

Online Learning Faculty Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to describe and explain the processes, procedures, and issues that faculty should understand when becoming active in online learning at LPC. It will also detail the resources and services available to you and, hopefully, answer any questions you might have.

It will not, however, serve as a training manual on how to use Blackboard, the course management system that is used to deliver online learning at LPC.

Before we proceed, let's make clear that online learning is an umbrella term that encompasses three types of courses offered to LPC students: web-enhanced, online, and hybrid. Each type of course is defined below.

In fact, there are some sections in this handbook that apply only to online and hybrid courses. These sections will be designated with the graphic below in front of them:



The majority of this handbook is applicable to all instructors using Blackboard.

Blackboard is essentially a virtual classroom on the Web that is used to post course information and/or deliver instruction. Almost everything you can do in the regular classroom (i.e. lectures, quizzes, presentations, discussions, group activities, etc.), you can do in Blackboard. And it's relatively easy to use, which is one reason why it is one of the most popular e-learning systems in the world.

Chabot also uses Blackboard. In fact, we share the same server. The server, incidentally, is located on the East Coast and is hosted and maintained by Blackboard, Inc. It is administered locally at both colleges and at the district.

Types of courses using Blackboard

Web-enhanced

A web-enhanced course combines face-to-face instruction with resources on the Internet. Students can access these resources either in class (if the class has student computers), in one of the student computer labs on campus, or, more typically, at home. Students in web-enhanced courses will always have access to course materials, such as syllabi, class policies, course links, course information, announcements, frequently asked questions, model assignment submissions, and even lectures or lecture notes if you choose to post them.

In addition, as the instructor, you have the option of adding learning activities, such as assignments, quizzes, practice quizzes, whole-class discussions, group work, and chats. Web-enhanced courses do not substitute online work for on-campus meetings; they merely augment the work done in class.

These courses are listed in the Schedule of Classes as regular, face-to-face courses.

Online course



Simply put, in an online course, instruction is delivered completely online. There are no on-campus meetings. However, if an instructor chooses to hold an on-campus orientation, the course would still be considered an online course. Since the state chancellor's office considers any course that is taught 51 percent or more of the time at a distance to be considered a Distance Education course, an online course is, obviously, considered a Distance Education course.

Students log into your course to, among other things, access class documents, read announcements, communicate with you and their classmates, complete assignments, participate in discussions and groupwork, and take quizzes and tests.

At LPC, all of the online courses are predominantly asynchronous, meaning that students do their coursework at whatever time of the day they want. The exception is participation in your online office hours because they typically take place once a week in a chatroom and are conducted in real-time.

Online courses meet the same learning outcomes, teach the same content, and require the same rigor from students as their counterpart face-to-face courses. Only the method of delivery changes.

Also, understand that most online courses are not self-paced; they rely on regular and effective communication between the instructor and students and among the students themselves.

Hybrid course



A hybrid course is a course that has any combination of on-campus meetings (excluding orientations) and online meetings. For example, a class meeting once online and the rest of the time face-to-face would be considered a hybrid. So would a class that meets once face-to-face (excluding orientations) and the rest of the time online.

In the schedule of classes—both in print and online—the on-campus meeting days and times must be made clear to students. Priority for scheduling rooms will go to those classes that meet regularly on campus. Also in the schedule, hybrids that meet over 51 percent of the time at a distance will be listed with a DE section designation. Hybrids that meet less than 51 percent of the time at a distance will be listed with a face-to-face section designation (i.e. V01, FT1, etc.)

To make a hybrid successful, you will need to rethink and redesign your course, in addition to learning new online teaching skills. One reason why hybrids are gaining in popularity is that they allow students the flexibility of limiting their time on campus in order to work asynchronously online.

Don't think that you can just put your PowerPoint presentations on the Web and call the course a hybrid; that's not good enough. Your online learning activities should engage and challenge students, all the while complementing your face-to-face meetings. The ultimate goal is to have the necessary blend of online and face-to-face activities that will help students achieve the learning outcomes of the course.

