Desire2Learn: Quick Start Guide

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Getting Started

Logging In and Out

D2L Login Page: Go to https://ecampusd2l.blinn.edu (no www. is enter in this address).

**Username:** Your D2L username is the same as your Blinn email/MyBlinn username.

**Password:** Your D2L password is the same as your Blinn email/MyBlinn password.

**Forgot Your Password?** Select the Password Management link in the login box. Follow the steps in the password management wizard. Need help? Call the Computer Help Desk at 979-830-4357.

**Logging Out:** The logout link is located on system navbar in the upper right of each page.

My Home

**My Home** is your starting point inside D2L. From here, you can set up your profile, edit your preferences, and access your courses. You will also see announcements posted by D2L system administrators.

On the **My Home** page, there are widgets, a navigation bar, and a minibar that allows you to access various functions within D2L.

![Minibar and Navbar](image)

**The Minibar**

1. The minibar allows you to access profile settings, message alerts, update alerts, chat alerts, and quickly switch to another course by using the Select a course drop down list. Hover your mouse over the minibar icons for screen tips on each icon.

**The Navbar**

1. The navbar contains link to course-specific organization-wide tools and resources.

**News Widget**

1. The home page **News** widget displays D2L system wide announcements. Please check these for dates/times that maintenance is scheduled.

**My Courses Widget**

1. Courses are listed as hyperlinks and organized by semester in the **My Courses** widget. You may also use the Select a Course drop down list on the minibar to view and search for additional
course titles. Click on the hyperlinked course name to access the course.

**Calendar Widget**

1. The Calendar widget contains a monthly calendar and a list of upcoming events.

**Setting Preferences**

Set your personal preferences in your profile:
Click on your name in the minibar and select
- Profile – enter personal information/picture
- Notifications – set up instant notifications
- Account Settings - Set account preferences

Click **Save and Close** to save changes.

Students may view their instructor’s Profile information.

**Course Home**

From the **My Courses** widget click on a course title to display the course’s **Course page**. The Course page displays a (1) **Course Navbar**, (2) **Updates widget**, (3) **News Widget**, (4) a **Tegrity widget**, and (5) the **Role switch widget**.

1. The course navigation bar provides access to course related D2L tools.
2. The **Updates** widget displays new items in the course such as unread discussion messages or submissions to the Dropbox.
3. The course page **News** widget provides a place to post course related announcements.
4. The **Tegrity widget** allows access to Tegrity video recordings for this course section.
5. Use the **Role Switch** tool to view your course from the student perspective.
6. The **Calendar** widget (not pictured) is used to manage and view events.

Common Icons

The following icons are common to most tools and widgets in D2L:

- ![Add New](image)
- ![Edit](image)
- ![Delete](image)
- ![Reorder](image)

Preparing for a New Semester in D2L

Copying Content from Another Course

Empty course shells are loaded in D2L prior to the start of a new semester. Follow the steps below to copy content from a previous semester into a new semester’s course shell.

To Copy Content to Another Course

1. From **My Home**, select the empty course shell hyperlink – this is the course you want to add content to. It is an empty course.
2. From the **Course Home** page select the **Content** link in the navigation bar.
3. Select **Table of Contents module** select the **Import/Export** button to open the Import/Export/Copy Course Components page.
4. Select **Copy Components from Another Org Unit**. Make sure the **Include Protected Resources** has a check mark.
5. Select **Search for offering**.[Search for offering](image)
6. In the **Search for** box enter the title of the course you wish to copy from or click the search wand to display a list of your courses. When the course title displays select the **radio button** preceding the ‘old’ course that you wish to copy content from. Click the **Add Selected** button.
7. Select the **Copy All Components** option to copy the entire course.
   **Note:** To copy a few, or specific components from the ‘old’ course use the **Select Components** button to view a list of course content. Select the individual items you wish to copy and include the corresponding **Manage Files** for any individual files you wish to copy over.
8. Select **Continue**.
9. A list of all the items that will be copied from the ‘old’ course displays. Select **Finish**.
10. The **copy summary page displays** when the copy process is complete.
11. Select **Done** to finish the process.
12. Check your course to make sure all content has been successfully copied.
Frequently Performed Tasks in D2L

**News Items - Announcements**

On the Course Home page instructors can post course-related announcements using the News widget.

**To Create a News Item (Announcement)**

1. Select **Course Home**.
2. In the News widget, select the drop-down arrow next to News.
3. Select **New News Item**.
4. Under **Headline** enter the title of the announcement.
5. Under **Content** enter the announcement message.
6. Under **Availability** select the start date and, if desired, select an end date for the announcement.
7. Select **Publish**.
8. The **News** page displays all course news items with either **Published** or **Scheduled** listed under the **Status column**. To edit a news item use the dropdown arrow next to its title.

