



# BLACKBOARD TIP OF THE WEEK

## A few tips to make your course page even more user-friendly

It is easy just to copy the content and structure of earlier course pages into the upcoming pages for the autumn courses. However, maybe it is time to run through and improve them a bit.

Here are three tips on how to improve your course page:

1. Instead of using the cryptic “Week 1”, “Week 2”... titles in your course menu, **write something about the content** instead. E.g. “Week 3 – Protein transport”. This gives the students a general idea of what they are going to learn rather than just a numbered list of hoops to jump through.

Even better – make the title a question. “Week 3 – How do cells move protein molecules around?” – Pique their curiosity.

2. **Do not use midnight deadlines** (or even 11.59 p.m.). Are you really going to start grading Sunday at midnight? When you went to the university, I am sure you pulled all-nighters too.

If you are an early riser, set the deadline for Monday at 6 a.m., 8 a.m., or wait until noon.

In addition, if the students have trouble submitting they will have a chance to get help from peers or the Study Systems Support.

### 3. **Have at least two discussion forums.**

One for the students to introduce themselves as response to questions like:

“Where are you from?”, “Why did you sign up for this class?”

Then you can ask something to get them to start feeling a joint ownership of the course: “After reading the learning outcomes and the syllabus, what are you most excited about?”

Then finish with a low-stakes icebreaker: “Share a funny story about a thing that happened to you” or “What’s something you would never eat?”

This lets the students get to know one another, lets you get to know them a bit, and as a sneaky feature, gives you a writing sample of their authentic voice in case a written assignment feels “off”.

The second forum is for posting questions about the course content, a Q&A forum.

Often, another student will answer the question even before you get to do it.

Best regards,

ST Learning Lab