Using Blackboard to Create a Strong Teaching Presence

There are two parts to the Online Teaching training:

- **Online Teaching Part 1** involves learning Blackboard. The test involves creating a supplemental course site that meets the criteria below. It is **due by May 19**.

- **Online Teaching Part 2** will not be offered this summer so that we can concentrate on preparing faculty for remote teaching in summer 2 and fall. Online Teaching Part 2 is not required to teach remotely in summer II and fall 2020.

- **What training is needed to teach remotely in summer II and fall?** Go to https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/offices/elite/summer-institute.html Under the heading Professional Development Opportunities, use the Flow Chart to identify your next steps to prepare for summer II and fall. See also the FAQ section.

How to Complete Online Teaching Part 1

1) Complete the Blackboard Tutorials.

   A) Please watch following video. It explains important details about organizing a course site: [Using Bb to Create Teaching Presence](http://somup.com/cYfe3R1zDd) or paste the URL into a browser http://somup.com/cYfe3R1zDd

   B) See the attached *Blackboard Essentials Quickstart Guide*, especially page 3 on using the **paperclip icon** to attach files, page 5 on adding **learning modules** (rather than folders), page 6 on using **Build Content > Item** to create pages in a learning module; and page 7 on **creating links and embedding videos**. Ask if you have questions. These skills are critical.

   C) Enter the **Blackboard Learning Center** (on your course list in Blackboard) to complete any of the following tutorials not already completed.

   - **Blackboard Content Editor – Creating Web Pages**

   - Blackboard Assessments

   - Blackboard Communication Tools

   - Blackboard Grade Center

   - Create and Grade Assignments (in the Blackboard Tip Sheets folder)

   The tutorials above can be completed in any order. Some are offered as live webinars. See the [Remote Professional Development](https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/offices/elite/workshop-calendar.html) section of the Emergency Remote Teaching Guidelines page or paste the URL into your browser https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/offices/elite/workshop-calendar.html

   Note: There is no need to register in MC Learns for each individual workshop. Online Teaching Part 1 includes credit for all 5 Bb workshops.

2) **Build a supplemental course site to meet the Blackboard Skills Demonstration criteria below**. You can edit a supplemental site from a previous semester or use a development site (where the title of the course is your name). Creating one or two learning modules is enough. You do not need to revise an entire site.

Verify that you have met all of the criteria below and let me know which site and module to review.

Questions? Contact Tom Cantu 240-567-6006 or tom.cantu@montgomerycollege.edu

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Bb Skills Demonstration Criteria - Complete the following tasks to prepare a supplemental site to use with an on-campus course. You can build in a development site or edit a site from a previous semester. *Please address all of the instructions. They are designed to create a strong teaching presence.*

1. **Write as if you are teaching in-person**. One way to create a strong teaching presence is the creative use of voice, orienters, and transitions. **Voice**: Write as you are teaching one of your favorite classes or talking to one of your favorite students in your office. Students will "hear" your voice in your writing. **Orienters**: Introduce everything. Think of what you would say in class before distributing an article, playing video, explaining an assignment, etc. and write those instructions and objectives so that students know what you want them to do and why before they click on a link. **Transitions**: Think of the things you say in class to smoothly move students from one activity to the next. Add similar instructions to your online site. Voice, orienters, and transitions: When all three come together it feels as if the professor is sitting beside you talking you through the course. It's powerful. It's one way to create a strong teaching presence.

2. **Formatting:** Use the style guidelines on page 4. These guidelines are vital for creating course pages that students will read. Once their eyes cross from reading dense paragraphs, you've lost them.

3. **Syllabus**: A) Post your syllabus in the Syllabus area. B) **Attach the syllabus file(s) using the Attach Files button on the Content Editor (2nd button in the 3rd row)**. C) Introduce the syllabus and make the page inviting, i.e., avoid a mostly blank page with a tiny link.

