



# Quick Start Guide to American University Blackboard

## Purpose of this Guide

This guide is meant to help you navigate American University Blackboard. If you have previously worked with any version of Blackboard you will find that most of its features are the same. Many of the changes in navigation are cosmetic and designed to offer a more streamlined experience. There are also new features that will allow you to do more in a more generous interface.

What is Blackboard? Blackboard Learn is an online multimedia content management system which professors can use to host video, audio and text documents relevant to your class. Professors can also use Blackboard to collect assignments, give online test and quizzes, and even hold live lectures.

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## Accessing Blackboard

1. We strongly recommend that you use the most up-to-date versions of Apple's Safari, Mozilla Firefox, or Google Chrome (all free). These browsers have no known issues. Internet Explorer does not properly render Blackboard's Grade Center, and we do not advise you use Internet Explorer with Blackboard.
2. There are two ways to access Blackboard:
  - Go to the AU Portal at <http://myau.american.edu> and click on the **Academics** drop-down menu on the left-hand side of the screen. Then click on **Blackboard**.
  - Point your browser directly to <http://blackboard.american.edu>. We suggest you bookmark <http://blackboard.american.edu> in your browser for easy access.
  - Please note that you cannot bookmark pages within Blackboard after you've logged in as you will receive an error when trying to access them.

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## Logging in

1. Blackboard uses the same username and password created by students and faculty for the University's network accounts so **new students first need to create network accounts**. These can be created at <http://myau.american.edu>. You will need your AU ID number to create an account, which is obtained during orientation or through mail in your acceptance packet. After you create your network account, you will be in the Blackboard system.
  - Please note that you must change your password for your network account every 90 days, or you can opt-in for a 1 year password. If you are unable to log in to Blackboard, you should reset your password at <http://myau.american.edu> or by clicking the "Reset an expired or forgotten password" link on the login page.

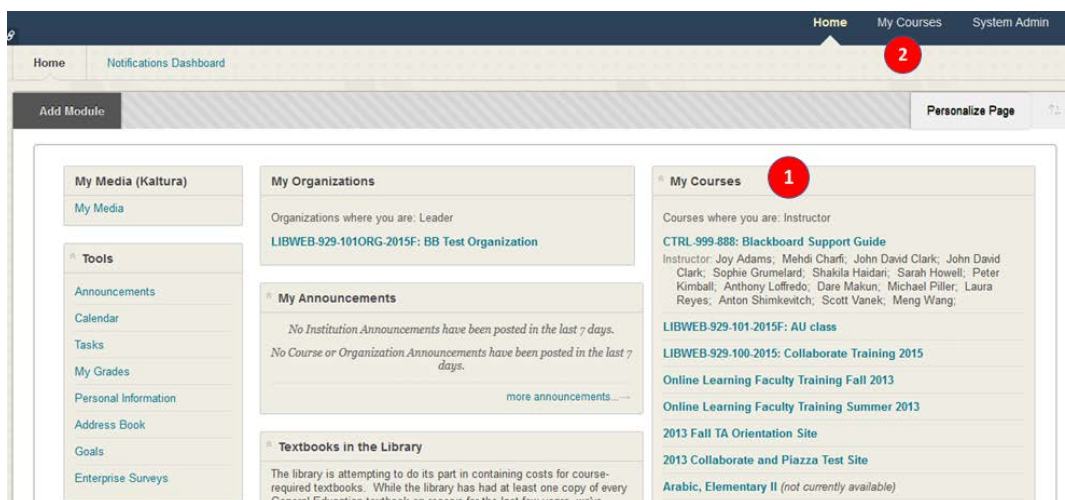
E-Learning Support Services at American University

Bender Library, Room 321 | 202-885-3904 | [blackboard@american.edu](mailto:blackboard@american.edu)

2. Go to <http://blackboard.american.edu> and click the blue **Login** button.
3. Enter your username@american.edu and password. DO NOT type in @STUDENT.american.edu after your username or the login will fail.
4. Click the **Log In** button to access Blackboard environment.

