Best Practices for Implementing Blackboard Communities

Adam Voyton
Instructional Technology Project Specialist
Where exactly is Wilmington University? everywhere.

- 8 Delaware Locations
- 5 Partnership Locations
- 100% Online
Wilmington University started in 1968 as Wilmington College with a charter class of 194.

- Accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
- Private non-profit university.
About Wilmington University

Learn more at www.wilmu.edu/about/
Over 95 Online Programs, Concentrations and Certificates

- 2 Associate Programs
- 24 Undergraduate Programs
- 7 Undergraduate Minors
- 41 Graduate Programs
- 3 Doctoral Programs
- 18 Certificate Programs (11 Undergraduate, 7 Graduate)
Table of Contents:
1. Interface Customizations
2. Blackboard Organizations
3. Online Student Association
4. Sample Communications
5. Lessons Learned
6. End User Feedback
Customized Views

- Create the tabs, sub-tabs, and modules within Blackboard.
- Each tab, sub-tab, and module can be configured to appear to users that are assigned to a particular Role.
- A module is basically a box that can contain content:
  - Video
  - Advertisement for an upcoming event or new service
  - My Courses module
  - RSS feed
Institutional Roles

• Primary roles are Students, faculty, or staff

• For tabs or modules that have information relevant to students and/or faculty in certain department, we set up college-specific institutional roles

• The data is automatically updated from the Student Information System (SIS)

Examples:

• College of Arts and Sciences - Faculty (based off of the college they teach for in the SIS)

• College of Arts and Sciences - Student (based off of their major in our SIS)
Questions? Contact the UIC!

Hours of Operation:
Monday—Friday from 8:00 a.m. — 9:00pm EST
Saturday Online Only from 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. EST
Sunday Online Only from 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. EST

Call: (877) 967-5464
Email: infocenter@wilmu.edu
Chat: Click to Chat Now!

My Announcements

Students: IDEA Survey Details

No Course or Organization Announcements have been posted in the last 7 days.

more announcements →

My Courses
Courses where you are: Student
- DEPT.DISTLEARN.DI5095.FA2014: DI5 095 - NEW Online Orientation for Students
- HIS320.OLEXAMPLE: Global Civilizations
- MHR6503.OLEXAMPLE: Law, Regulation and the Workplace

My Organizations
Organizations where you are: Participant
- APA Wizards
- College of Arts and Sciences: The Big MUGS Club (MUGs=Mechanics, Usage & Grammar)
- Online Learning - Online Student Association

Student Health 101 Magazine
February’s Wilmington Student Health 101 is now ready - check it out and enter this month’s drawing for $1,000! http://readsh101.com/wilmu.html
don’t panic

don’t panic
Video Tutorials for Using Blackboard

These short video tutorials provide answers to the most common questions students and faculty have about Blackboard.

Seeing too many courses on your My Courses module...

If you would like to organize or limit the courses you see in your My Courses module please see this video tutorial to "take control" of your course list.

Browser Plug-ins

Sometimes, you may need additional software to view and listen to instructional content within your course. These plug-ins are free to download.

Technical Support

To request technical support for Blackboard, WebCampus, email, or other technology systems, please contact us.

- Email helpdesk@wilmu.edu or fill out the web form on the WilmU Website
- Phone: 1-877-708-2905
- Click to Chat Now!
- Blackboard How-To Videos

Spring 2015 Hours

Monday to Friday: 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Saturday: 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Sunday: 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM

How to Use WebCampus and Blackboard

Browser Settings

Use the button below to check if your web browser is properly configured to use Blackboard

Test Browser

Blackboard Mobile Learn App

Get the Blackboard App

Keep up with your classes from your phone

$1.99 for life

Available on the iPhone App Store and Android Google play
Welcome to Wilmington University and the College of Health Professions! It is an exciting time to be in health care and an excellent time to advance your career by pursuing a degree. I encourage you to communicate and collaborate with your faculty and peers throughout your academic experience. Whether online or face-to-face, you have access to a variety of resources in support of your student success. It is our commitment to provide academic excellence and promote lifelong learning. Please find the tabs and modules in this blackboard segment helpful in keeping you informed of the on-goings within your College and your degree program. We wish you the very best in pursuit of your academic endeavors. Thank you for selecting us to be a part of your educational journey!

Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society

ΣΘΤ—Sigma Theta Tau International, ΩΓ—Omicron Gamma Chapter

Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing, is an organization that fosters scholarship in nursing. It is dedicated to improving the health of people worldwide by increasing the scientific base of nursing practice. In 1936, Sigma Theta Tau was the first organization in the United States to fund nursing research. It has world-wide recognition and respect.

Sigma Theta Tau was founded in 1922 by six nursing students at Indiana University. More than 405,000 nurse scholars have been inducted. With 130,000 active members, it is the second largest nursing organization in the world. Members are active in more than 92 countries and territories. There are over 450 chapters on college campuses in the United States, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and in many other countries.
Tabs to Other Systems

- We have tabs that directly link to other systems:
  - “eFolio/TaskStream” (College of Education online portfolio software for students)
  - “My Career” – to our online job/internship portal named, Career Link
  - “Search the Library” – access to library databases from within Bb
Governance

Have rules/governance policies for what modules can appear in certain locations within Blackboard.

- The landing page is the most popular place that people want to have a module.
- Our policy is to have My Courses in the Top Right corner and My Announcements is in the Top Center column.
- Set up a calendar to manage the content schedule of the “Ad” modules that appear on the landing page of Blackboard.
Preview Wilmington University’s Blackboard

You can use a guest account to login to Blackboard and see the typical setup of an Organization, as well as the layout of the modules/tabs.

**Log in to Blackboard** using the following login information:

- Website: https://wilmu.blackboard.com/
- Username = onlinedemo
- Password = student

The Online Student Association is a great organization to reference:
Table of Contents:

1. Interface Customizations
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6. End User Feedback
84 Blackboard Organizations are Currently Set Up

- 52 Academic Program
- 18 Club
- 9 Department
- 3 Honor Society
- 2 University Site
Recommended Fields to Track on a List of all Organizations

- Organization ID (that follows a naming convention – see next slide)
- Organization Name
- Type (club, academic program, honor society, etc.)
- Faculty/Staff Leaders
- Student Leader(s)
- Membership style (auto-enroll, self-enroll, leader will manually manage, or a combination)
- Changed Enrollment (if the requirements for auto-enrollments change, keep a record)
- Availability
- Web site with details on its purpose & how to participate
- Legacy Course Name
- Legacy Course ID
- Department
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Folder Name</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Code for the Group</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Course ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>ATHL</td>
<td></td>
<td>BASEBALL, MEN'S BASKETBALL, WOMEN'S BASKETBALL, CHEERLEADING, CROSS COUNTRY, GOLF, WOMEN'S LACROSSE, MEN'S SOCCER, WOMEN'S SOCCER, SOFTBALL, VOLLEYBALL</td>
<td>ORG. ATHL. BASEBALL, ORG. ATHL. MENS BASKETBALL, ORG. ATHL. WOMENS BASKETBALL, ORG. ATHL. CHEERLEADING, ORG. ATHL. CROSS COUNTRY, ORG. ATHL. GOLF, ORG. ATHL. WOMENS LACROSSE, ORG. ATHL. MENS SOCCER, ORG. ATHL. SOFTBALL, ORG. ATHL. CLUB. GAME, ORG. CLUB. DIGITAL FILM MAKING, ORG. CLUB. PHOTOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>CLUB</td>
<td></td>
<td>GAME CLUB, DIGITAL FILM MAKING CLUB, PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB, BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE</td>
<td>ORG. CLUB. GAME, ORG. CLUB. DIGITAL FILM MAKING, ORG. CLUB. PHOTOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>ASSOC.</td>
<td></td>
<td>STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION, STUDENT NURSES ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION</td>
<td>ORG. ASSOC. SGA, ORG. ASSOC. SNA, ORG. ASSOC. ACJA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF ARTS &amp; SCIENCES - UNDERGRADUATE, COLLEGE OF ARTS &amp; BUSINESS - UNDERGRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. ARTS SCIENCE UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. ARTS SCIENCE GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF BUSINESS - UNDERGRADUATE, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS - GRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. BUSINESS UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. BUSINESS GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF EDUCATION - UNDERGRADUATE, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION - GRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. EDUCATION UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. EDUCATION GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS - UNDERGRADUATE, COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS - GRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. HLTH PROF UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. HLTH PROF GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF SOCIAL &amp; BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES - UNDERGRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. SBSC UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. SBSC GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>COLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY - UNDERGRADUATE, COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY GRADUATE</td>
<td>ORG. COLL. TECH UGRADUATE, ORG. COLL. TECH GRADUATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>UNIV.</td>
<td></td>
<td>LIBRARY RESOURCES</td>
<td>ORG. UNIV. LIBRARY RESOURCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>EMPL</td>
<td></td>
<td>EMPLOYEE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES</td>
<td>ORG. EMPL. TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>DEPT.</td>
<td></td>
<td>FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>ORG. DEPT. FACULTY, ORG. DEPT. PROF. DEVELOPMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>UNIV.</td>
<td></td>
<td>APA &amp; THE ART OF WRITING</td>
<td>ORG. UNIV. APA &amp; THE ART OF WRITING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>UNIV. OR CLUB</td>
<td></td>
<td>WILDCAT DANCE TEAM, CYBER WILDCATS,</td>
<td>ORG. UNIV. WILDCAT DANCE, ORG. UNIV. CYBER WILDCATS, ORG. UNIV. GREEN TEAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>ORG.</td>
<td>UNIV.</td>
<td></td>
<td>GREEN TEAM</td>
<td>ORG. UNIV. GREEN TEAM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blackboard Organization Request Form

