BLACKBOARD COMMON COURSE MENU

Blue Ridge Community & Technical College

Goals

The purposes of the common course menu are –

1. To promote student retention
    - Online enrollment continues to grow
    - Proven correlation between site design and retention
    - Seamless navigation and "findability"

2. To facilitate course creation for faculty
    - Time commitment to create web content
    - Head start in transforming content for delivery online

The Common Course Menu
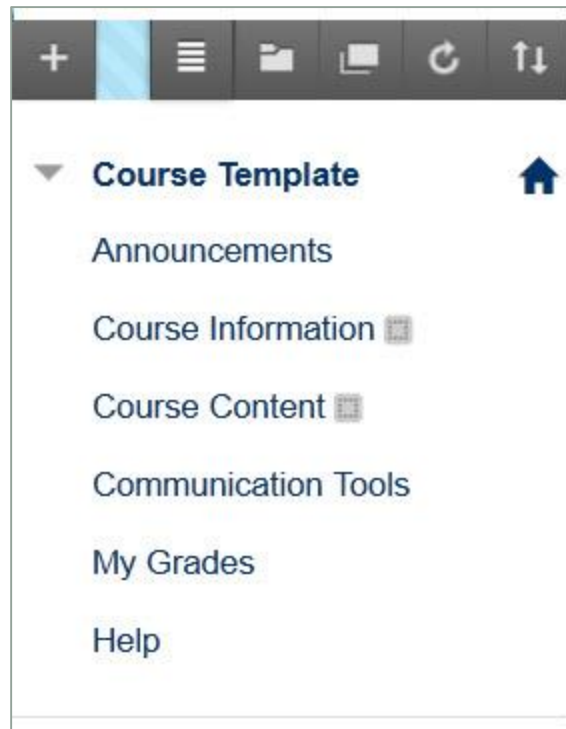
Announcements
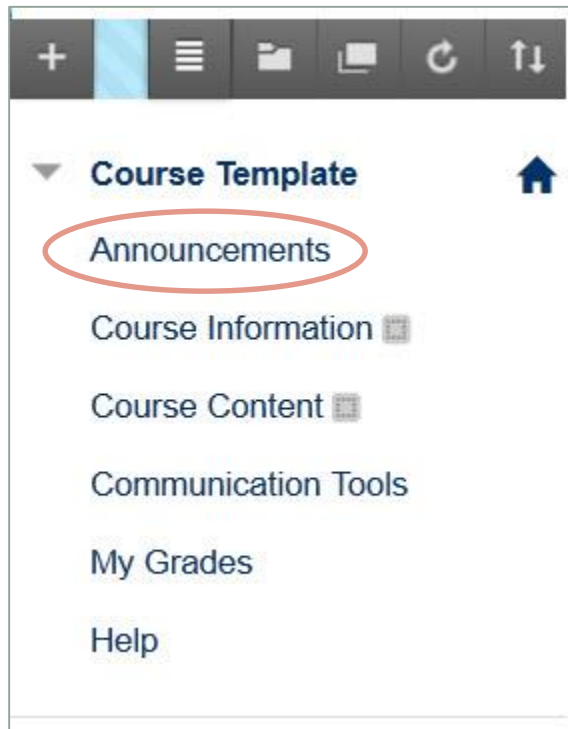
The entry point for every course and an ideal way to communicate information to the entire class including

- when assignments are due,
- changes to the syllabus or schedule,
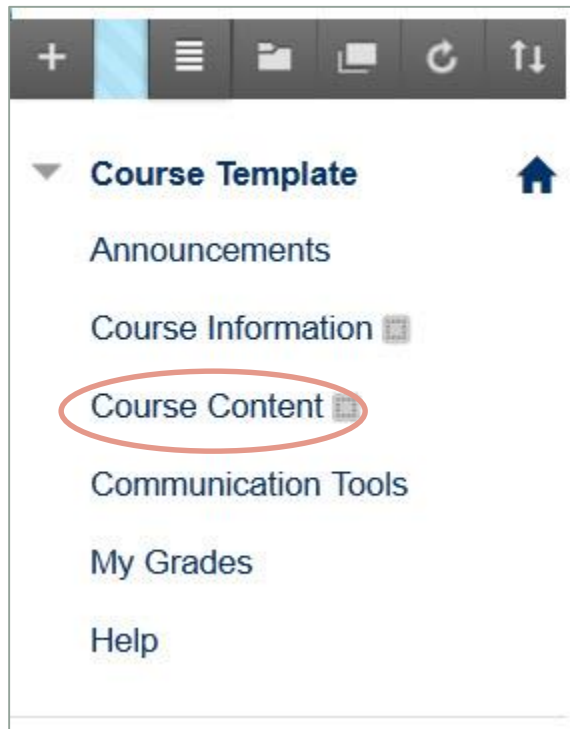- clarifications on assignments, or
- exam study tips.

