

CCE Blackboard Primer

Community and College Education Department (CCE) Western Washington University

Overview

Welcome! The purpose of this document is to help you, the new CCE student quickly begin to use your Distance Learning (DL) courses with Western's DL Delivery System, **Blackboard**.

Information and resources from Western's *Academic Technology and User Services* (ATUS) were used to prepare this document and I encourage you to visit their excellent website listed below for additional information or any help you may need with technical issues.

Good luck! Sandy Daffron



Dr. Sandra Ratcliff Daffron

Assistant Professor
Community and College Education

Miller Hall 314-A MS 9090
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225

Office Phone: 360 650 2977

FAX: 360 650 7516

Email: Sandra.Daffron@wwu.edu

Universal Account: Features

As a registered student at Western you will receive a free Universal Account, an account which provides you access to four technology resources to enhance your academic experience.

MyWestern (includes)

- Web-based e-mail account
- WWU campus and activity information
- *Blackboard* (Western's Distance Learning Delivery System)

Computer Labs (access to General University computer labs on-campus)

U-Drive (personal disk space accessible from both campus and Internet computers)

Modem Pool (dial-up access to e-mail and the Internet from off-campus)

This primer will help you connect to and navigate the **MyWestern** technology resource.

Universal Account: Activation

Register for your courses first

Registration options and info available at: <http://www.wwu.edu/depts/registrar/registration.html>

Wait approximately 24 hours

Connect to Western's ATUS website at: <http://www.wwu.edu/atus/helpdesk>

Click the *New Students: Account Activation* link on the left

After the page loads click the *Account Activation Program* link



After you have read the instructions (above) click on the “Begin Web Activate” button.



You will be prompted for your WWU student number and your registration PIN

Your WWU student number begins with a W and is followed by *eight* numbers

Your registration PIN is typically the first *six* digits of your Social Security number

After you have entered both your Student Number and your PIN click the *Submit* button.

The activation program will also ask you for a secret password, which you make up

The system will take a few seconds to create your Universal ID
Your Universal ID will then be displayed

TAKE A MOMENT TO WRITE DOWN YOUR UNIVERSAL ID AND PASSWORD!

This Universal ID (also called a user name, user ID or login name) and your secret password will grant you access to *MyWestern*, lab computers and the modem pool.

Your account should be available within a few minutes to a few hours. During the first few weeks of Fall and Winter quarters, the process may take up to 24 hours. During other periods (when fewer students are activating their accounts), your account should be available within an hour or less.

Universal Account: Password Tips

Your password must be a combination of 6-8 characters
Do not use names, words, phone numbers, or room numbers
Do not use the number pad to type in numbers
If you use special characters, do not use * / + \
Your account should be available within one to 24 hours

Universal Account: Activation Problems

If you have any difficulty setting up your account, please contact:

