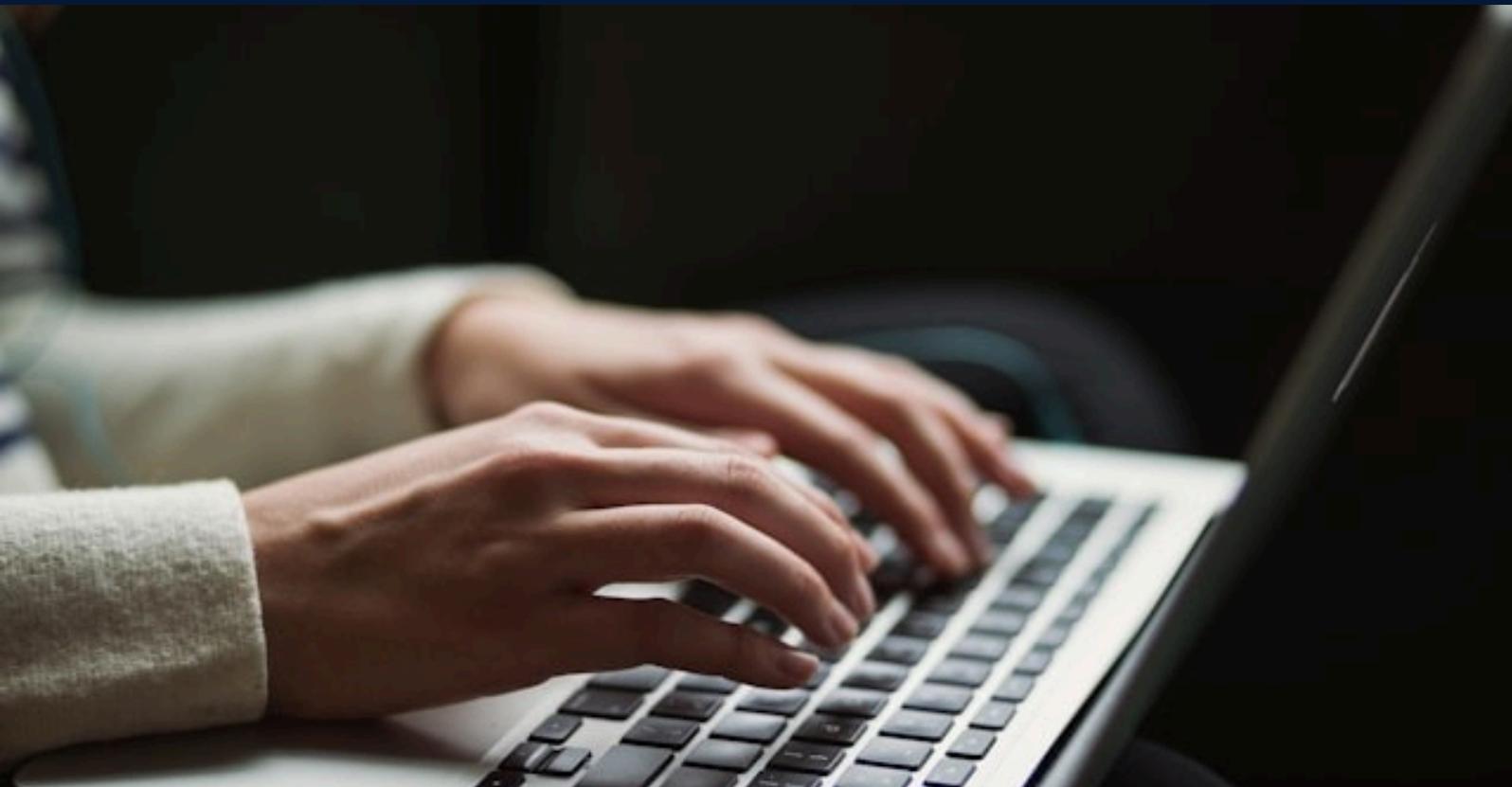


Blackboard Learn

Academic Staff Guide



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What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is an online learning platform that instructors use for:

- Providing access to courses and learning materials.
- Uploading assignments and exams for assessment.
- Maintaining discussions and communication with students.