- We have a web page explaining Blackboard Organizations on our website: www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx as well as a tab in Bb
Faculty and staff may request to set up a new Organization for their group by completing this form: [www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/OrganizationRequest.aspx](http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/OrganizationRequest.aspx)

- The Organization leader must complete Blackboard Basics Training. Faculty who are already familiar with Blackboard will not be required to complete this initial formal training.
- The form is the first step. You will be contacted by a member of the Educational Technology department within five business days with more information. Before certain Organizations can be set up, a consultation meeting may need to be held to verify the way the enrollments will be set up.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Con</th>
<th>Commonly used in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-enrollment</td>
<td>All students can join</td>
<td>Doesn’t offer privacy</td>
<td>Student Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Enrollment or Batch Enroll from an Excel Spreadsheet</td>
<td>Leader has complete control</td>
<td>Leader is responsible for adding and removing all members – time consuming</td>
<td>Organizations for faculty in a specific program or honor societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatic Enrollment</td>
<td>Members are automatically updated based on a specific criteria in the SIS</td>
<td>Some students may not want to be automatically added into an organization</td>
<td>Organizations for students in a specific program or certain clubs (like the Multicultural Student Association)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Clubs and Automatic Enrollments

• Automatically enrolling students into a Blackboard Organization helps to quickly foster engagement in an organization

• For example, we auto-enrolled all students marked in our SIS as a military student into the Blackboard Organization for the Military Veterans Student Organization (MVSO).

• The MVSO is a private organization and not open to all students/faculty members.

• Be sure to come up with an unsubscribe process.

• Secure a graphic designer to create a banner for all organizations
Unsubscribe Process

Who May Participate in this Organization?

Students currently taking an online course will automatically be enrolled in this Blackboard Organization. This Organization is also open to any student via self-enrollment.

You may request to be unenrolled from this organization by following these steps:
1. Click the Unsubscribe button, which is located to the left at the bottom of the course menu.
2. Click “All Leader Users”
3. In the subject line, type "Please Unsubscribe". In the message field, please let us know why you are unsubscribing. Then simply click Submit. You will be removed within two business days.
Discussion Board Code of Conduct

Students are expected to use the Blackboard Organization discussion boards appropriately. If a student violates the Code of Conduct, it will be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs. Violations include but not limited to:

- Mental abuse, harassment, or a threat to another person within the University community;
- The sending of any correspondence (including pictures), to any Wilmington University employee, faculty or staff member which is vulgar, threatening or profane;
- The use of any racial, ethnic or sexual orientation slur;
- The interference with the freedom of speech of another person;
- Sexual harassment;
- A violation of any local, state, federal law or regulation;