ATUS Help Desk

On-campus: Haggard Hall 145

Telephone: 360-650-3333

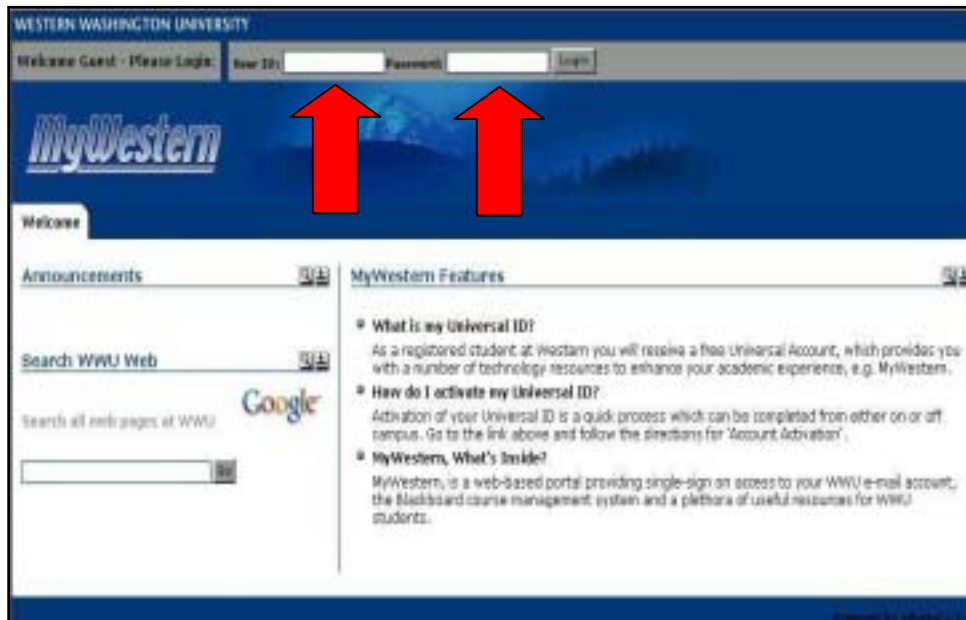
E-mail: helpdesk@wwu.edu

Web: <http://www.wwu.edu/atus/helpdesk>

MyWestern: Login Screen

MyWestern is a WWU web site or portal through which you can access a variety of student services and information resources; two of these resources important to the CCE student are *Email* and *Blackboard*. To access *MyWestern* use the following link from any Internet connected computer. (For your convenience, save this address as a Browser “Favorite”)

<http://mywestern.wvu.edu/>



Type your Universal ID in the *User ID:* window
Type your secret password in the *Password:* window
Click the *Login* button to enter your *MyWestern* portal

You only need to login once using your Universal ID and password to access both your *Email* account and *Blackboard* course areas in *MyWestern*.

MyWestern: Email Account

Your *Email* account was automatically set-up when you activated your Universal Account. Your WWU e-mail screen is accessible by clicking the *Email* link on your *MyWestern* opening page.

MyWestern Email is a web-based system, which means you can send and receive your WWU student e-mail entirely from your web browser; no special software is required for your computer.

The image is a screenshot of the MyWestern website interface. At the top, it says "WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY" and "Welcome ABE Student". Below that, there's a navigation bar with "Home" and "Logout" on the right, and "Email", "Blackboard", "WebU", and "My files" in the center. A red arrow points to the "Email" link. The main content area is divided into several sections: "MyWestern Features" with links for "What is my Universal ID?", "How do I activate my Universal ID?", and "MyWestern, What's Inside?"; "E-Mail" with a "Go to mail" button and a list of features like "Filter Spam", "Have 10 MB Storage", and "Collect mail from other accounts"; "Announcements" with a "University Dates & Deadlines" section listing events from September 10 to November 21; and "Blackboard Courses" with a list of courses like "CCER New Blackboard Students" and "SPED 4698 (Winter 2000) (Unavailable)".

Your student e-mail address contains three parts, the name of your *Email* account, the Internet address of the WWU mail server and the @ symbol separating the two. As an example:

Email account name: smithj897 (exactly the same as the Universal ID for this user)

WWU mail server address: cc.wwu.edu

E-mail address: smithj897@cc.wwu.edu

Your *Email* account name **IS** your Universal ID

Simply add @cc.wwu.edu to your Universal ID and that is your WWU e-mail address.

Universal ID @ cc.wwu.edu (with no spaces, of course)

Blackboard: Navigation

Your CCE instructor may use **Blackboard** in two different modes as a:

Distance Learning course delivery system

Support system for traditional face-to-face classroom courses

The courses in which you are enrolled that are using **Blackboard** will appear automatically in your **MyWestern** opening page under **Blackboard Courses**. Click on the Course Name / Title you wish to access.

The screenshot shows the MyWestern website interface for Western Washington University. The top navigation bar includes 'Home' and 'Logout'. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'home', 'student services', and 'personal'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'MyWestern Features', 'E-Mail', 'Announcements', and 'Blackboard Courses'. The 'Blackboard Courses' section is highlighted with a red arrow and the text 'Your Courses'. The 'Blackboard Courses' section lists courses in which the user is enrolled, including 'CCEWR New Blackboard Students', 'Blackboard Administration and Communication', 'Program Planning', and 'Todd's "mock" course'. The 'Announcements' section lists university dates and deadlines, including 'New Faculty Orientation', 'Fall Faculty Luncheon and State of the University Address', 'Fall Orientation', 'Welcome Convocation', and 'Discovery Days'. The 'E-Mail' section lists features like 'Filter Spam', 'Have 10 MB Storage', and 'Collect mail from other accounts'. The 'MyWestern Features' section includes information about the Universal ID and how to activate it. The 'Personal Links' section includes 'My bookmarks'. The bottom of the page features a search bar for WWU web pages and a Google logo.

