

MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE

BLACKBOARD POLICY GUIDE

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PURPOSE

This document sets forth the policies and procedures related to the use, management, and operation of the Learning Management System (“Blackboard”), managed by Information Technology Services (“ITS”), at Moody Bible Institute (“Moody”). Due to the evolving nature of educational technology, this document will be reviewed annually and revised as appropriate.

SCOPE OF USE

The Blackboard “Course Delivery” system is available to Moody’s faculty as a tool to enhance the teaching learning environment. Licensing restrictions keep ITS from making Blackboard course delivery available for other uses.

The Blackboard “Community Engagement” system allows qualified Moody groups to have “organization” sites. An organization site has most of the functionality available in Blackboard course sites, but it falls outside of the official course environment. The Blackboard Community Engagement system can be used by any qualified group on Moody’s Chicago, Michigan, or Spokane campuses as well as Moody Distance Learning.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

“Available” and “Unavailable”

The terms “available” and “unavailable” refer to the visibility of either a course or a user in Blackboard.

- A course can be available (enrolled students can see it) or unavailable (enrolled students cannot see it).
- An enrolled user can be made unavailable in a course, which means that user can no longer access the course. This is preferable to deleting a user from a course in most cases (see “Remove” below).

Course Enrollment (“Enrollment”)

The term “course enrollment” or “enrollment” is used to specify a user being added to a course or other academic site in Blackboard. A user must be enrolled in a Blackboard site in order to access it.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

“The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. *The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.*”

LDAP Credentials

To access Blackboard (and my.moody.edu), it is necessary for the user to enter a *username* (provided by Moody) and password. Together, the username and password are called “credentials”; “LDAP” is the server from which the credentials are authenticated as valid when entered by the user.

PeopleSoft Campus Solutions (“Campus Solutions”)

Campus Solutions is the student information system licensed by Moody, and it houses all official course and student data. This information is managed by the Academic Records department.

Remove (Delete)

Any user account (which includes enrollment records) or course can be removed from Blackboard. All content associated with the removed item is permanently removed from Blackboard without the possibility of the data being recovered.

USER ACCOUNTS

Account Creation

Faculty

Each faculty member, whether full-time or adjunct, who is scheduled to instruct one or more courses (as designated in Campus Solutions) will be assigned a Blackboard user account.

Students

Each student officially registered for one or more courses (as designated in Campus Solutions) will be assigned a Blackboard user account.

Staff

A non-faculty employee may be assigned a Blackboard user account if his or her responsibilities require access to one or more Blackboard sites (for administrative purposes).

Special Accounts

There are times when an account needs to be created for a user who does not have an official Moody username and password. Examples would be “dummy” accounts used for feature testing by ITS and Moody Distance Learning (MDL), independent contractor accounts, and accounts for use by accreditors and evaluators. These accounts are audited regularly.

“Dummy” Accounts

Any account created in Blackboard that is not associated to a user with an official Moody username and password (LDAP credentials) must be created with a specific prefix, which will vary according to the purpose of the account. The prefixes to use for “dummy” accounts are:

- ets* or *its* - ITS use
- mdl* - MDL use

Guest Accounts

A Moody sponsor (full-time faculty or staff), may request that a person not associated with Moody be given a Blackboard user account. There must be a business reason for the request. This includes any accreditor and/or evaluator accounts.

Unless otherwise stated in a department’s service-level agreement with ITS, the sponsor must submit a “New Employee Account Request Form” to the ITS Support Center Desk in order to officially request a guest account. Each request will be reviewed by the ITS Blackboard management group, and a decision will be communicated to the requester within nine (9) business days. The prefixes for guest accounts are:

- ac- Accreditor/Evaluator user
- oth- Other, miscellaneous users

Contractor Accounts

The only exception to the use of a prefix is an account created for an independent contractor. *All contractor account requests should be indicated as “Contractor” on the “New Employee Account Request Form.”* Contractors are set up without ID numbers, and the username is usually based on a “firstnamelastname” paradigm. Having contractor accounts tied to an individual helps close a security loophole because the accounts are more regularly audited.

Passwords

When a new Blackboard account is created that is not based on LDAP credentials, a secure and strong random password will be issued along with the username. The user of the account may change the password to something that can be more easily remembered, but the user is responsible to make sure that the new password is secure.