**Content Area**

Use the Content page (tool) to post and organize course content such as course expectations, course syllabus, Tegrity videos, and lecture notes.

Course materials posted in Content can include documents, images, media files, URL links, and existing course activities. You can add release conditions and grade items to topics to ensure users navigate through course materials while fulfilling specific course requirements and learning expectations.

The content area is divided into modules. Each module can be divided into sub-modules. Instructors add course files and assessment items to each module/sub-module.

The Content page also has an Overview module. The Overview module opens only the first time the student accesses the course.

**To Use the Overview Area**

(Instructors may choose not to use the overview module. It only displays on the student’s first login to the content page. To hide this module from students simply do not enter any text into it).

1. Select **Content** from the course navigation bar.
2. Select **Overview**.
3. Select **Add a description** to add text information or to add a file.

**To Create a New Module**

**Note:** You must create a module before you can add course files or assessment items.

1. Select **Content** from the course navigation bar.
2. Select **Table of Contents**.
3. Click in the **Add a module text box**.
4. Enter a **Title** in the title field and press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.

**Note:** Setting dates on a module does not hide the module. Modules with a ‘Published’ status are viewable to students regardless of date settings. Change “Published’ status to “Draft” to hide modules/content items from student view. Dates entered on the Restrictions tab of discussion forums, dropboxes, and quizzes restrict students from accessing these content items to within the designated date range.
To Create a New Topic (Add Content Items/Files to Modules)

1. Select Content from the course navigation bar.
2. Locate or create a module to add content to.
3. Select the New button to add one of the following content items:
   - 🔄 Upload Files: Create a new topic by uploading a new file.
   - ☐️ Create a File: Create new course content using the HTML editor
   - 📲 Create a Link: Add a link to an external website
   - ☐️ Add from Manage Files:
     - Add files that you previously uploaded to the Course File Manager
   - 📚 New Checklist: Create a new assignments checklist for your students
   - 📚 New Discussion: Create a new discussion topic
   - ☐️ New Dropbox: Create a new dropbox folder
   - ☐️ New Quiz: Create a new quiz
   - ☐️ New Survey: Create a new survey
4. After selecting the content type take the appropriate steps to create or add your content.
5. Set any further options on the individual content item and select Save, or Save and Close.

Add Existing Activities

Instructors may begin course content creation by uploading course documents and creating course content items such as dropboxes, quizzes, and discussion forums. After content is created the instructor may add the content to the appropriate content module.

1. To add pre-created course content to a module go to the module and select the Add Existing Activities button.
2. Select the type of activity that you wish to add (such as a Quiz, Dropbox, or Discussion).
3. A list of items that reside in the course displays (such as a list of all quizzes in the course).
4. From the list of items select an item (such as Quiz 1) to add it to the module.

To Upload a File

1. Select Content from the course navigation bar.
2. Locate the module that you wish to upload files to, or create a new module.
3. Select the New drop down button and select Upload Files.
4. From the Add a File window select the Upload button, locate the file in your file manager.
5. Select the file and click Open to upload the file and return to the Add a file window.
6. Click the Add button on the Add a file window.
7. The file displays in the module.

To Reorder Content

Select Content from the course navigation bar.

1. Select Table of Contents.
2. Move your mouse over the three small grey bars preceding the module/topic title until it turns into a four pointed arrow.
3. Click (hold down left mouse button) and drag the module/topic to the new location. Release the mouse button to ‘drop’ the file in its new location.
To Edit Modules and Topics

1. Select **Content** from the course navigation bar.
2. To edit **Modules**, select the module from the table of contents menu.
3. To edit **Topics**, select the drop-down arrow next to the topic name and select **Edit Properties** in place.

**Link a Concourse Syllabus as a Content Item**

Open Concourse (https://blinn.campusconcourse.com)

1. In the course list locate the course title of the course with the syllabus. Click on the course title to display the course Syllabus page.
2. Click on **Info** in the gray navigation bar to open the Course information page.
3. Locate the **My Information** section on the right.
4. Under the **Links** section locate the **Public - Preview** link address.
5. Select to highlight the Public – Preview link address text.
6. **Right-click and copy** the link address to your computer’s clip board.

