



Using the Digital Drop Box

A Blackboard Learning Services Tip Sheet

Introduction The functionality of the Digital Drop Box tool in the Blackboard Learning System has not changed from previous versions of the application. The Drop Box still provides a shared area where students and instructors can store and exchange digital files. Students are able to send files to the instructor; the instructor can retrieve and review those files, then return them to the students.

This overview is designed for Instructors who will be building and teaching courses with the [Blackboard Learning System \(Release 6\)](#).

About the Digital Drop Box

Business Rules

The following Business Rules apply when using the Digital Drop Box:

- Adding a file to your drop box does not send the file
- Any files added by you to your drop box cannot be seen by others.
- Students can send to Instructors only, not to other Students

Student View The Digital Drop Box allows students to send and receive files to the Instructor.

To access the Digital Drop Box, click **Tools** on the Course Menu, and then click **Digital Drop Box**. The Instructor may also create a direct link to the Student Drop Box on the Course Menu.



Note: The Group Pages area of the course includes a File Exchange tool, which is very similar to the Digital Drop Box. An important difference is that the File Exchange allows a student to share files among other students in the Group, as well as with the Instructor.

Instructor View

For the Instructor, the Digital Drop Box is multi-directional; an instructor can send files to a single student, selected students, and to all enrolled students in the course.

As an Instructor, to enter the Digital Drop Box, click **Control Panel**, then click **Digital Drop Box** link in the Course Tools area.

Adding Files to the Digital Drop Box

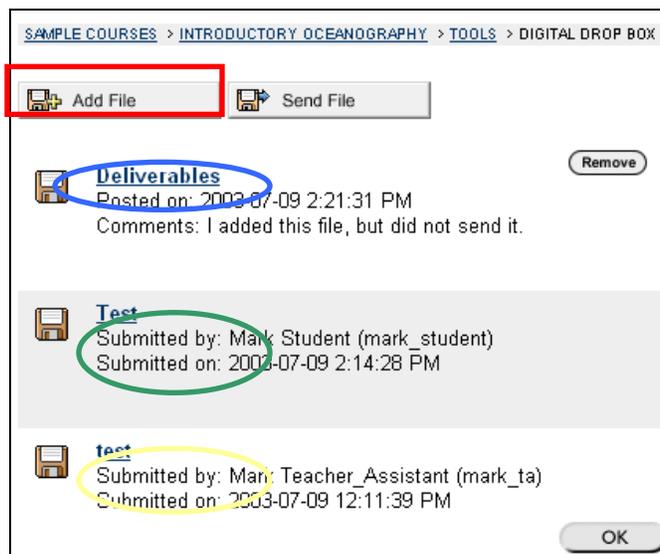
Why Use it? Students can upload a file to the Drop Box as a web-based location to store any file, paper, or presentation. For example, students who use campus computer labs can use the Drop Box to store their work between edits. Instructors might add a file to the Drop Box so they do not have to carry disks between work and home. The files in the Drop Box can be retrieved from any web browser at any location.



Note: When adding a file to the Drop Box, it is only visible to you and no one else. This applies to both instructors and students.

Adding Files to the Drop Box

When a user wishes to **Add File**, they are simply posting a file to be stored as a part of the course. A file that has been added to the student's Digital Drop Box will appear as shown below.



Note:

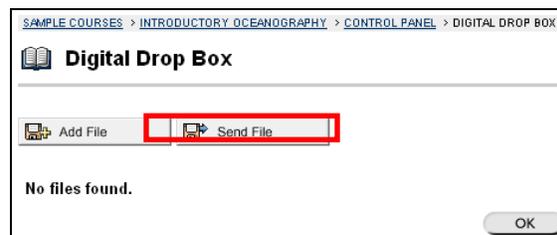
- The first file has a “Posted on” date; this file was uploaded but not sent.
- In the second file, “Submitted By” displays the student name. This file has been uploaded (added) and sent. The “Submitted on” date is the date that the student sent the file to the instructor.
- In the third file, “Submitted By” displays the *Instructor's* name. This indicates the Instructor has sent a file. The “Submitted on” date is the date the Instructor sent the file.

Sending Files with the Digital Drop Box

Why Use it? The **Send File** action is useful when an Instructor wishes to deliver a particular file to selected students in the course. This functionality separates the Drop Box from the general *Content Areas* of the course where all enrolled users can view every file.

For the student, the **Send File** action guarantees that the instructor receives a submitted file in a timely manner. It also alleviates the need to visit on campus to deliver a particular project or assignment.

Sending Files from the Digital Drop Box The **Send File** button performs two actions. When a user chooses this option in the Digital Drop Box, the file they select will be added to their Drop Box, and will be sent to the Drop Box of an identified user.



Clicking on the **Send File** button in the Instructor's Digital Drop Box will pull up the following screen:

To send a file the user can either:

- Click **Select File**, then selecting the desired file that is in the drop box;
- Type a unique name in the *Title* field, and then click **Browse** in the *File* field and select the desired file they wish to send.



Note: Since students can use the Drop Box to send files to the instructor only, the student view of the Drop Box does not have a recipient list.

After Sending the File After a file has been sent it will appear in both the user and the recipient's Drop Box as shown below.



Digital Drop Box Tips

Digital Drop Box Tips The following are some helpful tips when using the Digital Drop Box:

- Time/Date Stamp:** The Time/Date stamp can help you establish which students have turned in their work on time. This field is automatically created once a user has submitted a page, and is based upon the time setting on your institution's Blackboard server.
- Comments:** Add comments to the file you are placing in the Digital Drop Box. For example, an instructor returning a file may add comments about the file instead of entering comments directly into the file itself. You can also:
- Write comments in a word processing document and send the document to the student via the Drop Box or email.
 - Send the student an email with comments.
- File Naming Conventions:** Blackboard software assigns a unique identification number to every uploaded file. If multiple users upload files with the same name, the application will be able to distinguish them from one another. However, you may end up with multiple files with the same name when offloading the content to a local source (i.e. hard drive, floppy disk, CDR). You should instruct your students to use a standard naming convention, such as including student initials or last name, to keep files separate.
- Virus Protection:** Whenever a user downloads a file posted or submitted by another user, make sure that students use virus protection software to scan the file for computer viruses.