

Creating Assignments and SafeAssignments in Blackboard



What is the difference between an Assignment and a SafeAssignment?

An **Assignment** in Blackboard allows instructors to post an article or other document with instructions, retrieve the completed assignment from a student, and grade that assignment via the Gradebook. With Assignments, Blackboard provides enhanced item management options, including bulk downloading and cleanup of submitted files.

A **SafeAssignment** checks student work against billions of Web-based documents, including all publicly accessible Internet documents up to 2Mb in size, a library of continuously archived Internet pages, term paper mills and download sites, a wide range of online databases, virtually all newspapers with online outlets, and student papers previously archived to a UM proprietary database. The software then generates a report that rates the papers based on the amount of material drawn from other sources and gives you links to the original source material. Like Assignments, SafeAssignment submissions may be bulk downloaded and graded via the Gradebook.

Creating an Assignment

To add an Assignment, go to the content area of your course Control Panel where you wish to post the assignment (for example: Course Documents). From the drop-down list on the right side of the page, select *Assignment*, and then click *Go*. From here, you will have the same options that you have for most other content types, including time-release options.

Assignments can contain file attachments (such as lists of questions for students to answer, articles to read, presentations to review, maps or spreadsheets to analyze), as well as text embedded directly into Blackboard. When adding an Assignment, provide clear and concise directions for the student. Blackboard will automatically create a button that reads "**View/Complete**," but this may be confusing for students without supplemental information and directions. As always, the more detailed the instructions, the fewer questions students will have when completing the assignment.

Viewing and Assigning Grades to an Assignment

Instructors can retrieve and grade Assignments through the Gradebook. To retrieve an individual student's Assignment submission, select the individual entry from the Gradebook. You can enter a grade from this screen, or click *View* to see the student's work. After clicking on *View*, you will be able to download the file that the student has submitted, add feedback that the student will see in his Student Gradebook, and add private Instructor Notes that will not be seen by the student.

One of the strengths of working with Assignments is the ability to download one, some, or all student submissions at once. To download multiple files at one time, click on the name of the Assignment at the top of the Gradebook column, and then click *Item Download*. Blackboard will create a .zip file that contains all of the selected assignment submissions.

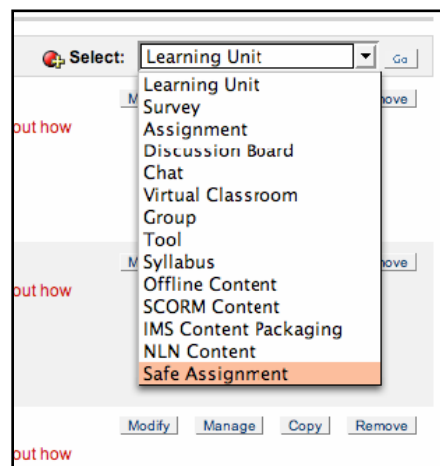
To return a graded assignment, click the individual entry from the Gradebook and then click *View*. In the Feedback to Student section, enter a grade, comments, and attach the graded assignment. Click *Submit*.

Detecting Plagiarism using SafeAssignments

Creating a SafeAssignment

The first step is to determine where to place your SafeAssignment. As with Assignments, you can place a SafeAssignment into any course content area.

- Navigate to your course Control Panel and then to your chosen content area.
- From the drop-down menu at the right of your screen, choose *SafeAssignment* and click *Go*. (see image at right)
- Enter a title for the assignment, the number of possible points, and any instructions your students will need to complete the assignment.
- Choose *Yes* to make the assignment available, and set the Dates of Availability if desired.
- Configure the SafeAssignment.
 - Choose *Yes* for **Draft** if you want students papers checked, but not stored in the UM database.
 - Choose *Yes* for **Students Viewable** if you want your students to see their own Originality Reports.
 - Choose *Yes* for **Resubmittable** if you want students to be able to submit the same paper more than once.
 - Choose *Yes* for **Urgent Checking** if you need to see the results quickly.
- Enter an Optional Announcement that will appear in the Announcement area of Blackboard letting your students know that an Assignment has been posted.
- Click *Submit* to create this SafeAssignment.




Modifying or Removing a SafeAssignment

To Modify a SafeAssignment, from the Control Panel, choose the Content Area that holds the SafeAssignment. Click *Modify* to the right of the SafeAssignment and make the appropriate changes.


To Remove a SafeAssignment, go to the Content Area in which the Assignment has been posted, and click the *Remove* button to the right of the SafeAssignment. You will be asked to confirm the action. Click *OK*. Note that when a SafeAssignment is removed from the Blackboard content area, it may still remain in the Gradebook. You may choose to keep the grades in the Gradebook. If not, you must also go to the Gradebook and remove the SafeAssignment. A SafeAssignment can only be removed from the Gradebook after it has been removed from the content area where it is located.

Viewing/Downloading Student Submissions

Using SafeAssignment through the Blackboard Control Panel, you can easily locate student submissions for viewing, downloading, and printing. You can also access the Originality Reports generated from SafeAssignment.

- In the Control Panel, under Course Tools, click on *MyDropBox Suite (SafeAssignments)*. A new page will appear showing all of the SafeAssignments in your course.
- Click *View* below the assignment you want to see. The page will change. You will now see each student's submission date and time and matching score.
- Click on the PaperClip  icon to download a student's file to your computer. To download all student files at once as a .zip archive, click the *Download* button near the top of the page

Locating and Interpreting SafeAssignment Originality Reports

To view Originality Reports, go to the *MyDropBox Suite (SafeAssignments)* section of the course Control Panel. Choose *View* for the desired assignment. Scroll to the student whose report you want to see, and click on the *SA Report*  icon to open the report. Paper information and matching score are shown in the top section of the report. URLs of suspected sources are shown in the middle section, and the paper text with highlighted links to matched sources is shown in the bottom section of the report.

SafeAssignment provides guidelines for interpreting the Matching Score as follows:

- **Scores below 15%** - Usually papers with such scores contain some quotes and a few "typical" phrases that match other documents. In most cases, they do not require any further analysis, and there is no evidence of plagiarism in the report.
- **Scores between 15% and 40%** - Papers with such scores can contain plagiarism or can just have too much quoted material. We recommend reviewing the reports with such scores before making any judgments about the papers.
- **Scores over 40%** - With such scores, there is almost 100% probability that the paper contains some text copied from elsewhere, and even if this text is properly cited, such amount of cited material is considered excessive in most cases. Therefore, such scores give a clear warning to instructors. However, there are few cases when such scores can be given to authentic papers, for example, when the paper was legitimately published online before it was sent for processing, or when the same student has already submitted this paper or a similar paper to another class.

Managing SafeAssignment Grades

You can manage SafeAssignment grades in the same way you manage other Blackboard grades. You can clear student statistics and hide, modify, or columns using the in the Blackboard

attempts, view summaries, and remove Gradebook *Manage Items* tool Gradebook.

Quick Submit Option

You can use the SafeAssignment Quick Submit option in several ways:

- To check a paper that was not submitted by a student to a SafeAssignment.
- To upload a zip file of papers from a previous semester that were not checked by SafeAssignment and saved to the database for future checking.
- To check your own work for inadvertent use of sources.
- To upload papers from another course against which you want to check.

To use Quick Submit, go to the *MyDropBox (SafeAssignments)* area of the course Control Panel and click the *Quick Submit* tab.

Comments, Questions, or Suggestions?

Contact the Faculty Technology Development Center at 915-7918 or e-mail blackboard@olemiss.edu.