

All About My.UNL

What is the Blackboard academic portal (my.unl.edu)?

Simply put, **Blackboard** refers to tools that allow instructors to put material on the web and students to access and interact with it. **My.UNL** uses **Blackboard** to allow you to build an online course **without** needing to learn HTML. It is also completely scalable - meaning you choose which tools you want to use. You can use Blackboard to post an electronic version of your syllabus, augment your classroom learning, teach an entire course completely at a distance, or manage an organization.

What kinds of tools does My.UNL provide?

Secure entry: **My.UNL** users are only able to access what their instructors allow. You can be assured that only students enrolled in your course can access your material. You can, however, make portions of your online class accessible to guests if you wish. Because of this security, it is possible to post copyrighted materials under fair use in compliance with the TEACH act.

Document area: **My.UNL** allows you to organize your files and present them to your students as you wish, when you wish. Upload word processor documents, HTML files created by an editor program, Acrobat (.pdf) files, video clips or any other type of electronic media.

Email functions: With a click, you can send emails to entire classes using email addresses chosen by each student. You don't have to maintain email lists for your classes; **My.UNL** takes care of it for you.

Asynchronous discussion boards: Use web-based discussion forums to get your students to interact and analyze in new and inventive ways. Discussion boards allow for interaction over time on any number of topics.

Synchronous chat: Use the "chat room" to host a "speaker" from a distance in real time or have virtual office hours.

Assessments: With **My.UNL** you can have online tests, practice quizzes or anonymous surveys. The question types allowed range from multiple choice to matching to essay. Assessments can be built in a particular way or randomized from a large pool of questions. Grades are automatically entered in the grade book where students can view them securely along with other assignments, in-class work, or participation.

Gradebook: Securely allow students to view just their own grades. Blackboard's gradebook calculates automatically, can use multiple scales and/or weighting and also allows grades to be exported to or imported from a spreadsheet program such as Excel.

Groups: Setting up groups within **My.UNL** allows you to create areas for students to work on group projects using many of these tools - all while remaining separate and secure from intrusion by non-group members. It can also be used to quickly email certain students.

File sharing: Students can share files for group project work.

Assignments: If you are interested in going completely digital with assignments, **My.UNL** gives you the tools. A built-in assignments manager organizes submitted assignments, renames files and allows you to return graded papers. Comments and notes can be given to individual students or kept private for your own records.

How do I learn to use My.UNL?

Training: UNL offers **free introductory workshops** as well as in-depth workshops for a small fee. You'll find a schedule and sign-up information at <http://training.unl.edu/>. Click on the **faculty/staff** link.


Tutorials: Find tutorials at <http://itg.unl.edu/>. Click **Resources** then **Tutorials** followed by **Blackboard**.

Extended Education and Outreach website: <http://extended.unl.edu/>

Online knowledge base: Click the help button, , at the top of the screen in **My.UNL**.

Online software manual: In the **Control Panel** of your course, click **Online Manual**.

Where do I get support?

Online support system: After logging in, click the help button,  , at the top of the screen in **My.UNL**. There you can create a help request and track its progress.

UNL Helpdesk: Speak immediately to a Helpdesk representative from 7:30am to 11:30pm CT everyday. The phone number is 472-3970 or toll-free outside of Lincoln at 866-472-3970. You can also email helpdesk@unl.edu.

How do I get started?

My.UNL is automated. This means that your online courses have already been generated and your students have already been enrolled. You only have to log in and start using your course space(s).

How do I log in to My.UNL?

Using Internet Explorer 5 or higher or Netscape 4.7 or higher, go to <http://my.unl.edu/>.

All faculty, staff, and students automatically have a username. If you are faculty/staff, it is the same as your CSO alias (you may have seen this as the first part of your email address, such as **jdoe2**). Graduate teaching assistants will find their login information on the What About Me (WAM!) page (<http://wam.unl.edu>).

If you need to look up this **username**, there is a link on the very first page. Your initial **password** is your NU ID number found above the bar code on your NCard. This can be changed in the **Personal Information** area.

I'm having problems logging in. What should I do?

Contact the UNL helpdesk. They are open from 7:30am to 11:30pm CT everyday and can help with problems logging into **My.UNL**. The phone number is 472-3970 or toll-free outside of Lincoln at 866-472-3970.

What if I log in and a class I'm teaching is missing?

My.UNL generates its course information based on data from Registration and Records. If they haven't received notification of the courses you're teaching, **My.UNL** won't know to assign you to your courses.

Have your department secretary contact Registration and Records and add you as the instructor of record for your missing courses. Once this is done, your course will show up in **My.UNL** the next morning. If the problem persists after 24 hours, see the support information above.

What about graduate teaching assistants?

If a GTA is the instructor of record for a course, Registration and Records will enter this information so it loads automatically into **My.UNL**. When a GTA logs in with his/her student username, he/she will see both courses being taken and being taught.

If you are the instructor of record but have TAs for your course, this is not loaded automatically. You can add them manually, however. Go to the **Control Panel** and click **Enroll User** (not add user). Search by last name. Place a check mark next to your TA and submit. Then, return to the **Control Panel**, click **List/Modify User** and find the TA's name. Click **Properties** to change the access level of the user.

How can I stay current of what's going on with My.UNL?

Join the Blackboard users' email listserv. Simply send an email to <mailto:listserv@unl.edu> with the phrase "subscribe bb-user" in the **body** of the email. This is a low-volume listserv with general announcements about the server as well as a forum for instructors to communicate with other instructors.