[Learn more about hybrids.](#)

How to get started

Four I's Program

The purpose of the Integrating the Internet Into Instruction, better known as the "Four I's" (Integrating the Internet Into Instruction) program, is to train faculty to enhance student learning by giving students in traditional, face-to-face courses 24/7 access to course materials and/or activities in Blackboard.

The amount of required training will depend on how many of the Blackboard tools you want to learn. If you just want to be able to create basic course materials from within Blackboard, upload materials into Blackboard, and revise materials, come to the 2-hour Blackboard Basics workshop.

If you choose to add learning activities, such as quizzes and whole-class discussions, training for using those tools typically lasts 1.5 hours each. Training on the above tools, as well as training on the Blackboard gradebook and assignments tools, will be provided both in the Teaching and Learning Center and online.

You should complete Blackboard Basics before attending the subsequent workshops. However, if you don't want to attend the subsequent workshops, that's OK; after completing Blackboard Basics, you can request your course in Blackboard so you can begin using it with your students.

Training for all faculty using Blackboard is highly recommended. On March 11, 2009, the LPC Academic Senate approved the following statement: "Whereas Blackboard is such an integral part of our education, all faculty who use it, need proper training, including copyright and accessibility issues."

Sign up by clicking the [Workshops](#) link on the Staff Development web site, and choose the Blackboard Basics workshop, along with any other workshops you want to attend.

All face-to-face workshops will take place in the Teaching and Learning Center. Online training is also available. If you prefer to learn the Blackboard Basics in a one-on-one, face-to-face environment, contact Scott Vigallon at svigallon@laspositascollege.edu.

Online Course Development Program



The purpose of the Online Course Development Program (OCDP) is to train faculty to design, develop, and teach instructionally sound online courses. Based on best practices in online pedagogy, participants will design and develop their course over one semester. They will then teach it the following semester.

To be selected for the OCDP, you first need to fill out an application, then have it signed by one full-time faculty member in your discipline before submitting it to your division office for your dean's signature. Applications, including deadline dates for submission, will be sent mid-semester via email and will also be available on the LPC Intranet. You are accepted into the OCDP once you get the appropriate signatures.

Participants will be required to attend weekly two-hour workshops in the Teaching and Learning Center or via webconferencing. Times and days will be worked out to fit faculty schedules. The number of workshop dates depends on the needs of the participants. For example, those who are

already experienced with using the Blackboard tools can just request training on online pedagogy and instructional design.

An online training course is available for those faculty who prefer to learn at their own pace.

Participants do not need to have any prior experience using Blackboard or developing web pages. The only prerequisites are knowledge of using a computer and a willingness to learn new technical and/or instructional skills.

Distance Education proposal



If you want to teach an online course, aside from applying to, and getting trained in, the OCDP, you will need to complete a Distance Education proposal. This is required by the state and must be approved by your division before being approved by the Curriculum Committee. The proposal form is available at your division office and also online at the [Faculty & Staff web site](#).

When writing your proposal, it is important to consider how methods of instructions, typical assignments, and evaluation will be adapted to the online format, as well as how regular and effective student contact will be achieved.

It is recommended that the proposal be developed in consultation with the Instructional Technology/Open Learning Coordinator. There are also examples that you can use to help you through the writing of the proposal.

If the course outline for the proposed course is not current in Title 5 format, you'll have to complete that, too. Contact your division dean or staff for assistance on this.

Instructors teaching hybrid courses—regardless of how many times those courses meet at a distance—will also have to complete a Distance Education proposal.

Requesting Blackboard course shells

A Blackboard course shell is your virtual classroom that contains no content. After requesting a shell via CLASS-Web, and having it set up, you then enter content into it by direct typing, posting documents, or copying content from a previous course. You can even have content from your textbook publisher uploaded into it.

Faculty who have completed the Blackboard Basics training in the Four I's Program and/or faculty who are already teaching with Blackboard will receive an email a month or two into the semester, requesting that they go to CLASS-Web and submit a request for Blackboard shells for the next semester.

