



What are Blackboard Communities?

Blackboard Communities are online environments for formal and informal organizations and clubs at the university. When a department or a center wants to use Blackboard for purposes that are not course-related, it can request a Blackboard Community. Communities have the same features for presenting information and communicating with other users that are found in academic courses and they are also managed in a similar way.

Requesting a Blackboard Community

1. Blackboard Communities can be requested through the *Forms* page of the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) at ssl.niu.edu/app/itsforms/
2. Click **Computing Access Resources (CAR)**
3. From the drop-down menu on the following page, select **Faculty/Staff Account**
4. Select **Blackboard** and click the **Continue** button
5. On the following page, select **Community Request** and click the **Continue** button
6. Then select **New Community** and click the **Continue** button
7. On the next page, fill in or select the various options and complete the process as directed

Accessing a Blackboard Community

1. Log in to Blackboard at webcourses.niu.edu
2. Click the **Community** tab located near the top of the page
3. The Communities that the user is enrolled in appears under **My Organizations** — to enter a particular Community, click the relevant link

Cellular Service: Print and fill out this form, then bring it to the library.

Computing Access Resources (CAR): Account Management (FMS), Human Resources Information System (HRIS), Content System requests, NIUNT Group Membership, Visual Studio, Web Publishing and Domain Name Registration

Copier Services: Huskie Bucks Cards

Directory Change or Update: Update faculty / staff in Community Directory.

▼ My Organizations

Organizations where you are: Leader

Guest Community 2 *(not currently available)*

Organizations where you are: Participant

Guest Community 1

Guest Community 20

Guest Community 21

Guest Community 22



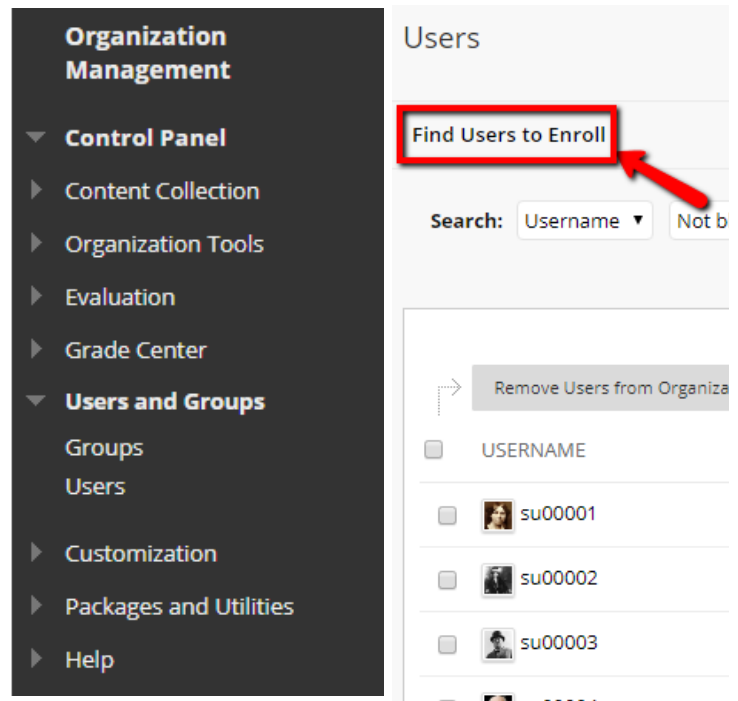
Remember!

1. Blackboard Communities are free
2. Blackboard Communities can include individuals outside of NIU, but you must request affiliate accounts for each person
3. Blackboard Communities should not be used for any external (outside NIU) commercial activities
4. Blackboard Communities can also make use of tools such as Assessments, Discussion Boards, Wikis, Blogs, and Groups

For more information, visit niu.edu/blackboard/communities

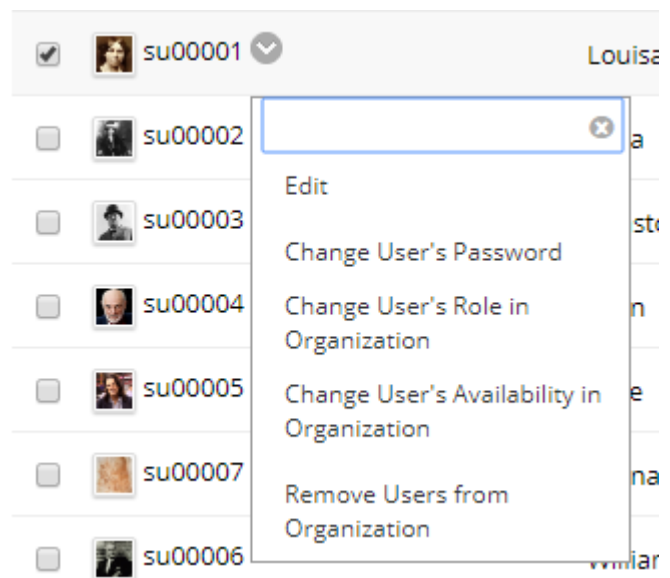
Enrolling Users

1. After accessing your Community, from the *Control Panel*, click **Users and Groups**
2. Select **Users**
3. On the adjacent page, click the **Find Users to Enroll** button
4. On the *Add Enrollments* page, if the *Username* of the user is known, enter it in the textbox (Z- or A-ID) and click **Submit**; otherwise, click **Browse**
5. If you clicked **Browse**, search for users by *Username*, *First Name*, *Last Name*, or *NIU Email* and click **Go**
6. Click the **Submit** button if user was located
7. On the *Add Enrollments* page, select the appropriate *Role*
8. Click the **Submit** button



Modifying Status of Users

1. After accessing your Community, from the *Control Panel*, click **Users and Groups**
2. Select **Users**
3. To change the status of a user in the Community, click the action link next to the *Username* of the user
5. From the drop-down menu, select **Change User's Role in Organization**
6. On the following page, for **Role** select the appropriate choice (see **below** for more information about Roles)
7. Click the **Submit** button



User Roles

There are a variety of user roles within a Blackboard Community, including:

- **Organization Builder**— Has access to most areas within a Community, including the Control Panel, however, no access to participant grades or the Grade Center.
- **Grader**— Has limited access the Control Panel, but can assist with the creation, management, delivery, and grading of assessments and surveys within a Community.
- **Leader**— Has access to all areas within the Community. This role is generally given to those developing, teaching or facilitating the Community and is comparable to the role of Instructor.
- **Participant**— Has no access to the Control Panel, and is the default role within a Community. This role can be compared to the role of Student in a Blackboard Course.
- **Assistant**— Has full access to the Control Panel, but is not listed in the Community Catalog as a Leader. Can also manage (add, change, delete) membership of the organization.