

**VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**  
**GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLACKBOARD CONTENT SYSTEM**  
**SPRING 2006**

The primary functions of the Blackboard Content System (BbCS) are: 1) to serve as a file storage system for instructional content within Blackboard; 2) to provide faculty with a technological means to manage and share Blackboard's instructional content among multiple courses/sections; and, 3) to provide the capability to share content with other faculty, departments, campuses, and institutions. The academic intent of the BbCS is to improve file management services available to individual faculty within Blackboard, as well as to encourage and assist *instructional collaboration* among other VCCS faculty. To that end, the following "guiding principles" should serve to facilitate the implementation of the BbCS.

**1) Faculty control their own Blackboard content.**

- Individual teaching faculty retain creative control over use of their own instructional content and materials within Blackboard, subject to appropriate VCCS acceptable use guidelines, applicable copyright laws, and current intellectual property policies.
- Individual teaching faculty should make curricular decisions about development of course content in accordance with VCCS policies, and in consultation with appropriate academic administrators.
- Individual teaching faculty decide what content is to be shared through assignment of "permissions" (i.e., "read" "write" "remove" "manage") to specific others.
- Use of "permissions" by individual teaching faculty within Blackboard does not supercede copyright obligations or abrogate the copyright restrictions of another entity. Faculty (and colleges) may be held liable for copyright infringements.
- Generally, content that is shared through permissions may be used by specific others without additional notification to the original creator of the content. Shared content used by specific others should be cited appropriately. With the exception of "read-only" permission, shared content may be further modified or re-shared by specific others.
- "VCCS Commonwealth Courses" are specifically intended to be shared and re-used (in whole, or in part) by any interested VCCS faculty or college.
- While faculty control their own content, appropriate LRC staff may be called upon to assign appropriate meta-data tags for shared content and to manage meta-data protocols between and among VCCS colleges.

**2) Faculty must be mindful of "acceptable use" guidelines for the VCCS and the college.**

See: <http://www.vccs.edu/its/standards/VCCSEthicsGuideline.htm>

"Acceptable use" generally speaks to procedures for authorized access to VCCS and college resources, use of proper identification and authentication, use of password protection measures to prevent unauthorized use, a commitment to authorized and lawful uses, an avoidance of unlawful purposes, compliance with copyright restrictions, and insuring responsible behaviors that do not disrupt the educational process.

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**3) Faculty must be mindful of federal copyright laws, especially “fair use” provisions.**

- “Fair use” provides for limited copying of copyrighted material done for a "transformative" purpose such as to comment upon, criticize or parody a copyrighted work --- without obtaining permission from the copyright holder. Fair use is determined by the application and interpretation of four principles:
  - the purpose and character of the use
  - the nature of the copyrighted work
  - the amount and substantiality of the portion taken, and
  - the effect of the use upon the potential market.
- The federal “TEACH Act” of 2002 further defines use of copyrighted material in a distance learning environment.
- College LRC staff may serve in the role of copyright consultants to faculty, and may provide appropriate training in applying copyright principles to the educational process.
- Content development and/or content sharing within Blackboard does not supercede copyright obligations or abrogate the copyright restrictions of another entity. Faculty (and colleges) may be held liable for copyright infringements.

**4) Intellectual property statement:**

Use of the VCCS enterprise *Blackboard Academic Suite*<sup>™</sup> (Learning System, Community System, and/or Content System) does **not** constitute a “substantial use of college resources” as defined by VCCS policy. ***Unless otherwise specified in writing by the college in advance***, the individual faculty creator shall retain ownership and rights to their intellectual property as specified in Section 12 of the VCCS Policy Manual.

**5) Colleges retain responsibility for staffing associated with implementation of the Blackboard Content System, including (but not limited to) the following functions:**

- Faculty training needs.
- Blackboard system administration responsibilities for the Learning System, the Community System, and the Content System.
- Course development and curricular design practices.
- Electronic reference services, meta-data protocols, and copyright issues.
- Student services functions associated with e-portfolio” capability.

**6) As the Blackboard Content System is implemented in the VCCS, users are encouraged to contribute to “content etiquette” and “best practices” statements, to be shared across the System.**