

Message, Email, and Digital Drop Box: What's the Difference?

Messages	Email	Digital Drop Box
Accessed through Blackboard.	Accessed outside of Blackboard via Webmail, Outlook, etc.	Accessed through Blackboard.
Does not cause email congestion. Separates files by course.	Constantly receiving emails from individual students. Does not separate files by course.	Does not cause email congestion. Separates files by course.
Students must choose who to send to.	Students must choose who to send to.	All files sent via Digital Drop Box by the students are automatically sent to the assigned instructor(s) in the course.

NOTE: In the below steps, faculty accesses all three components through the **Control Panel** under **Course Tools**. All other steps, unless specified, are the same for students and instructor.

MESSAGES

- The Messages feature gives each course a private and secure system for communication that functions similar to email. Keep in mind that Messages cannot be sent or received outside of the users in the course.
- Messages are usually accessed through the Communications area of a course. Although, as with most features, the Instructor can restrict access or change the layout of the Course Menu so that Messages are accessible directly.
- Follow these steps to open the Messages feature.
 - ❖ Click **Communication** from the Course Menu or Organization Menu.
 - ❖ Click **Messages**.
- Folders store messages and provide access to functions for creating and organizing messages. Even the Inbox folder and Sent folder include these functions.
- Follow these steps to open a folder, including the Inbox folder or Sent folder.

- ❖ Click **Communication** from the Course Menu or Organization Menu.
- ❖ Click **Messages**.
- ❖ Click a folder.

<i>To . . .</i>	<i>click . . .</i>
<i>open the Inbox to see delivered messages</i>	Inbox. The Inbox folder will open with messages received.
<i>view messages that you sent</i>	Sent. The Sent folder will open with a list of messages sent.
<i>add a new folder</i>	Add Folder. Folders can be used to organize messages. Note that the System Administrator may turn off the ability to add folders.
<i>change the name of a personal folder</i>	Modify next to a personal folder. It is not possible to modify the Inbox folder or Sent folder.
<i>delete personal folders</i>	the check box next to each folder that will be deleted. Then click Remove Folder in the action bar. The folders, and any messages in the folders, will be deleted.
<i>Read a message</i>	the link that appears in the subject column for the message. The View Message page will appear.
<i>Draft and send a new message</i>	New Message in the Action Bar.
<i>Delete messages</i>	The checkbox for each message to delete. Click Remove in the Action Bar to delete the messages.
<i>Sort messages</i>	The carat above each column to sort by that column.
<i>Mark messages as unread</i>	The checkbox for each message to mark as unread. Click Mark Unread to change the selected messages to unread. Unread messages appear with a closed envelope icon.
<i>Mark messages as read</i>	The checkbox for each message to mark as read. Click Mark Read to change the selected messages to read. Read messages appear with an open envelope icon.

Viewing Messages

- Follow these steps to open a message.

- ❖ Click Communication in the Course Menu or Organization Menu.
- ❖ Click Messages.
- ❖ Select a folder.
- ❖ Click the link in the subject column for a message.

Drafting a New Message

- Follow these steps to open a message.
 - ❖ Click **Communication** in the Course Menu or Organization Menu.
 - ❖ Click **Messages**.
 - ❖ Click **New Message**.
 - ❖ Select, **To**, **Cc** or **Bcc**.
 - ❖ Select the user(s) to receive the message, by highlighting the user's name. For multiple users, press the **CTRL** key while clicking the user's name.
 - ❖ Then click the **Right Arrow** to move the names to the **Recipients** box.
 - ❖ Fill in the **Subject** and **Body**. Attach files, if necessary and click **Submit**.

EMAIL

Users can access email functions through the Send Email page. Users can send email to the following people in a course or organization:

Group	<i>Sends email to all users in the course or organization.</i>
All Users	<i>Sends an email to all Students in the course.</i>
All Students	<i>Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course or organization.</i>
All Groups	<i>Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.</i>
All Teaching Assistants	<i>Sends email to all of the Instructors for a specified course.</i>
All Instructors	<i>Sends email to all of the Leaders for a specified organization.</i>
All Leaders	<i>Sends email to a single user or select users in a specified course.</i>
Select Users	<i>Sends email to a single user or select users in a specified course.</i>
Select Groups	<i>Send email to a single group or select groups in a course or organization.</i>

Sending Email

- Follow the steps below to open the Send Email page:
 - ❖ Open a course or organization.
 - ❖ Click **Communication** on the **Course Menu** or **Organization Menu**.
 - ❖ Click **Send Email**.
 - ❖ Users can also access the **Send Email** feature for all of their courses and organizations through the **Tools Box** on the **My Institution tab**.
 - ❖ If selecting any of the “**All**” categories, select the appropriate choice and proceed as with any other email.
 - ❖ If selecting any of the “Single” categories an additional step is needed.
 - ❖ Select the user(s) to receive the message, by highlighting the user’s name. For multiple users, press the **CTRL** key while clicking the user’s name.
 - ❖ Then click the **Right Arrow** to move the names to the **Recipients** box.
 - ❖ Fill in the **Subject** and **Body**. Attach files, if necessary and click **Submit**.

DIGITAL DROP BOX

FACULTY

- The Digital Drop Box enables Users to exchange files with the Instructor or Leader.
- Follow the steps below to open the Digital Drop Box page.
 - Click on the **Control Panel**.
 - Click **Digital Drop Box** under **Course Tools**.
 - Click on **Send File**.
 - Select the user(s) to receive the message, by highlighting the user’s name. For multiple users, press the **CTRL** key while clicking the user’s name. (NOTE: Unlike email and Messages, the Digital Drop box is primarily used for sending files to individual students. Items that are being sent to multiple users-unless in the case of group project being sent to all members of the group-should be sent via Email or Messages.)
 - **Name** is the same as **Subject** line in Email.
 - Click on **Browse** to attach file next to **File**.
 - Type any comments to share with students and click **Submit**.

STUDENTS

- The Digital Drop Box enables Users to exchange files with the Instructor or Leader.
- Follow the steps below to open the Digital Drop Box page.
 - Open a course or organization.

- Click **Tools** on the **Course Menu** or **Organization Menu**.
- Select **Digital Drop Box**.
- Click on **Send File**.
- Students do not
- **Name** is the same as **Subject** line in Email.
- Click on **Browse** to attach file next to **File**.
- All files sent via Digital Drop Box by the students are automatically sent to the assigned instructor(s) in the course, therefore there is no window to select users.
- Students should type his/her name either in the **Comments** section or in the **Name** (Subject Line) field. This step is imperative because when files are received by instructors, it only includes the time and date that it was sent, but not from whom it was sent.
 - Note: The date and time displayed in each instance is not the date and time on the user's machine, rather, it is the date and time on the Blackboard Academic Suite server.