Blackboard is a Distance Learning delivery system that provides the following:

- Password protected Web access by student
- Customized student interface and content areas
- Exchange of electronic files between students and between students and instructor
- Synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (non real-time) text chat
- On-line testing and grading options

Blackboard is used in a wide variety of courses by many different instructors, so each course site has its own unique customized look and feel.

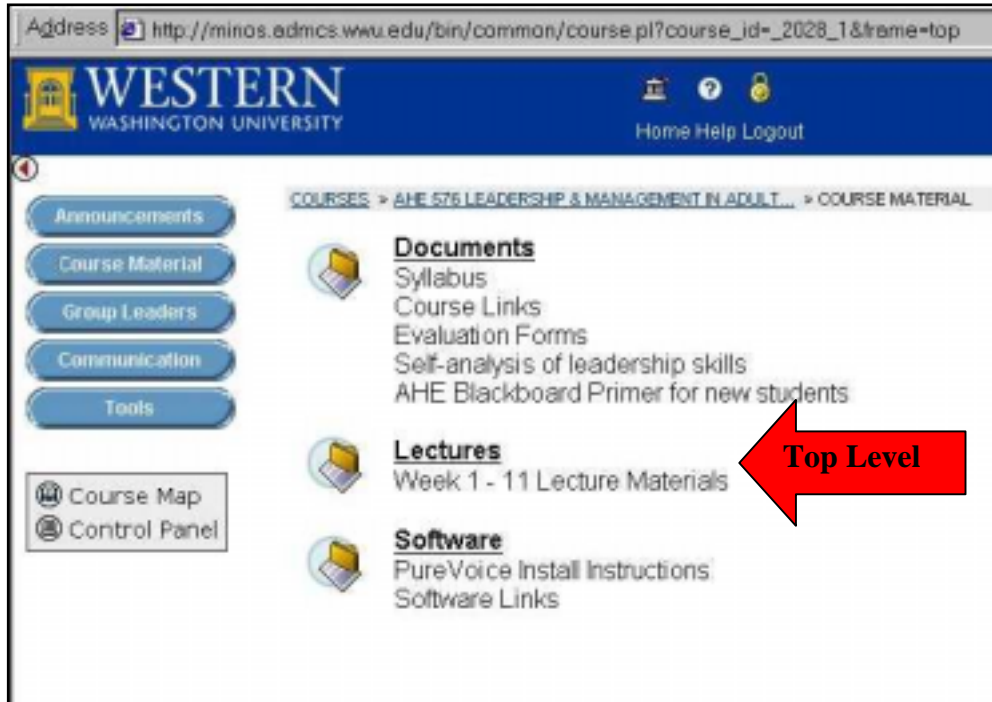


Typically, the opening **Blackboard** screen has a “banner” graphic to identify the course, below the banner are instructor created “announcements” with important course related messages. To the left are “sidebar” buttons for you to jump quickly to content and chat areas. A “Course Map” button provides a quick overview display and quick link to the **Blackboard** course areas.



Blackboard: Downloading Material

DL Course Material is often organized into descriptively named top level folders. Each top folder can have subfolders, which contain electronic course files for your download (below).



Open any folder by clicking on the underlined title just as you open a folder on your computer.



