

**WHY WOULD YOU USE THIS FEATURE?**

This feature allows students to “turn in” assignments and it allows the instructor to view and review the work. The assignment feature is similar to the digital drop box in that the students can submit their work; however, it also allows students to submit many documents for an assignment at once. The downside (or the upside) is that students can only submit assignments once. After that, the system blocks students from posting more.

The biggest advantages for using this feature are really to the instructor. The feature allows faculty to download all files associated with an assignment at the same time (fewer clicks are good). The files get downloaded into a zip file that can then be uncompressed. Student comments and files come to the faculty in a folder titled with the assignment name. Another advantage is that when you create an assignment using that feature, a grade book item is automatically created. In addition, you can post grades and send documents and comments back to individual students through the grade book (vs. the digital drop box). This way you know exactly who is getting what and whom you sent it to.

**TO ADD AN ASSIGNMENT IN A BLACKBOARD CLASS**

1. In the control panel, open a content area, such as course documents.
2. Select assignment from the drop down action (select) menu on the right side of the page. Click go.
3. Complete the Add Assignment page. Notice that in #2 the instructor can attach documents to the assignment. In #3 the instructor needs to be certain that the assignment is available.
4. Click Submit.
5. After an assignment is added to a content area, students may access the assignment, complete it in a separate file, and send it back to the instructor. Students may only submit an assignment once unless their attempt has been cleared by the instructor on the Grade Assignment page.

**TO ACCESS STUDENT SUBMISSIONS USING THE ASSIGNMENT FEATURE**

1. From the Control Panel, select the Gradebook. Click on the name of the assignment you want to download.
2. Click on Item Download. Follow the instructions on the next page, choosing the users you want to download. Click Submit.
3. You must click on the link "Download assignments now." and then a .zip file will be saved to your computer.
4. You must have WinZip or another application to uncompress the files. What you then get is a folder with .txt files (these are the comments from each student) and the files the students attached.

**TO GIVE GRADES AND TO SEND COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS**

1. Once you have graded the assignment, click on the "!" in the grade book for the student you wish to post the grade and feedback for. (The "!" means that the item needs grading.)
2. Click on "View."
3. Enter a grade, and any comments on the screen that comes up. You can also make notes that only you see in the "Instructor Notes" area.
4. You can also upload any documents you might want to share with your students (your comments in their papers perhaps).

**POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR STUDENTS**

Students may not know how to submit an assignment. You might consider having them post a test assignment at the beginning of the course.

Student may not realize what the "!" in the grade book means that the item has been submitted and needs grading. Student may also not know that by clicking on the grade in the grade book, s/he can view your comments.

Sometimes students forget to submit the file (vs. just saving it). When this happens, you see a lock in the grade book and you'll either have to remind the student to submit the file to you or you might have to clear their attempt so they can start over.