

Blackboard Quick Reference Guide

Creating & Managing Announcements

Each time a student enters your Blackboard course, by default he or she will see your announcements. You can use the Announcements area to welcome students, introduce the course and keep them updated on changes or additions to the course site.

In your announcements, you may want to include:

- A mini orientation to your course website*
- Contact information for students who need help*
- Course changes (dates, times, assignments, etc.)
- Announcement of special events
- Announcement of quizzes and exams posted
- Assignment or project due dates approaching
- Trivia, jokes, or interesting facts that change frequently and keep students coming back for more!
- A link after the announcement to another section in the course

* Provided in the “Quick Start” templates under “Getting Started”

Here are a few tips for creating announcements:

- Keep them short and to the point.
- Use color and bold lettering for emphasis.
- Use italics sparingly – they are hard to read on a computer screen.
- Don’t use underlining. On the web, underscoring usually indicates a “clickable link”.
- Attachments can’t be used in “Announcements”, unlike other areas in Bb.
- Course links can not be edited or deleted within an announcement. You will need to remove the announcement and create a new announcement.

Creating Announcements

Step 1: From the  Control Panel , click Announcements under the Course Tools area.

Step 2: Click  Add Announcement .

Step 3: Enter the *Subject* and *Message*.


Step 4: Under Options, determine when the message should be displayed (or if it should be permanent). For more information on this, see “Managing Announcements” below.

Step 5: Under Course Link, you can browse to include a link in the announcement to a specific place in your course. (This makes it easier for students to find a particular assignment, for example.)

Step 6: Under Email Announcement, you can choose to email this announcement to all students in your course (check email addresses using List/Modify Users link in control panel).

Managing Announcements

There are *two methods* of managing announcements: 1) have all announcements visible all of the time or 2) have announcements posted during the last week visible; others are automatically archived, but can still be accessed by students.

 To change the order of current announcements, click **Modify** the announcement and under the Options area, change the dates, so that the announcements will appear in order, with the most recent date first.


Method 1

To keep all announcements in order and visible at all times, with the most recent on top, make them all “permanent”. This method is most often used when the course will have students entering on different schedules and you want them to be able to see all of the announcements and/or you expect to post just a few announcements.

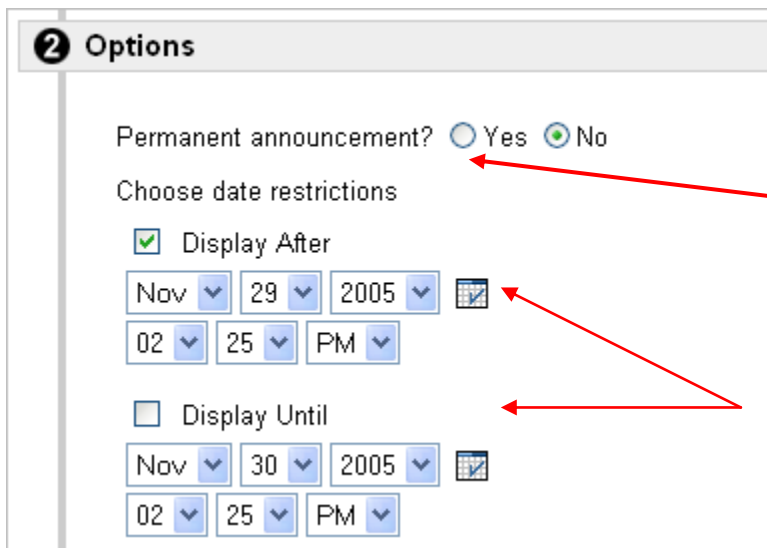
Step 1: When creating (or editing) an announcement, click **Yes** to the statement, *Permanent announcement?*

Step 2: If an announcement becomes irrelevant, you can:

- Click **Remove** to delete the announcement.
- Click **Modify** to change *Permanent announcement?* to **No**. This retains the announcement, but won't display it in the current view window.

 The generic announcements currently in the **Quick Start Template** have been identified as “permanent”. They will always appear when a student looks at the announcement page unless you remove them or change them from a permanent status.

Normally you will want your announcements to appear **before** the generic ones, with the most recent announcement on top. To do this, make the announcement “permanent”, but don't make any changes to the *Display After* and *Display Until* dates.



Click **Yes** to make the announcement “permanent”

Do not change the default -- the “display after” date will be the date you post the announcement (unless you want to change the order of the announcements)

Method 2

If you prefer to have only the last week of announcements visible, click **No** to the question, *Permanent Announcement?* (see screen shot above). The last seven days of announcements will appear in chronological order by posting date, with the most recent announcement on top. This method is most often used by instructors teaching fully online courses to keep students on track, or those instructors who plan to post many announcements.

Announcements posted more than a week ago will be automatically “archived”, but can still be accessed by students by clicking on one of the tabs that appear on top of the “**Announcements**” section of your course. Be sure to advise your students of how this works – it is often an area of confusion.