Blackboard: Electronic Files



Any type of electronic file can be made available (uploaded) on the **Blackboard** course site by your instructor. However, electronic file size is a concern for those of you connecting to **Blackboard** via dial-up modems. The larger the file the longer the time required for the transfer (download) of the file to your computer through your phone line. Some typical files that are uploaded for use in Distance Learning courses:

- Text files (Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Adobe PDF, RTF format)
- Slideshow files (Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe PDF)
- Picture files (JPG, GIF, BMP format)
- Movie files (AVI, MPG, MOV format)
- Sound files (MP3, QCP, WMA, DSS format)

Downloading the electronic files to your computer is just the first step to accessing the course material contained within these files. You also need the correct viewing software installed on your computer. You may already have some of the correct software (Microsoft Word and PowerPoint) but some free software may need to be downloaded and installed (Adobe Reader and an audio player). Links to the free software will be provided on your **Blackboard** course site when possible.

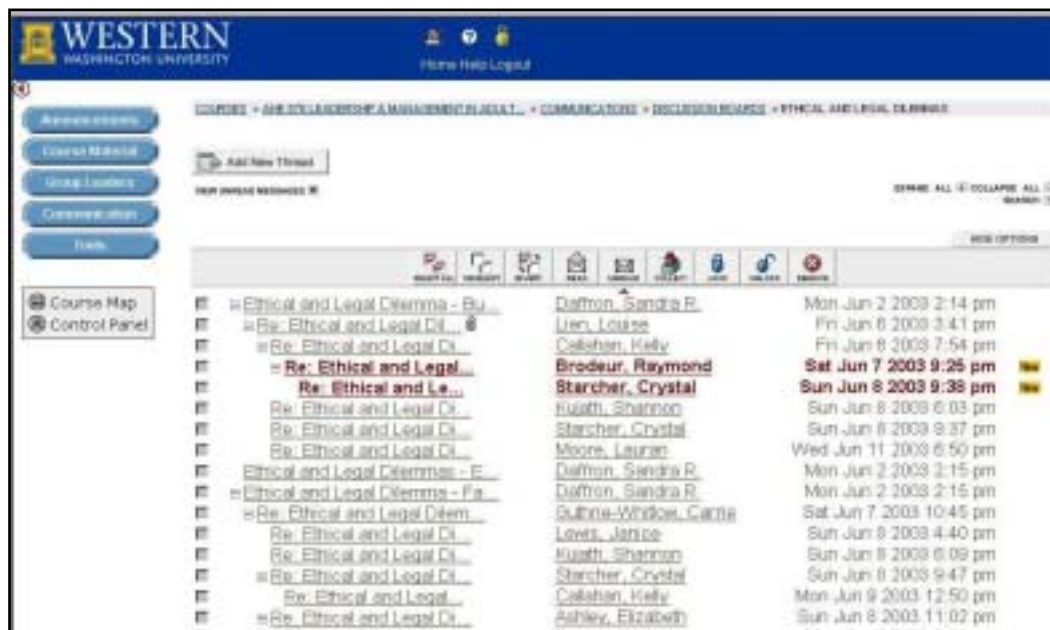
Care is taken by the instructor to choose DL file formats that have:

- Reasonable file size
- Free viewing software
- Mac and PC compatibility

Blackboard: Electronic Discussion

In DL courses you will participate in electronic “chat” discussions on a variety of course related subjects; the instructor will set the topic of each forum or chat room. Students may offer their comments and opinions on the original topic, comment on other student replies or start a new discussion topic (new thread). This asynchronous, or not in real-time class conversation may span several days or weeks. Blackboard will keep track of which comments or “postings” you have read by showing a “NEW” icon to the right of each unread item.

Each posting you make is displayed below and to the right of the posting you are commenting on. It is important to make note of the posting “threading” option menu at the top of the posting area of the discussion board. Several handy tools are available for you to easily display and read just the postings you wish. Students often find it convenient to compose messages in a word processor with its built in grammar and spell checker. The completed post is then “cut and pasted” into the **Blackboard** posting window and submitted to the discussion board.



Synchronous or real-time chat with your instructor and other students is possible with the **Collaboration** function in **Blackboard**. Unlike a discussion board chat, a “Virtual Classroom” requires all participants to be on-line on the same day and time, and all connected to the Internet and **Blackboard**.

Your instructor will provide conduct rules (netiquette) for message posting in Discussion Groups. Inappropriate language or actions simply distract the focus of the class and serve no purpose for the common good.

