

Posting Podcasts

This tutorial explains how to post podcasts to your Blackboard Site.

Posting podcasts to Blackboard offers the following advantages over “regular” audio or video files:

- If Enabled, students will be able to subscribe to your podcast via an RSS feed in a tool such as iTunes. This means that new episodes will automatically be delivered to them, even if they are not logged into Blackboard.
- Students can place a “Recent Podcasts” module on their Blackboard homepage, which will automatically list and provide access to the most recent podcasts posted.
- The media files are not stored in your course web site itself, but on a specialized media server. Your course size will not increase, and your media files will be delivered more quickly to students. This does not affect the ability to copy this type of content.
- If you are using Blackboard to deliver regular lecture recordings to your students, we strongly encourage doing so via the podcast tool.

Uploading a Podcast

1. The first step to prepare, your podcast files. Be aware that uncompressed audio or video files can be very large, download slowly, and fill up your student’s iPods or similar devices quickly. It is important to work with compressed files. Contact your ATS, if you have questions about compressing your podcasts, or getting them into a supported file format.
2. Name your audio files correctly: do not include unusual characters such as a backslashes (/) in the filename. Make sure the file name terminates in the proper file extension, depending on the file type. Please note: **Use of spaces in file names on Blackboard is not recommended.** Podcasting supports the following file types:
 - .m4a
 - .mp3
 - .mov
 - .mp4
 - .m4v
 - .pdf
3. Decide where you want to post the files. The content area “Documents” is a good location –we’ll use that for this tutorial. If you have many audio clips, it is a good idea to create a subfolder for them. See the separate tutorial on items and folders to learn how to do this.
4. In the left-hand navigation bar, click on *Control Panel*.
5. On the Control Panel page, in the Content Areas section, click on *Course Documents*.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Academic Suite interface in a Mozilla Firefox browser. The page title is "MCTRAIN: Test course 1 - Melonie Ivey (Instructor)". The navigation bar includes "Home Page", "Courses", and "System Admin". The main content area is titled "MCTRAIN: Test course 1 - Melonie Ivey (Instructor)" and contains several sections:

- Content Areas:** Includes links for [Syllabus](#), [Tutorial for new courses](#), [Course Documents](#) (circled in red), [External Links](#), and [Assignments](#).
- User Management:** Includes links for [List / Modify Users](#), [Enroll User](#), [Create User](#), [Remove Users from Course](#), [Batch Create Users](#), and [Manage Groups](#).
- Course Tools:** Includes links for [Announcements](#), [Glossary Manager](#), [Course Calendar](#), [Messages](#), [Staff Information](#), [Course Objectives](#), [Tasks](#), [SafeAssign](#), [Send Email](#), [Quota Usage](#), [Discussion Board](#), [Link Checker](#), [Collaboration](#), and [Manage Podcast](#).
- Assessment:** Includes links for [Test Manager](#), [Gradebook](#), [Survey Manager](#), [Gradebook Views](#), [Pool Manager](#), [Performance Dashboard](#), and [Course Statistics](#), [Early Warning System](#).
- Help:** Includes links for [Support](#), [Contact System Administrator](#), and [Manual](#), [Quick Tutorials](#).

6. On the Course Documents page, locate the drop-down menu on the right of the gray editing bar. From this menu, select *Podcast Episode* and click *Go*.
7. On the Add Podcast Episode page, assign a name to the podcast episode.
8. If you wish, type explanatory text about the episode into the text box.
9. On the Add Podcast Episode page, in section 2, "Podcast Media", click on *Choose File* or *Browse* and navigate to the file you wish to podcast.
10. Click *Submit*.
11. This will pose the episode. It will appear with a *listen* link, which allows students to access the file in a Blackboard browser window.

Enabling an RSS feed for you podcast

A podcast RSS feed allows you to publish your podcast beyond Blackboard. It allows your students to "subscribe" to your podcast with a tool such as iTunes, i.e. to automatically receive new postings without checking Blackboard.

1. To create an RSS feed for your podcast. In the left-hand navigation bar, click on *Control Panel*.
2. On the Control Panel page, in the Content Areas section, click on *Manage Podcast*.

The screenshot shows the Blackboard Academic Suite interface in Mozilla Firefox. The browser address bar displays the URL: http://bbweb.meredith.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_2_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2. The page title is "MCTRAIN: Test course 1 - Melonie Ivey (Instructor)". The navigation menu includes "Home Page", "Courses", and "System Admin". The main content area is titled "TEST COURSE 1 (MCTRAIN) > CONTROL PANEL".

Content Areas		User Management	
Syllabus	Tutorial for new courses	List / Modify Users	Enroll User
Course Documents	External Links	Create User	Remove Users from Course
Assignments		Batch Create Users	Manage Groups
Course Tools		Assessment	
Announcements	Glossary Manager	Test Manager	Gradebook
Course Calendar	Messages	Survey Manager	Gradebook Views
Staff Information	Course Objectives	Pool Manager	Performance Dashboard
Tasks	SafeAssign	Course Statistics	Early Warning System
Send Email	Quota Usage		
Discussion Board	Link Checker	Help	
Collaboration	Manage Podcast	Support	Contact System Administrator
Digital Dropbox		Manual	Quick Tutorials

3. On the Mangae Podcast page, in section 3, "Options", set the visibility to "Everyone". The URL of your RSS feed appears in parentheses right there.
4. Click *Submit*.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the strange string of numbers and letters in the podcast RSS feed URL? For example,
http://bbweb.meredith.edu/webapps/lobj-podcast-bb_bb60/feed/+TUNUUKFJTg==+/podcast.xml
 Why isn't the URL less cryptic?

A: The RSS feed's URL encodes your course code and number, so that it is not possible for others to "guess" what the URL for a given course's RSS feed would be. This makes your RSS feed a bit more private.