4. **Organize Course Materials in Learning Modules**: (*Course Content > Build Content > Learning Module*).

   a. Create an **Assignments** page as the first page in each module listing the assignments due in the current week or unit. See the sample on page 5 below.

   b. **Post course materials.** A) In one or more learning modules, B) **Use *Build Content > Item*** to create several pages to present course materials to students.   C) **Attach __all__ files using the paperclip icon (2nd button in the 3rd row of the button bars)**. *Do not use Build Content > File.* D) Edit the Name of Link to File to use student-friendly titles, not file names.   E) Add images as appropriate. (To see an example, enter the *Tom Cantu* site and look in Course Content, Unit 1, especially the Handouts for Unit 1 page.)

   c. **Create two or more links to web sites**. *Do not use the Web Link tool.* A) On an Item, use the **Insert/Edit Link** button (looks like a chain link).   B) Set each link to open in a new window. C) Use a descriptive label for the link, e.g., Britannica ImageQuest instead of making a lengthy URL into a link. D) Introduce each link i.e., explain what you want students to do and why {think: instruction and objectives}. Tip: Type the label, select the text, then click the Link button.

   d. **Embed one or more videos on Items.** See the instructions on page 8. Add instructions above each video and transitioning statements beneath. Write what you would say in-class.

   e. **Introduce students to the course site**. A) In the first module, B) use *Build Content > Item* to write a message to your students. C) Introduce students to the supplemental site and D) explain how the site will be used. E) Do not hide the page in its own module. Students will not see it. You want students to see it numerous times. (To see an example, enter the *Tom Cantu* site and look at the first page in Course Content, Unit 1.)

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    f.   **Direct your students to install Outlook / MC Email and the Blackboard App** on their mobile phones. See the details on page 6.

    g.   **Organize the table of contents (TOC)**. A) Make the TOC titles clear and meaningful to students. B) Keep the TOC titles brief. The TOC titles should fit in the TOC frame and should not require horizontal scrolling. *Tip: Add a longer title to the first line of any page.*

5.   **Discussions**: A) Create two or more discussion forums that you plan to use to supplement your on-campus course. B) One of the forums can be a place where students can ask questions. C) Post one or more discussion prompts to your students for each discussion forum.

6.   **Set up Send MC Email or Course Mail:**

Option 1: Add **Send MC Email** to the Course Menu. See pages 9-10 of the *Blackboard Essentials Quickstart Guide*. Most faculty supplementing on-campus courses prefer to have all email go to MC Email addresses. B) Hide Course Mail on the left-hand course menu.

Option 2: Use **Course Mail**, the internal email tool. A) Add the **My Messages** channel to the homepage so that users will be notified when new mail is waiting. {From the homepage, click **Add Course Module**. Select **My Messages**. Click OK.}   B) Create a folder in the Course Mail area to file old messages, e.g., Old Mail. Move messages from your Inbox into the Old Mail folder.

7.   **Tests & Surveys**: A) Create a test/quiz or survey. B) Deploy the test/quiz or survey in one of the learning modules in the Course Content area. C) Verify that the settings support your teaching strategy, e.g., Avoid revealing the answers until you are ready. Do not use Force Completion.

D) Enter student preview mode by clicking the icon to the left of Edit Mode On. E) Click the **Settings** button and select **Keep the Preview User and All Data**. F) Take test/quiz or survey. E) Exit student preview mode and view the test/quiz or survey submitted by your test_student. F) Do not delete the results.

8.   **Assignments**: (*Create Assessment > Assignment)*   A) Create one or more assignments (think: assignment drop boxes) for students to submit assignments. B) Provide detailed instructions for completing and submitting the assignments. C) Include a link to the student video Submit an Assignment (or paste this URL into your browser: https://youtu.be/Cv1KOhABlBE)

9.   **Grade Center**: A) Create two columns (*Create Column*) to distribute grades to your on-campus students. (Remember that assessments, assignments, and graded discussion forums will automatically generate columns in the Grade Center.)

10.   **Announcements**: A) Post an announcement welcoming your students into the course site. B) Give clear directions on where to go and what to do to begin using the site. Tip: You can check the box next to Email Announcement to send a copy of the announcement to your students' MC email.

11.   **Simplify the Course Menu.** A) Hide the Tools link on the left-hand course menu. B) Optional: Add tools such as My Grades to the left-hand course menu. (In Edit Mode On, click the + above the course menu and select **Tool Link**. The tools appear in alphabetical order.)

12.   **Check Your Work**: A) In Edit Mode OFF, check every module and every page. Only materials that are relevant to students should be visible. B) Verify that all links work and open in new windows.

Please verify that you have met all of the criteria and let me know which site and module(s) to review.

