

# Using a Master Course Copy to Ease Blackboard Course Maintenance

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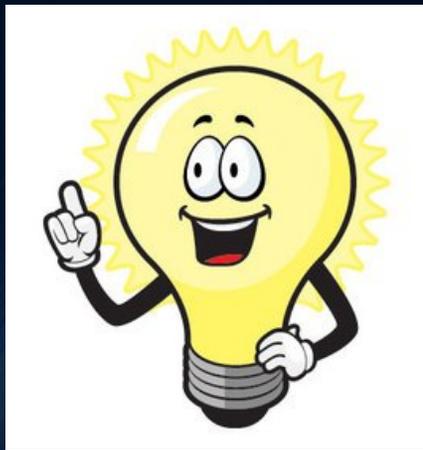
# Problem Description



- You Need to Deploy Similar Content to Multiple Blackboard Instances
  - Multiple sections in one semester
  - Same course in different semesters
- Content Changes Between Instances are Minor
- Different Instructors Teaching Same Course
  - May use largely the same content
  - But may want to put their own “spin” in their own instance

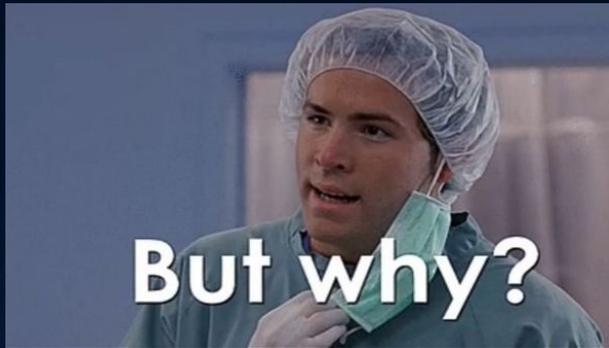
# Solution: Blackboard Master Site

A Master Site is a Blackboard instance that never gets deployed to students



- Master Site contents are copied to student-visible course sites
  - Some content may then be customized according to the courses' needs
- All instructors of the course have access to the Master Site
- The Master Site is a repository for the “canonical” version of a course
- It can also serve as a store for useful content variants (alternate assignments, etc.)

# Why Not Just Copy from a Normal Course? What's so Special?



- There's nothing wrong per-se with copying your course from a previous student-visible instance
- Advantages of a Master Site
  - Explicitly Shared Ownership
  - Content Doesn't Necessarily have to be Student-Ready
  - Regularly Maintained
  - Natural Gathering Place for Course Know-How from Multiple Instructors

## How Do I Get One?



- Go to [mymasonportal.gmu.edu](http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu)
- Click Help->Contact Us
- Request a Sandbox Course
  - The term “Master Site” isn’t a technical term. It’s just what our team refers to it. Call yours whatever you like!

# Best Practices



- Document your Course Copy Procedure
  - Note which items MUST be checked for successful course copy
  - Note all items that must be modified every semester
    - Be pedantic about it
    - Don't forget the "little" things like updating your bio or changing the date on your syllabus
- Separate Content that Needs Frequent Updating (like Assignment Due Dates) from Evergreen Content
- If you Add New Content to your Course over the Semester, Propagate it Back to the Master Site
  - Something as simple as a hidden Miscellaneous area for content to be considered for "canonization" can be useful
  - Stakeholders should take some time between semesters to discuss Master Site content

# Demo

- See a Demo of a Course (GAMEI40-DLI) Being Setup from a Master Site here:
  - <https://youtu.be/GDT2Pdpjocc>
- Thanks for watching!

*Questions?*

Email Rob or Ying-Ying if you'd like to know more

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