

## **FACULTY FORUM**

### **Relating to Large Classes**

Your Blackboard course site can assist you in managing the administrative tasks in your class, in turn saving you time. Here are some ideas:

#### **General Suggestions**

- When planning for your class, set clear objectives for yourself for what you would like to accomplish through the use of Blackboard. By setting up structures or processes for using Blackboard early on, you can build in efficiencies up front and will not be inundated with administrative issues during the first or second week of class.
- Inform your class during the first class session and on your syllabus how you plan to use the course site. This can reduce student confusion (and the amount of e-mail you receive). CITL can assist you in creating a customized instruction sheet for your students based on the tools you plan to use.
- Involve your TF and/or department administrators. You can enroll any Stern teaching fellow or employee in your course to help you post content, manage administrative questions and even post grades. Many faculty members choose to have their TF take primary responsibility for regularly updating their course site.
- Forward any technical inquiries to CITL. We are responsible for ensuring that all users know how to use Blackboard. Direct questions to [citl@stern.nyu.edu](mailto:citl@stern.nyu.edu) or 212-998-0919.

#### **Managing Pre-Course Assignments**

- Post any pre-work or assignments you want students to complete prior to the beginning of a course. Since you can control when you would like your course site available to students, you can control when your students can access your materials. Examples of such assignments include self-assessments, biographical information sheets or readings assigned for the first day of class.

#### **Managing Groups**

- Have students organize into groups prior to the first day of class. Students can use the discussion board to facilitate the sign-up process by communicating with potential teammates and posting final group compositions. They can also use the *Personal Homepage* function to post background information.
- Use the *Create/Manage Groups* function in your course site. This will automatically create a personal area for each project or class group, with a discussion board, chat room and file exchange area accessible only by the group members and yourself. Encourage students to use these tools to communicate with one another. You can then monitor group progress.

#### **Managing Student Questions**

- Use the *Discussion Board* as the place where students ask all administrative questions during the course. Have your TF monitor the board. This can significantly reduce the amount of e-mail you receive.
- Post announcements for students. This can reduce the amount of e-mail you send to students (and avoid problems with full mailboxes or returned mail). Remind students to check your site frequently for announcements.