assignments in another content area.

**Handouts**: Course documents may be posted here, such as lecture notes or slides or electronic copies of materials handed out in class. Instructors may group content by putting it in folders.

**Assignments**: Often you will hand in assignments electronically. Instructors often create links in the Assignments area for you to post files. You may also find readings, problem sets and other materials you may need for assignments submitted in class.

**Discussions**: Many instructors use online discussion forums to continue discussion beyond class sessions. Forums for the whole class and groups can be accessed here.

**Groups**: The groups area provides students a virtual workspace to share documents, discussions, and other tools while working on a group project.

**Tools**: these are tools you can you in the course web site. They include: Digital Drop Box, Edit home Page, Personal Information, Calendar, View Grades, Student Manual, Tasks, Electronic Blackboard, and Address Book.

**Library Resources and e-Reserves**: These are content areas created by the Library's reference and reserve librarians to provide research guides and electronic versions of reserve reading materials.

**Technical Support area**: Provides help using Blackboard. There are links to documentation and video tutorials supplied by Assumption College as well as Blackboard.