

Using Moodle for blended learning

Brandon University uses many methods for presenting content to students including traditional face-to-face and on-line presentations. Many instructors use **Moodle**, our Learning Management System (LMS), to enhance their teaching and to address diverse student needs. Using an LMS is often called distributed learning or blended learning. Moodle is designed to allow all interested instructors to set up and maintain a website where students can log in, access course information, interact, share, and teach others. Many instructors post their course outlines, accept and grade assignments, link to PowerPoint slides, and use a whole host of other functions.

Resources for Learning and Using Moodle

Task	Resource
Manage a Moodle Course	https://docs.moodle.org/33/en/Managing_a_Moodle_course Includes: editing text, activities, resources, quizzes, course enrolment, grouping users, grade book, tracking progress, and reusing activities.
Manage Moodle Content	https://docs.moodle.org/33/en/Managing_content Includes: text files, image files, sound files, video files, YouTube links, repositories, portfolios, maths symbols, emoticons, and plagiarism prevention.

Request a Moodle Website

Moodle websites help you manage courses. You can share your syllabus (course outline), course information, accept assignments online, post grades, engage in online discussions, and other learning activities. The first step for setting up a Moodle website for your course(s) is to send a request to the Moodle Administrator for a course. Our Learning Technology Specialist serves as our Moodle Administrator. You can contact Glen Gross at grossg@brandonu.ca.

You will need to complete a separate request for each course. For example, if you teach three courses, send three separate requests. The purpose of the request is to give the administrator the basic information about the course. The administrator uses that information set up your basic page for you.

Use the following procedure to **request a Moodle website** for a course.

Step	Procedure
1. Go to Moodle Log In	Click on one of the Moodle Log In links from the BU website. There is a link on the BU homepage under Student Resources. There is also a link to the Moodle log in on the CTLT page and on the CTLT Resources page. You can also use this URL to go to the Moodle Log in: https://moodle.brandonu.ca/ .
2. Log In to Moodle	Enter your BU Username and Password into the login box. Press the Enter key. If you have not received this information yet, you will need your department chair to request that your credentials be created by I.T. Services on your behalf.
3. Complete User Profile	If this is your first time using Moodle, you will need to complete a user profile. <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Under the description field, you can add your bio or simply type "Course Instructor".· If you have already completed a profile, you can go to the next step.
4. Request Website	From the Moodle website homepage, select the Instructor New Website Request link.

5. Complete the Course Request form	<p>Fill in the Details of the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Enter the Course Full Name with five-digit number, for example, 01:220 Introduction to Early Childhood Education. · Enter course short name by typing in the five-digit course number. · Use the pull down menu to select the Course Category. Choose the heading for the area where your course should appear on the BU Menu of courses. · For the summary of the course find the course description in the BU Calendar, copy it, and then paste it into this summary area. <p>Complete the “Reason for wanting this course” area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In the section “Supporting information to help the administrator evaluate this request” enter the reason for wanting this course (type in the purpose of the website, for a course, you may type something like “to help manage instruction for a course”). <p>To complete the course request, click on the Request a course button.</p>
6. Finish Course Request	<p>You will receive a notice of having sent your request. Click on Continue.</p> <p>The Moodle Administrator will set up your website.</p> <p>After the Moodle Administrator creates the website you will get an email message with a link to the website. You can also locate your course by logging into Moodle and selecting the My Courses link at the top of the page.</p>
7. Develop your website	<p>You can begin creating your website to help manage your course. Please contact the Moodle Administrator Glen Gross at grossg@brandonu.ca for an appointment if you need assistance in setting up your website.</p>

Enrol Students to your Moodle Website

Once your website is ready, you can begin letting students enrol in the website. One way to do this is to create an enrolment key. The enrolment key is a series of keyboard characters the student uses to enter the website. It will be helpful for your students if you choose a meaningful word or series of characters. Here are two examples of enrolment keys:

- “intro2psych”, “balloon”

Set up your website for student self-enrolment with an enrolment key:

Step	Procedure
1. Go to the Self-enrolment (Student) control page	<p>From your course website, go to the column on the left side of the page, find the ADMINISTRATION area. Under Course Administration, choose Users.</p> <p>Under Users, choose Enrolment methods.</p> <p>Under Enrolment methods, choose Self-enrolment (Student).</p>
2. Enter your enrolment key	<p>While there are many options for setting up enrolment in your course, for most courses at BU, you only need to set the enrolment key. Leave the custom instance field empty. For the next two choices - Enable existing enrolments, and Allow new enrollments – leave the yes option identified.</p> <p>In the next field, enter the characters for your enrolment key. To view the actual characters, click “unmask” at the end of the field.</p>
3. Choose options for the student enrolment	<p>*For most courses, the default settings for enrolment will work for you.*</p> <p>If you want to include a Welcome Message for your students that they will receive when they enrol, you can add this message at the bottom of the self-enrolment page. Scroll down to Send course welcome message and place a check mark in the box. In the box Custom welcome message, type your message.</p>

4. Confirm your enrolment options	Click on the Save changes button. Your students will then be able to enrol in your course website.
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Reset a Moodle Site to Reuse for a Different Section or Term

If you have already set up a Moodle site for a course, you can use that page for another section of the course or for a new term. You may first want to make a backup of the original version.

Reset Your Course:

Step	Procedure
1. Go to the Reset control page	From your course website go to the column on the left side of the page, find the ADMINISTRATION area. Under Course Administration, choose Reset .
2. Choose the items you want to reset	On the Reset Course page, choose the settings you would like to change, and those you would like to leave the same. You will want to change the course start date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The default for resetting will work for most courses, it includes, deleting all events, deleting all notes, un-enrolling all students, deleting grades, and deleting all forum posts. To use the reset default;-choose Select default on the blue floating menu. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you want to reset other items or not delete items that are included in the Default reset, make your choices at this page.
3. Select reset options	When you have made your choices for saving or deleting data from your previous site choose the Reset course option on the blue floating menu. Keep in mind that resetting the course will delete all of the information that you have selected. If you have any questions contact the Moodle Administrator before resetting.

Moodle Website

Development

Moodle can assist you in managing your students' learning. Here is a list of some of the more common tasks Moodle can help you and your students do:

- share files with students (limit of 1GB per file)
- post files to submit assignments to teacher
- set up student activities, which include: forums, journals, quizzes, surveys, chats, and more
- link to resources in the library
- send out announcements
- develop a gradebook
- track student activity.

General Moodle Design Suggestions

Course Site Organization

- Use your course page as a launch pad. Include an Introduction to the course followed by links to other pages for content information.
- Each additional page should have the content for one complete topic.
 - If you are organizing your content around weeks, use one folder for each week.
 - If you are organizing your content around content topics, use one folder for each topic.
- Be consistent in your layout: use headings, indenting, bullets, etc. consistently. Use parallel structure.

Page Layout

- Use page layout techniques to identify content:
 - Use labels to identify your chunks of content.
 - Use a maximum of three different fonts.
 - Use white space to indent and identify the level of the content. Leave space after a chunk of content to show the end of one and the beginning of the next.
- Consider adding images to your content but keep in mind the content is the important information. Wrap your content around the images so students don't always have to scroll down and down to pass pictures and then find content.

Include Students

- Include activities for students (see list of student activities above)
- Give your students access to completion tracking. It allows them to check off and keep track of what they have completed. It also allows you to see what they have completed.

The CTLT's Learning Technology Specialist (who is also the Moodle Administrator) is your source for answers to all Moodle related questions. You can contact Glen Gross at grossg@brandonu.ca