To create a new (Syllabus) module

7. Select **Content** from the course navigation bar.
8. Select **Table of Contents**.
9. **Click in the Add a module** text box to activate the box.
10. **Type/enter the desired module title** in the Add a Module box. For a syllabus module the title might be Syllabus or Syllabus/Orientation.
11. Press **Enter** on your keyboard. The module displays.
12. Click on the **module title** to open the module.
To create a new topic (add Syllabus link to module)
13. Select Content from the course navigation bar.
14. Locate the module where you want to add the syllabus (Syllabus Module)
15. Select the New drop down button.
16. Select the Create a Link option.

The New Link dialog box displays.

Enter a title of ‘Click Here to view Course Syllabus’ (or any title you desire).

17. In the URL text box delete the http:// text.
18. Right-click and paste the Concourse syllabus link (you copied this to your clipboard in step 4).
19. If you do not have the address on your clipboard – maximize the Concourse window and copy the link again (Step 5 & 6). (Make sure that your link does not display with http://https:// in the URL – just https:// belongs in the address)
20. Type the Title * such as – Click Here to View the Course Syllabus. Students see this text as the link they click on.
21. Check the Open as External Resource checkbox.
22. Click the Create button.
23. Test your link.

Discussions

Use forums to organize your discussion topics into categories. A course can have multiple forums and topics or one forum with multiple topics. Topics must be organized within a forum. Students post messages to the topic. Forums are for organizing topics only – not for posting messages.

To Create a New Forum
1. On the course navbar Select Edit Course to open the Course Administration page.
2. In the Communication section > select Discussions.
3. Select New then Forum.
4. Enter a Title and a description.
5. Set other options such as date restrictions/due dates.
6. Select Save or Save and Add Topic.

To Create a New Topic
1. Select Edit Course > Communications section > Discussions.
2. Select New then Topic.
3. Select a Forum from the drop-down list.
4. Enter a Title and a description (instructions for students).
5. Set other options such as the post first option, and **Availability dates or Locking Options**.
6. Select **Save** or **Save and New**.

**Dropbox**

The D2L Dropbox tool allows students to submit files electronically. Dropboxes may be setup for either individual or group submissions. Optionally, instructors may enable Turnitin Originality Checking within a D2L Dropbox.

**To Create a New Dropbox Folder**
1. From the course navigation bar select **Dropbox > Dropboxes**.
2. Select **New Folder**.
3. Under the **Properties** tab, enter the title of the folder in the **Name** field.
4. If desired, select the **Originality Checking** option to create a Turnitin dropbox.
5. Select the appropriate **Folder type**, either **Individual** or **Group Submissions**.
6. If desired, select or create a **Category** to organize your Dropbox folders page.
7. If desired, select or create a **Grade Item** to add the dropbox to the gradebook.
8. Enter the total points in the **Out of** box.
9. Enter the assignment instructions in the **Instructions** text field.
10. If desired, add an attachment by selecting **Add a File**.
11. Under the **Restrictions** tab set:
   - **Availability**: Give the assignment a start and end date to limit the time frame for student submissions.
   - **Special Access**: Allow selected students to either see the assignment or submit the assignment even after the availability has expired. Set an extended time for accommodations.
12. Select **Save**.

**Groups**

You can use the **Groups** tool to create group work areas for your students. Groups can be used to organize students’ work on projects or assignments, or to create special work areas for students. Each group can have its own discussion forums, dropbox folders, and Locker area.

**To Create a Group**
1. Select **Edit Course** from the course navbar.
2. Under **Learner Management** select **Groups**.
3. Select **New Category**.
4. Enter the **Category Name**.
5. Select the **type of enrollment** from the drop-down box:
   - # of Groups – No Auto Enrollment
   - Groups of #
   - # of Groups
   - Groups of # - Self Enrollment
   - # of Groups - Self Enrollment
   - # of Groups of # - Self Enrollment
6. Enter the **Number of Groups**.
7. Under **Additional Options** select the desired workspaces (discussion area, lockers, and/or dropboxes).
8. Select **Save**.
9. If **Discussion Areas** was selected:
   - Select the forum name or create a new forum for the groups.
   - Select **Create** and **Next**.

10. If **Dropbox** was selected:
    - Enter a name for the dropbox.
    - If desired, select the **Originality Checking** option.
    - If desired, select or create the appropriate **Category**.
    - If desired, select or create the corresponding **Grade Item**.
    - Enter the total points allowed for the assignment in the **Out of** box.
    - Enter the assignment instructions in the **Instructions** text field.
    - If desired, add an attachment to the dropbox by selecting **Add a File**.
        Students may retrieve the attached file.

11. Select **Create**.

12. The **Workspace Summary** displays. Select **Done** then **Save**.

**Quizzes**

**Quizzes** allow instructors to create online tests in D2L. It is recommended that instructors input all quiz questions into the course section’s Question Library then add the individual questions from the library to the quiz.