Accessing Blackboard

There are two ways to access Blackboard:

Accessing Blackboard via The Zone

When you log into The Zone with your W number and PIN, click the Blackboard tab at the top, then click the link on the left to access Blackboard. The first time you do this, The Zone will take you to an External Account Synchronization page where you need to enter your Blackboard username and password in order to synchronize Blackboard with The Zone. Click Save Account Information after you do this. From now on, each time you enter The Zone with your W number and PIN and click the Blackboard link, you will be taken directly to your My Institution page in Blackboard where you can access your courses. The only exception is if you change your password in Blackboard; in this case, The Zone will again ask for your Blackboard password.

Accessing Blackboard directly

You can bypass The Zone to log into Blackboard directly by going to <http://clpccd.blackboard.com>. If you've used Blackboard previously, your login information will still work.

Faculty email addresses

Faculty email addresses will be automatically populated into Blackboard. These will be your GroupWise addresses (svigallon@laspositascollege.edu). You will not be able to change these in Blackboard. However, if you do not want to use your GroupWise address in Blackboard, you can change this via Class-Web. Once you do so, your non-GroupWise address will be automatically placed into Blackboard overnight that night. For timing reasons, you should do this before the semester begins. You—primarily adjuncts—probably don't want students emailing you to an account you don't check often. Here's how to change you Blackboard address in Class-Web:

1. Log into CLASS-Web.
2. Select "What is my email address?"
3. Select "Update Email Address".
4. Under "Type of E-mail to Insert", select "Email for Blackboard" and click "Submit".
5. Enter the email address in the field next to "E-mail", and click "Submit".

Faculty support

All faculty using Blackboard—either for web-enhanced, hybrid, or online courses—will be supported by LPC. Whether you are designing your course or actually teaching it, technical and pedagogical support is available. Contact Scott Vigallon (svigallon@laspositascollege.edu, 424-1654) for any of the above assistance. Scott is typically available 8-5 Monday through Friday. He is usually in his office, which is located in the Teaching and Learning Center (Room 2410). Contact Jeff Sperry (jsperry@laspositascollege.edu, 424-1655) for technical support. Jeff also works in the Teaching and Learning Center.

Class sizes

Regardless of whether you teach a web-enhanced, online, or hybrid course, the maximum number of students in the class will be set at the contractual limit. That number can be changed only by agreement between the instructor, the appropriate dean, and the VP of Academic Services.

Preparing for the semester

Notes for class schedule



If you know that you will be teaching an online course and have decided to conduct a mandatory orientation for your students, you will need to submit a request for a day, time, and room to your division so it can be placed in the schedule of classes. Keep in mind, though, that your mandatory orientation will be a low priority when it comes to getting scheduled; face-to-face and hybrid courses will have higher priority.

If you will be teaching a hybrid course, please make sure that your division knows exactly when students will be meeting on campus so this, too, can be placed in the schedule of classes.

Regardless of whether you will be teaching an online course with a mandatory orientation or a hybrid, you will need to submit your requests for meeting dates in a timely manner.

Create an information page



The information page is a page that is linked to your course listing on the online course offerings page of the [Online Learning web site](#). It is intended to give prospective students a very clear idea of what your course is about, how it operates, what types of activities are required, what the expectations are, etc., prior to the students registering for it.

This page should be created, and posted, before the Schedule of Classes is released. All you have to do is fill out a web form, and the Instructional Technology staff will create the page and upload it for you.

Instructors teaching hybrid courses should also create an information page.

Considerations while designing your course

Get familiar with best practices



If you are designing an online or hybrid course, you will want to read, and study, the document called "[Best practices in designing online courses](#)" that has been approved by the LPC Distance Education Committee. These practices—a synthesis of best practices nationwide in Higher Education—will be used during faculty training and can also be used by current online instructors who want to improve their courses. The document includes examples for each criterion.

Make your content accessible to students with disabilities

By federal law (Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act), all of the materials you post to the Web need to be accessible to students with disabilities, regardless of the type of online learning course you teach. This is detailed in the [California Community College's Distance Education Guidelines for Students with Disabilities](#). The Four I's and OCDP programs incorporate web accessibility training.

In addition, any time you need help making materials accessible, you can contact Jeff Sperry at 424-1655, or [visit the LPC Web Accessibility web site](#).

