How to communicate in Webcampus:

Creating Announcements

Adding an item to a Content Area

How to use the Discussion Board

How to send email
This document covers some of the essential areas in the learning management system Webcampus. The areas include: the Announcements page, Content Areas, the Discussion Board and Email tool.

Once you familiarize yourself with these areas, you will be able to use Webcampus to communicate and share course materials with your students. The ways in which you can communicate with your students can include: creating announcements, adding items to content areas, posting course documents, creating discussion board forums and threads, and generating emails.
Creating an Announcement:

The announcement tool is an effective way to communicate time-sensitive information to students. When a student logs in to their Webcampus courses they are taken to the announcements page. All active course announcements are displayed on this page. It is possible to create an announcement and have a copy of the announcement emailed to all students enrolled in your Webcampus course.

To create an announcement, first log in to your Webcampus course. Click the blue “Create Announcement” button located on the Announcements page (See figure 1).

Figure 1: Clicking the Create Announcement button

Click the “Subject” field and enter the Subject for the announcement you want to create. Then click in the “Message” text box and enter the text for the announcement you want to share with your students (See figure 2).

Figure 2: Enter a Subject and Message
It is possible to set restrictions for the time period when announcements will be displayed. To set a time restriction for an announcement, click the radio button for the “Display After” setting. Double click the “Display After” field and set the date month and year you would like for the announcement to be released on. Be sure to enter the date in the MM/DD/YYYY format. Then double click the time field and enter the time when you want the announcement to become available. Repeat the steps listed above for the “Display Until” date (See figure 3).

![Select Date Restrictions](image1)

**Figure 3:** Clicking the Display until check box

If you would like to email your announcement to all students enrolled in your Webcampus course, click the “Email Announcement” check box in the Web Announcement Options group (See figure 4).

![Email Announcement](image2)

**Figure 4:** Click the Send a copy option
If you would like to include a link to another part of the course in your announcement, you may do so. Start by clicking the “Browse” button from the Course Link group (See figure 5).

The course link window will appear. Select the course item you would like to link to in your announcement, then click the “Submit” button located in the lower right-hand corner of the Announcement page (See figure 6).

If the Announcements page is your home page for the course (the default setting for Webcampus courses), the announcement will now be displayed on the home page of your Webcampus course.
How to add an Item to a Webcampus course

In Webcampus, areas where faculty members create items, add files, folders and URLs, and so on, are called Content Areas. When you create an item in a Webcampus content area you can include a file with the item. To do so follow the instructions listed below.

Files that can be added as an item include MS Office files, Portable Document Files (PDF) and zip files. One benefit to adding a file as an item in a Webcampus course is you will be able to include a description with the file.

To add an item to a Webcampus course, first navigate to the content area where you want to add the item. Click the button for the content area located in the navigation panel in the left hand corner of the Webcampus page (See figure 1).

![Figure 1: Clicking the button for the content area](image)

Next place your cursor over the **Build Content** button in the action bar, then click the **Item** option from the drop down menu (See figure 2).
Click in the “Name” field and provide a name for the file you want to add to the content area. Then click in the “Text” field and enter the description for the item you will be adding (See figure 3).
After entering the description, scroll down to the Attachments group and click the “Browse My Computer” button (See figure 4).

See figure 4: Clicking the “Browse My Computer” button

The Open window will appear. Browse, then select the file you want to attach. Next, click the “Open” button (See figure 5).

Figure 5: Selecting the file, then clicking the Open button
New fields will appear in the Attachments group confirming the file will be attached. Click the “Link Title” field and enter a title, which will become the visible link for the file (See figure 6).

![Figure 6: Entering the Link title](image)

The options group is where you can set restrictions for when the items is visible. By default, the item is visible; if you do not want the item to be visible, there are two options for hiding it. You may choose to click the “NOT” option for the Permit Users to View this Content prompt to hide the item until you mark the item visible. Or you may select Display After and Display Until dates.

To Set Display After and Display Until dates, first click the radio button from the Display After group. Next click the mm/dd/yyyy field and revise for the date you want. Then double click the time field and enter the time after which you want the item to be available. If you want to identify a date after which the item will no longer be visible, repeat the previous steps for the Display Until prompt (See figure 7).

![Figure 7: Setting a Display Dates](image)

To finalize your item, click the “Submit” button located in the lower right hand corner of the screen.
The Discussion board as communication tool

The course Discussion Board is an area for asynchronous communication among members of the class. Participants (faculty and students) can post individual comments or reply to each other, without needing to be commenting at the same time (as would be the case with chat or other synchronous forms).

The Discussion Board is organized on three levels: Forums, which may be based on course units or the larger subject matter units of a course. Each forum may contain many Threads, which may contain discussion of specific topics within a Forum. Individual comments within a thread are called Posts or Replies to Posts.

