Getting Started with Blackboard

This reference guide will give you the basic steps for using Blackboard. The types of tasks you will need to perform depend on the courses you are taking. These instructions will cover the most common tasks. If you experience technical issues or need additional information, you may contact the College through one of the methods below:

Professional Education Counselor:  888-263-7265 (8 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST Monday-Friday)
                                      ProfessionalEducation@theamericancollege.edu

Technical Support:  OnlineDelivery@theamericancollege.edu

NOTE ABOUT MOBILE ACCESS: You may access Blackboard via your mobile device’s browser and perform most of the tasks to complete your course. For some items, additional apps may be necessary. Notes about those requirements will be posted inside your course. Please note that downloading documents and uploading documents (as in assignments) may not be possible on some devices. These are limitations of the device and cannot be resolved by the College.

For additional information, please visit our Student Help page.

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Log In / Log Out</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Navigation Menu and Notifications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Your Courses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Posts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking Your Grades</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Calendar</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting an Assignment</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting Started with Blackboard

Log In / Log Out

1. In your browser, go to https://www.theamericancollege.edu/
2. Login with your username and password.
   If you forgot your password, click the “Forgot Password” link and follow the instructions. Enter your information and click Submit.
   If you continue to have issues, contact a Professional Counselor at 1-888-263-7265.
3. Click the Blackboard link in your Student Portal.
4. The first time you log in, you will see an overlay that highlights some features. You may click “Close” to close this message. The message will only appear the first time you log in.
Getting Started with Blackboard

Global Navigation Menu and Notifications

1. Click your name in the upper-right-hand corner to open the Global Navigation Menu. You will see a list of your courses and several icons for different areas of Blackboard.
2. To open a course, click the course name.
3. Notifications will appear as a red “badge” next to your name and in the Global Navigation Menu.
4. Click the icon that has a notification badge.
5. The area will open and you will see a list of the notifications.
6. The purpose of each of the icons in the Global Navigation Menu is explained below.

   - **My Blackboard**: an overview of your courses
   - **Posts**: view and reply to recent Discussion Board posts in all your courses
   - **Updates**: view all the most recent notifications
   - **My Grades**: view all your grades in all your courses
   - **Calendar**: view events from your courses, and post your own events
Getting Started with Blackboard

Accessing Your Courses

1. Your Blackboard home page has a section labeled “My Courses.” Click the course name to open the course.

![My Courses screenshot]

2. In addition, from the Global Navigation Menu, you will see a list of your recently visited courses as well as other courses. Click the course name to open the course.

3. In addition, Blackboard allows you to navigate from one section of a course directly to the same section in another course. For example, if two courses have a section labeled “Course Materials” then you can use the task navigation menu in the upper-left-hand corner to go from “Course Materials” in one course to “Course Materials” in the other course.

![Course Materials screenshot]

This feature works with any similarly named sections in your courses: Discussion boards, My Grades, Announcements, etc.
Discussion Board Posts

Discussion boards (also called Forums) allow you to share ideas with your fellow students. In some cases, you may also upload files. Discussion boards are typically NOT monitored by the instructor, however this depends upon the instructor and course. In some courses, the discussion boards may be accessed through links called “Discussions,” “Forums,” or “Contact Your Faculty.” Discussion board posts may also be accessed through the Global Navigation Menu, via the Posts icon. The steps below highlight how you can access course discussions via the Posts icon.

1. From the Global Navigation Menu, click the Posts icon.

2. The most recent posts across all of your courses will be listed.

3. Click each post to read it.
4. To reply to a post directly from the Global Navigation Menu, click the Reply button.
5. Type your reply.
6. If desired, you may attach a file: click Browse My Computer, choose the file, and click Open.
7. Click Submit to send your reply.
8. You may also click the title of the post to open the post inside the course’s forum. This is convenient if you want to see the entire thread (all posts for this subject) on one page.
9. To post a new thread, click the forum name (“Student Lounge” in the example above). The course forum will open. Then:
   a. Click Create Thread.
   b. Enter a subject, type a message, and attach a file if desired.
   c. Click Submit.
Getting Started with Blackboard

Checking Your Grades

NOTE: Grades shown in Blackboard courses are typically not part of the final grade for the course, but instead reflect performance on practice exams and quizzes. This is course dependent as grades shown in the FSCP program are part of the overall grade. Access your course syllabus for more information.

