



GCC Student Quick-Reference Guide to

Blackboard®





Learning System Release 6.3



This guide is intended as a supplement to Blackboard Orientation offered by the GCC Distance Learning Department. To sign up for orientation, go to <http://www.germanna.edu/dl/DEOrientReq.asp>. For technical help with Blackboard, Email all@gcc.vccs.edu or call the Student Technical Help Desk at 540-891-3077.







Logging In to Blackboard

To log into Blackboard:



- Go to the Germanna home page at www.germanna.edu and click the myGCC icon. 
- When the "Student Information System" screen appears, click the Login to myGCC icon 
- In the log-in screen that pops up, enter your Username. (To look up your username, click on "Look Up Username & Set Your Password" under the log-in box. Tip: the information you provide in the username search boxes must match exactly what you used when you filled out your college admissions application.)
- Enter your password in the **Password** box. (*The password is case sensitive. If you have not used the system before, your password is your 6-digit date of birth. Follow the prompts to change this un-secure password to log in.*)
- Click the **Login** button 
- The Welcome! screen that opens will offer a list of Tools to choose from. Click on Blackboard. 

If you need help finding your username/password, Email all@gcc.vccs.edu.

Customizing the myGCC Page

- When the myGCC page opens (shown below), you see a series of modules (or boxes) with a variety of information. To customize the myGCC view, click the modify **Contents**  button, select the modules you want to display, clear the modules you wish to remove, click **Submit** (see the Submit hint  at the bottom of this page, and click the **OK** button. (*Note that you cannot remove modules with red check marks: GCC Announcements*).
- To customize the order of the modules on myGCC and the color scheme, click the modify **Layout**  button, make changes to your layout options, click the **Submit** button, and click the **OK** button.
*Note: To quickly customize what is included on your page, click the **Minimize Module**  button, the **Edit Module**  button, or the **Remove Module**  button in the upper-right corner of each module).*

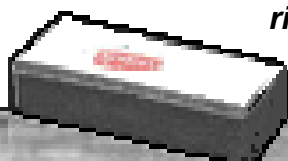
Opening a Blackboard Course Page

- On the myGCC page navigate to the **My Blackboard Courses Module** 
- Click the name of the course you want to open 

The screenshot shows the myGCC page with a navigation bar at the top containing "My GCC", "Learn", "Student Connect", "Research", and "Help". Below the navigation bar are several modules: "My Blackboard Courses" (containing "Courses you are teaching", "Courses in which you are enrolled", "Blackboard Basics", "Announcements", and "Blackboard Basics"), "My Organizations" (with a message "You are not currently participating in any organizations."), "GCC Welcome", and "GCC About Your Student Tabs" (with a description of the tabs). The "My Blackboard Courses" module is highlighted with a red border and a mouse cursor pointing to the "Blackboard Basics" link. The "GCC About Your Student Tabs" module is also highlighted with a red border. The page has a red and white color scheme.



Keep in mind when using Blackboard: No changes take effect until you click Submit, and you may have to SCROLL down to the bottom right side of your screen to find it!



Submit

Navigating within your Blackboard Course

When you click on the name of a course on your myGCC page (see Opening a Blackboard Course Page on page 1), you will enter the course site (shown above). If you want to return to myGCC, simply click the My GCC tab **1** on the upper left side of the screen. The course site consists of:

- 2 Course Menu** – Contains shortcuts to content areas within your Blackboard Course
- 3 Navigation Path** (Bread Crumb Trail) – Contains hyperlinks of the pages the user has viewed to get to the current page. Use these to move forward and backward
- 4 Content Frame** – Displays course content. (By default, the **Announcements** page, shown, is displayed when you access your course page.)
- 5 Course Map** – Opens a tree directory of the course navigation in a separate window

Using the Course Menu

By default, the following course content areas are accessible from the **Course Menu**:

- **Announcements** – dated information from the instructor
- **Start Here** — displays descriptive information about your course, such as course policies, course outcomes, etc.
- **Contact Info** — displays information about the instructor
- **Course Outline** — displays the course outline or syllabus
- **Course Resources** – displays course content items, such as presentations, lecture materials, and resources, etc.
- **Assignments** – descriptions of and links to class assignments
- **Tests & Quizzes** — contains all tests and quizzes
- **Communication** – contains links to communication features, such as collaboration, group pages, e-mail, etc.
- **Discussion Board**—displays the Discussion Board feature
- **External Resources** – links to resources on the web and contains an area for supplemental materials
- **Tools** – contains links to course tools, such as the address book, calendar, tasks, etc.