The **Question Library** is a central, shared repository for quiz questions for a course section. Instructors create, copy, or import questions. Quizzes, surveys, and self-assessments may share the questions in the Question Library. Using the Question Library allows instructors to reuse and share questions without re-entering them for each test that they are used on. For example, after entering questions for each test (per chapter or module) in the library the instructor can then choose to create an exam that draws selected questions, or a pool of random questions from the library for each chapter that the exam covers. Example: Exam 1 – Instructor may draw questions from Chapters 1, 2, and 3 quiz questions in the library.

**To Create a Quiz**

1. From the course navigation bar select **Edit Course** > **Assessments section** > **Quizzes**.
2. On the Manage quizzes page select the **New Quiz** button to open the quiz editor.
3. Under the **Properties** tab, enter a **Name** in the title field.
4. If desired enter a **Description and Instructions**.
5. Under the **Restrictions** tab, set the **Status** of the quiz in the drop-down box:
   - **Active**: Students will be able to see the quiz and will be able to take the quiz according to the dates set in Has Start Date and Has End date.
   - **Inactive**: Students will **not** be able to see or take the quiz even if attempting to during the dates set.
6. Check the checkboxes preceding the Start and End dates and select dates/times.
7. Under the **Restrictions** tab, set the time limit in **Timing**. Unit of time is in minutes. Select the Enforced checkbox to enforce the time limit. A minimum grace period of one minute is required. Select Auto-Submit to enforce time restrictions.

   **Note** – Emphasize to students – they should save each quiz question as they complete it. If they do not, and time expires or there is a technical problem – they could lose all answers.

   a. To set a special time for **Accommodations** under **Advanced Availability** select **Add Users to Special Access** button. On the Special Access page > Access area select the checkbox for **Assign special time limit**. Enter the time. Select enforced checkbox.
Scroll to the bottom and select the student(s) who require the accommodation. Click Add Special Access.

8. Under the Assessments tab, add the item to the gradebook. Check Allow automatic export to grades and check Allow attempt to be set as graded immediately upon completion (If this is an essay or manually graded exam do not check this item). To allow multiple attempts select the number of Attempts Allowed from the drop-down list.

9. Under Submission Views you may edit the default submission view to allow students to see quiz questions and answers as soon as they submit the quiz. The default prevents review of questions upon submission. If added to the Gradebook, grades will display in the grade report.

10. Select Save.

To Add Questions to the Question Library
1. Select Quizzes from the course navigation bar.
2. Select Question Library.
3. Select New then select the type of question from the drop-down box.
4. Complete the necessary fields for that question type and select Save.

To Add Questions to a Quiz
1. From the course navigation bar select Assignments > Quizzes.
2. Select the quiz where you want to add questions.
3. Select the Properties tab.
4. Select Add/Edit Questions button in the middle of the page.
5. To add questions directly in the quiz:
   a. In New, select the type of question from the drop-down box.
   b. Complete the sections for Points, Question Text, and Answer according to the type of question. Each type of question has a different format for the answer.
   c. Select Save.
6. To add questions from the Quiz Library:
   a. Select Import.
   b. In Source Collection, select Question Library from the drop-down box.
   c. In Source Section, select Collection Root. Your questions should now appear on the page.
   d. Place a checkmark next to the questions you wish to use.
   e. Select Save.
7. The selected questions should display in your quiz.

Classlist, Email, Enroll a User

In a course section go to the Navbar > Progress > Classlist to see who is enrolled in the course, access user progress reports, to add other instructors the course, and to send emails and pages. Students who are currently logged into D2L appear with a green dot beside their names. Often this green dot displays for a period of time after the student logs off.

To Send an Email to a Student
1. Select Progress > Classlist from the course navigation bar.
2. The Classlist page displays.
3. Select the checkbox in front of the student’s name and click on Email at the top or bottom of the list. A separate window will pop-up.
4. The student’s email will automatically be entered in the Bcc field.
5. Enter your email in the To or Cc: field.
6. Add a title in the Subject field.
7. Enter your message in the Message field.
8. If desired, attach a file by selecting Browse under Attachments.
9. Select Send.

10. Note: To access the full email feature go to Tools drop down list and select Email. This allows copying email to student’s Blinn email account. Students may not reply back into D2L from Blinn email.