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#2. Formatting: Make your pages easy to read   *Tip: Print this page.*

To put it simply, once your students' eyes cross from reading dense text on-screen, you've lost them. Use the following guidelines to make your pages easy on the eyes and visually engaging.

1. **Use numerous short paragraphs** instead of lengthy, dense paragraphs.

2. **Apply Paragraph Style to any bulleted or numbered list.** This increases the spacing between each sentence, making the list much easier to read. Highlight the list, open the **Format** drop-down menu (5th button, 1st row), select **Paragraph**.

3. **When writing instructions, state the action first in bold**. Then follow with the details.

4. **Use headings and sub-headings to break up long blocks of text**.
    Sub-headings can be an effective way to break long passages into manageable chunks. For an example, see [Why Apple, Inc. Stock Popped 5%](#). Notice how the subheadings (*What happened?, So What?, Now What?*) move the reader smoothly through the article. Think of the things you do in-person to keep students' attention and move them along. Subheadings help create a similar kind of teaching presence in your Bb site.

5. **Insert <u>two</u> blank lines between the end of a paragraph or section and the next heading.** This increases the readability of the page and orients the reader that one segment has ended and a new one is beginning. That subtle mental pause can do a lot to avoid reader fatigue. **Press the Enter key. Then press the Space bar** to insert an invisible character to hold the blank line in place. Repeat for each blank line.

6. **Include images**. A simple trick is to add an image to the top or bottom of a page and center the image on the page. (Insert images using the 3rd button, 3rd row. Drag the corner handles to resize an image. **Include Alt Text** to ensure ADA Compliance. See page 7 below. Do not paste images. Pasting won't work. To use **Text Wrapping**, right click on an image, select **Alignment**, select the desired setting. Drag or cut and paste the image to position it.

7. *Streamline your site by organizing materials on Items (pages).* As a general guideline, avoid creating a new page for each link or video. Use the paperclip icon (2nd button, 3rd row), the Embed Media button (4th button, 3rd row) and the Link button (in the middle of the 2nd row) to organize course materials on Items, just as you would when creating a handout in Word. Introduce everything. Explain what you want students to do and why (Think: introduction and objectives).

8. *Post lengthy instructions as Word or PDF files.* That makes it easy for students to save or print or both.

#4 a. Create an Assignments page in Each Module

Remote teaching will involve teaching by Collaborate Ultra or Zoom during the times when your course would normally meet on-campus. This is vital to keep students on schedule in case we are able to return to campus. Creating a robust Blackboard site will help to keep students on track between classes and to ensure they come prepared to each webinar / class meeting. The following is a sample Assignments page that can appear as the <u>first</u> page in each of your modules. You can then organize the resources students need to complete the weekly assignments on additional pages in each learning module.

Introduction

Tell students what they will learn and why it is important. The introduction should *motivate and prepare* students for the work ahead. Tell your students what they should be able to do by the end of the week. Clear objectives begin with an action verb that indicates the performance you will require on the assessment.

Objectives

- Define the following terms and provide examples of each.

- Explain the process of …

- Compare and contrast the theories of …

Assignments

1. Read Ch. 12 and watch my PowerPoint lecture.

2. Submit your study notes on Ch. 12

3. Complete Assignment 12

4. Contribute to the online discussion at least 3 times on three different days during the week.

#4 f. Direct your students to install MC Email/Outlook and the Blackboard App:

Install Outlook on Your Mobile Phone

1. Look for Microsoft Outlook in the App Store (iPhone) or the Google Play Store (Android).
2. Download and install.
3. Launch Outlook Mobile.
4. Login with **MyMCID**@montgomerycollege.edu e.g., jdoe23@montgomerycollege.edu
5. The password is the same password used to login to MyMC.

Turn Off Clutter in Office 365

1. Go to Settings by clicking on the Gear icon in the upper right.
2. Search for "**Clutter**" and select the option when it appears.
3. Uncheck "Separate items identified as **clutter**".
4. Click the Save button at the top.

The Montgomery College IT Service Desk will provide technical support:

Phone: 240-567-7222 or E-Mail: ITServicedesk@montgomerycollege.edu

Install the Blackboard App

The Blackboard app for students is the one with the pencil icon. Login with MyMC credentials. From that point on, tap and the app opens. Note: **Course Mail** is found under Course Content.

