

Archiving Blackboard Courses

Once a semester closes, you may decide to keep a course that you've created or made changes to for possible use later. These instructions will tell you how to that, but there are a couple of things you will probably want to do first. (The first, saving the gradebook, you may want to do regardless of whether you're going to archive a course or not.)

Saving the Gradebook. If you're using Blackboard's gradebook, you may want to save this because it would be inconvenient to load an entire course (if archived) into Blackboard because someone later has a question about a grade...extremely inconvenient. The following will allow you to save the gradebook as an Excel file. (You need Excel on your computer to do this.)

To save a gradebook as a separate file (in Excel format), do this:

1. Click **Control Panel** as you normally do.
2. Click **Gradebook** under **Assessment**.
3. In the gradebook, you'll notice at the top of the screen the option to **Download Grades**. Click on that.
4. On the next screen, click **Download**.
5. A box will pop up with several options; the best thing to do here is click **Open**. This will open the file in Excel with the default name **gb_export**.
6. In Excel, now, choose **File, Save As...** because you'll want to rename it. The **Save As** dialog box will open.
7. Change the name to something meaningful; perhaps a name that will tell you what course and semester, like BUS 110-01-Fall, 2004...whatever will work for you. **Do not Save yet...keep reading.**
8. Blackboard creates a comma delimited data file, not a true Excel file. You'll notice at the bottom of the **Save As** dialog box that Excel wants to save the file as a CSV file. Click on the **Save As Type** dropdown list and choose the very first option (at the top of the list), **Microsoft Excel Workbook**.
[By the way, the reason you want to do this is that, although Excel can open a CSV file directly, it doesn't automatically look for them when you go to open a file. You may not see it listed and you'll think the file is "lost."]
9. Now locate the drive and folder where you want to save this file as you normally would with any file and click **Save**. You're done with Excel now, so you can close it.

Recycling the Course. Recycling a course allows you to get rid of the stuff in the course that you may not want to keep. It's not necessary, but if you don't do it, and you use the course later, you will have all your old announcements, discussion boards, etc., when the course is reloaded and you'll have a lot of cleaning up to do. Cleaning out all the semester specific stuff will give you a template that can be reused over and over.

In fact, you may want to archive the course, recycle it, and then archive it again so that you have a complete record of the course as you left it, and a "clean" version. (This would be the safest thing to do.)

In any case, here's how you do it:

1. Click **Control Panel**.
2. Click **Recycle Course** under **Course Options**.
3. Stop a moment and reflect on the statement in red that Blackboard displays: ***** Warning: This process is irreversible.** Because they really mean it.
4. Click on the boxes in sections 1 and 2 for the sections you want cleaned out. Remember, it will take **everything** out of these sections of the course. If you want to be more selective, you'll have to go into those sections and delete items individually, leaving the material you want, instead of using recycle.
5. After choosing what to recycle, you must type **Remove** in the text box at the lower right corner of this page.
6. Click **Submit** and a page will display telling you what was recycled.

And Finally, Archiving the Course. To archive your course, you need to:

1. Click **Control Panel**.

2. Choose **Archive Course** under **Course Options**.
3. The next screen simply tells you what course you're archiving, so click **Submit**.
4. It may take up to a few moments (depending on how much content is in the course), but eventually you'll get to a page with a link to the archive file (what Blackboard calls the "generated package").
5. **Right click** with your mouse while pointing to this link, and choose **Save Target As...** from the menu (assuming Internet Explorer).
6. A default name is generated with "ArchiveFile" in front of the course ID. You can change this name if you like.
7. Choose a place to save this file as you would any other file. You'll need to make sure you know where you're saving this file, because if you ever want to use this course again, you'll need to email it to me so I can reload it. Click **Save** after you have determined where you're going to save it.

After the semester is over, and you've saved your gradebook, and archived your course, you can let me know it is okay to delete it from the system. I'll eventually get around to it as each new semester begins, anyway, but I will do it as soon as possible if you let me know you're done.

We're only going to keep courses on the system for a limited time after a semester is over, but I will warn you that I'm going to clean up to give you a last chance to archive any courses you want.