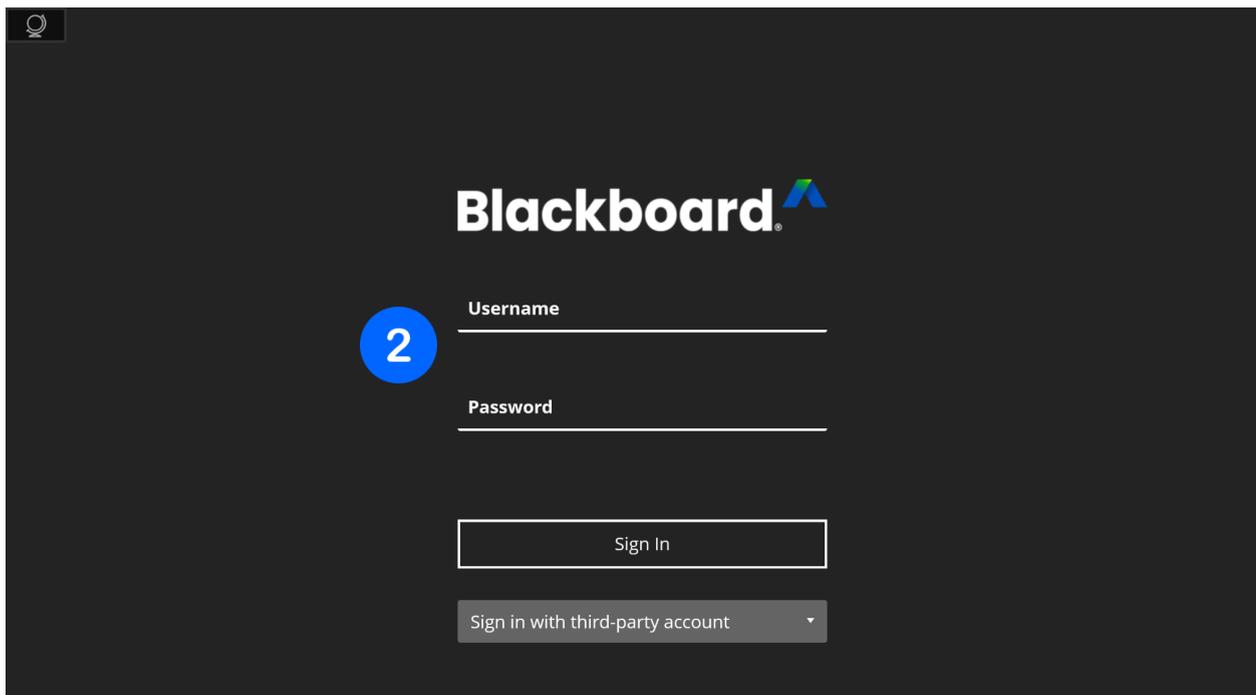
Logging into Blackboard

1. Open Blackboard:

Visit: <https://elearn.mu-varna.bg/>

2. Log in with your credentials:

Use the username and password provided by the university.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard login interface. At the top center is the Blackboard logo. Below it, on the left, is a blue circle containing the number '2'. To the right of this circle are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. Below these fields is a 'Sign In' button. At the bottom of the form is a dropdown menu labeled 'Sign in with third-party account'.

3. If you experience login issues, contact IT support:

support@mu-varna.bg / tel. 052 677 024

Navigating Blackboard

After logging into the platform, you will see the main user menu (on the left), which includes the following sections:

- **Institutional Page** – Contains important announcements, links to resources, guidelines, and university events.
- **Your Name and Surname (User Profile)** – Contains personal information, profile settings, options to change language, password, notifications, and privacy settings.