Blackboard
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4.0 ★

Professors can install "Blackboard Instructor." The app will enable you to keep up with Course Mail and discussions when you are away from a computer.
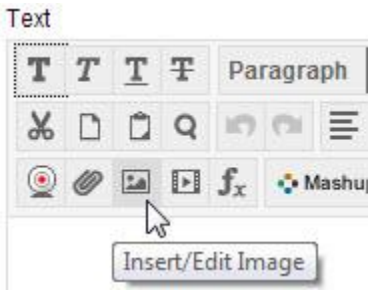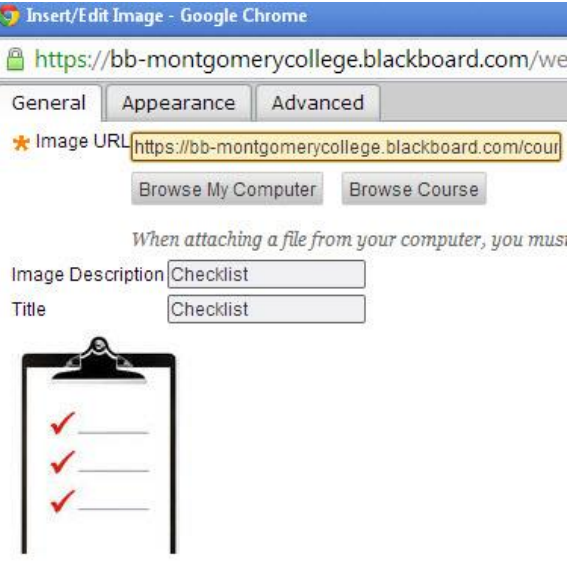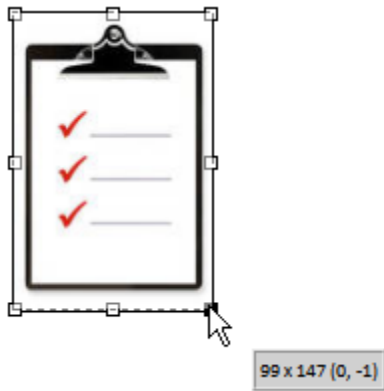
Use GroupMe or Remind to Create a Network of Their Peers (Optional)

Many professors have begun using the group texting app GroupMe. All messages go through the app so no one has to reveal his or her private cell phone number. That has advantages for the professor and students. Most importantly, once the professor trains students to assist each other, students find that they have a network of 25 or 30 of their peers they can rely on. To create a group go to: https://groupme.com/

Many professors in the business department and elsewhere have been using it with positive results. Teach your students to help each other. You can silence the notifications so that you can sleep.   The ATPA coaches use the Remind app. It is very similar.

NOTE: If you want students to type equations, try using **Piazza** instead. See Piazza.com

Adding Images

Text [toolbar image with Insert/Edit Image button]	1. To insert an image into a page, click the **Attach Image** button, 3rd button in the 3rd row. 2. Then click **Browse Computer** or **Browse Course**. 3. Select the image you wish to insert. 4. Click **Open**.
Insert/Edit Image - Google Chrome [dialog image]	**Add Alt Text** 5. *To meet accessibility requirements*, enter a description in the **Image Description** field so that screen readers can identify the image for visually impaired students. 6. Copy and paste the same description into the **Title** field so that you can see the alt text label. 7. Click **Insert**. 8. The image will appear on the page.
[checklist image with resize handles] 99 x 147 (0, -1)	9. To resize an image, click on the image. Square "handles" will appear. Click on a corner and drag to resize the image. 10. Center or right-align the image on the page by clicking **Align Center** or **Align Right** in the middle of the 2nd row.

#4d. How to Embed YouTube Videos in Bb

Blackboard makes it easy to embed a video from YouTube. Simply copy the URL, click the Insert Embed Media button (4th button, 3rd row) and paste the URL. Here are the steps:

1. Copy the URL.

2. In Bb, open the desired item, click the **Insert/Embed Media** button (4th button 3rd row)

3. Paste the URL. (On the General Tab, in the File/URL field)

4. TIP: Add   **?rel=0**   to the end of URL. This tells YouTube NOT to show suggested videos. No need to distract students with the latest dancing kittens. {Translation: ? (do you want?) rel (related videos) = (set value equal to) 0 (show no related videos). }

5. Click **Insert**. (The video appears as a yellow block. This is normal.)

6. Click **Submit** to save and view the video.

Tip: To resize a video, edit the Item, click on the video, the click the Insert/Embed Media button. On the General tab, edit one of the dimensions. Be sure to keep the Constrain Proportions checkbox checked. This will ensure that the image is resized without being distorted.