Course Information

The Course Information link should lead to familiar resources such as

- the syllabus,

- an assignment schedule,

- instructor biography, and your

- participation policy.
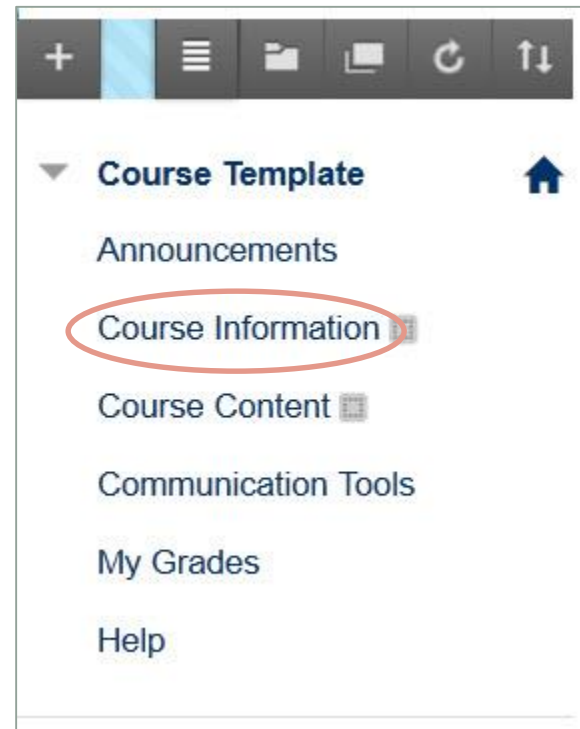
Course Content

Course Content will link to
- assignments,
- tests,
- resources, and
- other content-related materials for your course.

We encourage you to create **second-level structure** in this area to organize content.

Organizing Course Content

Content Type

- Creating Folders within your Course Content area to structure your materials by content type is a useful approach for your **face-to-face course**.
- If you use Blackboard to share files, post complementary resources, or "go green" by making less paper copies, this is a perfect option for you.

Modules

- Creating Lesson Plans or Folders to organize content in a modularized fashion is an excellent model for **online or hybrid courses**.
- You can add all related instructional materials, practice assignments and assessments in one location.

Organizing by Content Type

- Ideal for your **face-to-face course**
- All materials of a similar category are added to the appropriate folder.

Course Content

- Tests & Quizzes
- Assignments
- PowerPoints
- Study Guides

Modularizing Your Content

Sequential

Course Content

Unit 1
January 22 - February 1

Unit 2
February 1 - February 22

Unit 3
February 22 - March 15

Unit 4
March 15 - March 30

By Topic

Course Content

Federalism

The Legislature

The Executive Branch

Courts & the Legal System

Chronological

Course Content

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Communication Tools

The Communication Tools link is where you can make tools such as

- Messages or E-mail,
- the Discussion Board,
- Journals,
- Blogs, and
- Chat,

available in one convenient location.
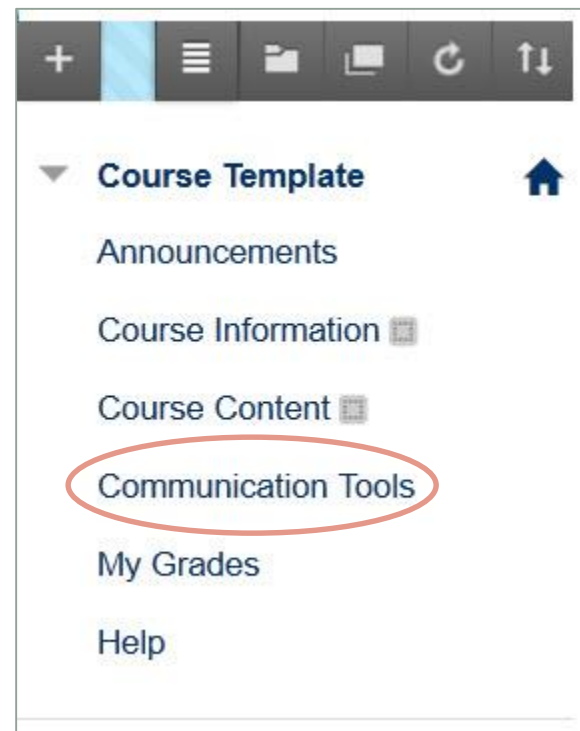
My Grades

