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:

- 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 [Yula 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. 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 for a consultation and we can help you make sure your Grade Center is set up according to your course needs.

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