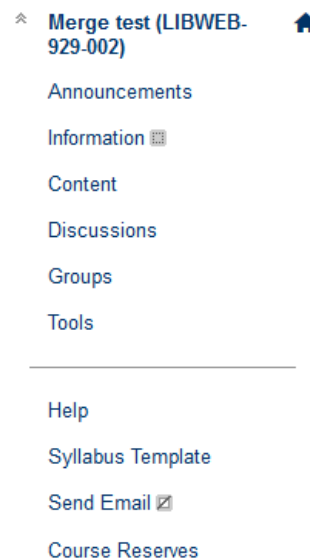
## Navigating Blackboard

1. When you log in to Blackboard, you will see what is called the Home page. It shows several modules which you can personalize. The most important is the **My Courses** module on the right-hand side, which lists the courses in which you are enrolled. To get into the unique Blackboard Page for your course, find the course link in your list and click on the name of the course.
2. If your list is very long or features courses with the same name, you can alternatively click on the **My Courses** tab which offers a complete Course List.



## Navigating your course page

1. Menu – On the left hand side of the screen, you’ll see a menu containing link that you can click on to access Content Areas or Tools.
2. Content Areas – Blackboard pages which contain items such as assignments, videos, readings or other documents. In the example on the right, the content areas are “Content” and “Information”.
3. Course Tools – A link to applications within Blackboard. In the screenshot on the right, the course tools are “Announcements,” “Groups,” “Discussions”, “Course Reserves”, and “Tools”.
  - The difference between Content Areas and links to Course Tools is that Content Areas usually content course documents or links, where Course Tools are specific links to applications within the Blackboard environment.



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## Submitting an assignment



### This is an assignment

Please click the title above to submit your assignment.

1. Assignment links look something like the example to the right.
2. Click the bold text to enter the assignment submission page.
3. Your instructor will most likely want you to submit the assignment in a Word or .PDF file. Click the **Browse My Computer** button to find and attach your file.
4. Click on the blue **Submit** button to finalize and submit your assignment.
5. Please note that if you have made a mistake and submitted the wrong assignment, you should talk to the Instructor in the course before contacting us.

Cancel

Save Draft

Submit

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#### ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Points Possible

**100**

Please click the title above to submit your assignment.

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#### ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Text Submission