Account Removal

Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff will have their Blackboard user accounts inactivated when (1) they are no longer employed by Moody or (2) when access is no longer necessary to perform their duties and responsibilities.

Students

Blackboard accounts for students no longer enrolled in courses will expire at the same time their other Moody accounts are decommissioned by ITS.

Guests

Guest accounts will be inactivated after three consecutive semesters. A Moody sponsor must resubmit a request for the guest account to be reactivated.

Login and Access

User Login

Each user will access Blackboard by logging in with his/her *myMoody* username and password.

Administrator Access

At times, staff with system administrator rights will access the Blackboard system for support and maintenance purposes. They are prohibited from modifying, distributing, or relaying student grade information found in Blackboard. Student records are covered by FERPA guidelines.

Blackboard Roles

Blackboard includes a number of roles that can be utilized within a course. A user may be assigned only one role in a given course; however, a user's role may be different from one course to another. For instance, a user may have the "Student" role in one course but the "Teacher Assistant" role in another.

Student

Users with the "Student" role are able to access all course content and assessments made available to them by the instructor. They can also access all grades posted in Blackboard via the "My Grades" module. Students do not have access to the course Control Panel.

Instructor

Users with the "Instructor" role are able to control all aspects of a course through the Control Panel. They are able to add/remove content and add/disable other users. Users in this role can also change others' roles in a course. (More restrictive guidelines are in place for those instructing online courses with MDL.)

Teacher's Assistant

Users with the "Teacher Assistant" (TA) role have almost the same course rights as the "Instructor" role. TAs can perform every function an instructor can in the course with the exception of removing instructors.

Grader

Users with the “Grader” role assist the instructor in the creation, management, delivery, and grading of assessments and surveys. A grader may also assist the instructor with adding manual entries to the online gradebook. Graders do not have the ability to post content.

Course Builder

Users with the “Course Builder” role are able to add content to the course through the Control Panel. This role is appropriate for an assistant who has limited responsibilities and should not have access to student grades.

Student Auditor

Users with the “Student Auditor” role are able to access all course content and assessments made available to them by the instructor. This role is appropriate for those students not officially registered for a course in Campus Solutions but who have permission from the instructor to access the course content.

Guest

Users with the “Guest” role are able to view areas of the course, but cannot participate in any way. Guests do not have access to the communication tools such as e-mail or the discussion board.

COURSE CREATION AND MANAGEMENT

Creation of New Courses

Traditional Courses (Chicago, Spokane, and Michigan campuses)

ITS creates shells for traditional, face-to-face courses in Blackboard one week after the open enrollment period for Chicago classes begins. The course shells are created in an automated process based on class information pulled from the official Campus Solutions database. The course creation script will be run periodically after this time to catch courses that may have been added recently to Campus Solutions. The following caveats apply:

- If an instructor has not been assigned to a course in Campus Solutions, a Blackboard shell will not be created for the course. The shell will be created in a subsequent running of the course creation process; the process is run on a regular basis to ensure that Blackboard shells are created for courses in which an instructor recently has been assigned.
- If a different instructor is assigned to a course in Campus Solutions after the initial creation of Blackboard course shells, subsequent runnings of the course creation process will not change the instructor from the initial one added to the course shell. ITS must be informed of the instructor change so that the Blackboard course shell can be updated manually.

Availability of New Courses

When course shells are created, they are set as “unavailable.” This means that, although those with the “Instructor” and “TA” roles can access a particular course shell, students enrolled in the course are not able to view or access it. This is done so that students do not see the course site until the instructor has had a chance to add the desired course content. *It is the responsibility of the instructor or TA of the course to make it available to students.*

Directed Study Courses

Because not every directed study course requires a Blackboard site, course shells are not created automatically for them. If an instructor wants a course shell for a directed study course that has been entered into Campus Solutions by Academic Records, it must be requested through the ITS Support Center Desk.

If the instructor wants a directed study student to have access to an existing Blackboard site for a traditional course, a special process must be run; the instructor must request this through the ITS Support Center Desk. The request should include the name and section number of the traditional course to which the student should be added and the name and ID number of the directed study student.

Online Courses (MDL)

MDL courses are “cloned” from master templates for each semester and session. Instructors and TAs are given access 1-2 weeks prior to the start date of the course. Courses are made available to students the Friday before the Tuesday start date of the course.

