





Communication Tools Quick Start Guide

Instructors and students can use many of the tools in D2L to communicate with one another and convey important information. Which tools are used in a course is determined by the instructor.

Email

You can send email through BeachBoard to all course users, a group of users, or an individual.

- **To email all users:** click **Classlist** > select **Email Everyone on this Tab** > type message in text box > click **Send**.
- **To email selected users:** **Classlist** > select checkboxes next to users' names > click  > type message in text box > click **Send**.
- **To email one user:** **Classlist** > click directly on user's name > type message in text box > click **Send**.

You can also send email to selected or individual users wherever you see the  icon (examples: Dropbox folder submissions, Enter Grades area, and in Discussion topics).

News

The News widget appears in the center of the **Course Home** homepage and can contain updates regarding the course posted by the Instructor. Because News is typically the first thing that a user sees upon logging in to the course, it is recommended that News be updated regularly.

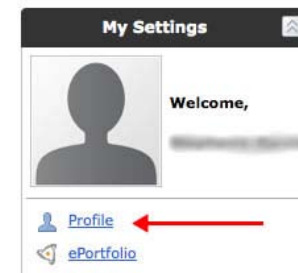
1. From **Course Home** > under **News** click  (New News Item).
2. Enter text for the **Headline** and **Content** > **Save** > click **Course Home**

3. You can edit , delete , and  reorder posted announcements.

Profiles



One way to connect with others is to add a photo to your D2L profile. Adding a photo allows users to place a face with a name. Posting a photo is completely optional. Your photo appears next to your name in the Classlist and any Discussion posts you author.

1. From the **My Home** homepage, click **Profile** under **My Settings**
2. Click **Change Picture**. Upload picture.
3. Click **Save**.



Discussions

Discussions allow multiple users to converse with one another on a given topic. Instructors set up discussions, while students read and post messages. There are three levels to the Discussion tool: **Forums**, **Topics**, and **Postings**. **Forums** are used to organize your discussion **topics**. **Topics** are the actual place where discussions take place, and **postings** are the discussion messages themselves. **Forums** without **Topics** are not visible to students.

- **To create a Forum:** click **Discussions** > **New Forum**  > **Title** > **Description** > set options > **Save**
- **To create a Topic:** **Discussions** > **New Topic**  > **Forum** > **Title** > **Description** > set options for each tab: **Restrictions** tab, **Assessment** tab (to be able to grade messages), **Activities** tab (to attach a rubric, optional).
- **To post a message:** **Discussions** > click on **Topic name** > **Compose** > **Subject** > type message in text box > **Post**
- **To Read: Grid vs. Reading Style (Settings)**
 - **Grid Style** messages resemble a traditional email reader where each message's subject, author, and date appear in a list without the full text of the message. To read a message, you

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click the subject; the full text is displayed in a separate area. You can **print** messages from **Grid Style** only.

- **Reading Style** messages show the full text of all messages in a single view. You read messages simply by scrolling through the page, without having to select messages and read them one at a time in a dedicated reading pane or a popup window.

Online Rooms (Illuminate)

Online Rooms provide an opportunity for instructors to set up virtual classrooms where they can share information and converse with students in real-time using chat, webcams/microphones, and a common whiteboard. Sessions can be recorded and archived for later viewings.

- **To create an Online Room: Online Rooms** (on the Nav bar) > **New Room** > **Name** > set **Availability** > **Show Advanced Properties** > select desired options > **Early Room Entry 180 minutes** > Archive Mode (Manual means the moderator starts the recording, Automatic means the recording starts as soon as the moderator joins the room – recording is optional) > **Save**
- **To add attendees to a room: Online Rooms** > click the **pencil** next to the desired room > tab **Attendees** > **Add Internal Attendees** > check boxes next to names of desired attendees > **Save**
- **To enter an Online Room: Online Rooms** > click on the **name** of desired room (active rooms are in blue). This will launch the application in another window.

Note: the start and end dates and times cannot be changed once the room has become active.


Custom Widgets

Custom widgets can give instructors an opportunity to post contact, personal, or professional information on the Course Home homepage.

Step 1: Create a **Custom Widget** for the homepage.



- **Edit Course** > **Widgets** > **New Widget** > **Name** (what appears in the header) > **Content** tab > type message/information in text box > **Save**.

Step 2: Create a copy of the Default **Homepage** and add custom widgets.

- **Edit Course** > **Homepages** > Locate **Course Default** and click  **Copy of Course Default** > **Set** (to activate as homepage)
- Click **Copy of Course Default** > **Content/Layout** tab > click **Add widget** to desired area of the homepage > check box next to desired widget > **Save**

Calendar Widget

The Calendar widget is a default widget on the course home homepage. It is the face of the **Schedule** tool. By clicking on a date, a user can view course events added by the instructor (such as add/drop periods, exams, office hours, etc.) by day, week, or month.


- On your **Course Home** page, click the  button in the **Calendar** widget to open the **Schedule** tool.
- Click the **New Event**  button > add **Title** and **Description** > select **Dates** and **Times** > Set desired options > **Save** or **Save & New**.

Optional: Remove the **Calendar** widget and add the **Events** widget.

Events Widget

The Events widget is a system widget similar to the Calendar widget, but in written form. Events can be used to display course events/due dates posted to the schedule right from the **Course Home** page.

Create a copy of the Default **Homepage** and remove/add widgets.

- **Edit Course** > **Homepages** > Locate **Course Default** and click  **Copy of Course Default** > **Set** (to activate as homepage)
- Click **Copy of Course Default** > **Content/Layout** tab > click triangle next to Calendar > **Remove from Homepage** > click **Add widget** in desired area of the homepage > check box next to **Events** > **Save**

To add events to the schedule, follow the steps outlined under the Calendar widget.

For more information, visit our BeachBoard [Help Pages](#).