The screenshot displays the Blackboard interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with the Blackboard logo and navigation icons for Institution Page, Milena Ivanova, Activity, Courses (highlighted), Calendar, Messages (4), Grades, Tools, and Sign Out. The main area is titled 'Courses' and includes a search bar, 'Terms' (All Terms), 'Filters' (All courses), and '25 items per page'. Below this, it shows '12 results' and a section titled 'Others' containing three course entries:

- 123000_z-001-2022_23
Biomedical Imaging // Artificial Intelligence in Bio Medicine_M (заочно обучение) Ori...
Open | [Multiple Instructors](#) | More info ▼
- 808080
Blackboard Help (Distance Learning Students) Original Course View
Open | Stanislav Nikolov - BB Admin | More info ▼
- ITN-230-20022_23
Course Shell (Original Course View) Original Course View
Open · [Start now](#) | bbteacher1 bbteacher1 | More info ▼

- **Activity** – Displays real-time updates on all new actions within your courses: uploaded assignments, published materials, announcements, deadlines, and grades. A convenient way to keep track of what's happening in each course.
- **Courses** – A list of all the courses you are teaching during the current academic year.
- **Calendar** – Provides access to all events and deadlines from your courses in one place.

- **Messages** – Allows you to send and receive messages from students or colleagues directly within a specific course through the internal communication system.
- **Grades** – Gives access to the grades you’ve entered for all your courses, as well as pending assessments that need to be recorded.
- **Tools** – Provides access to various additional institutional resources and features that support the learning process.
- **Sign Out (Отписване)** - Logs you out of your account.

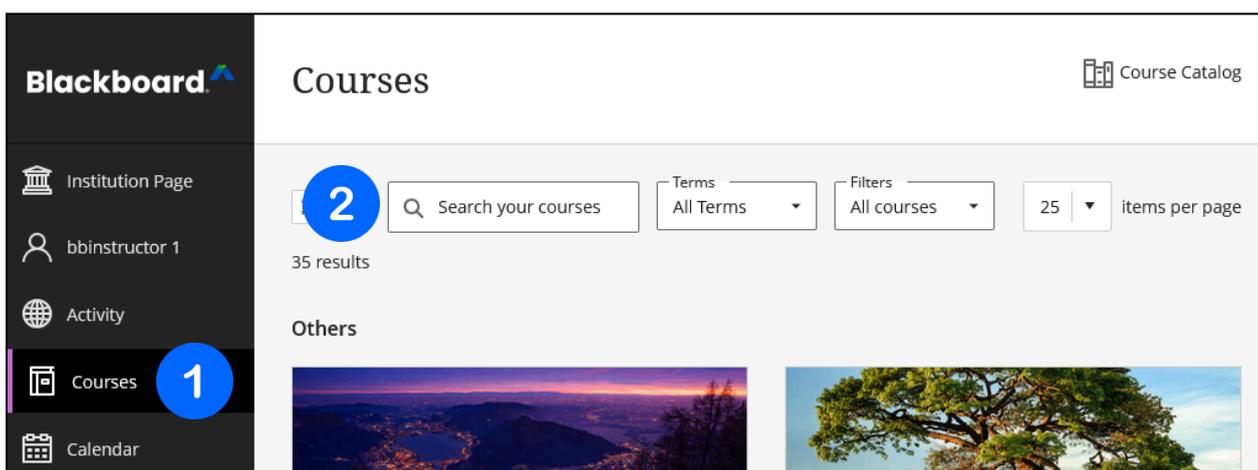
Accessing Courses

After logging into Blackboard, you can find and open the courses you are teaching during the current academic year.

Important: Access to courses is controlled, and instructors may have different roles in each course, with specific rights and responsibilities for managing course content. For more information, contact the E-Learning and Distance Education Center at MU-Varna.

Finding Your Courses

1. From the navigation menu on the left side of the screen, select **Courses**. Your courses will appear in a list, arranged in alphabetical order.



2. Use the search bar to find a specific course by title, code, or keyword.

Tip: To quickly access courses you use frequently, mark them with a star. These will appear at the top of your list.

