

Main Transcript

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The Assignments Feature

Hello. This tutorial will serve as a brief introduction to the assignment feature in Blackboard, which is the feature that you're going to need to use in order to collect the data for the big-data project that we're doing in the fall.

So, you first come over to the little plus button in your navigation bar on the left hand side, and then you're going to create a Content Area. Pretty simple. Just click on it and add the name of the content area. This is usually, the way I do it, this is the name of the assignment, so I might call it "Essay One, Literacy Narrative," and submit it, and then it will show up at the bottom of the links that are available to students. There are many more links that are available to you but students don't see these. It will be appear down here. You see that it's got this bar through a box; that means that the link is hidden from students and that gives you an opportunity to build the link before students are able to see it. When you're ready you just click on this, and you show the link, and you'll see that that little bar disappears. This other little box just indicates that the link doesn't have any content as of yet, just as a reminder. And then, of course, some of you know this already, you can move this around. So, I would put this up. I've got a sub-heading here called Assignments and Grading Criteria.

So, once I have this link to a Content Area, I'm going to enter it. (Just as an aside, the Edit mode needs to be on in order for you to be able to do this. If the Edit mode is off, you can't do anything. This is intended to show you what it looks like for students. It doesn't always work, but that's its purpose. So make sure that it's on.) I'm going to build an Assessment; the Assessment is an Assignment. And this IS the Assignment feature of Blackboard; this is the thing that is crucial for data collection for this project. And I'm going to call it Essay One, Literacy Narrative, and here in the description area I would probably repeat the description of the assignment and the expectations. Attach files if there are any to attach. You can use this or not--I don't use it--it alerts you, it alerts students. It's optional.

Grading: It has to be graded. I give everything in Blackboard 100 points and then I adjust its grade weight in the grade book feature itself later. So, I can make this worth ten percent of the overall grade, or five percent, or twenty percent, whatever it is. And then you can add a rubric here. There are other tutorials that I have given you on how to use rubrics. I highly recommend them. I think they're a great idea.

In Submission Details, leave this alone. It's an individual submission. Here, I adjust this to two attempts. Because that way, if a student messes up the first attempt they can do it a second time. That always happens, and then I download the last graded attempt.

You can do this if you want; I don't usually. But if you do this, I think this is a very good idea for students to be able to see the originality report. And, here are some features for you. If you want

to grade your students' essays anonymously you can. If you want to delegate grading, you can do that as well. The assignment has to be available. You can make it available for a certain time and then have it disappear at a certain time, but just be aware that the link to the assignment disappears completely, so it doesn't just grey out, which means that students may be confused. They may think that they just didn't find it; they might not understand that it's no longer available.

So once you have this set the way you like it you just click submit. You can always edit this and go back and change it. And there it is. Of course there would be some sort of a description here, but that's the Assignments feature. In the next video I'm going to show you how to access and download those.

Accessing And Downloading the Essays

So now that I've created this, this is where students will need to come to submit their essays. I'm going to turn off the Edit mode so that you can see what students will see. They click on the link and you're going to want to ask them to attach a file so that the file can be downloaded in a .docx format. That's very important, that they attach the file and they don't just write the submission, they don't just put the submission in the dialog box. They can add some comments to you if they like, that's up to you. And then they'll need to submit it. This is pretty straightforward for students; they don't have a problem figuring out how to do this.

The Grade Book

So what I'm going to do is show you the grade book end of it. I've come down to the Grade Center, which is here in the Control Panel. Click on Assignments; you can click on Full Grade Center, Assignments, whatever way works best for you. This is an old class of mine. You can see that the students' names have been hidden for their privacy. But this, I'm not going to use this. This is the one that we just created. I'm not going to use it because there's nothing in it and I want to show you a live one. So, what you'll need to do to participate in the project is click on this downward facing arrow, and then scroll to Assignment File Download. Click that; these are the students who were in the course. Highlight their names, click submit, and then you'll have a link for Download Assignments Now. And there you have it. The assignments are downloaded, or they're downloading now. They are in the .zip file. And here is the file. It came as a .zip and then the computer automatically unzipped it. If you open this, you'll see all of the final research projects following a particular naming convention. And that's all there is to retrieving the assignments. Then you can grade them this way or there are other ways to grade them, but this is the .zip file that will be sent to me when these are collected. And that's it. Thank you.