Tips to Increase Student Engagement in Blackboard Organizations

1. Make registration ULTRA-EASY (barriers to registration tend to be higher among adult students who are less eager). A few ways we can do this:
   - As it stands now, students can instantly sign up to the site by logging into Blackboard, clicking organizations, then following the directions to self-enroll. However, this puts the responsibility on the student.
   - To take some of the responsibility off the student, we can set up a web page with a request form to subscribe. After they fill out the form, give them a confirmation message that says they will be added in 2 business days. Then, send them a confirmation email with instructions to instantly enroll, in case they want instant access. This will require that an administrator manually adds the student, but it takes the responsibility off the student.
   - Have a list students can sign at face-to-face events. Following the event, have a organization leader manually enroll those students.

2. Email all students and push out a press release. In both, have a prominent link for them to sign up.

3. Video tape face-to-face events and share them in the Blackboard organization.

4. Student representatives are a unique asset because they bring an authentic voice that’s a bit more relatable to other students. Train select student to be ‘leaders’ on Blackboard.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization FAQs page</td>
<td>Completed: web page available at: <a href="http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx">http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added the Organization as a Tab to the Organization Tab Group.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a web form for faculty and staff to request a new Bb Organization which ensure all of the necessary requirements are gathered.</td>
<td>Completed: web page available at: <a href="http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/OrganizationRequest.aspx">http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/OrganizationRequest.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot program – create a small set of exemplary Organizations that will serve as a model for future Organizations. This small set of examples will contain rich multimedia content and engaging activities.</td>
<td>Competed – 3 Student Clubs now have organizations with content: 1. SGA (led by SGA President Devon Augatis) 2. The Green Team (led by Tom Hurd) 3. Game Forge (Led by Scott Shaw's Teaching Assistant, Daniel Castagna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview video “Introducing Blackboard Organizations”</td>
<td>Completed; video available at: <a href="https://vimeo.com/43289366">https://vimeo.com/43289366</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email all chairs and Dean with info regarding what an Organizations can be used for and how to request one.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email all student club advisors with info regarding what an Organizations can be used for and how to request one.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a procedure for Student Club Leaders to proactively moderate content posted in their Organization(s).</td>
<td>Completed; • If a student is given the role of ‘Leader’, then the club’s advisor will also be given the role of ‘Leader’. This will enable the club advisor will be able to moderate content if need be. • Dr. Sharpe, the Senior Director of Career Services, will be given the role of ‘Leader’ in all Blackboard Organizations for Student Clubs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a Participation Policy that describes what inappropriate content is and what sanctions may be enforced.</td>
<td>Completed; each Organization will include Netiquette guidelines to help students communicate online in an efficient, effective, and courteous manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert 44 Special Courses to Organizations.</td>
<td>4 Nursing Special Courses have been converted. 40 legacy ‘Special Courses’ remain; contact the facilitators of each course to lead the transfer to an organization. Anything non-academic should be coded as an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create banners for new Organizations</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide training to Student Club Advisors</td>
<td>Completed; Students who are Student Club Advisors may not be familiar with the administrative privileges that are used to contribute and moderate Organizations. Advisors will receive mandatory Bb Basics training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kick–off communication campaign to students</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition to training, student advisors will need assistance in filling their Organization with dynamic and engaging content.</td>
<td>Start with a few exemplary organizations to serve as examples.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents:

1. Interface Customizations
2. Blackboard Organizations
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Welcome to the Online Student Association!

Posted on: Tuesday, February 19, 2013

Purpose
This Blackboard Organization has been created to serve as a virtual community for WU students that are taking online classes. Participants will have a chance to network with other students, faculty, and staff in a relaxed atmosphere outside of the classroom.

You can interact from a distance by participating in various online activities:

- Participate in the Discussion Board. You can enter to win a $25 Visa Gift Card by participating in the discussion board of the month!
- Each month, students will have the opportunity to attend an online group meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for students to ask questions, express concerns, and share ideas. This meeting will be held using Blackboard Collaborate - a webinar tool similar to Skype.
- Participate in a Wiki.
- Read about previous students who have been selected as Student of the Block. Also, learn how to apply to be the Student of the Block for an upcoming term.