Accessing a Course

1. Click on the course title to open it.
2. The course homepage will display the **Content section** by default.

If You Don't See a Course

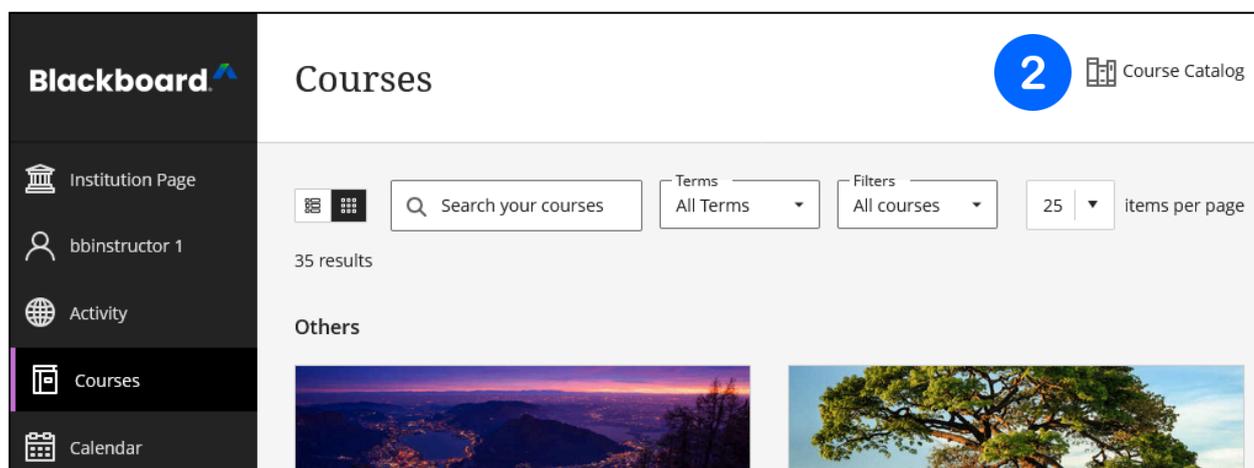
- Make sure you are entering the correct name or part of the name of the course in the search field, and that you are using the available filters properly.
- Contact your department's administrative assistant or course coordinator, as well as the *E-Learning and Distance Education Center at MU-Varna* for assistance with access.

Accessing the Institutional Course Catalog

The institutional course catalog in Blackboard allows instructors to view the list of existing academic programs at the university, along with the courses taught in each program (required, elective, and optional) – according to each program's curriculum. The catalog makes it easier to search for and find course information.

How to Find the Institutional Course Catalog:

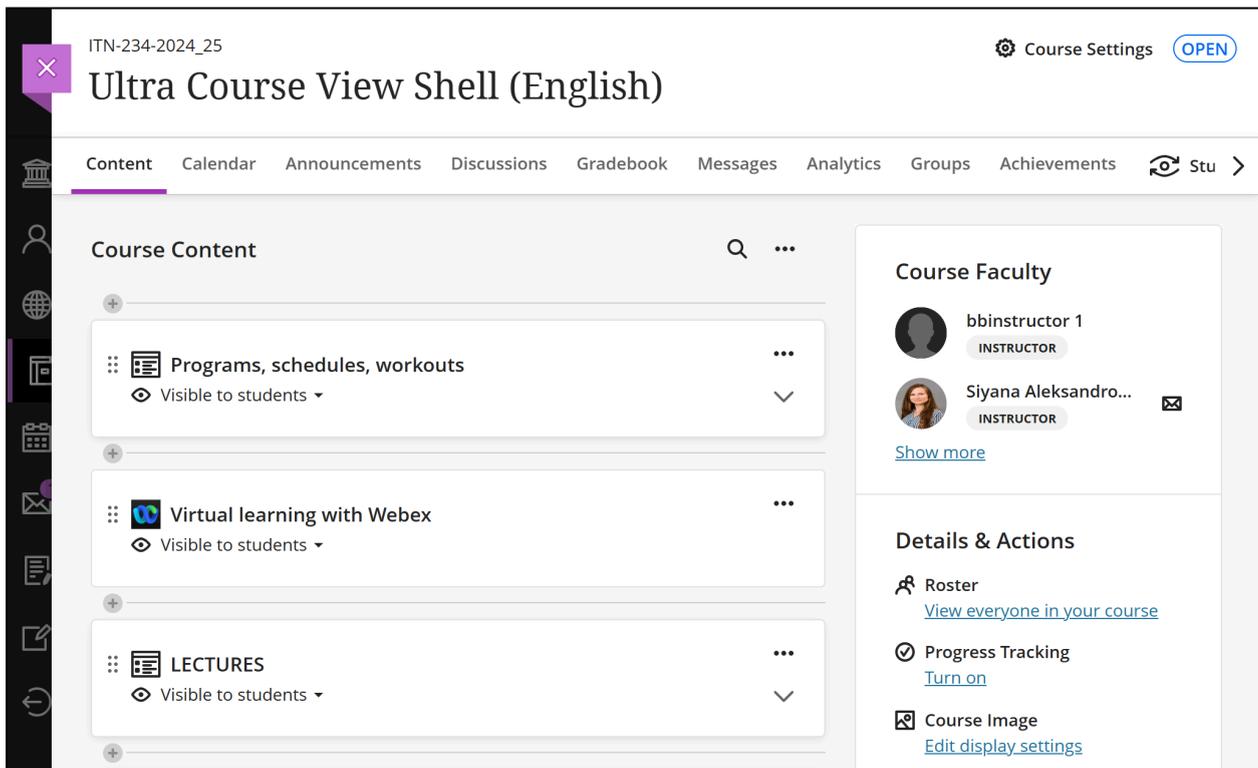
1. From the navigation menu on the left side of the screen, select **Courses**.
2. On this page, you will find a link to the **Course Catalog** in the top right corner.
3. Click this link to open the catalog.



Managing a Course

Course Structure

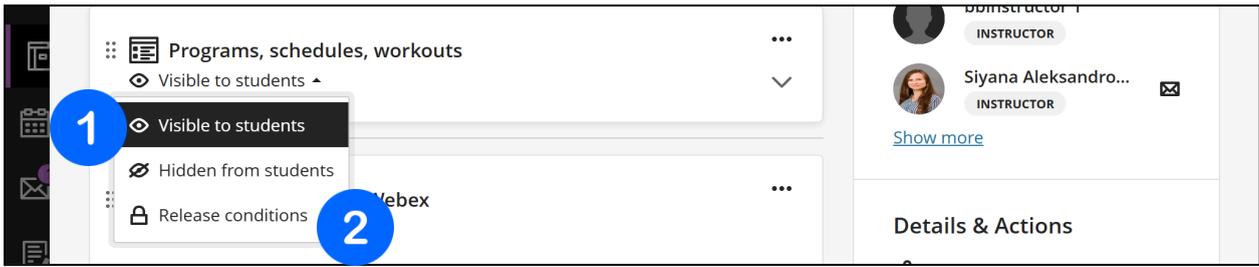
Each course has a pre-built structure where the learning content is organized into modules and folders according to its purpose and topic.



Organize your content clearly and consistently using the available structure. Contact the *E-Learning and Distance Education Center* for guidance and support in organizing materials and creating learning resources.

Showing/Hiding Content

1. Use the **drop-down menu** next to each learning resource to make it visible or hidden to students.
2. You can schedule when the content becomes available by setting specific dates through **Release Conditions**.