Modular Courses

MDL staff will provide ITS with course creation requests at the appropriate periods as noted in the MDL Service Level Agreements. Course requests are fulfilled in the order they are received from MDL.

Course Size

“Course size” refers to the amount of space the course uses on the Blackboard server. So far, ITS has chosen to not limit the size of each Blackboard course; however, courses over 250MB cannot be archived or used to create course export packages because of limitations in Blackboard. Each semester, ITS will make an inventory of course sizes to determine courses over the 250MB range and will contact the instructors of those courses. The instructor may wish to pull large files from the course and save them outside of Blackboard to make it a size that can be archived. Course documents can be removed as well, and the Grade Center records can be exported and saved as an Excel file. These are the only items that can be removed from a Blackboard course and stored on a user’s computer.

Size of Files within a Course

Media Files

Media files include file formats such as audio, video, or any combination of the two. Because of the large size of media files, ITS asks that they not be uploaded to Blackboard. There are several options for making media files available in Blackboard: they can be added to Moody’s streaming server* or hosted directly on YouTube.com, Vimeo.com, or another public streaming site.

** Instructors who have files to be uploaded should provide them to the ITS Support Center Desk; a Support Center Desk technician will ensure that the files are properly loaded to the streaming server. Then, the instructor will receive an e-mail containing the links for the streamed files which, in turn, the instructor will add to his or her Blackboard course.*

Non-Media Files

A reasonable attempt should be made by faculty and staff to save any non-media files that will be uploaded to Blackboard as a smaller file. Non-media files include file formats such as documents, spreadsheets, presentation slides, and PDFs. ITS can support faculty in analyzing potential methods of file compression, if requested. (Those instructing an MDL online course should contact MDL *before* uploading any files to a course.)

Transferring Course Content

Instructors have the ability, through the course Control Panel, to transfer the content of a previous course into the empty shell of a course that is being taught in the upcoming semester. ITS can train an instructor in how to transfer course content but is not responsible to transfer content for an instructor. (This is not permitted with MDL online courses.)

Expired Courses

Six weeks after the end of a semester, ITS will “expire” all course sites for that semester; in other words, the courses will be set to “unavailable.” Students will no longer have access to these course sites. If an instructor needs to have a course site available for longer than six weeks after the semester ends, it is his or her responsibility to contact ITS and request that the time be extended.

Course Duration on Blackboard and Archiving

ITS will keep a total of seven (7) semesters of course sites on the Blackboard server—this includes the current semester plus the previous two years of course sites. (One year is equal to the fall, spring, and summer semesters.) All courses older than seven semesters will be archived and removed from Blackboard.

A course archive is a package of files containing course content and student records. An archive can be “restored” to Blackboard to create an exact representation of a course that previously may have been removed. Although ITS does archive course sites before removing them from the server, availability of course archives cannot be guaranteed long term. *For that reason, if an instructor wishes to save course content for use in another semester, it is the responsibility of the instructor to create an export package of the course content and store it for future use.*

Similarly, instructors who want to keep a long-term record of course assignment grades should export a copy of the course Grade Center and save it in a secure place, being sure to maintain FERPA confidentiality to these files.

Student Enrollment into Course Sites

ITS begins enrolling students into Blackboard course sites at the time the course sites are created (see below for the exception of MDL online course). Enrollments, which are run each day throughout the semester, are based on the registration data for each course in Campus Solutions—including course adds and drops. The purpose of this process is that within 24 hours the course rosters for Blackboard course sites will match the corresponding Campus Solutions course rosters.

Any student who drops a course is made “unavailable” in the corresponding Blackboard course site. The reason ITS does not “remove” the student is that any record of work the student may have completed while enrolled in the course would be permanently deleted. *Therefore, instructors may not remove students from a course.* Any instructor who would like to have a dropped student(s) hidden in a course may contact ITS to request that the needed process be run. This process will hide the students but maintain their data.

Enrollments for MDL Online courses are not done according to the above. MDL is responsible for all course enrollments and drops; they begin enrolling students the Friday before their course period begins.

Grades

Campus Solutions (i.e., Faculty Center) is the official repository of all student academic information and, as such, all final course grades must be entered there. The Blackboard online Grade Center is a tool designed for the convenience of students and faculty. Thus, it is not an official record of student grades, nor should it be considered a legally binding record of student scores.