If you are simply entering all of your content into Blackboard as text, you have nothing to worry about. However, if you plan to post web pages with graphics or tables, Microsoft Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, or multimedia elements that either you, someone else, or a textbook publisher created, there are requirements you'll need to follow in order to accommodate students with disabilities.

Moreover, The High Tech Center Training Unit, which provides leadership on accessibility issues to all California Community Colleges, is recommending that anyone who teaches with Blackboard include an Alternate Media Statement in their syllabi. A sample statement is located at the bottom of the disabilities page on the Online Learning web site. You can simply create a link to the statement from your syllabus: <http://www.laspositascollege.edu/onlinelearning/disabilities.php - statement> .

Don't violate copyright law

Be careful when using someone else's content on the Web. Just because something is on the Web doesn't mean you can use it freely in your course. If you are unsure whether you can use someone else's content, the rule of thumb is to always ask permission. Crediting the original creator of the content is also advisable. Here are some links to helpful information on copyright:

- [U.S. Copyright Office](#)
- [Copyright and Distance Education](#)
- [Copyright and Fair Use](#)

Review the free resources available to you

[Learn how to obtain other content to use for your course](#). Much of this content was created for educational use and have fewer copyright restrictions.

Non-Blackboard tools to add content

If you want to create your own content using LPC's resources, the Instructional Technology staff in the TLC can help you. Among the content you can create are [podcasts](#), [instructional videos](#), [narrated PowerPoint presentations](#), [concept map diagrams](#), and [interactive study games](#).

Use the Succeeding in an Online Course tutorial



This tutorial, which resides on the [Online Learning web site](#), was created for two reasons:

1. To help students determine whether or not they should enroll in an online or hybrid course; and
2. To help students succeed in online and hybrid courses.

As the instructor, you have the option to have your students complete all or specific lessons in the tutorial. If you choose this option, you can give your students a chance to earn credit (or even extra credit) by incorporating corresponding quiz questions into your course.

A web site with information about the quizzes is online. Contact Scott for access.

[View the tutorial](#)

Decide if you will use library guides

If you choose to have your students conduct research, the LPC library can help. The [Library Guides section](#) on the LPC Library site lists guides that are essentially compilations of resources that your students can use. Just contact the librarians at lpclibrarian@laspositascollege.edu, and they can put these guides together for you. An example guide for an online course is [John Steinbeck's East of Eden](#).

Dealing with disruptive students online

Just as in the face-to-face classroom, you might have to deal with disruptive students online. Possibly because of the lack of face-to-face presence and the difficulty in interpreting emotions within electronic communications, disruptive students online can be more challenging to handle. Some can even appear downright disrespectful or abusive toward not only fellow students, but also toward you.

The document titled "[Dealing with disruptive students](#)", identifies some of the behaviors that you might encounter, gives suggestions for handling disruptive students, then outlines the official CLPCCD procedure for removing students.

Important Blackboard notifications

In the weeks and months leading up to a new semester, you will be kept informed, via email, of important Blackboard tasks and deadlines. Those already mentioned include requesting Blackboard shells and creating an information page. You will also receive an email that describes any changes concerning Blackboard issues or changes to LPC procedures from the previous semester.

Important Blackboard notifications will also be accessible via a Blackboard support blog. Most of the information on the blog will be the same info that is emailed to you. However, the blog will make it easier for you to read something you might have missed. The blog is linked from the Staff Development web site (go to Instructional Technology/Blackboard) and from the BOLT (go to Online Learning info). Its URL is <http://lpc-blackboard.blogspot.com>.

Fake students

To better improve the security of the Blackboard system, faculty fake students will not be added into every course. No, we have not had any security breaches, but in light of the recent DVC grading scandal, any possible risks should be minimized.

However, if you feel like you really need that fake student, you can request one on the online course request form that is emailed out each semester.

Student enrollment process

You do not have the ability to input students into your course. The district uses a tool called Snapshot that links the district's administrative computing system, Banner, to Blackboard, so once students enroll in a course that is tagged for Blackboard use in Banner, their names, usernames, default passwords, email addresses, and the courses they are enrolled in will be automatically generated for Blackboard.

A week or so before the first day of classes, Snapshot will input students into your course. Students won't be able to access your course until you make the course available to them.

Hiding old courses

Once your course shell gets created, you will see it on the My Institution page right when you log into Blackboard. If you have a lot of courses from previous semesters and don't want to see them, you can hide them, along with old announcements, by clicking the circular icon to the right of My Courses, then unchecking the boxes under Display Course, and clicking Submit at the bottom.

Student email addresses in CLASS-Web

If you would like to contact students via email prior to the start of classes, you can do so either through CLASS-Web or Blackboard. Keep in mind that students won't be inputted into Blackboard classes until a week before the semester begins.

General student orientations



In the week prior to the beginning of the semester—and once during the first week—live, general orientations for online students will be conducted on campus and online. These orientations, which will cover login instructions, Blackboard navigation, how to get technical help, etc., will be conducted by Academic Services staff (probably by Scott Vigallon). [Learn more about these orientations.](#)

Online student orientations



For instructors who choose not to hold mandatory orientations for students, there is an asynchronous online orientation that you can use instead. It is located at <http://lpc1.clpccd.cc.ca.us/lpc/blackboard/orientation>. There is an associated quiz that you can use with your students to make sure they completed the orientation. To gain access to more information about the quiz, contact Scott Vigallon.

Make sure your course is ready

Prior to the semester beginning, be sure to check all of the links in your course to make sure they work. You can use the Link Checker tool to do this, but it will only check links added with the Create External Link button; it will not check links that are in web pages that you might have uploaded into Blackboard.

Also, if you copied your course's content from a previous semester, check to make sure that the items are in the proper order; Blackboard doesn't do a perfect job of this. And, if you have menu items that aren't used, delete them.

BOLT

As a Blackboard instructor, you will be given access to the Blackboard Online Learning Team (a.k.a. the BOLT) site. The BOLT is designed as a support resource for LPC and Chabot faculty who teach with Blackboard. Whether you have pedagogical or technical questions, you can find answers in the BOLT. Even if you don't have specific questions, you can frequent the BOLT's Discussion Board to give feedback to your colleagues, to see how other instructors are using Blackboard, and to share your successes, frustrations and lessons learned.

In the Blackboard resources section, you will find information on online pedagogy, including teaching tips and sample lesson plans. Throughout this section, you'll find tutorials on how to accomplish most Blackboard techniques.

Beginning of the semester

Proofread your course

Just prior to making your course available to students, you will want to proofread it to make sure it is ready to go. [View a list of things to look for.](#)

Make your course available

When your course shell is created, it is, by default, unavailable to students. Keep your course unavailable if you don't want students to access it until the first day of classes. Of course, all instructors need to make their courses available by the first day of classes.

Mandatory orientations



If you are teaching an online course and choose to conduct a mandatory orientation for your students, you'll want to cover the technical, navigational, and instructional aspects of your course. To view specific recommendations, read "[Tips for Orientation Meeting](#)".

You will also want to decide beforehand if you are going to accept any student adds above the limit for your class. It's likely that many students wanting to add your course will show up at the orientation.

Student email addresses in Blackboard

Through The Zone, all students will be provided college email accounts. This means that Blackboard will be automatically populated with college email addresses for ALL students, including previous Blackboard students. Students will not be able to change their email addresses in Blackboard. If they want to use their personal Gmail, Yahoo, Comcast, etc. account, they will have to log into The Zone and set up their college email account so it automatically forwards all emails to their personal account. Alternatively, they can add their email into CLASS-Web, which will then get inputted into Blackboard.

If you are going to use Messages (internal email) and continue to give students access to the Send Email tool (external email), make sure it's real clear to your students which one is the primary method of email. If Messages is used, you might even want to delete the Send Email tool to avoid any confusion. And vice versa.

Student support for login problems

Student login instructions are on the LPC [Online Learning web site](#).

However, some students just won't read or follow directions, and some students might just have legitimate login problems. If students tell you that they are having difficulties logging into Blackboard, refer them to our [Instructional Technology Student Support](#) group (LPCdistEd@laspositascollege.edu or 925-424-1142). The instructional assistants in our room 803 computer lab provide this support, which also includes support for technical problems with the student's Blackboard class.

