This guide provides an overview of the different approaches available to instructors for controlling what students are able to see. Methods include:

- Hiding an entire course section. (Page 1)
- Hiding links on the left menu. (Page 1)
- Manually hide/display individual Folders, Items, or Files. (Page 2)
- Timestamp hide/display Individual Folders, Items, or Files. (Page 2)
- Using “Adaptive Release” to control what students see by group, score, review status, or date. (Page 3)
- Ensuring sequential learning by using “Learning Modules”. (Page 3)
- Hiding tools. (Page 4)

### Hiding an Entire Course Section

This method will hide an entire course section from student. It is a useful method of hiding content before the semester has begun thus giving instructors a chance to prepare a course before the students can see it. By default, new Blackboard courses are unavailable to students until the instructor makes them available. To make a course available/unavailable, follow the steps below.

1. Log into Blackboard ([https://blackboard.usc.edu](https://blackboard.usc.edu))
2. Click the “Home” tab.
3. If necessary, click the “+” button to the left of a course to expand it.
4. Click the course’s “Quick Tool Pad” button.
5. Use this button to make a course available or unavailable.

### Hiding Links on the Left Menu

Instructors can hide any left menu link from students. This is a useful method of hiding content or tools once the semester has started and instructors need time to work on a new content area.

1. Open the course section you wish to affect.
2. Make sure “Edit Mode” is “On”.
3. Click the drop down arrow to the right of a menu item.
4. Select “Hide Link”.

Note that you can unhide a link using the same method (“Show Link”).

This symbol indicates that a menu item is hidden.
Hide / Display Folders or Files Individually – Manually or by Date

You can use this technique to hide/display most content items you create in Blackboard including folders, files, and assignments. The instructor can manually make the item visible or invisible at any time or can specify a date range for when it will appear and/or disappear. This method is useful when students can already access a content area but the instructor wishes to control when they can see specific content.

Create a New Item and Specify Visibility
You can specify visibility while creating a new content item or after the fact through “Edit”.

1. Access the course section you wish to affect.
2. Make sure “Edit Mode” is set to “On”.
3. From the left menu, click the content area you wish to create content within.
4. Select “Build Content” (or “Create Assessment” if making an Assignment).
5. Select the type of content you are creating (e.g. “Item”, “File”, or “Content Folder”).
6. Specify a name for the item.
7. If desired, upload files or type descriptive text.
8. Go to the “Options” section:
   - Use this option to manually hide/unhide the item at any time.
   - Use this option to display an item after a specific date and/or hide the item after a specific date.

9. Click “Submit”.

Set Visibility on an Existing Item
To access the screen shown above on an existing item, follow the steps below.

1. Access the course section you wish to affect.
2. Make sure “Edit Mode” is set to “On”.
3. From the left menu, click the content area you wish to create content within.
4. Click the down arrow to the right of the item you wish to affect.
5. Select “Edit”.
6. Set the options as shown above.
7. Click “Submit”.

Note the following:
- A hidden item or folder is invisible to the student and its icon appears gray to you.
- Hiding a folder prevents students from viewing items in the folder.
- Hiding items in a folder does not affect the folder’s color.
Control Content Access with Adaptive Release

Adaptive Release allows the instructor to control which students can access specific content or a folder based on any of the following criteria:

- Group Membership.
- Specific Student.
- Score recorded in the Grade Center.
- Another Content Item marked as Reviewed or not.
- Date Range.

For specific steps on using Adaptive Release, please view this document:


Encourage Sequential Learning Using Learning Modules

Learning Modules are more of a way of presenting content sequentially rather than hiding it. The learning module shown to the right was created for a math course and displays the courses content in the order students should learn it. When a student clicks “About this Course” at the top of the tree, its content will display in the far right. When they click the next item down, its content will display. The content in the learning modules can consist of typical Blackboard items such as folders, files, assignments, and items. It can also consist of links to content you have stored in another content area and simply wish to present it here chronological.

For specific steps on using Learning Modules, please see the Learning Modules guide available at:

http://info.marshall.usc.edu/dept/training/Pages/Blackboard.aspx
Hiding Tools from Students

Technically, Blackboard does not consider Tools to be content but being that we are on the subject of hiding things; here is how to hide such Tools as the Grade Book, Calendars, Journals, the course roster, etc., from students. Note that the instructor can still access these tools. (To hide content from the instructor as well, go to Control Panel → Customization → Tool Availability. You might do this if you never intend to use the tool and its cluttering up your screen.)

1. Access the course section you wish to affect.

2. Make sure “Edit Mode” is set to “On”.

3. Click “Tools” from the left menu.

4. Click “Hide Link” to hide the tool from students.

Note that hiding a tool here does not hide the tool in other locations you may have made it available. For example, if you created a Journal in the Content area but hide it here in the Tools area, it will still be available from the Content area.