

Blackboard courses are created automatically using information from Banner Student Information System. Blackboard courses begin as “empty” shells. Instructors and students are automatically enrolled into their respective Blackboard courses. The current student access and course retention policy is that two weeks after the end of a semester, student access to the courses is removed. After the removal of student access, courses remain on the Blackboard system for three semesters. This means for example, courses created for the Fall 2014 semester will not be removed until after the start of the Spring 2016 semester. For additional information about the removal of courses and student access to courses visit [Bb FAQs](#).

If you would like your course content/materials to be available in Blackboard beyond the current retention period of three semesters, you should request a Master Course Shell for the course.

A Master Course Shell:

- Is a course environment an instructor uses to develop and maintain course materials that are used from semester to semester.
 - Is not tied to Banner. Therefore, no students or other users are enrolled into this shell.
 - Can be used as a "master" where one keeps permanent changes to a course.
 - Faculty may copy content from a Master Course Shell into a Blackboard Course shell as long as they are enrolled as an instructor in both shells.
 - Master Course Shells are not deleted except upon the request of the instructor or when the instructor is no longer employed at Xavier.
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You can request a Master Course Shell; copy the course content you want to keep into the Master Course Shell; and copy the Master Course Shell contents into your “empty” Blackboard course once the course becomes available. Follow these steps to do it:

1) Request a Master Course Shell

- Please fill out the “Master Course Shell Request Form.”

<http://cat.xula.edu/request/master>

2) Copy the course content you want to keep into the Master Course Shell

- Once the MASTER Course Shell is created, you may copy your course into it using the Course Copy feature in Blackboard. Step-by-step instructions on how to [copy course content from one course to another](#) is available. Alternatively, you can start from scratch building content in your Master Course Shell.
- MASTER Course Shells will not be deleted as regular Blackboard courses are. You are free to go into your MASTER Course Shells to edit your courses any time.
- You should check your Master Course Shells after a Blackboard upgrade to verify all features are still working. This would also be a good time to check for broken links. Step-by-step instructions on how to [check for broken links](#) is available.
- No student users are enrolled in your Master Course Shell. Occasionally, faculty would like to login to a course as a student to see things from the student's perspective. You can add a test student in any Blackboard where you are enrolled as the instructor (including your Master Course Shell). Step-by-step instructions on how to [add a test student](#) is available.

3) Copy the Master Course Shell contents into your “empty” Blackboard course once the course becomes available

- Once the “empty” Blackboard courses are created for the upcoming semester, you can copy your MASTER Course Shell into the “empty” Blackboard course. Step-by-step instructions on how to [copy course content from one course to another](#) is available.
- You should double check that there are no broken links, etc. in the Master Course Shell before the course copy. Step-by-step instructions on how to [check for broken links](#) is available.
- Typically, instructors copy content from a Master Course Shell into an “empty” Blackboard Course Shell and then make any changes needed (in the Blackboard Course Shell) relative to that specific semester.
- Remember, if you make any changes to your Blackboard Course you may also want to make the same changes to the MASTER Course Shell.

4) Sharing your Master Course Shell

- Please fill out the “Request to Grant User Access” form if you want to grant another user access to your Master Course Shell.

<http://cat.xula.edu/request/access>

The user will be enrolled in your Master Course Shell as an instructor.

Links referenced in this document:

Bb FAQs

<http://cat.xula.edu/food/blackboard-faq/#removal>

Copy Course Contents

http://cat.xula.edu/food/wp-content/uploads/Copy_Course_Content.pdf

Link Checker

http://cat.xula.edu/food/wp-content/uploads/Link_Checker.pdf

Add a Test Student

<http://bit.ly/1NYvjRH>

Request a Master Course Shell

<http://cat.xula.edu/request/master>

Request to Grant User Access

<http://cat.xula.edu/request/access>