If you have any questions or ideas to improve this organization, please email me at kelly.t.clayton@wilmu.edu.

Kelly Clayton
Online Student Navigator
Advisor of the Online Student Association
Student Engagement in the Online Student Association

Total Posts on the Discussion Board of the Month (Participation by Students)

- APR-13: 31
- MAY-13: 10
- JUN-13: 8
- JUL-13: 13
- AUG-13: 32
- SEP-13: 29
- OCT-13: 16
- NOV-13: 24
- DEC-13: 66
- JAN-14: 8
- FEB-14: 31
- MAR-14: 54
- APR-14: 29
- MAY-14: 33
Online Student of the Block

Highlighted students on a map that have been selected as the Online Student of the Block.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>File with Student Life to be an official club</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request a Blackboard Organization be set up with Auto-enrollments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Content to Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verify dates for online student meeting, set up registration forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verify topics for discussion boards, get prizes for DB of the month raffle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Update Purpose to reflect these changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write script for 1 minute promo video (include what the club is/its purpose and how students can get involved in the club)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Student Life Staff as Leaders to the Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update web pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx">http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="http://www.wilmu.edu/studentlife/studorganizations.aspx">http://www.wilmu.edu/studentlife/studorganizations.aspx</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write press release with video</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create flyer with directions for F2F student to self-enroll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Student Navigator send out communication to online students – include video, and info about the discussion board of the month raffle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create club web page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Initial Press Release

• View the full article at http://www.wilmu.edu/news/newsArticle.aspx?newsID=1868

Wilmington University Launches Blackboard Community Engagement

Wilmington University recently implemented the Blackboard Community Engagement module. This powerful module enables University groups, committees, cohorts and clubs to have a virtual meeting space called a Blackboard Organization. These collaboration spaces will be familiar to users since they are modeled after the course environment used every day in Blackboard-enhanced courses. Students and faculty will be able to access any Blackboard organizations in which they are enrolled from anywhere they can access the World-Wide Web.

"Through the additional tools in Community Engagement, the Blackboard Learn solution goes well beyond online teaching and learning," said Sallie Reissman, Senior Director of Online Learning and Educational Technology at Wilmington University. "Blackboard Organizations give participants the opportunity to make new friends and interact with other students, faculty and staff in a relaxed atmosphere."

Some Blackboard Organizations will remain accessible only by invitation from the organization’s leader. However, the Online Learning and Educational Technology Department, in collaboration with the Student Life Department, is proud to introduce 5 Blackboard Organizations for student clubs that all students can join:

• Student Government Association - SGA
  Get involved in student events on campus and make a positive impact on the community.

• Game Forge
  Interact and make connections with other students that share an interest in Game Design and Development.

• The Green Team
  Collaborate with people who share an interest in the environment and raising awareness on campus, at home, and in the community.

• The Multicultural Club
  Foster and enrich your awareness of diverse cultures.

• Digital Film Making Club
  Interact and make connections with other students that share an interest in Digital Film-Making.
Press Release for the Online Student Association

Wilmington University Offers Online Students New Ways to Connect

Wilmington University is excited to announce the new Online Student Association. This Blackboard Organization has been created to serve as a virtual community for students that are taking online classes. Students will have a chance to network with other students, faculty, and staff in a relaxed atmosphere outside of the classroom and interact from a distance by participating in a variety of online activities:

- Comment on the Discussion Board of the Month and enter to win a $25 Visa Gift Card.
- Each month, students will have the opportunity to attend an online group meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for students to ask questions, express concerns, and share ideas. This meeting will be held using Blackboard Collaborate - a webinar tool similar to Skype.
- Read about previous students have been selected as Student of the Block. Also, learn how to apply to be the Student of the Block for an upcoming term.

“We are excited to open up the Online Student Association as it provides our students taking classes from a distance with a new pathway to connect with the Wilmington University community,” said Kelly Clayton, the Online Student Navigator.

Students currently taking an online course will automatically be enrolled in this Blackboard Organization. Students not taking online classes may join via self-enrollment. This can be done by logging to Blackboard, clicking on the Organizations Tab, and then following the "Directions to Self-Enroll in a Public Organization".