Student adds and drops

After classes begin, students can add courses through CLASS-Web, depending on available slots, of course. Once they add courses, their data will be transmitted by Snapshot in the middle of the night. They will then be able to log in.

The key here is that although you can add students, you don't have the ability to add them to your Blackboard roster. This is an automated process. So is dropping students. You can drop students, but you can't remove them from your Blackboard roster. Snapshot will do this. In fact, while Snapshot will remove dropped students from your Blackboard roster, it will retain the students' data, such as assignment submissions and exam results. If, for some reason, a

dropped student needs to be placed back into the class, Snapshot will re-enable the student and the student's data after he re-registers for the course.

Remind your students that they are responsible for officially withdrawing from classes by the deadline date listed in the current Class Schedule. There is no automatic withdrawal process. Failure to follow the proper withdrawal procedures may result in a grade of "F". Students may drop courses via CLASS-Web.

If students need more information about withdrawing from a class, direct them to the LPC Registration Policies at http://www.laspositascollege.edu/admissions/registration_policies.php-withdrawing.

Regarding faculty dropping students, in Spring 2009, the Academic Senate and college administration approved new language on dropping DE students. The language (in the paragraph below) has been inserted into the following places: the Online Learning ad that goes in the printed schedule, the Online & Hybrid Courses page on the Online Learning web site, and into each online and hybrid course information page on the Online learning web site. It is also supposed to be inserted into the college catalog.

"The instructor may drop students who miss the first meeting of a course. The first meeting of online or hybrid Distance Education courses is the first day of the class as specified in the class schedule listing. For these courses, instructors may drop students who do not log into their Blackboard course and/or complete indicated activities by the third day of classes."

You might want to take information from above and place it into your syllabus.

Instructor-student contact



Successful online learning requires that the instructor plan, deliver, and evaluate ongoing learning activities that promote extensive instructor-student, as well as student-student interaction. Online learning can best help students to succeed when these activities occur throughout the course. They are especially necessary at the beginning of the semester in order to provide students with the optimum foundation for academic achievement.

In fact, you are required by Title V to have "regular effective contact" with your students. Here is the specific language of subsection a) of section 55211 – Instructor Contact:

"All approved courses offered as distance education include regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities."

Those other activities can include class discussion assignments, class announcements, chats, webconferencing, and web logs. Whatever methods you use, make sure you are communicating effectively with students. [View tips on communicating with online students.](#)

The end of the semester

Closing your course



[View this document for instructions.](#)

Evaluation of instruction



The District and the Faculty Association have negotiated the use of two forms, the Observation of Online Instruction form and the Student Response to Instruction form, to evaluate online instruction. If your class will be evaluated, contact Scott Vigallon so he can prepare the technical part of the evaluation.

The instructor will give the evaluator a 1-2 hour tour of the course, then the evaluator will have 1-2 hours of access to the course as a student. Students will be notified when the student survey will be available, and they will complete it in CLASS-Web. The evaluator will complete the observation form and will be given access to the student survey results.

Archive your course

After the semester ends, and after you turn in grades, you'll want to archive your course. Even though the Blackboard server has its own backup system, you'll want to do this because you never know what can happen to the server. Matter of fact, you'd be wise to archive your course every week or two during the semester and download it to a safe place (a flash drive, CD or DVD).

[View instructions for archiving your course.](#)

Download your gradebook

Once students are deleted from the Blackboard server, neither their work nor their grades will appear in your archived course. That's why you should download your Gradebook separately. Like the archive, download your Gradebook to a safe place. Also like the archive, you should do this every week or so during the semester.

[View instructions for downloading your gradebook.](#)

Archive your emails

If you are not using the Messages tool in Blackboard, you are advised to archive any emails from your students that you feel need to be saved. Archiving your Blackboard course does not archive your class email -- unless you use Messages (internal email) and not Send Email (external email).

Make your class unavailable to students

Once you determine that students no longer need access to your class, make it unavailable to them. You might want to keep it available until a week or so after grades are posted. Just let your students know that the class will be available until a specific date.

Length of faculty access to courses

Courses over two years old will be deleted from the Blackboard server prior to each semester.