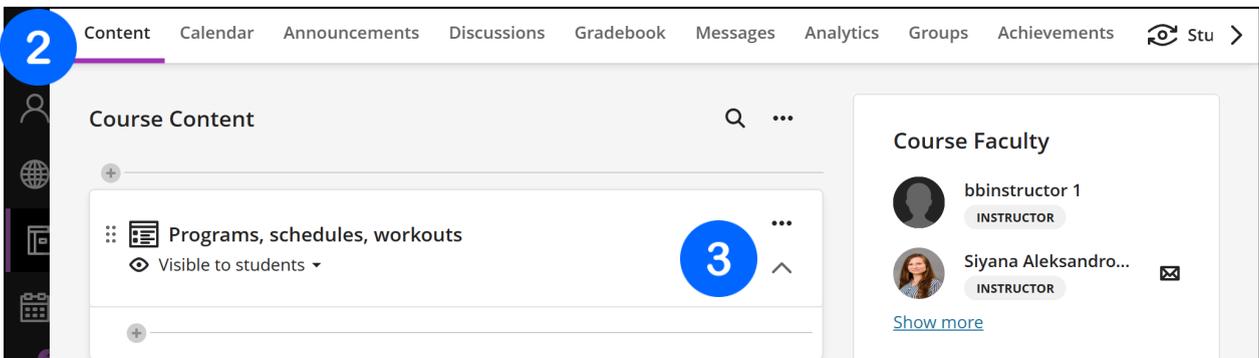
Uploading Learning Materials

You can attach files from your computer or from the course's content library.

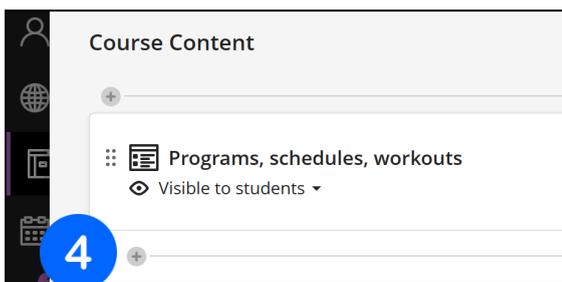
Adding Content

Follow the steps below to publish learning materials in your course:

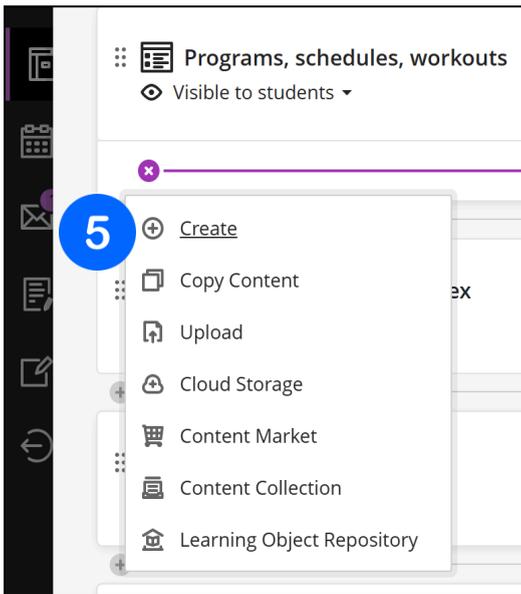
1. Log into the course where you want to add content.
2. Go to the **Course Content** section. This is the main page where all course materials are displayed.
3. Locate the folder or learning module where you want to add content. Click the arrow on the right to expand and view the nested content.



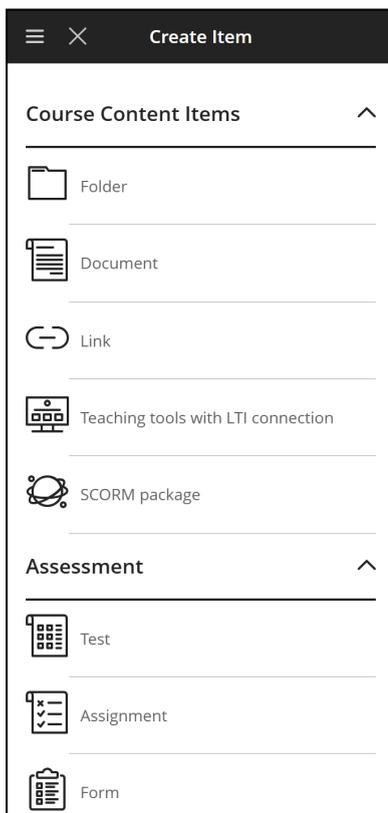
4. Click on the **plus (+) icon**. A menu will appear with options for adding new content.



