

3Rs: Review, Refresh, and Refine Your Blackboard Skills



You're spending much time online using Blackboard to build and teach your Spring 2021 courses. How comfortable are you with the skills needed to teach your course? Now's time for the 3 Rs, to **Review, Refresh, & Refine** your Blackboard skills. Check the list of basic skills and links in the table, "**Check & Master Basic Blackboard Functions & Technology Skills**" below.

If you aren't sure if you've mastered these basic skills, or if you wish to review other advanced Blackboard functions for your course, please contact ITS Blackboard Courses Support at Mason (courses@gmu.edu).

Check & Master Basic Blackboard Functions & Technology Skills

Here is a list of the basic skills needed to teach most courses in Blackboard (click on each link to review Blackboard Help Information for instructors):

- ✓ [Post the course syllabus](#)
- ✓ [Access the course roster](#)
- ✓ [Create and update course content pages](#)
- ✓ [Add announcements](#)
- ✓ [Send email and private course mail messages](#)
- ✓ [Create and post to discussion forums](#)
- ✓ [Manage student assignment submissions](#)
- ✓ [Create and add questions to tests, surveys and quizzes](#)
- ✓ [How to set-up and use online proctoring tools \(such as Respondus LockDown Browser\)](#)
- ✓ [Set-up and use the gradebook](#)
- ✓ Hold online office hours (using [Collaborate Ultra](#) or [Zoom](#))



If You're New to Online Teaching, Keep It Simple!

If you are new to online teaching, focus on mastering the **basic** Blackboard skills. **Keep It Simple!** Make sure you master and feel comfortable with Blackboard functions & tools. Don't get bogged down or overwhelmed by including many (external) tools in your course, just for technology's sake. Make sure that the technology tools you use all serve and support your learning outcomes, and also enhance the student learning experience. Focus on being present, available and active in your online course.

Keep it simple the first time around!

If a particular tool is critical or essential for teaching and learning in your course, subject areas or discipline, please make sure that you learn how to use and incorporate such tools skillfully.

For example:

- If you teach modern languages, you'll likely need to use or record synchronous sessions (**using Collaborate Ultra or Zoom**) in order to converse with individual students and/or with entire class. Make sure you understand these synchronous tools.
- If online quizzes or tests are important for your discipline, then make sure you master how to create, edit and auto-grade **online quizzes or tests in Blackboard**.
- Also learn how to use **online proctoring tools** (e.g., Respondus Monitor and Lockdown Browser), if needed for your course.

Finding Blackboard Help at Mason

Where to get Blackboard Technical Help at Mason? The **Blackboard Courses Support Team** (ITS Online Learning Resources) is available to assist you and your students with Blackboard technical questions.

Contact Information for Courses Support (ITS Online Learning Resources)

E-mail: courses@gmu.edu; Phone: 703-993-8870.

Website: [GMU ITS Blackboard Instructional Support for Faculty](#)

FAQs: [Blackboard FAQs \(Faculty & Staff\), GMU ITS](#)

Update: [New MyMason/Blackboard Navigation](#)

Blackboard Learn Help: [For Faculty \(Instructors\)](#) | [For Students](#)

Where to Find Help for How to Teach in Blackboard? Please contact [Stearns Center](#) for help integrating technology tools (including Blackboard tools) into teaching your online, hybrid, and remote courses (see our contact info below). You may also submit your questions to the Stearns Center [here](#) to our questions portal; our Team is working remotely and will respond to you promptly via email.

Contact Us!

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