THE DISCUSSION BOARD

The **Discussion Board** is a tool your instructor may use to help you share and build ideas with your classmates. The DB provides a place or "forum" for your class to interact with each other. Students post comments (called "threads"), and other students can reply to those comments/threads.

Posting a New Thread to a Discussion Board

1. Click **Discussion Board** from the course menu
2. Select the name of the forum you wish to post a message (note that you can see the total number of posts and unread posts for each forum)

3. Click **Create Thread** to add a new thread
4. Enter a title in the **Subject** field
5. Type your response or reaction to the discussion topic in the **Message** field
6. Click **Submit**

Reading/Replying to Threads in the DB

1. Click the **Discussion Board** from the course menu
2. Select a **thread** you wish to read/post a message
3. Read the message – to reply, click **Reply**
4. Follow steps 4 thru 6 from above.

MY GRADES

The Blackboard gradebook provides you with easy access to feedback regarding your course progress.

Grading Symbols Defined

- **Dash** - Your item has not been completed.
- **Exclamation point** - Your item has been submitted but has not been graded.
- **Check mark** - Your item has been submitted and is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor.
  -OR-
  Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review item but may not provide a grade (i.e. survey).
- **Red exclamation mark** - Grade Center Error. Contact your instructor.
- **Gray lines** - Grade exempted for this user. If this item is not completed, it will not affect your grade.
- **Blue Clock** - You are in the process of completing the assignment but you have not submitted yet.

MY GRADES

Viewing Grades

Access your grades by clicking **My Grades** from course menu.

To review instructor feedback follow these steps:

1. Click **My Grades** from course menu
2. Select a graded assignment to view

Your submitted assignment will appear along with the grade and any feedback from your instructor.

LOGOUT

Always **Logout** when you have finished your session. Click ⏻ in the upper right corner of screen to logout.

Blackboard learn +
Student Quick Reference

ACCESS A CLASS

Login to Blackboard

1. Go to **http://blackboard.nwtc.edu**
2. **Enter** your **username** and **password** and click **Login**

UserName = Your 8-digit student ID number (*i.e. 12345678*)

Password = The first time you login at NWTC you are assigned a default password: the first two letters of your first name followed by your 8-digit student ID number (i.e. Jane Doe's password will be *ja12345678*)

Student Technical Support Information

Student Technical Support is available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week.

Call toll free: (866) 235-5037

Tabs

A row of tabs under the top banner provides shortcuts to common areas of Blackboard. Review each tab to note other services and resources NWTC has to offer.

Welcome Page

All of the courses you are enrolled will appear on your **Welcome Page** within the **My Courses** box.

Course Availability

Online classes you are enrolled in will not appear until 8:00 am on the listed start date of the class. If your instructor is using Blackboard to Web enhance an in-person class, it will appear once the instructor has made it available to students.

Click the course name to access

CLASS NAVIGATION

My Blackboard

Blackboard has a new global navigation tool called **My Blackboard.** Located in the upper right corner of the screen, you can navigate to any course or organization you are a member. You can also use it to quickly view notifications of updates, grades and posts.

Announcements

When you select a course you should see the **Announcements Page**. You can get back to this page at any time by clicking the Announcements button.

Course Menu

Use the **Course Menu** to navigate to the various parts of a course. The buttons shown here should appear in all classes (however, there may be more if the instructor added other resources.)

Navigation Path (Bread Crumbs)

Bread crumbs appear at the top of the class to help you keep track of your current location. To go back to a prior page, select the corresponding hyperlink within the navigation path.

SEND AN EMAIL

The **Email** feature is linked to your NWTC myMail account. You can easily send messages via Blackboard, but will need to check your myMail account for any replies.

To send an email follow these steps:

1. Click **Send E-mail** from the course menu
2. Select **All Instructor Users** from list
3. Enter the subject in **Subject** field
4. Enter the email text in **Message** field
5. Click **Attach a File** to add an attachment (browse to locate the file, click **Open** to attach, repeat if needed.)
6. Click **Submit** to send

CLASS MATERIALS

What is in the Class Materials?

One of the features that you will use most in your courses is the "**Class Materials**" link. In this section you will find the syllabus for the course and all Learning Plans. Each learning plan folder may contain activities, assignments, discussion board forums and assessments.

The Syllabus

The **syllabus** is an extremely important part of a course. It clarifies all class policies and expectations. It should be looked at as a contract between you and your instructor.

Learning Plans

Each class is broken down into **Learning Plans** to help organize the learning experience. A Learning Plan may contain a combination of the items described below.

Activities

An **Activity** is a non-graded learning exercise providing you the opportunity to build knowledge of a subject (competency).

