MOBILE LEARN 4.0

Recommended Practices for Mobile-Friendly Courses: Getting Started with Mobile Learning

1st of 4 guides

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Recommended Practices for Mobile-Friendly Courses: Getting Started with Mobile Learning

Blackboard mobile™

Blackboard Mobile Learn™ version 4.0 is designed to provide students with instant access to their courses via their mobile devices. The recommended practices from this document will ensure the content you publish in the Blackboard Learn environment will integrate well with Mobile Learn. The following information will also create a more enjoyable student experience, providing maximum access to course materials for students on mobile devices.

Please note the terminology used throughout this guide: We refer to the Blackboard Learn desktop website as "Web Learn" and the mobile application as "Mobile Learn."

Getting Started with Mobile Learning

Mobile technology is not meant to address every single aspect of your Blackboard course; rather, it should be used strategically to enhance key features that translate best to a mobile device.

By that same token, not everything you build as an instructor will be mobile-friendly, nor should it be. There are certain areas of your course that the Mobile Learn app will add the ability to extend learning and engagement into spaces there wouldn't normally be the opportunity (i.e., on public transit, in the café queue, in-between classes, etc.).

Mobile Learn Features:
- View and post Announcements on the go
- View recently posted Grades (students only)
- View and post to a Discussion, Blog or Journal
- View Discussions, Blogs, or Journals for a Group
- Upload files from your Dropbox to Discussions, Blogs, Journals, and new Content
- Increase opportunity for experiential learning: i.e., posting pictures of city architecture examples in a Discussion

Setting Up and Personalizing Your Course

Structuring your course:
- How do you want to structure your course menu?
    - Do you want to create folders, content areas or learning modules?
    - Are you going to organize your course by week, unit, chapter or some other method?
    - What Tools do you want made available to your students?

If you're curious as to how your course will appear to your students on Mobile Learn, try one or both of the following methods:
- On Web Learn, view your course menu hierarchy using the Folder View at the top of your course menu (see Image 1): this Folder View will closely resemble the course menu students will see when selecting your course in the app.
    - Select "Expand All" to see all items with the hierarchy of folders
- We also encourage you to view your course through a mobile device to see how changes you make on Web Learn are reflected in Mobile Learn.
    - You can view your course when it is either in "Available" or "Unavailable" mode, depending on how much you'd like to experiment with your course content and organization (see Image 2)
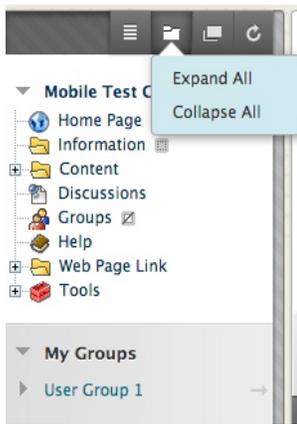
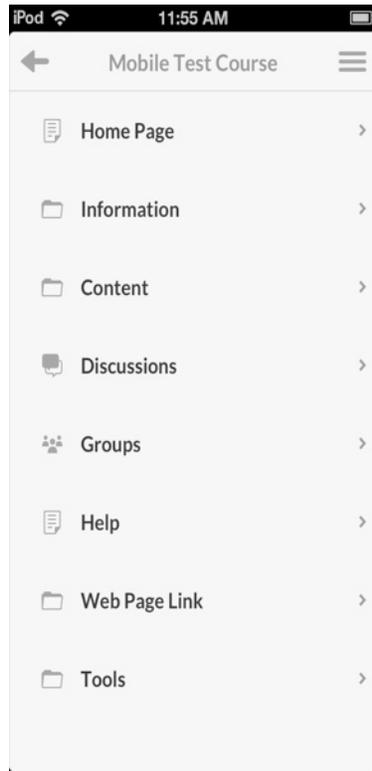*Image 1. Folder View of Course Menu in Web Learn*

Image 2. View of Course Menu in Mobile Learn

Course Interaction:

How do you want students to interact with each other? i.e. Discussions, Groups, etc.
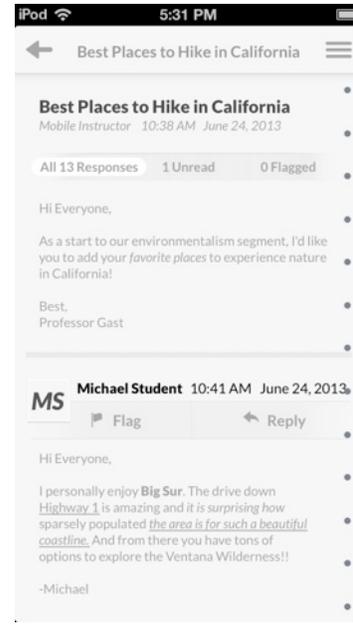

Image 3. Create Discussion forums, encouraging students to share their ideas with each other. You can also create Discussion forums within Groups.

How do you want to interact with your students? i.e., posting Announcements, posting new Content and Assignments, creating Tasks, etc.
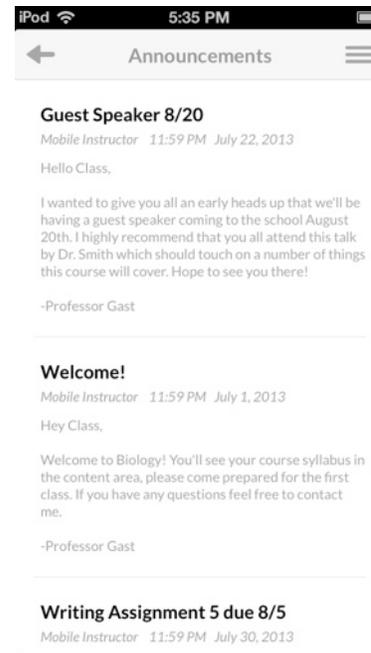

Image 4. Students will receive push notifications to their mobile device when you make an Announcement, allowing for instant engagement with your course.

Mobile Friendly Practices:

Course Titles—
Choose course names that are short, simple and easy to identify. Remember that the Course ID (accessible in the Edit Menu on Mobile Learn) can contain more detailed information such as the department and course number.

How-to:
Course names can be modified using the Course Management menu on Web Learn:
Control Panel > Customization > Properties

Folder and Content Titles—
Make sure folder and content titles are short and simple for easy viewing in Mobile Learn. Also, do not use symbols in your titles, as they will not appear on a mobile device.

Have feedback for making this document more useful to you? Submit your suggestions at help@blackboardmobile.com.

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