# The Blackboard 5.5 Student Guide

## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is Internet Explorer?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I use my desktop?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I start Blackboard from my desktop?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I do if I have started the wrong program, and how do I change the size of the window I am looking at?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I login to Blackboard?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am trying to login to Blackboard and it is not working. What do I do now?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have logged into Blackboard. What do I do now?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I reach the course page for my Blackboard course?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am at the course page and everything looks different now. What do I do?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I use the Announcements Page?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does the Main Navigation Frame do?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I clicked on the Communication button. What can I do with all of these menu options?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I use the Discussion Board to post or reply to a message?</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I respond to a post on the Discussion Board?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I clicked the Tools button. What can I do with all of these menu options?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My email address (<a href="mailto:n@n.com">n@n.com</a>) is wrong</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I use the Digital Drop Box?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I check my grade?</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am done using Blackboard. What do I do now?</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I restart or shut down my computer?</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the Blackboard Student Guide

To begin, use this page as a place to write down your Username and Password. Remember that in order login to Blackboard successfully, you MUST type your Username and Password in lowercase.

Bring this guide with you to every Blackboard class you enroll in each semester. Your instructor will inform you of your login information shortly. You will use the same Username and Password in every Blackboard class you enroll in until you graduate.

(If you have already received a Username and Password from a previous online course, write it down here.)

MY USERNAME IS:____________________________________________

MY PASSWORD IS:____________________________________________

To access Blackboard from either on or off campus, type the following address* into your browser exactly as it appears below:

http://198.83.124.162:8080

We recommend that you add this site as a favorite or bookmark to save having to type the address again.

*Please note that this address will only allow you to access regular BMCC technology-enhanced courses. You will NOT be able to access Distance Learning courses from this address. For DL courses, go to http://bmcc.blackboard.com

Blackboard, Windows 9X, Internet Explorer, and all other program names mentioned in this student guide are the registered trademarks of their respective companies.
What is Internet Explorer?

Internet Explorer is a web browser, or a program that allows you to view different sites on the World Wide Web. It is also the program you will be using the most with Blackboard. Most Explorer features are located on the toolbar. Each text box in the Explorer window shown contains instructions for how and when to use each button.

How do I use my desktop?

Your desktop is the first thing you see after Windows 95 or 98 have started up. It contains icons, or little pictures of the most commonly used programs installed on your computer. You may start a program from one of these icons by double clicking it. Below is an example desktop.

Note: You may also access Blackboard by using Netscape Navigator. Because Internet Explorer is BMCC’s browser of choice, Netscape Navigator is not mentioned in this guide. Both browsers, however, work essentially the same way.
How do I start Blackboard from my desktop?

First, locate the Blackboard icon on your desktop. It looks just like an Internet Explorer icon. However, if you look below the icon itself you will notice that it is named Blackboard login. (This icon can be named something else depending on the computer you are using, but EVERY Blackboard icon will contain the word “Blackboard” in it.) After you have located the Blackboard icon, double click on it to start the program.

What do I do if I have started the wrong program, and how do I change the size of the window I am looking at?

The fastest way to close a program or change its window size is through the three buttons located on the right side of the program's Title Bar. Text boxes in the example to the left identify the Title Bar and the location of the three window size buttons.

The Title Bar is located at the very top of the window you are working in. It will usually display the name of the program in use. Microsoft Word is the program in use in this example.

Click the Minimize button to shrink the window you are working with to a small button that will appear at the bottom of your desktop.

Click the Maximize (or Restore) button to expand your window so that it fits your entire screen.

Click the X button ONLY IF you wish to stop using the program you are working with.
How do I login to Blackboard?

Double clicking the Blackboard icon on your desktop will cause an Internet Explorer window to open. Follow the instructions below to login to Blackboard.

1. First, click the Login button.
2. Enter your Username here.
3. Enter your Password here.
4. Click the Login button after you have entered your Username and Password in the provided fields.
I am trying to login to Blackboard and it is not working. What do I do now?

If you are experiencing difficulty logging in, it is most likely due to an improperly typed Username or Password. You will at the beginning of your Blackboard course receive a slip of paper listing your Username and Password. Notice that they are written in lowercase. This is done because Blackboard is case sensitive. You must enter your Username and Password in lowercase in order to login and begin using the program.