(Continued on next page)

ORGANIZATION CREATION AND MANAGEMENT

An *organization* is created from within the Community Engagement system of Blackboard. Organizations have much of the same functionality of courses except that they have a different purpose. A course site is linked to an official course listed in Campus Solutions by Academic Records and is a tool to enhance the teaching learning environment.

An organization can be requested by any qualified group on Moody's Chicago, Michigan, or Spokane campuses as well as Moody Distance Learning. Organizations allow Blackboard communication, collaboration, and training tools to be used for purposes other than courses. At this time, organizations can only be used by faculty, students, and others within the Education group.

Creation of New Organizations

An organization site can be requested by any qualified group within Moody.

- For students, a qualified group is any one that has an official sponsor such as Student Programs or a faculty member.
- For faculty/staff, a qualified group would be any officially recognized department, organization, committee, or club.

Organizations can be used for many purposes including, but not limited to, student groups, faculty groups/committees, student leadership, student interests, student information, sports, music groups, and other public-facing groups.

To request an organization, send an e-mail to its@moody.edu and include the following information:

- The name of the organization
- The name of the sponsor
- The name of the leader

The organization's leader will be responsible for adding or removing users to the organization site and for inputting/loading all content.

Organization Size

"Organization size" refers to the amount of space the organization uses on the Blackboard server. So far, ITS has chosen to not limit the size of each Blackboard organization; however, ITS will periodically check organization sizes. If an organization is 500 MB or above, ITS will work with its leader to make the organization size smaller.

Size of Files within an Organization

Media Files

Media files include file formats such as audio, video, or any combination of the two. Because of the large size of media files, ITS asks that they not be uploaded to Blackboard. Rather, users should upload video and audio files to Panopto, which is the solution that Moody has contracted with for video management. The URL for Moody's Panopto site is moody.hosted.panopto.com.

Non-Media Files

A reasonable attempt should be made by the organization's leader to save any non-media files that will be uploaded to Blackboard as a smaller file. Non-media files include file formats such as documents, spreadsheets, presentation slides, and PDFs. ITS can support faculty in analyzing potential methods of file compression, if requested.

Organization Duration on Blackboard and Archiving

ITS will keep an organization available until its leader requests that it be taken offline. Organizations will not be archived unless it is requested by the leader.

COPYRIGHT

Copyright-Protected Materials

Instructors/leaders are responsible for ensuring that copyright-protected materials are not saved, printed, copied, or further disseminated by students/participants. Current copyright law (including Fair Use) states that prior permission must be obtained from the copyright holder to post content in Blackboard unless its use is for—in limited amount—course-related (not organization-related) activities. Instructors/leaders are encouraged to accompany all copyright-protected works in Blackboard with a visible explanation about the appropriate and legal handling of such content.

External Links

Instructors/leaders creating external links to websites from within Blackboard must check the box next to the standing option that reads "launch item in external window." Not choosing that option means that the external website will open up within the frame of Blackboard itself, without reflecting the URL address for the linked site.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Planned Outages

Blackboard is taken offline from 5:00-6:00 AM every Monday for routine system maintenance. Should it be necessary for Blackboard to be unavailable for any reason outside this standard maintenance window, ITS will notify all students, faculty, and Education administrative staff as soon as the outage is planned. This notification will be sent via e-mail to all student and faculty *moody.edu* accounts as well as the *moody.edu* accounts of organization leaders who are not students or faculty. It will also be posted as a system announcement within Blackboard.

Unplanned Outages

Unplanned outages can be reported to ITS at any time by calling 312-329-4001 and pressing option "2" at the voicemail prompt. This will trigger a page to ITS technicians, who will respond immediately to bring the system back online.

In the event that Blackboard will be offline for one hour or more, ITS will notify users according to the same procedures in "Planned Outages." When Blackboard is brought back online, ITS will send another notification to the same users. The notice will include the time frame of the outage and the services affected, and will be sent regardless of the duration of the outage. If the outage occurred after normal business hours, this notice will be sent on the next business day.

INFORMATION SECURITY

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

From the U.S. Department of Education [website](#):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

The U.S. Department of Education [website](#) also states: "Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "eligible student," and all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student."