See the video explanation How to Embed Videos in Bb.

How to Embed a Video that is not on YouTube

Embedding a YouTube video is easy. Embedding a video from anywhere else requires a few extra steps. If you have videos in your Screencast-O-Matic account, first login to your account, then click on the desired video. The Embed code button is at the top of the screen.

1. Find the desired video

2. Copy the **Embed Code** (the Embed code button is usually above or below the video).

3. Return to blackboard. Open the desired Item and click the **Embed Media** button (4th button, 3rd row)

4. Click on the **Source** tab.

5. Paste the Embed code.

6. Click on the **General Tab** to give Blackboard a moment to accept the embed code.

7. Click **Insert**.

If you are interested in creating your own videos, see the pages below on using Screencast-O-Matic and uploading videos to YouTube to automatically generate captions.

Questions? Contact Tom Cantu 240-567-6006 or tom.cantu@montgomerycollege.edu

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Create Your Own Videos Using Screencast-O-Matic (Optional)

This information is for reference and highly recommended. Use Screencast-O-Matic to narrate PowerPoint presentations. You can create videos of anything that appears on your computer screen or you on a web camera or both. It's like lecturing from a smart station while recording both you and the projection screen. Here's an example of a narrated lecture from MC Biology professor Kiersten Newtoff.

See my quick start guide to Screencast-O-Matic or paste https://youtu.be/NzHAWs0Sk0s

The free version of Screencast-O-Matic will do most of what you need. If you decide you need the extra features, the paid version is about $17 per year.

To begin

1. Go to http://screencast-o-matic.com/
2. Create an account.
3. Login and then you will see the button to Download / Install on your computer. You can also use it through the browser. There are video tutorials on the website. I suggest the following to get started

   - Welcome to SOM (2:09)

   - Upload to YouTube (2:07) Note: Upload videos as **Unlisted**, not Private which requires a password to view.

   - Upload to Screencast-O-Matic (2:22)

Tips

   - Imagine you are lecturing to one of your favorite classes or talking to a few favorite students in your office. When you do, the animation you have in class will come through in your video.

   - Look into the camera. It appears as if you are speaking directly to each student.

   - Use the Pause key. When you lose momentum and begin to "um" and "ah," press pause and take a break. Compose your thoughts, un-pause to continue recording. Repeat as needed. (In Screencast-O-Matic, open the recorder and click the Preferences link to set your own Hotkey. I use Alt-S so I can pause with my left-hand and move the cursor with my right hand.)

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Captioning

It is vital that all courses are accessible. Videos should be captioned to ensure ADA compliance. Here's how:

1. Upload the video to a YouTube account.

- YouTube will automatically generate captions for the video. It may take an hour or up to a day. The captions will be about 70 to 80% accurate, so they will need to be edited for accuracy.
- You can improve the accuracy by speaking like a newscaster or your favorite radio host.
- Your videos can be uploaded as "unlisted" so that they will not be found in a web search. They are only visible if someone has the URL.

I suggest starting with the following tutorials:

- [How to Upload Videos in YouTube](#)

- [How to Access the Auto Captions Feature](#)

- [How to Edit the Auto Captions](#)

For more information, see [Closed Caption and YouTube](#) on the ELITE Support page at https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/offices/elite/support.html

2. Disability Support Services (DSS) can assist you with captioning in a pinch.

If a student shows an accommodation letter and requires captions, the DSS office can help you caption your course quickly. I don't like to abuse their services as they are quite overloaded.

If you have a student with DSS considerations who needs captions, contact the DSS office or Christopher Moy or Stacey Ford, the Accessible Technology Coordinator x7-9175. They can gather the resources to ensure that your entire course is ADA compliant. Otherwise, the college and possibly you are at risk of being sued.

It's best to make your course ADA compliant as you build it the first time. It's so much easier than revising in a hurry.