Types of Activities: Chapter Readings, Journals, Web Searches, Interviews

Assignments

An **Assignment** is a graded learning exercise providing you the opportunity to practice and demonstrate knowledge of the subject (competency) that is submitted for evaluation.

Types of Assignments: Article Reviews, Chapter Review Questions, Mind Maps and Diagrams

Discussion Boards

A **Discussion Forum** is a graded or non-graded learning exercise (check your syllabus for each course) fostering a dialogue between students, and instructor. This activity is comparable to discussions that would normally take place in the classroom.

Examples of Discussion Topics: Introduce Yourself, Controversial Issues, Reflections, Journal Entries etc.

Assessments

An **Assessment** is a graded exercise for you to demonstrate the knowledge obtained of the subject (competency).

Types of Assessments: Projects, Tests, Quizzes, Portfolios, Case Studies, Essays or Reports

CLASS MATERIALS

How do I complete the Class Materials?

Completing Activities

Opening Folders

Many times additional information will be contained within a **Folder** in a learning plan. To open the folder select the link next to the folder icon.

Learning Plan 1 Objectives

Opening External Links

To open an **External Link**, double click the link.

Blackboard Website

Opening Documents and Presentations

Instructors often attach **Documents** and **Presentations** in the class materials section as files. You can open/view attached files, print, save (to your computer, your student H: drive on a campus computer, or a USB drive), or email them to yourself for further reference.

LP 3 Assignment: Learning Objects

Attached Files: Article_Learning Objects.doc (144.5 KB)

Read attached article and answer questions 1 thru 5.

To open a file, follow these steps:
1. Select the **attached file link**
2. Click **Open with** (to open with appropriate software application)
3. Once you have looked over the document

z To save a file, follow these steps:
1. Select the **attached file link** to open
2. Select **File > Save As**
3. Browse to the preferred location (H: drive, USB)
4. Click **Save**

For another option, follow these steps:
1. Right click the **attached file link**
2. Click **Save Target As**...
3. Locate where you want to save the document in the Save in drop down box (H: drive, USB)
4. Click **Save**
5. Open the file as you would any other saved file

CLASS MATERIALS

How do I submit my work?

Submitting Assignments

One of the features you will use most in your courses is the **Assignment Link** to submit assignments to your instructor. Your instructor will then grade the assignment and enter a grade (and sometimes comments) you will be able to view in My Grades.

To Submit an Assignment follow these steps:
1. Select the name of the **Assignment Link** and view all **Assignment Information** from your instructor
2. An attachment (Word document) may be supplied by your instructor. To **view the attachment**, select the **Name** of the file, and select **Open**, click the **OK** button
3. Use **File > Save As**, (you may want to resave your file with a part of your name for identification). Browse to your preferred location (H: drive, USB)
4. Complete the assignment
5. Click **Save**

> **Note:** *If your instructor does not supply an Assignment File, create your work in the application of your choice and save it to your desired location.*

6. Enter any **Comments** you may have in the comments box
7. To **attach your assignment**, go to **Attach File**, click **Browse My Computer** and locate the saved file (H: drive, USB). Select the name of the file and click **Open**. Repeat steps 7-8 if you have more than one file to submit
8. Click **Submit**

> **Note:** *Do not enter large blocks of text into the submission field. You could easily lose your work if you select the Back button. It is a good practice to create your assignments in another program (i.e. Word) and attach the document or copy/paste.*

CLASS MATERIALS

How do I take tests and quizzes?

Completing Tests and Quizzes

To take a **Test**, select the underlined name of the test.

Blackboard Review
Review of the following tasks:
Send an email
Adding a discussion thread
Saving an assignment

Instructors use a variety of testing options. When you start a test, it is important to read everything in the Instructions field.

1. Instructions	
Timed Test	This Test has the time limit of 10 minutes.
Timer Setting	You are notified when time expires, and you may continue or submit.
Force Completion	This Test can be saved and resumed later.
Multiple Attempts	This Test allows multiple attempts.

Click **Begin** to start test test. Click **Cancel** to go back.

List below provides information about test options.

- **Timed** - You have a timed window in which to complete the test.
- **Force completion** - You must complete the test the first time you open it (cannot be saved and finished later).
- **Multiple attempts** - You can take the test unlimited times or a certain number of times (instructor chooses a number). This is often used for quizzes or "homework" type tests.
- **Password** - You must have a password to access the test. Proctored exams always have a pass word.
- **Feedback** - Your instructor chooses to display the correct answers to the test. Often correct answers will not display until all of the students have completed the test.
- **Presentation mode** - The test may open inside of Blackboard or in a new window. Questions may appear all at once or one at a time and are often randomized.

Test Taking Tips and Tricks

- Click **Begin** only when you are ready to take the test.
- Watch the timer while completing a timed test or quiz and adjust accordingly.
- **DO NOT** click the Save Button.