1. To access your grades, click the My Grades icon in the Global Navigation Menu. (In addition, your course may include a “View Grades” or “My Grades” link.)

2. When viewing the grades from the Global Navigation Menu, you can view the grades for all your courses on one page. Click the course title to change your view. (When viewing grades from inside a course, only the grades for that course will be displayed.)

3. By default, all grades are shown. You may filter the grades shown by clicking the links at the top of the gradebook.

   - **All** - view all items that are graded or will be graded
   - **Graded** - view grades for all items that have been graded
   - **Upcoming** - view grades for assignments that have not been submitted
   - **Submitted** - view grades for assignments you have submitted

4. The grade column may contain a symbol rather than a grade. The symbols may be:

   - ![In Progress](image): return to the course to complete the test or assignment.
   - ![Needs Grading](image): you submitted the assignment but it has not been graded.
5. If your instructor leaves feedback for a grade, a comment bubble will appear next to the grade (as in the image below). Click the comment bubble to read the feedback.

6. If the item name is a link (as in “HS 346 Practice Exam” above), you can click the link to see detailed information about your grade. Examples include tests, quizzes, and assignments. When you click the name of the item, you will be taken to one of the following:
   a. The assignment submission page. On this page, you can view and download multiple submissions, see grade details, and submit a new version of your assignment.

   b. The test attempt page. This page will list all attempts, whether you have one attempt or multiple attempts. On this page, click the grade to see your specific responses.

7. To return to a course, click the Global Navigation Menu, and then click the course name.
Using the Calendar

The Blackboard Calendar is a powerful time management tool you can use to keep track of assignment due dates, class meetings, and personal reminders.

NOTE: Assignment due dates may not appear in the calendar automatically. However, this feature may be adopted in the future as courses are revised. If your assignment due dates are not shown in the calendar, you may use these steps to add these dates yourself.

1. In the Global Navigation Menu, click the Calendar icon.

2. The Calendar will open to the current date.

3. The default view is month view. To change the calendar to day or week view, use the icons on the upper-left.

   - Day View
   - Week View
4. Calendar items are color-coded. You can turn events for specific courses on or off by using the checkboxes.

NOTE: Events that you add to your calendar will always be color-coded as “Personal.” Not all courses utilize the calendar function and you may need to add your own events for each course. In those cases, the color-coding will not correspond to a course, but will correspond to a Personal item.

5. To add an event, click the [+] button in the upper-right.

6. Enter the event title.
7. Enter the start date and time, and end date and time.
8. If desired, select “All Day” and/or “Repeat.”

9. Enter an Event description, if desired.
10. Click Save.
11. If you need to move an event to a different date, click and hold the event, then drag it to the new date.
12. To return to a course, click the Global Navigation Menu, and then click the course name.
Getting Started with Blackboard

Submitting an Assignment

In some courses, instructors may require you to submit your assignments in Blackboard. These instructions may not apply to every assignment. Refer to the detailed instructions in your course for further information. IMPORTANT: Submitting assignments to Blackboard cannot be done on a mobile device. Please use a desktop or laptop computer.

1. Click the Assignment link in your course and review the instructions. If you need to submit the assignment to Blackboard, you will see a window similar to the image below.
2. If a Rubric is supplied, click the “View Rubric” option at the top of the assignment window. A Rubric will show the criteria by which your assignment will be graded.
3. If there is a file attached, right-click the file and click “Save Target As.” (In some browsers, the option may be “Save link as” or “Save file as.”)
4. Choose a location on your computer to save the file and click Save.
5. Open the file from your computer and edit it as required for the assignment. NOTE: It is very important that you download the document to your computer and open it in the appropriate program (Adobe Acrobat Reader, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, etc.). Do not open the document in your browser.
6. When finished, save the file.
7. Return to the assignment screen shown in step 1.
8. Click Browse My Computer.
9. Locate the file you saved, select it, then click Open.
10. Add comments to the assignment submission, if desired.
11. Click Submit.

After you submit the assignment, Blackboard will attempt to show a preview of your document. If the preview cannot be shown, you will see a document icon and a download button.

With Preview:

Without Preview:

- Click “Start New” to submit a new attempt. (Not available for all assignments.)