Miscellaneous Blackboard issues

Completing Incompletes

If a student chooses to complete an incomplete, the student may complete the course work by the end of the following semester and receive an appropriate letter grade. Should you need to have the student complete work in Blackboard, you'll have to choose one of the options below:

- Option 1: The student will complete the coursework in original site. The instructor must leave the course site set to Available. Note that all other enrolled students will have access to the site, as well. Since the previous semester has ended, and none of the previous students will be doing any work, interactivity among students will not be possible.
- Option 2: If you do not want all of the other enrolled students to have access to the course after the semester ends, make it Unavailable, then contact the Blackboard system administrator to request that a new course be set up. The system administrator will manually create a new course shell, copy the content of the original course into it, then add the student into it. Note that none of the discussion board postings, nor any student work completed will be carried over. Instructors would need to re-enter grades in the Gradebook. Because there will only be one student in this course, interactivity among students will not be possible.
- Option 3: If interactivity among students, such as discussion board postings and replies, is required, ask the Blackboard system administrator to manually add the student into your current course. The student has to be added manually because he has not officially enrolled in the course. He can then interact with all of the students in the current course. Note that this method is just as if the student has begun a new course, so none of the coursework will be brought over to the new site. Instructors would need to re-enter grades in the Gradebook.

Informational emails

Once you begin using Blackboard, your email address will be included on the Blackboard faculty email distribution list. This list will be used to keep you updated on Blackboard-related issues that you will need to know about. You'll know when and how to request courses, when to copy content into new shells, when students will be inputted into Blackboard, etc.

In addition, when Blackboard, Inc., announces that it has scheduled routine server maintenance, you will know the day and time so you can pass the information along to your students. The server might or might not be available during these maintenance periods. It will definitely not be available between 2-2:30 a.m. each night because it gets restarted during that time.

Again, the Blackboard support blog will also have all of this information.

System-wide announcements

For more significant Blackboard issues, such as planned server outages on short notice, a system-wide announcement will be placed on the Blackboard login page. System-wide announcements can also be placed in every class and automatically become the first announcement that students will see.

System administrators at LPC and Chabot are sensitive to external announcements being placed within classes and will be judicious in posting system-wide announcements there. These announcements cannot be separated by college; once a significant announcement is posted, it gets posted to every class, regardless of college. Less important system-wide announcements can just be posted to the login page.

If the Blackboard server goes down without warning, an announcement will be placed on the Online Learning home page, on the Blackboard tab in The Zone, and on the Online Learning web site's Twitter account. Furthermore, instructors, along with the student support desk, will be notified by Scott Vigallon via email as soon as possible.

Weekend technical support

There is no technical support for faculty on the weekends, holidays, or days in which the LPC campus is closed. The same goes for student technical support. Therefore, you might want to schedule deadlines for major student submissions in Blackboard (i.e. exams, research papers) for days in which there will be technical support.

Guest access to your course

For privacy reasons, Guest Access is off by default for all Blackboard courses.

Blackboard decision-making

Important Blackboard issues concerning only LPC, such as the approval of this handbook, will be discussed, and decided upon, by the LPC Distance Education Committee. However, if the issues concern the Blackboard server, the committee will make recommendations that will be taken to the district and Chabot for final decisions. LPC and Chabot share the Blackboard server, while the district provides system administrative support and pays the licensing fees.

An example of a “shared” issue is the upgrading of Blackboard software. Like all software companies, Blackboard, Inc., periodically provides its clients with upgrades. Because LPC, Chabot, and the district will all be affected by the upgrade, all three will have to agree that an upgrade should be installed and when the installation will occur (usually between semesters).

The LPC Distance Education Committee includes full college representation, and it reports primarily to the Academic Senate and secondarily to the Office of Academic Services. Its charge is “to explore and recommend policies, procedures and tools to enhance student learning and services in the delivery of Distance Education offered through Las Positas College.” The committee’s agendas and approved minutes are available on the [committee’s web site](#).

Keep in mind that some decisions made at the district or board levels can have an effect on Blackboard usage. These include policies such as the board policy on intellectual property and proposed policies on web use and copyright.

This handbook is subject to change as new technologies emerge and new decisions get made.