

# Course Building Quick Start Guide

Follow these steps to build your course.

- Step One: [Decide the Structure](#)
- Step Two: [Organize Content for Ease of Access](#)
- Step Three: [Request a Master Course Shell](#)
- Step Four: [Plan the Course for Ease of Update](#)
- Step Five: [Build the Course](#)
- Step Six: [Finalize the Grade Center](#)

## Step 1: Decide the Structure

The structure will be used for how containers (learning modules and folders) will appear to students.

- Weekly (Sun-Mon, M-F, etc.)
- By Unit (content or time frame)

See examples below for Course map templates:

- [Course Map Template by Week](#)
- [Course Map Template by Unit](#)

## Step 2: Organize Content

Fill in the weeks or modules; create folders to reduce scrolling. Make sure to include:

- Learning Objectives: a guide for student expectations and success.
- Materials: videos, articles, etc.\*
- Activities: assignments, discussion, etc.
- Notes: include information to help you build (i.e., time students will spend on materials/activities to help manage cognitive load).

\*ADA Inclusivity: you can use the [Blackboard Ally](#) tool for accessible documents and [YuJa Video Management](#) for closed captioning.

## Step 3: Request a Master Course Shell

Copying the same course from semester to semester increases the chance for errors but keeping a static master course shell that is updated and then freshly copied each semester will help reduce the number of errors you encounter.

Email your request for a Master course shell to [blackboard@utep.edu](mailto:blackboard@utep.edu).

## Step 4: Plan the Course for Ease of Update

Build with updating in mind to reduce the workload.

Best Practices:

- Keep a Course Calendar document with all relevant due dates and avoid due dates in the *description* of activities, so they will not need to be updated.\*
- Utilize OneDrive and provide instructions using documents that you can share and update without having to download/upload to Blackboard each time.
- Take advantage of the [Batch Edit](#) function to help you re-assign your due dates.

\*Try to set due dates/times for assessments during usual service hours (8-5pm) so that students can reach out to Technology Support with any issues they encounter.

## Step 5: Build the Course

Fill out the course in Blackboard, based on your course map. For assistance with tools and settings, contact us at [blackboard@utep.edu](mailto:blackboard@utep.edu). Below are tutorials to get started:

- [Learning Modules and Folders](#)
- [Document](#) (works as a blank page where you can provide information/instructions)
- [Assignment](#)
- [Test](#)
- [Discussion Boards](#) including [Settings for Graded Discussions](#)
- [Journals](#)

## Step 6: Finalize the Grade Center

Below are some tutorials to help set this up, but if you encounter any issues at all, contact Blackboard Central at [blackboard@utep.edu](mailto:blackboard@utep.edu) for a consultation and we can help you make sure your Grade Center is set up according to your course needs.

- [Grading](#)
- [Calculated Totals](#)