If you cannot login:

- Check your keyboard to make sure that you did not mistakenly press the Caps Lock button. Three lights are located above the keyboard’s keypad. If the second light is on, press the Caps Lock button once to turn it off. The keyboard will now function normally, and you should be able to reenter your Username/Password and successfully log into Blackboard.
- Your Blackboard Username and Password must be entered into the login screen exactly as they appear on the slip of paper that you received at the beginning of your course. If your Username is, for example, jd1234, and your Password is nectar, then you must type jd1234 and nectar, exactly as they appear on the slip of paper, into the login screen.
- Pay particular attention to the way your Password is spelled. Blackboard Passwords must be spelled correctly in order for them to work.
- Ensure that you are entering the proper information. You cannot use your email address or AOL screen name as your Blackboard Username, nor can you use your email address or AOL password as your Blackboard Password.

If you encounter this error at home or on campus, refer to the list below for further assistance. If you are still unable to login to Blackboard even after trying the suggestions below, contact your instructor.
I have logged into Blackboard. What do I do now?

Below is an example of the first screen you will see after you have successfully logged into Blackboard. Follow the arrows and text boxes below to learn about Blackboard’s different features.

How do I reach the course page for my Blackboard course?

Take another look at the example above. You will notice a menu titled “My Courses” located to the right-hand side of your screen. If you have enrolled in one course, only one link will appear; if you have enrolled in a number of online courses, you will see a list. Choose the link named after your course. This concept is illustrated in the example below.

All of your course announcements will appear in the “Today’s Announcements” section of Blackboard.

Use the links in the “My Courses” menu to access a particular course’s page. For example, if you wished to go to the FALL 2001 MAT 150-112 course in the example menu above, you would click the link titled “FALL 2001 MAT 150-112”.

Clicking one of the links in this menu…
I am at the course page and everything looks different now. What do I do?

Every Blackboard page is divided into two parts called frames. The left frame, with the list of buttons, is called the Main Navigation Frame. The right frame, where different features appear after you have clicked on a button in the left frame, is called the Content Frame. Both frames are shown in the example below.

This is the Main Navigation Frame. Here you will find buttons that give you access to all of Blackboard’s features.

This is the Content Frame. This is where most of your online work will be done.

…will bring you to your course’s Blackboard page.
How do I use the Announcements Page?

The Announcements Page contains important up-to-the minute information regarding your course. For this reason, every Blackboard course page begins with the Announcements Page.

You may access your course announcements at any time by pressing the Announcements button in the Main Navigation Frame.

This is the first page you will see after accessing your Blackboard course page.

What does the Main Navigation Frame do?

The Main Navigation Frame generally contains ten buttons, each of which provides you with access to a different Blackboard feature. Information about these features can be found in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clicking this button…</th>
<th>…allows you to access these features.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>The Announcements Page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Information</td>
<td>Information regarding attendance and grading policies, syllabi, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Information</td>
<td>Information about your professor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Documents</td>
<td>Various required course materials (content changes according to the instructor.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Links to online assignments and examinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Send Email, the Discussion Board, the Virtual Classroom, the Class Roster, and Group Pages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Links</td>
<td>Links to other Internet resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>The Digital Drop Box, Edit Your Homepage, Personal Information, Calendar, the Blackboard online Manual, Tasks, the Electronic Blackboard notebook, and the Address Book.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each time you click one of the buttons in the Main Navigation Frame, the options available to you in the Content Frame change accordingly. For example, if you clicked the Communications button, your screen would look like the one below.

I clicked on the Communication button. What can I do with all of these menu options?

The Communication menu contains some of the most important Blackboard features. To access them, follow the instructions below.
How do I use the Discussion Board to post or reply to a message?

The Discussion Board is Blackboard’s most frequently used feature. Most instructors use the Discussion Board to create an environment that encourages students to engage in off-campus academic discussions. The content of these discussions would be readily available to the student through the World Wide Web. Follow the instructions below to add or respond to a post on your course Discussion Board.

First, click the Discussion Board link in the Communication menu.

Then click the link for the Discussion Board forum to which you would like to post. In this example, we will post to Introduce Yourself.
To add your post, click the Add New Thread button.

After you click the Add New Thread button, a new window called “Create New Message” will appear.

Enter the title of your new post in the Subject field.

Type the text of your post in the Message field.
When you have finished typing your new post, click the Submit button. Your new post will appear in the list after you have clicked the Submit button. It will contain the title of your post, your name, and the date and time the post was submitted.
How do I respond to a post on the Discussion Board?

First click the link of the message to which you wish to respond.

Then click the Reply button. (To find where it is in a long post, you might have to scroll down.) The Reply button will always be located at the bottom right of the Content Frame.
The Subject of your message is already written for you. Now, type the text of your message in the Message field.

