

Best Practices for Using Master Courses

A Master Course is a template course created as a master copy for the purpose of copying content to the Blackboard course shell for an upcoming semester. The Master Course is created as a blank shell for the faculty member to build their materials, which takes the place of copying a Blackboard course from one semester to the next semester.

There are several issues that can occur in the process of copying a previous semester course from one semester to another. One main issue is filling the [course files](#) with multiple copies of previous course file imports/copies that can cause problems with the function of the current semester's course. Therefore, using a Master Course to create all materials, which is then copied to a current semester's Blackboard course, is a best practice. It allows for a clean copy every semester, rather than copy of a copy, of a copy, etc.

This is a list of recommended best practices for using Master Courses.



You can request new Master Courses on the [Class Dashboard](#) in My Missouri State.

Related articles:

- [Best Practices for Folder Organization](#)
- [Best Practices for Assessing Learners](#)
- [Best Practices for Using Master Courses](#)
- [Best Practices for Faculty](#)
- [Best Practices for Building and Managing Course Content](#)

1. Request a Master Course for each course that you regularly teach.

Have a Master Course for each course and modality that you teach. For example, if you regularly teach PSY 121 in the seated format during the fall semesters but online during the spring semesters, consider requesting a Master Course for seated sections and one for online sections.

2. Use your Master Course as your true Master, or original, source of your course content.

Build the entire course structure directly within the Master Course. DO NOT copy the course structure from last semester's course into your Master Course, as doing so negates the purpose of having a Master Course.

3. Never Course Copy from an existing course into a Master Template Course.

Master Courses should never be used as the destination course for course copies.

4. Create all materials natively within the Master Course shell.

Create new items (e.g., syllabus, video lectures, etc.) directly within your new Master Course, and avoid copying content items from previous live courses. This ensures that all items in the Master Course are new items with no chance of future broken links.

5. Consider storing content items in Content Collection.

The Content Collection can help you set up content for sharing with peer instructors and linking across courses and semesters, and it can also be helpful if you regularly teach multiple sections of the same course. For more information on using [Content Collection](#) and [Folder Organization](#) see our related Experts Articles on those topics.

6. Course Copy or Export only from the Master Course.

Simply perform a [course copy](#) from your Master Course into your current semester's live production course. Keep in mind that you should never copy into the Master Course and never from a production course to another production course.