This initiative was driven by the Online Learning and Educational Technology department, in collaboration with the Student Life Department, as a part of the Blackboard Community Engagement project. More information about Blackboard Organizations is available at: http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/organizations.aspx
Hello Deans, Directors, and Program Chairs,

Have you ever wanted a simple way to easily communicate with the students and faculty in your program? If you answered yes, then it may be time for you to set up Blackboard Organization. A Blackboard Organization will enable you to post an Announcement which goes out to all of the students and/or faculty in your program.

Many program chairs have already set up a Blackboard Organization for their program. Here’s a few ways they are using their Blackboard Organization(s) to improve the way they communicate:

**Faculty members that teach in your program:**
- If a new course section just opened up and you need to find an instructor to teach it, spread the word to the adjuncts already teaching a course in your program
- Share course materials
- Store and distribute minutes from your advisory board meetings

**Students whose major is your program:**
- Post internship opportunities
- Push out reminders for upcoming guest speaker events or club meetings
- Spread the word about the availability of new courses or curriculum changes
- Share your department’s newsletter, academic articles, and photos from program related events
- Hold a monthly Blackboard Collaborate meeting to let students share their ideas and concerns
- Enable students to network and chat outside of the classroom using discussion boards

Please request a Blackboard organization by filling out this form: [https://wuedtech.wuflee.com/forms/q1jc4gk31t2rh3z/](https://wuedtech.wuflee.com/forms/q1jc4gk31t2rh3z/). The form will guide you through the requirements we need to set up a Blackboard Organization that meets your communication needs.
Table of Contents:
1. Interface Customizations
2. Blackboard Organizations
3. Online Student Association
4. Sample Communications
5. Lessons Learned
6. End User Feedback
Departmental Involvement

- Academic Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Our Students
- Information Technology
- Instructional Technology/Online Learning
Dedicate a staff member to serve as the Blackboard Community Admin, that will be responsible for:

- Create all new organizations and support leaders.
  - Consult with organization leaders to clarify needs before an organization is created. This conversation will help to identify what template to use, which enrollment option to use, what exactly they are looking for with auto-enrollments in regards to what fields are in CAMS, and what department to categorize the organization as.
  - Provide training and support for all organization leaders.
  - Ask Denise for auto-enrollments. Denise will ask Jeremy to set up auto-enrollments.
  - Maintain the list of all Blackboard Organizations which is publically posted on the OL & Ed Tech SharePoint site. The link to the document is: https://portal.sharepoint.wilmu.edu/Docs_/layouts/xlviewer.aspx?id=/Docs/Distance%20Learning%20and%20Ed%20Tech/Lists%20of%20All%20Blackboard%20Organizations.xlsx.
  - Adam will email leaders at the start of each block to encourage the usage of new features, such as discussion boards, Collaborate meetings, scheduling events on the calendar, and sharing files.
  - Create new users for external advisory board members, student mentors, or other special cases (such as participants in the Delaware State Police or Ursuline project).

- Create and maintain top layer tabs, tabs, and modules.
  - Meet with leaders from each colleges as well as the University’s service departments to set up and update top layer tabs (e.g., “College of Technology”, “My Career”, “Student Services”, etc.)
  - Manage Blackboard’s branding – this include the style and color scheme of modules and the header image.

- Manage the two areas within Blackboard which serve to promote a specific service or event.
  - Update the image which is 150px wide and added above the course menu in all Blackboard sites. These images are used to promote significant news or activities that will be good for students to know. The goal is to include images that apply to the entire student population - this means images won’t be used if the information they reference does not apply to online students.
  - Update the Rotating Module which displays on the top center column on the Blackboard home page currently labeled “Wilmington University”. This module will be swapped out every 1 or 2 weeks.
    - Weeks 1-2 of a block it will display the video created by Russ and Dr. Wilson.
    - Week 3-4 it will display a promo image for the electronic student health magazine.
    - Week 5 it will display info to download the Blackboard Mobile app.
    - Week 6 of the block it would display a link to download Blackboard IM or Blackboard Collaborate.
    - Week 7 and reading week it would have a tip to remind students when courses will be removed from blackboard so they know to save copies of all their assignments on their personal devices – then link to the student FAQ page - http://www.wilmu.edu/blackboard/students/studentfaq.aspx.
Additional Tips

1. Set up policies for the creation, moderation, and governance of custom tabs, sub-tabs, modules, and organizations within Blackboard.