To Send an Email to Multiple/All Students
1. Select Progress > Classlist from the course navigation bar.
2. The Classlist page displays.
3. Select the checkboxes in front of each student’s name and click on Email at the top or bottom of the list. To select all student select the checkbox preceding Email at the top or bottom of the classlist. A separate window will pop-up.
4. The students’ email addresses will automatically be entered in the To or Bcc field.
5. Enter your email in the Cc: field.
6. Add a title in the Subject field.
7. Enter your message in the Message field.
8. If desired, attach a file by selecting Browse under Attachments.
9. Select Send.

Adding Users to the Classlist
1. Select Progress > Classlist from the course navigation bar.
2. The Classlist page displays. Click on the Add Participants button.
3. Click Add existing users from the Add Participants button.
4. Enter the name of the user in the ‘Search For’ text box and click on the search wand icon. You can select from the Search In options to further narrow your search.
5. The user information displays. In the Role drop down list select the role for the user. Guests may be added as Observers. To copy course content between courses the enrollee needs an Instructor role. Check the checkbox preceding the username and click the Enroll Selected Users button. The user should display on your classlist. To have users removed from your classlist submit a help request to Distance Learning at http://www.blinn.edu/online/techassist.php.

Gradebook
Visualize the D2L online gradebook’s ‘Enter Grades’ page as a ‘grade-entry grid’ (like an EXCEL spreadsheet).
- Student’s names automatically display in the gradebook ‘grid’.
- ‘Grade items’ (assignment columns) must be created in order to enter grades for the assignments.
- Gradebook Categories are created to group Grade items (assignments) into Categories such as Exams, Homework, etc.
- Gradebooks may be set up as points or percentage based system.
- Percentage based gradebooks allow grade items (assignments) to be grouped into weighted categories (Exams 20%, Homework 20%, etc.).
• For more details visit the Help Files Central course in Blinn D2L or go to https://documentation.desire2learn.com/en/Grades.

To add a Category in the Gradebook

Gradebook categories organize and group related grade items into sections. Category grouping of grade items allows weighting of the value of the items in the category (% based classes), or points may be distributed equally across all grade items, or weights may be assigned to individual grade items. Optionally, the lowest grades or highest grades may be dropped automatically from a category.

1. Select Progress > Grades from the course navigation bar.
2. Select Manage Grades at the top of the Gradebook page.
3. Select the New button and select Category.
4. Type a Name for the category.
5. In the weighted system, enter the total Weight (percentage) that the category contributes towards the final grade.
6. Select Distribute weight evenly across all items to equally weight each item in the category. Or, select Manually assign weights to enter a value for each assignment as the grade item is created.

To Add a Grade Item in the Gradebook

Grade items are the course assignments.

1. Select Progress > Grades from the course navigation bar.
2. Select Manage Grades at the top of the Gradebook page.
3. Select New button and select Item.
4. Choose the Grading Method:
   • Numeric – 99% of the time we use numeric – our grades are numbers.
   • Pass/Fail
   • Formula
   • Calculated
   • Text
5. Put the title of the assignment in the Name box.
6. For Numeric grading:
   • Put the total amount of points possible in Max. Points.
   • Can Exceed: Select this option if you want to allow users’ grades to exceed the maximum value specified for the item.
   • Bonus: Bonus items are not included in the maximum points for a category or final grade. They are added on top of the calculated grade.
   • Exclude from Final Grade Calculation: Select this option to exclude the grade from the final grade calculation. (Option may not always be available depending on the grading scheme of the gradebook).
   • Grade Scheme: Grade schemes represent users’ grades using symbols or labels. Leave the grade scheme set to Default Scheme.
7. Select the Restrictions tab.
8. Choose one of the three options:
   • Grade item is always visible
• Hide this grade item
• Grade item is visible for a specific date range (displays grade item in student grade report on date visible – usually the date you assign the lesson).

9. Select Save and Close or Save and New.

★ Releasing Grades – Display the Current Grade Average in Student Grade Reports.
   If the instructor has not ‘released’ the Final Calculated grade (current average) or the Final Adjusted Grade (adjusted average) the current grade average will not display on the students' individual progress report (available under Progress>User Progress>Progress Summary page). Instead of the grade average a Final grades not released message displays.

   ![Image of grade item settings]

   **Student Progress Report**

   1. To release the final grade go to the course navbar Progress>Grades>Enter Grades.

   2. On the Enter Grades page, click ✔ Grade All from the Final Calculated Grade item’s drop down arrow menu.

   3. The Final Grades page displays. Select the checkbox preceding the name of the student(s) whose grades you wish to release. To select all students select the checkbox located in the links displaying just above the student list. With the student(s) selected click the Release/Unrelease link located on the navigation links displaying.

   ![Image of selecting all students]

   4. Click the Save button. The Release Calculated column should display a check in the check box for each student whose grade you wish to release. Typically this is all students.