5. Select **Create**.



6. Select the content type:



Folder

Use a folder to group related materials – for example, by topic or week. You can add documents, tests, assignments, links, and other resources within it.

Document

Allows you to add text, images, files, links, and multimedia in a single unified item. Suitable for combined materials and instructions.

Link

Add a link to an external resource, such as a YouTube video, an online article, or cloud storage.

Teaching tools with LTI connection

Integrate external educational tools and applications used by the institution into your course, such as Webex or Respondus.

SCORM package (SCORM пакет)

Add SCORM modules – pre-prepared training packages containing content and built-in assessments. These support tracking of student progress.

Test

Create an online test with different types of questions.

Assignment

Create an assignment where students can submit files or text responses. You can set a deadline, grading criteria, and feedback.



Form

Used for surveys, self-assessments, or student feedback.

Discussion (Дискусия)

Create a discussion forum where students can post opinions, respond to peers, and participate in discussions on a given topic.

Journal

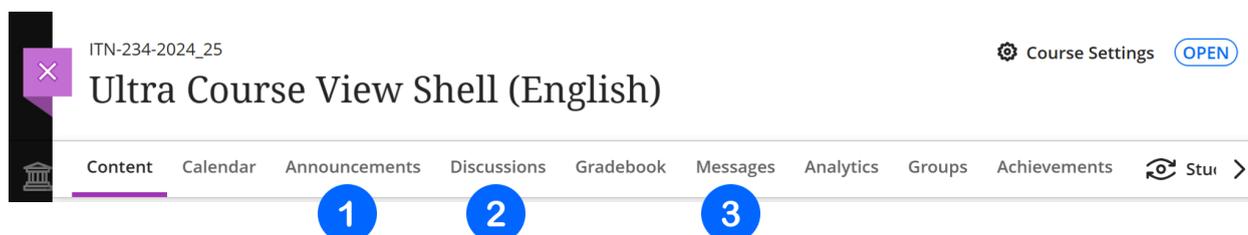
Provides a space for individual text entries from students – suitable for self-assessment, reflections, journaling, or feedback.

Tips:

- Use clear file names and consistent formatting.
- Use the content description field to add key information or instructions.
- Consider uploading PDF files instead of editable Word/PowerPoint files for greater security and consistency.

Communication with Students

Blackboard offers several built-in tools that instructors can use to maintain continuous communication with students:



1. Announcements:

Use these for urgent updates (e.g., schedule changes, exam reminders).

2. **Discussions**

Create forums to support asynchronous discussions.

Assign grades to forums if they are part of the assessment.

3. **Messages (Съобщения) in the course:**

The internal messaging system in Blackboard. Useful for personal or group communication within the course.

Virtual Learning with Webex

The Webex tool is used for conducting real-time online communication. It is integrated into the platform of each course, with a special link **Virtual learning with Webex** that facilitates access for both instructors and students.

What Webex is used for in teaching:

- **Live sessions:** lectures, exercises, lessons, and consultations in real time.
- **Communication:** video, audio, and chat for direct connection with students.
- **Recordings:** the ability to record and share conducted lessons.
- **Interactivity:** screen sharing, whiteboard, polls, group work.
- **Access:** built-in link in each course, accessible from a computer, tablet, or mobile phone.

If you wish to use Webex in your course, you must have a teaching Webex account provided by the institution. For more information, contact the IT department or the E-Learning and Distance Education Center at MU-Varna.

Contacts and Support

- International Center for E-Learning and Distance Education (**Blackboard support, access to courses, and instructor training**):
elearn@mu-varna.bg
tel.: 052 677 123.
- System Administrators (**for issues with username and password access to Blackboard**):
email: dmanushev@mu-varna.bg

email: kostadin.raychev@mu-varna.bg

tel.: + 359 52 677 024