Sending an E-mail Message

- Click **Communication** on the Course Menu
- Click the **Send Email** link
- Select the class user(s) you would like to send the email to. Your choices are All Users, All Groups, All Teaching Assistant Users, All Instructor Users, All Observer Users, Single / Select Users, Single / Select Groups, Single / Select Observer Users.
- To send an attachment, click the **Add** button, then click the **Browse** button. Locate and select the file you want to attach and click the **Open** button. Click the **Submit** button to add the file.
- Compose your email and click the **Submit** button

Checking Spelling

To check spelling in certain text boxes (i.e., to check the spelling of the text you entered as a reply to a discussion-board thread):

- After entering text in the text box, click the **Spell Check** button on the **Textbox** toolbar

Note: If you do not see the textbox toolbars, click on each of the small arrows at the top left corner of the textbox to expand the toolbars. If you do not see the arrows, the text box does not have the toolbar.

- For each word that appears in the **Not Found** box (see below), select a word in the **Suggestions** box or enter a word in the **Replace With** box. (If Spell Checker does not find any misspelled words, click the **OK** button.)
- Click the **Replace**, **Replace All**, **Ignore**, or **Ignore All** button. **(Continued on Next Page)**

Checking Spelling (Con't from page 2)

- Optional: To add a word to the dictionary, click the **Learn** button and then click the **OK** button.
- The window will close automatically when the spell check is complete. (To close the window before spell check is complete, click **Finish**.)

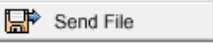

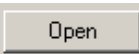
Adding a File to the Digital Drop Box

The Digital Drop Box allows students to send information directly to their instructor in a particular course. To add a file to the Digital Drop Box **to send at a later time**:


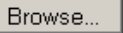
- Click the **Tools** link on the Course Menu
- Click the **Digital Drop Box** link
- Click the **Add File** button
- Enter a name for the file in the **Title** box
- Click the **Browse** button next to the **File** box
- Locate and select the file that you want to send and click the **Open** button to add the file
- **Optional:** Enter text to be submitted with the file in the **Comments** box
- Click the **Submit** button when you are finished
- Click the **OK** button **to confirm that this file will not be sent**.
- Click the **OK** button

Sending a File Using the Digital Drop Box


The Digital Drop Box allows you to send a file directly to your instructor, another student, or to a group of students.

- Click the **Digital Drop Box** link under the **Tools** link on the Course Menu
- Click the **Send File**  button
- Type a name for the file in the **Name** box
- Click the **Browse**  button next to the **File** box
- Locate and select the file that you want to send and click the **Open**  button to add the file
- **Optional:** Enter text to be submitted with the file in the **Comments** box
- Click the **Submit** button when you are finished
- Click the **OK** button

Creating a Discussion Thread

1. Click the **Discussion Board** button from the course menu.
2. Click the **Forum** you wish to add a thread to.
3. Click the **Add New Thread**  button.
4. Enter a subject in the **Subject** box.
5. Enter the thread text into the **Message** box.
6. If you have permissions to, and would like to, add an attachment, click the **Browse**  button, locate and select the file you wish to add, and click the **Open** button.
7. Click **Submit**.

Replying to a Thread

1. Click the **Discussion Board** button from the course menu.
2. Click the **Forum** you wish to add a reply to.
3. Click the **Thread Name** you wish to reply to.
4. Click the **Reply**  button.
5. Enter your reply into the Message box.
6. Click **Submit**.

Collaboration

The Blackboard collaboration tools allow you to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. There are two types of collaboration sessions, the Virtual Classroom and the Lightweight Chat feature. The Virtual Classroom allows students and instructors to participate in question and answer sessions, browse the web, and chat with other users. The Lightweight Chat feature only contains the chat portion.

Joining a Session

1. Navigate to the course **Communication** content area
2. Click the **Collaboration** link under the Communication button.
3. Click the **Join**  button to the right of the session you wish to join.

Using the Lightweight Chat

You can use the chat feature at the bottom of the Virtual Classroom window or you can access a Lightweight Chat session that contains only the chat feature.

In the **Virtual Classroom** or **Lightweight Chat** window, enter the text you want to display in the **Compose** box. Click the **Send**  button to display the text in the chat area.

Reference:

Part of the information provided in this Quick-Reference Guide was adapted from QUICK Source© Student Edition, Blackboard®, *Learning System Release 6.1*.

This GCC Quick-Reference Guide was adapted by C.J. Bracken and Susan Mahnel. If you have any questions related to Blackboard, please contact either C.J. Bracken, cjbracken@gcc.vccs.edu or the helpdesk at all@gcc.vccs.edu, (540) 891-3077.