The My Grades report includes a student's calculated score, as well as each graded assignment, and
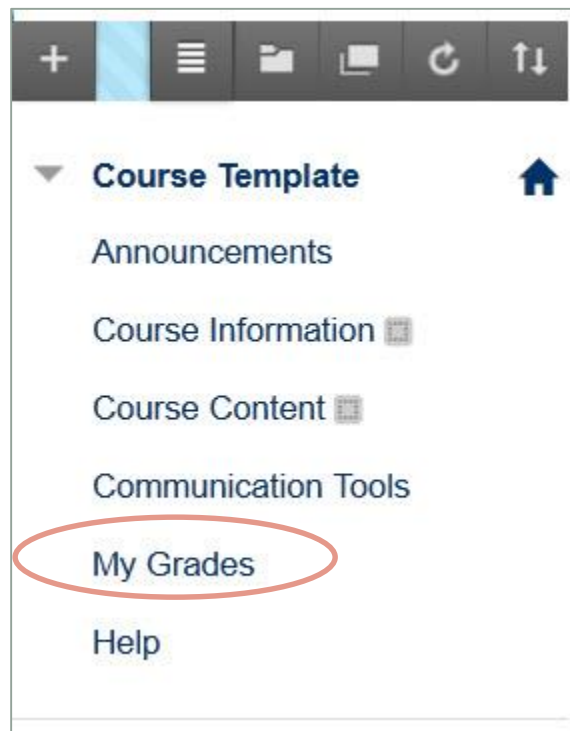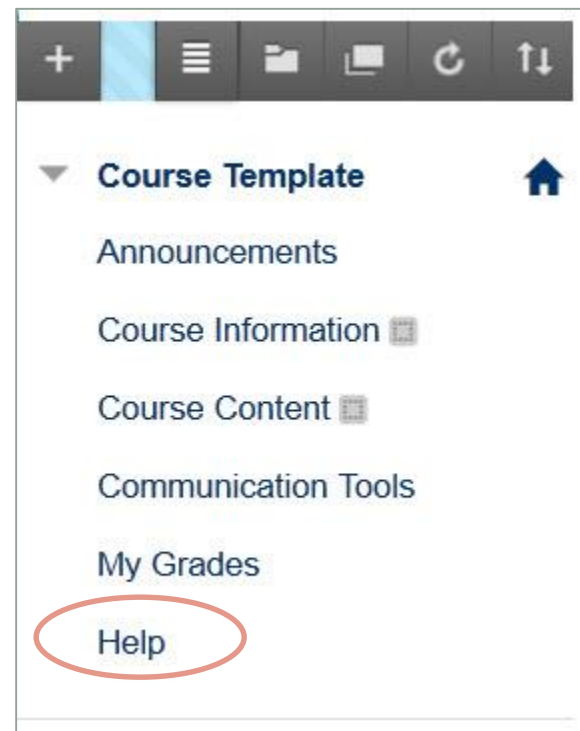
- its point value,
- the points he or she earned,
- when the item was submitted,
- when it was graded, and
- your personalized feedback.

Help

Help is an external link to Blackboard's student-centered help site. When students access Blackboard Help, they can search for step-by-step directions and/or video tutorials to help them complete their tasks.

Best Practices for Teaching Online

1. Incorporate an orientation period and materials to familiarize students with your course.

2. Use communication tools abundantly to let students know that you care about the course and about their concerns.

3. Articulate your plan for communication—either on the syllabus or in your orientation—and stick to it.

Best Practices for Teaching Online

4. List module-level objectives within your content areas in student-friendly language.

5. Use grading rubrics so students understand exactly how their grade will be calculated.

6. List a "How-To" along with your assignment guidelines.

7. Apply strategies to minimize academic dishonesty.