2. Audit content - Sometimes a Organization or Tab is implemented, but the Leader is not proactively updating the content. Purge organizations that aren’t being used.

3. Alumni may not have access. This creates a challenge if students want to continue to access content on a club’s organization after they graduate.

4. People that do not have a Blackboard login will not be able to access any content in an Organization, unless a user account is manually created by an LMS Admin.
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Has the use of your Blackboard Organization improved the way you communicate with students?

Alice Miller, Coordinator of Student Activities:

“Yes, the use of the Blackboard Organization has certainly improved the way we communicate with students. Posting announcements is quite easy and this is a great and effective way to get out information to students who may have not been able to attend an SGA meeting.”
Has the use of your Blackboard Organization increased engagement with students?

Gabrielle Gaul, Student Government Association Secretary:

“Definitely. Having a Blackboard Organization has really helped our club to grow in memberships and accessibility. It allows students from different campuses and online to connect with our club.

We use our Blackboard organization to announce Student Government Association meetings, post meeting minutes, event photos, and send out e-mail announcements.”
Has the use of your Blackboard Organization increased engagement or improved the way you communicate with students?

Paul Graefe, Administrative Assistant for the College of Technology:

“Our Blackboard Organization for MS-IST students has greatly increased the frequency with which we communicate with students. It is a time saver because we don’t have to maintain a distribution list for the program.”
Has the use of your Blackboard Organization increased engagement or improved the way you communicate with faculty?

Amy O’Dell, Chair of the Legal Studies Program:

“Yes, our faculty Bb organization made it possible to **hold faculty meetings through Collaborate** when the school had been closed due to weather.

Similarly, we have held online chat sessions through the student organization that enable students to connect with me and with each other. Both organizations have also become repositories for helpful resources.”
Do you have any tips to share with other leaders to help them maximize the usage of the system?

Maria Bannon, Administrative Assistant for the College of Technology:

“Update regularly. I use a calendar reminder to update timely items (i.e., as registration opens, event updates, etc.)”
Do you have any tips to share with other leaders to help them maximize the usage of the system?

Amy O’Dell, Chair of the Legal Studies Program:

“It’s great to go beyond announcements or emails and use the organization as a place to keep sample documents, program guides, and scheduling tips. We’ve even used the discussion board as a place where students can advertise their used books.”
Do you have any tips to share with other leaders to help them maximize the usage of the system?

Paul Graefe, Administrative Assistant for the College of Technology:

“When sending out announcements, I always use the “Send a copy of this announcement immediately” feature as well as the restrict date option. This ensures that the announcement gets out, but also that it doesn’t sit in the recent messages box which can sometimes cause confusion when an announcement is time-specific.”
Final Take Aways:

• The Blackboard Communities license enables new features within Blackboard.

• Using these flexible tools, you can improve how your institution communicates with specific segments of the students, staff, and faculty.

• Department leaders, program chairs, and club advisors can create learning communities to communicate and engage with key audiences.

• Virtual communities allow participants to network with other students, faculty, and staff in a relaxed atmosphere outside of the classroom.
Anticipated Questions
Our Online Student Navigator is here to provide personalized guidance for your online learning experience. Contact our Navigator for any questions you have about online learning.

www.wilmu.edu/onlinelearning/navigator.aspx
COEL – College of Online and Experiential Learning

Online Learning & Educational Technology Team

- Online Planning and Administration
- Instructional Design

Online Student Service

- Instructional Technology
- Training and Support
- Ed Tech System Administration
- Multimedia Services
Who’s learning online?

- Currently 7491 students are taking 1 or more courses online
- Currently 4492 students are 100% online
- Currently online learning comprises 37% of all seats
- Female 72%   Male 28%   Age 22-33 years old- 55%
- 57% Delaware, 18% New Jersey, 10% Maryland, 8% PA , 7% other
7 Strategies

1. Course Design – Product
2. Faculty Development – Sales Force
3. Technology - Infrastructure
4. Services – Customer Satisfaction
5. Staff – High Tech/High Touch
6. Accreditation – Closing the Loop
7. Marketing – Planning for Growth