

Customizing the Navigation Menu

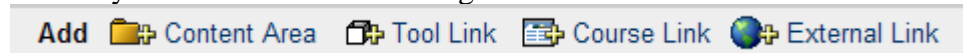
New course shells in Blackboard all start out with the same navigation menu. You can customize this navigation menu to make give your Blackboard course site a unique look and feel and to make it easier for students to find their way around.

Adding New Items to the Navigation Menu

1. Go to the **Control Panel** and click on the **Manage Course Menu** link at the top of the **Course Options** section.



3. Choose the type of item you wish to add to the navigation menu. You can select from four types of items:



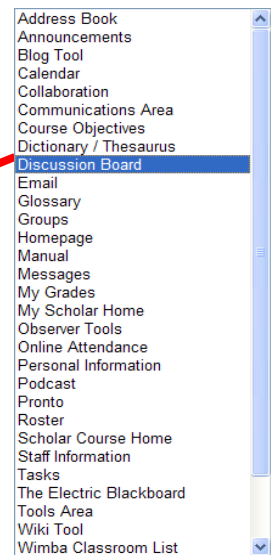
- Content Areas** act as folders that contain course content.
- Tool Links** link directly to Blackboard tools such as the Discussion Board or the Grade Center.

Add New Area

1 Set Area Properties

Type:

Name:



- Course Links** link directly to specific locations within the course site.
- External Links** link to web sites outside of Blackboard.

4. You will then see the menu items update page, where you can type in a name and specify properties for the new navigation item. The properties to be specified will differ depending on the type of item you are adding.
5. Once you have chosen a name and other item properties, click **Submit** then **OK**. You will see the new name for the item in the navigation menu.

Changing the Order in which Items Appear in the Navigation Menu

When designing your course site, you may want to place important items near the top of the navigation menu or group certain items together. To change the order in which items appear in the navigation menu:

1. Go to **Manage Course Menu** under **Course Options** in the **Control Panel**.
2. To the left of each menu navigation item, you will see a drop-down menu containing a list of numbers. Click the arrow next to the number of the item you wish to move and select the position in which you wish to have the item displayed. Blackboard will immediately refresh to move the item to its new position.

Adding a Separator Bar to the Navigation Menu

If you have many items in the navigation menu, you may want to separate the menu into sections. One way to do this is to add a horizontal line (separator bar).

To add a separator bar:

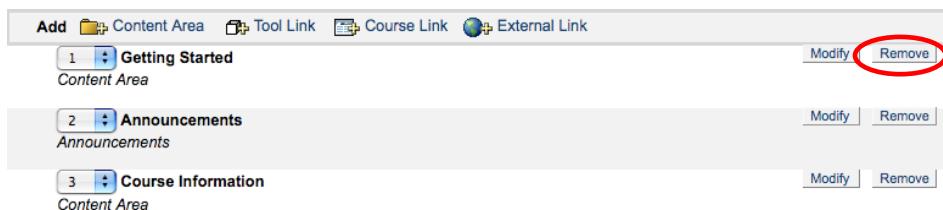
1. Add a new “content area,” by clicking on the **Manage Course Menu** link at the top of the Course Options section, as described in a previous section of this document.
2. Instead of giving your new content area a text-based name, type the HTML tag `<HR>` as the name of the content area. This HTML tag will display a horizontal line on the navigation menu. You may need to change the position of your new separator bar in the navigation menu to achieve the desired effect.

The screenshot shows the 'Manage Course Menu' interface. On the left, there are fields for 'Type' (set to 'Content Area') and 'Name' (containing 'Assignments' and '<HR>'). Below these are checkboxes for 'Allow Guest access', 'Allow Observer access', and 'Available for Student/Participant users' (checked). A red oval highlights the '<HR>' text in the 'Name' field. A red box labeled 'HTML' has an arrow pointing to this text. Another red box labeled 'Separator' has an arrow pointing to the 'Assignments' text. On the right, a purple navigation menu is shown with items: 'Getting Started', 'Announcements', 'Course Information', 'Course Materials', 'Assignments', 'Instructor', 'Discussion Board Groups', 'Groups', 'Communication Tools', 'My Grades', 'Course Map', and 'Control Panel'. A horizontal line is drawn between 'Instructor' and 'Discussion Board Groups'.

Deleting Items from the Navigation Menu

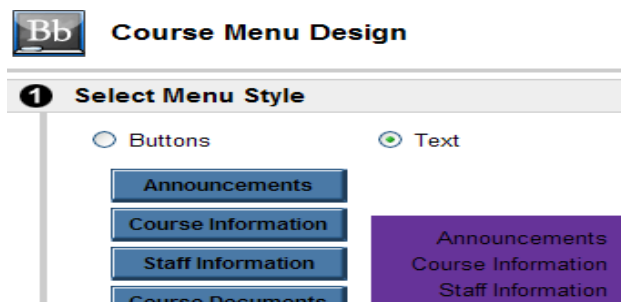
It's generally a good idea to remove unused items from the navigation menu. To delete navigation items:

1. Go to **Manage Course Menu** under **Course Options** in the **Control Panel**.
2. Click on the **Remove** button to the right of the menu item you wish to delete.



Changing the Style of the Navigation Menu

You can change the color and style of the items in the navigation menu. Changing the style of your course menu can make it easier for you and your students to quickly identify which course is being viewed.



To change the menu style:

1. In the **Control Panel** under **Course Options** click on the **Course Design** link.
2. Click on the **Course Menu Design** link.
3. Select either text or buttons for your navigation menu, and choose a background and text color.

Note: We recommend that you use a text style menu rather than buttons because buttons have some limitation:

- You cannot add separators(horizontal bars)
- You are limited to 18 characters
- You cannot apply different font styles or sizes

In addition, some of pattern choices for button type make the labels difficult to read. Utilizing a text menu style allows you to apply a different font style, size, or color to draw attention to any particular item on your menu. (Ex. [Getting Started](#))

We also recommend that you use colors combinations that provide ample contrast for individuals with limited vision. Some colors and color combinations are not recommended for the color blind. The websites below have tools that measure the appropriateness of color contrast for ADA compliance and simulate the appearance of the color palettes you've chosen for individuals with color deficits.

- The [Juicy Studio](#) website provides a color contrast analyzer tool to determine if the colors you choose are suitable or compliant.
(<http://juicystudio.com/services/colourcontrast.php#contrast>)
- [Cal Henderson's Color Vision](#) website provides a tool that simulates the appearance of the color palettes you've chosen for people with specific color deficits.
(<http://www.iamcal.com/toys/colors/>)