When you have finished writing your post, click the Submit button.

Your response will appear as a link underneath the link you first clicked. It will usually begin with the letters Re: followed by the title of the original post.
I clicked the Tools button. What can I do with all of these menu options?

The Tools menu contains additional, important Blackboard features. To access them, follow the instructions below.

- Click the Electric Blackboard link to access your electronic notebook.
- Click the Address Book link to view/edit your address book.
- Click here to check your grade.
- Click here to access your course’s Digital Drop Box.
- Click here to access/complete your course Tasks.
- Click here to access your course’s Digital Drop Box.
- Click here to edit your Blackboard homepage.
- Click here to enter/change your personal information.
- Click here to view your calendar.
- Click here to view your calendar.
- Click here to check your grade.
- Click here to read the Blackboard Online Help Manual.
- Click here to access/complete your course Tasks.

Not shown: Click the Electric Blackboard link to access your electronic notebook; click the Address Book link to view/edit your address book.
My email address (n@n.com) is wrong. How do I fix it either before or after I have accessed the course?

Before you have accessed the course:

**STEP ONE:**
After logging in, select PERSONAL INFORMATION from the TOOLS menu on the left of your screen.

**STEP TWO:**
Next, select the EDIT PERSONAL INFORMATION link and press OK.
Blackboard will then take you to a “User updated” screen. It should show your correct email address. If it does not, please try to reenter your email following the instructions above.

Or after you have accessed the course:

First, select TOOLS from the Navigation Frame.

STEP THREE
Enter your correct email address in the E-MAIL field. When you have done this, scroll down the page and click the submit button.
Next, select the PERSONAL INFORMATION link.

Finally, follow the same instructions to change your email that are listed in the previous section. When you have entered your correct email address you will again be directed to a "User updated" screen. If your correct email is listed, you have successfully changed your personal information. If it is not listed, please follow these instructions again.
How do I use the Digital Drop Box?

The Digital Drop Box is a tool that allows you to send computer files (like essays written in Microsoft Word or spreadsheets created in Microsoft Excel) to your instructor. Using it will keep you from having to print each document you wish to submit to your instructor. Follow the instructions in the text boxes below to learn how to use the Digital Drop Box.

First, click the Digital Drop Box link in the Tools menu.

Click the Send File button to send a new file to the Drop Box.
Click the Browse button.

A new menu appears showing you what documents you can send to the Digital Drop Box.
Double click the name of the file you want to send to the Drop Box from the list. In this example, we will send the file named Test Document.

The name of the file you want to send will appear in the File Name field.

Name the file you would like to send to the Drop Box. (You must name all files sent to the Digital Drop Box.)

Click the Submit button after you have named your file.
How do I check my grade?

If you are interested in keeping track of your grade during a term, or would like to receive your final grade online, follow the instructions below.

First, click the Check Grade link in the Tools menu.

A message will appear after you click the Submit button telling you that your attempt to send a file to the Drop Box was successful. If you encounter any difficulty sending a file in class, contact your instructor. If you encounter difficulty at home or in another location, recheck the steps listed above.
I am done using Blackboard. What do I do now?  

Always remember to logout of Blackboard!

Closing the window that Blackboard is in will not prevent possible technical troubles. Failing to logout of Blackboard once you have finished using it will allow the next person using your computer to login to Blackboard as YOU. They could then change all of your course information. Logged in as you, they can:

- Upload or remove papers from the Digital Drop Box,
- Post to your course Discussion Board in your name,
- And change your Username and Password through the Edit Personal Information menu.

Your grades will appear in the Content Frame after you have clicked the Check Grade link. (Note: this grade only reflects your GPA for exams taken online. Your instructor will inform you of your grades for other assignments, essays, etc.)
If your Password is changed it can take as long as two weeks for you to receive a new one. For example, say your account is compromised between during midterms or finals week. There is no guarantee that you will receive a new Username and Password before your exam date, and most likely you will be unable to take the exam. Please remember to logout at the end of every Blackboard session!

How do I restart or shut down my computer?

Return to your desktop by closing all of the programs you are using.

Click the Start button on the lower left-hand side of your screen and select Shut Down from the menu that pops up.
If you want to turn off your computer, click the circle next to “Shut Down.” Then click the OK button. The computer will then shut down.

If you want to restart your computer, click the circle next to “Restart.” Then click the OK button. The computer will then restart. Your instructor will tell you if you should restart or shut down your computer at the end of class.