If you are in doubt of some aspect of your posting, ask.

Blackboard: Work Groups



Often in a DL course you will be required to work as a team member in a collaboration group. An area will be set aside on the **Blackboard** course site for the members of your group to share ideas in the Group Discussion Board, exchange files or meet in the “Virtual Classroom”.

Your group product may be shared with the rest of the class in discussion forums or sent directly to the instructor for review. Your final product may be in a variety of electronic formats, such as a text file or a slideshow file.



Blackboard: Electronic File Information

To follow is helpful information on common file formats that you may encounter in DL courses:

TEXT: Microsoft *Word* format

- Software is de-facto word processor standard in business, education and home use
- Shared files can be altered
- Shared files can carry macro viruses from computer to computer

Recommended for document generation

Not recommended for sharing of student and instructor documents

TEXT: Rich Text Format (RTF)

- Text file exchange format for Mac, PC and all word processors
- Easily created from MS *Word* document with “File Save As” function
- Does not carry macro viruses

Recommended for sharing of all student and instructor documents

TEXT: Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)

- Generator software is simple to use and low cost
- Reader software is free and available for virtually every computer model
- Shared files cannot be altered and do not carry macro viruses
- Any printable document can be easily converted to a PDF file
- All fonts, graphics and URLs in original document retained and compressed for delivery

Recommended for sharing of scanned and secure documents

TEXT: Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) Text only, no graphics

- Easily created with Microsoft *Word*
- Elegant method to share Uniform Resource Locator (URL) links
- Viewable in standard web browser

Recommended for sharing simple text, table data and URLs

SLIDESHOW: Microsoft PowerPoint

- De-facto standard for business and education presentation documents with graphics
- Presentations may be used to share graphics and text in a lecture slideshow
- Free software viewers available for Mac and PC
- Presentation may be easily converted to Adobe PDF for those without PowerPoint

Recommended for sharing lecture presentations

AUDIO: Qualcomm PureVoice (QCP)

- Recorder and player are free and available for all computers
- Audio file is highly compressed, very small in size and easy to share
- Students can exchange voice messages as e-mail or forum attachments

Recommended for sharing audio messages

Using PureVoice Audio Files

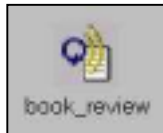
For certain class projects I may ask DL students to record and share via Blackboard a short audio recording to accompany their finished assignment. This requires you have a Mac or PC with a sound card, recording software and an inexpensive microphone. I recommend Qualcomm's PureVoice Player /Recorder software. This software is free, available for Mac and PC and creates a highly compressed audio file that downloads quickly. Here are links for you to download the correct player installation program for your computer:

PureVoice Player/Recorder for Windows 95, 98, 2000, ME and XP

<ftp://ftp.eudora.com/eudora/purevoice/windows/PureWin132.exe>

PureVoice Player/Recorder for Mac OS 7 - 9

<ftp://ftp.eudora.com/eudora/purevoice/mac/pvmac20.hqx>



After the PureVoice Player/Recorder is installed simply double-click on the PureVoice icon (left) to start playback of your downloaded audio file.



Using DSS Audio Files



I record the audio of my face to face (F2F) class sessions and distribute this recording via Blackboard to the distance learning (DL) students enrolled in the same class. I use a tiny solid-state, digital audio recorder, the Olympus DS-330 Digital Voice Recorder (left).

The digital audio file created by this recorder is very small in size and downloads very quickly, important for DL students with dial-up connections. The Digital Speech Standard (DSS) audio format used by the DS-330 requires a special free audio player (below, right) to be installed on your Mac or PC for proper playback. Here are links for you to download the correct player installation program for your computer:

DSS Player for Windows 95, 98, 2000, ME and XP

<http://www.olympusamerica.com/files/dsslite.exe>

DSS Player for Mac OS 8 – 9

http://www.olympusamerica.com/files/DSS_MacOS9.sit

DSS Player for Mac OS X

http://www.olympusamerica.com/files/DSS_MacOS10.sit



After the DSS Player is installed simply double-click on the DSS file icon (left) to start playback of your downloaded audio file.