Write Submission

Attach File

3

Browse My Computer

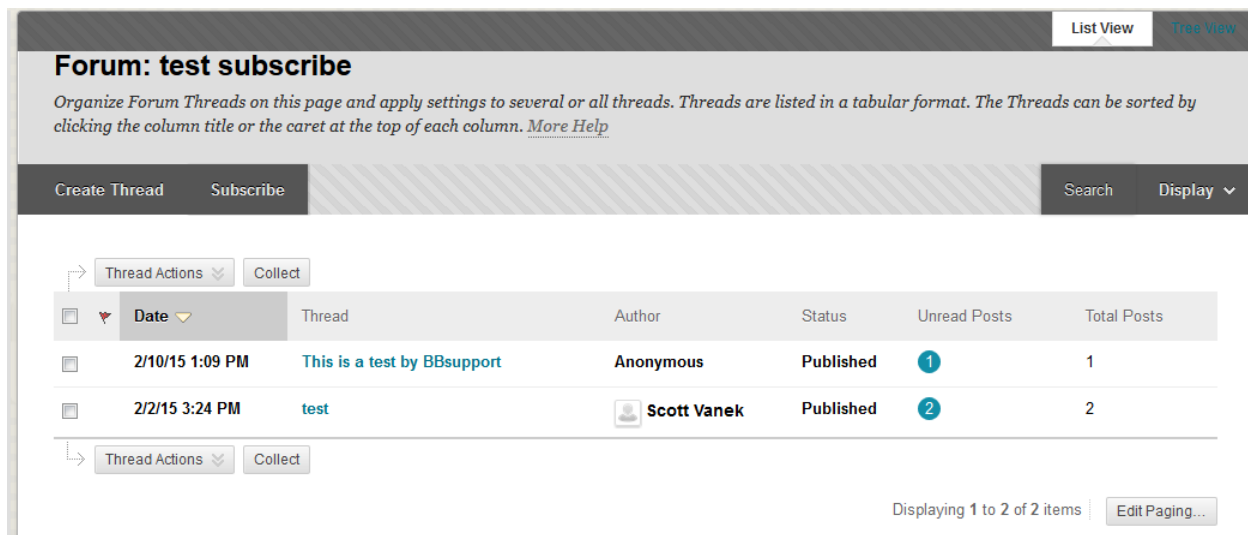
Browse Course

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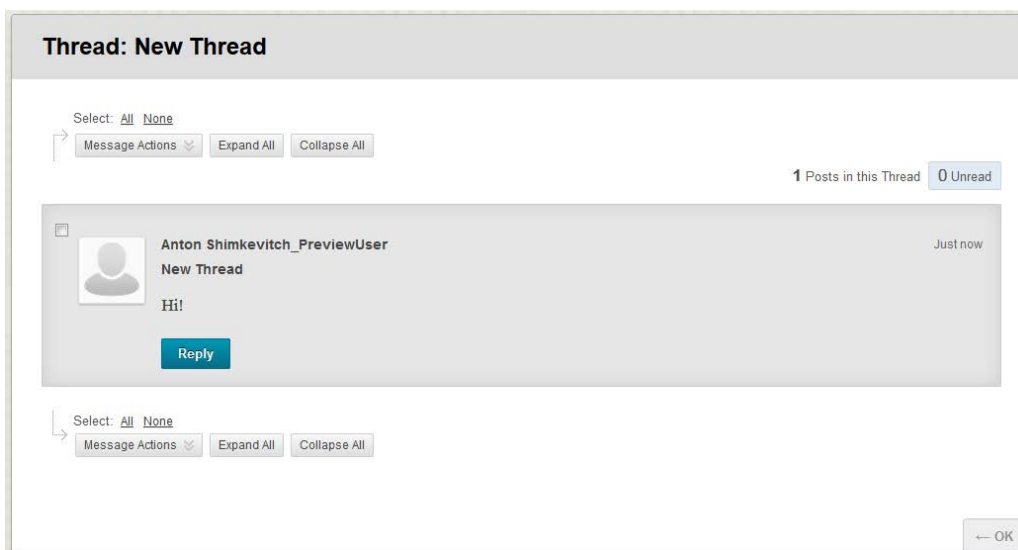
## Posting in the discussion board

1. If your Instructor asks you to make posts on topics in something called a Discussion Board, access it through the **Discussions** link in the course menu, if available. If you do not see that link, click on **Tools**, and click on **Discussion Board**.
2. Click on the Forum you have been asked to post in.

3. Click on the **Create Thread** button to create a brand new post. Write down your thoughts and click **Submit** when you're finished.



4. To reply to a post from the Instructor or another student, click on the link for the already existing thread. Click on the **Reply** button for the thread you'd like to reply to. Write your reply and click on **Submit** when you're finished.



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## Viewing your grades

1. To see all of your grades for all of your courses en masse, start at your Blackboard Homepage. In the **Tools** module to the left, click on **My Grades**.
  2. To see your grades for each individual course, go to your course page. Click the **Tools** link in the course menu and click **My Grades**. This view will be specific to that course.
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## **Sending emails to others in your class**

1. To send an email, click on **Send Email** in the course menu.
  2. Select what group of Blackboard users you'd like to send an email to, type your email, and click on **Send**.
    - Please note that Blackboard does not maintain a log of your emails. The only record will be a copy of the email that is sent to you, the sender.
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## **To learn more about Blackboard**

1. Visit the Blackboard Help website: <https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Collaborate/Ultra>.
2. Attend a workshop offered by the E-Learning Support Services staff. For information about upcoming opportunities or to request a group training session, contact our office or visit our website: <http://www.american.edu/library/technology/blackboard/>.
3. Contact us for immediate live support at (202) 885-3904 or [blackboard@american.edu](mailto:blackboard@american.edu). We are available from 9:00 am until 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, in Room 321 of AU's Bender Library.