The St. Louis Community College District has made available to students and staff an on
line resource known as Blackboard. This resource can be accessed at the URL:
https://blackboard.stlcc.edu This handout will show you the basics of Blackboard. A
more comprehensive tutorial is available at Blackboard. Please note: You must have cookies
enabled in order for Blackboard to work.

How to get to Blackboard

You must be enrolled in a class at St. Louis Community College. Not all instructors are
using this, so Blackboard may not be available for every class. When you first use the URL listed
above you will see a screen like this:

Click on the LOGIN button at the left. When you do, you get a login dialog box like this:
User names are your student ID. password will be your BannerWeb PIN.

**My Blackboard**

When you successfully login, you will see the screen below. This is the My Blackboard screen.

There are four sections on the initial screen: **Tools, Today’s Announcements, My Courses, and Today’s Tasks**. The announcement section will briefly list any new announcements that your instructor has posted. Tools has a variety of useful items including checking your grade and email. My Courses lists all the courses that are available to you.

Click on one of My Courses, in this case I’m going to use **Introduction to LANs** as the example. When the page has loaded you will find a set of seven buttons along the left hand side of the page. They are shown on the next page. Let’s take them in order and discuss what you find when you click on each of them.
Navigation Buttons on Blackboard

**Announcements**: Announcements takes you to an expanded form of the announcements shown on the opening page. You can review any class related announcements that have been posted with the last two weeks (longer if the instructor thinks they are important).

**Course information**: This page has general information about the course. A screen capture of the contents of IS 215 Course information is shown below. The underlined text is a hyperlink that will take you to a web site or open a document.

---

**Course Information**

**Current Location: Top**

**Useful Programs for IS215**

All of the files listed at this site are in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF files). Adobe acrobat reader can be downloaded by clicking on the link listed: [Acrobat Reader](#)

Another useful program is the archiving utility WinZip. The WinZip home page is: [WinZip](#)

For screen captures I recommend SnagIt by Tech Smith. This is very useful in compiling documentation. The link to download is: [SnagIt](#)
Course Documents: This page contains documents that are relevant to the course, like the syllabus. The screen shot for IS 215 is shown below. The content of Course Document will depend on the course and the instructor. I like to put as much useful information as possible here. The Test keys won’t be available at the beginning of the semester, only after the quizzes have been completed. ;-)

Assignments: Just as you might expect this area has class assignments. You can find all the reading assignments for the semester as well as all of the lab projects. IS 215 Assignment area is shown below.

Communication: This is the page that lets you communicate with the instructor and other students in the class. You need an email address recorded in BannerWeb to make this work. You can send email. You can check the class roster. You can create your own home page for this class. You can participate in discussion forums. You can chat in real time, although, the server is a bit slow for this function. You can access more tools through the group pages. See the details on the next page.
Communication

- **Send E-mail**
- **Discussion Board**
- **Virtual Classroom**
- **Roster**
- **Group Pages**

**External Links:** This page let’s you get to outside sources from within Blackboard. For the security class I teach, I update current security related links on a regular basis. This allows the student to check information that is timely and relevant to the current class lecture. The screenshot is shown below.

**External Links**

**Current Location: External Links**

**Interesting Networking Information**

**Student Tools:** Just what it sounds like this page has tools for students. The digital drop box lets you upload files to the instructor or other students. Change your information allows you to edit your personal information (password, login name, email address, etc.). Want to see how you’re doing in class? Go to check your grade. You can create and edit a class related homepage with Edit Your Homepage. Student Calendar and Manual are just what they sound like.
If you want to change your personal information click on **Personal Information** and edit or add things as you like. You can change your password here also.

**Group Pages:** On the Group Pages (available through Communications) there are some more useful functions available to the student. Group Tools allow a Discussion board, Virtual Chat, File Exchange and email. The file exchange is potentially the most useful since it allows members of a group to transfer files back and forth. This can be very handy when working on Lab documentation.

In the beginning of the semester, there are no students assigned to any groups, but later everyone will be assigned to a group to work on the hands on projects. There are Group tools available.

**Group Tools**

**Group Pages - Group 1**

- **Group Discussion Board**
  Use your group discussion board for course-related debates and conversations.

- **Group Virtual Classroom**
  Meet your group for a real-time discussion.

- **File Exchange**
  Exchange files with your group members.

- **Group Members**
  No Users have been assigned to this group.

The most useful tool is the file exchange. This can be very handy when trying to complete documentation for the projects. You can specify a name for the link to the file and you can upload it from a floppy, ZIP disk or your home hard drive by browsing to where the file is located.
You can also put files in the instructor’s electronic drop box through these tools. Since the file is time stamped on upload, the student doesn’t have to worry if he or she made the deadline on something. The verification is easily accessible.

**Course Map:** The Course Map is a really useful little widget that lets you see at a glance where everything is for a particular course. Below is a condensed map.

![Course Contents](image)

By clicking on the “+” symbols next to any of the listed items you can expand your view and get a more detailed look at what is going on in the class: