




Blackboard Quick Reference Guide

Create and Display a Customized Course Banner

To add a little graphic “pizzazz” to the top of your Announcements page (first thing the student sees when opening the course), you can include a visually appealing banner, using Microsoft PowerPoint. You can pick from several banner templates (in the Quick Start Template), then customize the banner with your own text.

 The following steps assume PowerPoint 2007.

Part One - Create the Banner

If you ARE using a Quick Start Course Template:

- Step 1:** In the Control Panel, click **Course Materials>>Course Materials Content for Faculty Only >>Create a Course Banner**.
- Step 2:** View the sample banners created in PowerPoint by opening up one at a time. Use the back arrow on your browser to close out each choice after you have viewed it. Select one to be the background template for your course banner. You will have to go back into that file again to save it.
- Step 3:** Click on that file again and **Save** it to your Desktop. These files have been created in a special banner size and will open in PowerPoint.
- Step 4 :** Proceed to Part Two 2.


– OR –

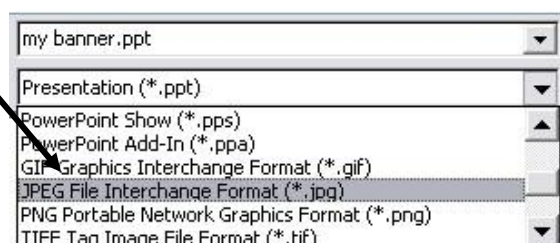
If you are NOT using a Quick Start Course Template:

- Step 1:** Open a new PowerPoint file.
- Step 2:** From the Design tab, click **Page Set Up**.
- Step 3:** From the *Slides sized for* pull-down menu, select **Banner**.
- Step 4:** Click **OK**.
- Step 5:** Save the file to your Desktop and proceed to Part Two.

Part Two - Customize the banner

- Step 1:** Open the file you just saved. You will now be in PowerPoint.
- Step 2:** From the Insert tab, click **Word Art** and create a text heading for your course (usually the course number and name). 28-32 point type usually works best on the banner, but feel free to experiment. You may also add a graphic to your banner if you wish.
- Step 3:** Save the changes to the file (in case you want to make changes later).
- Step 4:** Save the file again as a graphic, by clicking on *Save As Type* drop down menu, and selecting **JPEG (.jpg)** file type.

 **NOTE:** This file will have the same name as the .pptx file you saved earlier, but will have a .jpg extension.



Part Three - Upload your Banner into Blackboard

Step 1: Through the Control Panel, click **Settings>Course Design>Course Banner**.

Step 2: If necessary, check the box for *Remove this banner* to remove any existing banner and click **Submit**.

Step 3: Click **Browse** to find the .jpg file that you saved.

Step 4: Click **Submit** to upload the banner.



You can go through this process until you are satisfied with the way your banner looks. However, if you do make changes, they must be made to the **.pptx file**, not the .jpg file! Then save changes as a .jpg file, and upload it again.

Alternative Method for Creating the Banner

If you feel more adventurous (and have more time to experiment), you might want to check out this free banner-making tool at: <http://www.flamingtext.com>. Here is a sample made with this option:



Here are a few tips if you select this option:

- Under the site map, click on **Start Here** (under *New Users*).
- Avoid banner styles that are gradated or have lots of colors. The file size can be too large and take a long time to download.
- Experiment with the font size. Depending on the length of your banner title, you may want to use 40-50 point type.
- You can also make smaller headings for your content areas using 20-24 point font.
- Follow the directions for creating and saving your graphics.

When you are finished, go to Part Three (above) and follow the directions to upload your banner. If you want to use headings for your individual content areas, they are uploaded as any other image through the Add Item option in a content area.