Getting Started with Blackboard’s Mashup Tools

Blackboard’s Mashup Tool allows you to add YouTube videos, Flickr photos, SlideShare presentations and Ensemble audio and video media to your course quickly and easily, without having to leave Blackboard. To access the Mashup Tool, enter a Content Area (e.g. “Course Documents”) of your course and point to Build Content on the Action Bar. You will see the Mashup options in the right column. From here, you can search for content, preview it in a new window, and add it to your course.

Adding a Mashup to a Content Area

Students and instructors can also use the Mashup Tool in Discussion Board, Blog, Wiki and Journal entries, using the text editor. Click on the last button in the bottom row to access the Mashup options, as shown here:

Adding a Mashup via the Text Editor
NOTE: Instructors may have to enable these options by going to Control Panel > Customization > Tool Availability. The following items should be checked:

- Flickr (in Text Editor)
- Flickr Photo
- SlideShare (in Text Editor)
- SlideShare Presentation
- YouTube (in Text Editor)
- YouTube Video

Using Ensemble, YouTube, Flickr and SlideShare

Ensemble Video (http://ensemble.hartford.edu) Ensemble is an in-house media server like YouTube and was designed for publishing and sharing large media files, such as audio and video files. It can be used to share video lectures, instructional videos, and helps centralize campus media by providing ‘one stop media shopping’ for students and faculty. Ensemble is user-friendly and intuitive, and uploaded videos are organized into libraries that can be shared with others. Since videos are streamed rather than downloaded to a person’s computer, they are better protected. Ensemble videos can be accessed from a website, a playlist or directly with Blackboard, providing an easy way to share videos with students in a class.

To get started using Ensemble, instructors should call the Computer Support Line at (860) 768-5999 to request an Ensemble user account. Instructions for using Ensemble may be found on the FCLD website. Students do not need an account to view Ensemble media.

YouTube (http://www.youtube.com) is a video-sharing community. Users can upload, edit and share videos (including ones taken with a phone or webcam), and can create a “channel” of favorite videos. Instructors have been using YouTube to share clips of movies, television shows, music videos, news reports or educational videos as a way to help students engage with the course material. They also use it to record short examples or demonstrations (such as videos on how to solve math or science equations), which can be viewed by students outside of class.

Flickr (http://www.flickr.com) is an “online photo-management and sharing application.” Users can upload photos and videos, add notes or tags, and organize them into albums. Users can also join groups to share photos based on a single topic. Instructors and students have been using Flickr to find images to launch class discussion or to incorporate into assignments and presentations.
SlideShare ([http://www.slideshare.net](http://www.slideshare.net)) is a community for sharing presentations. Users can upload, edit and share slideshow presentations (such as PowerPoint or Keynote), videos, and documents. SlideShare materials can serve as a starting point for lectures, as well as a way to make an instructor’s presentations accessible when students do not have access to PowerPoint.

You do not need to set up a user account to view or link to YouTube, Flickr, or SlideShare material in your course. However, like Ensemble, if you want to create, upload and share your own videos, photos or slideshows, you will need to create an account in the specific application. If you already have a Facebook or a Google account, you can create a new YouTube, Flickr or SlideShare account easily using the same login information. All three websites offer free accounts, with extra features available for a monthly or annual fee.

Instructors should be mindful of Fair Use and copyright laws when linking to content in their courses. Websites like YouTube regularly remove content that violates copyright, so you will want to double-check your links before sharing them in your course. For more information on Copyright, we recommend visiting the “Crash Course in Copyright” from the University of Texas: [http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/cprtindx.htm](http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/cprtindx.htm).

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**Getting Help with Technology at the University of Hartford**

**Faculty Center for Learning Development (FCLD)**
FCLD provides consulting and instructional support to faculty and staff who are using technology in teaching and learning. The FCLD Faculty Lab in Mortensen 203a is available for faculty support and use and is equipped with instructional technology-related equipment.
**Phone:** (860) 768-4661  **Email:** fcld@hartford.edu  **Website:** [http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/fcld/](http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/fcld/)

**Information Technology Services (ITS)**  ITS Help Desk – Computing Center
For general computer and Internet/network support questions (not directly related to the classroom but rather passwords, Internet/email problems, Banner, campus Facebook).
**Phone:** (860) 768-5999  **Email:** its@hartford.edu  **Website:** [http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/its/](http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/its/)

**Media Technology Services (MTS) – Harry Jack Gray Center E113**
MTS maintains and installs classroom equipment, such as projectors, Sympodiums, and interactive white boards, delivers and sets up technology needed for classes such as laptops, overhead projectors, microphones, sound systems, DVD/VCRs, digital cameras, etc., and provides instruction on its use. MTS is also responsible for overseeing ECHO360 Lecture Capture classrooms and administers WebEx web conferencing accounts.
**Phone:** (860) 768-4643 (Main) or (860) 768-4662 (Tech Line)
**Website:** [www.hartford.edu/mts](http://www.hartford.edu/mts)