User Information and Privacy

From the "Blackboard Help" [website](#):

... users can make their own privacy choices on the **Personal Information** page, accessible from any tab in the **Tools** panel or under **Tools** in any course or organization in Blackboard Learn. On this page, the user can choose whether to be listed in the **User Directory**. The user can also choose whether to display their email address, address (street, city, state, zip, country), work information (company, job title, work phone, work fax), and any other additional contact information (home phone, mobile phone, website).

These fields and the user's name are the only personal information that is ever displayed in the **User Directory**, and by default they are **not** included in the **User Directory**. Users must deliberately opt-in to disclose their information in the directory. In this light, the Blackboard System is more conservative in protecting privacy than FERPA regulations. FERPA calls for an opt-out option for directory information, but Blackboard provides an opt-in option. Blackboard also allows the user to exercise this option at any time, not just during a period of time specified by the institution.

When users choose to make their email addresses available, whether or not they have chosen to be listed in the User Directory, their email addresses will be displayed in the Roster and Group pages for all of the Courses and Organizations in which they are enrolled (see [Privacy and Personal Information for Course Students and Organization Participants](#)).

If the user has opted to include their personal information in the **User Directory**, those fields the user has selected will display in the **User Directory** to other users who are logged on to the system.

Users also have the right to confirm that their personal information is correct. They can review and modify their information on the **Personal Information** page if it has been made available.

Discussion Board

The name of a student or participant who posts to the discussion board displays, along with the post, to all users in the course or organization or within the group (if it is a group discussion). To avoid this display of personal information, the user can choose to post to the discussion board anonymously if this option has been enabled by the instructor or leader.

Email

The names of email recipients display on the **Send Email** pages. The email addresses of the recipients do not display in either the **Send Email** pages or in the email that the student or participant receive. All email is sent by the Blackboard system as "blind carbon copy" (BCC). This means that one user who receives the email will not see the names or email addresses of other users who receive the same message. The name and email address of the user who sent the message will be visible to all recipients when they receive the message.

Groups

The names of students or participants included in a group within a course or organization are listed on the group page, which is accessible to other users included in that same group. If the user has chosen to make their email address available, their email address is also listed on the group page. To learn more, see [User Directory and Personal Information Disclosure](#).

Roster

The names of students or participants enrolled in a course or organization are listed in the roster. If users have chosen to make their email addresses available, their email addresses are also listed in the roster. To learn more, see [User Directory and Personal Information Disclosure](#).

Access to Student Information

As with other MBI records, faculty are cautioned to take care that student information (including, but not limited to, grades, test scores, usernames, or ID numbers) be closely guarded. Grades should not be posted so that students may see scores belonging to other class members.

The Blackboard help [website](#) provides the following information relating to system administrator access to users' personal information:

Users' personal information may, under certain circumstances itemized below, be disclosed to other users in Blackboard Learn. These disclosures and the user's right to choose privacy options are in keeping with FERPA regulations.

Blackboard Learn users who have access to the Administrator Panel may be allowed to view personally identifiable information because they are "school officials with legitimate educational interest." Administrators can view (and in some cases change) users' personal information, including student IDs, grades and other education records, passwords, contact information, and roles in courses, organizations, and Outcomes system contexts. System roles can also be given privileges to access Outcomes Assessment contexts as well as courses and organizations, including the course or organization Control Panel. Institutions need to use caution and good judgment when granting users administrative roles that have privileges to access the paths listed in System Administration Paths.

Privileges can be customized by the institution to limit which system roles have administrative access to users' personal information.

As a security precaution, only administrators can modify privileges.

Institutions can achieve a satisfactory balance between protecting privacy and giving users with "legitimate educational interest" the information they need to do their jobs by assigning roles and configuring privileges appropriately.

APPROPRIATE USE

Appropriate Behavior

As in all users of Moody technology, faculty, student, staff, and guests must adhere to the behavioral standards as outlined in Moody's "Student Life Guide," the "Employee Information Guide," or the "Code of Conduct for Online and Non-Residential Students" in the *MDL Student Handbook*. Faculty are able to partially disable students from active participation in Blackboard course activities using the Control Panel, allowing read-only access to the course.

SUPPORT

By email: its@moody.edu

By phone: 312-329-4001