The typical online conversation for a course requires a Forum created by the instructor. The instructor has several choices about features of a Forum, and may allow or prevent students from creating their own Threads. Depending the instructor’s choice, students may post comments under their own name or anonymously, though we recommend not allowing anonymous posting for most online course conversations.

Start by creating a Forum. To navigate to the Discussion board, click to expand the Control Panel. Next click the “Course Tools” group, then click the “Discussion Board” link (See figure 1).

![Figure 1: Clicking the Discussion Board link](image)

To create a Forum, click the “Create Forum” button located in the upper left hand corner of the Discussion Board page (See Figure 2).
Click in the “Name” text box and enter a name for the discussion board. Next click in the “Description” text box and enter a description for the Forum (See figure 3).
Review the Forum Availability group. By default, the forum is set to Available. To hide the forum, click the “No” radio button (See figure 4).

![Forum Availability](image)

**Figure: 4 Review the Forum’s Availability**

Next review the default settings. If you would like to allow students to receive email updates on a Discussion Forum or Thread click the appropriate option from the Subscribe group. It is possible for students to subscribe on either a thread or forum basis, or both (See figure 5).

![Subscribe Options](image)

**Figure 5: Review the Subscription options**

Grades can be associated with Forums and Threads. To enable grading, click the appropriate option from the Grade group (See figure 6).
Once you have finished setting the appropriate options, click the "Submit" button located in the lower right hand corner of the screen (See figure 7).

Figure 6: Review the Grade Discussion Forum or Grade threads option

Figure 7: Clicking the “Submit” button
Discussion Board Thread

Discussion board forums contain Threads. To create a Thread in a Forum, first navigate to the Forum in the Discussion board where you want to create a thread. Next, click the “Create Thread” button in the upper left hand corner of the forum page (See figure 1).

Click in the “Subject” field and enter a subject for the Thread. Then click the “Message” field and enter the Message for the Thread (See figure 2).
To complete creating the thread, click the “Submit” button in the lower right hand corner of the screen (See figure 3).

Figure 3: Clicking the submit button
**How to Read Threads in Webcampus**

Navigate to the Discussion Forum, then click on the Thread title.(See figure 1).

![Figure 1: Clicking the thread title](image)

**Working with the Thread Menu**

The action bar is where you will go to associate actions with a post or thread. Actions that can be performed on posts include: Read, Unread, Set Flag, Clear Flag, and Collect. Click the radio button located in the upper left-hand corner of the post. Next mouse over the Message Actions menu and click the appropriate option from the drop down menu.
The upper right hand corner of the Thread is where you will be able to see the number of posts and how many of the posts have been marked read.

To view all posts for the thread click the Expand All option in the action bar. All thread posts will be displayed below the parent post. To Collapse All posts, first click the radio button for the posts, then click the Collapse All button.

To reply to a post, mouse over the post and then click the appropriate response. The responses for posts include: Reply, Quote, Edit, Delete, and Email Author.
If you click the Email Author option, you will be taken to the Email Forum User menu. Your emails will include the Thread title as the Subject. The content of the recipient’s post will not be included in the email.

*Note it is also possible to reply to posts using the Notifications Dashboard. For more information regarding replying to posts please refer to the Notifications Dashboard tutorial.
How to create an Email Message in Webcampus

Start by clicking the “Email” link in the left-hand navigation panel of your Webcampus course (See figure 1).

Options for sending the email include: All Groups, All students Users, Single / Select Users and Single / Select Groups. To email your entire class, click the “All Student Users” link from the page (See figure 2).

Figure 1: Clicking the “Email” link

Figure 2: Clicking the All Student Users link
A listing of all the students who are enrolled in your Webcampus course will be displayed in the To field. Click in the “Subject” field and enter a subject for the email you wish to send to the class. Next click in the “Message” field and enter the email you want to send to your students (See figure 3).

![Figure 3: Clicking then entering a “Subject” and “Message”](image)

It is possible to send a copy of the students email to yourself. Do so by clicking the check box below the Message field (See figure 4).

![Figure 4: Clicking the Return Receipt Radio Button](image)

It is possible to send an attachment with an email. To send a document along with the email click the “Attach a file link”.

See figure 5: Clicking the Attach a file link
Next, click the “Choose File” button (See figure 6).

![Figure 6: Clicking the Chose File button](image)

The Open window will appear. Browse your computer for the file you want to attach. After you have found the file, select the file name, then click the “Open” button (See figure 7).

![Figure 7: Clicking the Open button](image)

The file’s title will appear in the Attachments area. It is possible to attach multiple files to an email in Webcampus. Repeat the previous steps for each file you want to attach to the email. After you have finished composing and attaching files to your email, click the “Submit” button located in the lower right-hand corner of the screen.