



# Blackboard Tools

Customize a workshop by learning how to build and grade assignments, assessments, and discussion boards. Reinforce academic honesty by learning how to use software that detects unoriginal content and methods for online proctoring.

**Achievements tool** – A tool which gives instructors and course designers the ability to add criteria for issuing rewards to students in the form of both badges and certificates. Students can see which rewards they've earned and see what they need to do in order to obtain more rewards.

**Discussion Boards** – Discussion boards serve to give students the opportunity to build a sense of community among their classmates by allowing them to take time to think before posting their ideas.

**Link Checker Tool** – This tool can be run on a regular basis to check the validity of a given course's links. The tool will list any broken links in the course.

**Respondus Lockdown Browser** – This tool is a custom browser students' must download in which the testing environment is locked down, consequently, students are NOT able to print, copy, go to another URL, or access other applications from that computer.

**Rubrics** – A rubric is a scoring tool that can be used to evaluate graded work. The rubric essentially divides the assigned work in parts and by providing a clear description of what is expected from the students at each part; students are able to focus their efforts in meeting those requirements.

**Safe Assign Tool** – This tool compares submitted assignments by students against a set of academic papers to potentially identify areas of overlap (Plagiarism) between the work submitted and the work that already exists.

**Retention Center** – This tool allows for you to identify which students in any given course are at risk, due to a combination of poor performance, poor attendance, or low engagements. The customizable tool alerts you of these students; while providing means of communication with those students so that they can take immediate action.

**Self and Peer Assessments** – This tool allows for each student to receive feedback from several individuals, thus, helping distribute workload as well. This tool gives the opportunity to all students to review work of fellow students through a criteria-based reference evaluation with the ultimate goal of enhancing their overall comprehension of a topic.

**Tests, Surveys, and Pools** – This tool is used primarily to gauge student knowledge, progress, and gather information from students in the form of surveys. Pools are simply a set of questions grouped together for a later use inside of a test.

**Blackboard Collaborate Ultra** – This is a real-time video conferencing tool which enables you to add files, share desktop applications, and use a virtual whiteboard to interact with your students. No download necessary – the application opens in a new browser window.

**Blogs Tool** - The blog tool is a personal online journal which is frequently updated and intended to be shared with others. Blogs can have a commenting feature to allow for others to share their ideas.

**Journals Tool** – This Journal tool is intended so that students have a personal space to communicate with an instructor. Thus, a student is able to reflect and give feedback on various aspects of a course on a one-on-one basis.

**Course Messages Tool** – This tool gives each course a private system for communication that functions similar to email. However, students are not able to send or receive messages from anyone outside of that specific course.



# Online Learning Best Practices

Promote technology and online learning with a customized workshop that focuses on the development process for hybrid and online courses. Learn how to create and the importance of holding virtual office hours, sharing instructional videos, and instructor responsiveness.

**Course mapping** – Course mapping is an essential tool that will contribute to the visualization, design and/or redesign of pedagogical material. The course map encourages the instructor to illustrate how students will perform and meet class objectives. The map will reveal any potential learning gaps in the course that may cause difficulty when trying to meet the targeted objectives.

**Student Engagement** – Best practices for integrating technology and Blackboard tools into the online classroom. Examples include: effective use of announcements, class versus group discussions, extrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

**Instructor Presence** – Best practices for creating an online course that mimics a face-to-face (f2f) course by discussing methods to improve timely feedback, effective use of inline grading and rubrics, virtual office hours, and Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing.

**Instructional Videos** – Learn how to create brief instructional videos on a computer, tablet, or phone. Instructional videos are intended to illustrate detailed concepts in a short three minute or less video. Some basics include: welcome/introduction, assignment feedback, and weekly reviews or reflections.

**Collaborative and Group Assignments** – Learn how to use collaborative tools for assignments in Blackboard. Examples include: peer reviews, surveys, wikis, and group discussions.

## UTEPEDGE

CID's goal is to collaborate and encourage student success in online courses. The following EDGE Advantages can be incorporated into any course:

- Leadership
- Confidence
- Problem-solving
- Global awareness
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Entrepreneurship
- Critical thinking
- Social responsibility

By joining the UTEP EDGE Online Project instructors can apply these soft skills to every online course across all disciplines. The Center for Instructional Design will work with instructors to “Edge Out” a course.

### CID and Course Redesign

- CID assists in identifying EDGE Advantages already present in a course and guides instructors how to best highlight these soft skills
- CID assists in creating “high impact” experiences that equip online students with the competitive EDGE that distinguishes them from their peers and prepares them for leadership and lifelong success