BLACKBOARD LEARN 9.1 TESTING TIPS FOR STUDENTS

Testing on a Learning Management System like Blackboard Learn (BBL) can be very simple with some preparation and planning. Before you take your first test in your BBL online course room, please read the following tips and change your computer settings if necessary.

Important First Steps:
- Give yourself plenty of time before your test or quiz is due—don't wait till the last minute! This applies to other assignments as well. Leave time for your instructor or the college Helpdesk to help
- Be familiar with each of your instructors' policies on dealing with technical issues. Technical issues are not always accepted as an excuse, especially if you wait till the last minute to take a test.
- Be sure to start tests and quizzes using a **fresh browser and BBL session** (log out of BBLearn, and close all browser windows before logging back in for a test).
- **Do not take BBL tests on mobile devices** (phones, tablets, etc.)
- Be sure your Internet connection/Wi-Fi signal is strong before you start a test.

Computer and Browser Settings:

Use an Updated, Supported Browser: When you log in to your BBL account at the beginning of the semester, please take time to click on the "Computer Needs" link at the bottom left of the West Ga Tech landing page. This will take you to a page telling you which browsers and versions (Firefox, Chrome, etc.) work best with BBL and give you the chance to test your browser. If you click on the Browser checker, you will find out whether your current browser is supported by BBL. You will also be able to see the status of plug-ins BBL might need to use and whether your pop-up blocker is enabled. You may need update your plug-ins and/or turn off your pop-up blocker while you work in BBL based on the Browser Checker report.

Disable Pop-up Blockers: Most tests will work whether the pop-up blocker is enabled or disabled, but if an instructor has created a test to open in a new window (not recommended), your pop-up blocker will need to be off before you begin the test. Using the Browser version information given to you by the Browser Checker report, do a Google search to find instructions to disable the pop-up blocker for your particular browser (i.e. Firefox 43.0), and follow those instructions.

Clear Browser Cache: Browser cache keeps information from Web pages you have visited in a temporary memory connected with your browser. This allows you to quickly return to a page without having to download it from the Web, but this causes problems when you make changes to that page, particularly when taking a test. We strongly suggest that when you work in BBL you regularly delete your browser cache so the cache doesn't "undo" something you do. Please do a Google search on how to clear/delete your particular browser's cache and follow the instructions prior to taking tests or submitting major assignments. You will need to **close all but one window of the browser** for which you are clearing the cache before clearing it.

Close Other Programs: Some programs on your computer may interfere with BBL. Blackboard advises students to shut down all programs other than the browser in which they are taking a Blackboard test while taking the test.

Taking the Test

Complete a Practice Test First: To check BBL testing on your computer, you can self-enroll in the WGTC BBL Student Orientation and take two practice tests. To do this, log in to BBL, and on the landing page, click "Blackboard Learn Student Orientation." Scroll over "826 STUORI_ORGANIZATION," and click on the gray drop-down arrow and click, "Enroll." Click "Submit," "Lessons" and "Lesson 6 – Tests and Surveys." There are two tests in this Lesson Module that you can take (numbers 3 and 4).

Avoid Testing During Your Computer's Scheduled Software Updates and Virus Scans: If your computer is set to run software updates or virus scans at certain times of the day, avoid testing during these times, or change your computer's schedule for scans/updates.

Avoid Being Timed Out of a Test: Blackboard and Internet Service Providers time out after a certain amount of time with no activity—90 minutes for Blackboard, for example. To avoid being timed out of a test, be sure to begin with a fresh browser session and a fresh BBL session. Be sure to stay active in the test, saving answers as you go, especially if it is a longer test. On all-at-once tests, even after you save an answer, you can go back and change and save it again if you think your first answer was incorrect.

Read Directions Carefully: Before you click "Begin" to start your test, be sure to read all the directions and information provided about your test. Your instructor should provide directions under the link to the test and again at the top of the screen when you click into the test. Information about timing and the availability of the test should also be listed there. You should also be able to see if the questions are given "All at Once" or "One at a Time."

If questions are delivered "One at a Time," your instructor may have an option chosen to keep you from backtracking. If backtracking is prohibited, try to be as sure of your answer as possible before saving it and moving on to the next one.

Be Sure to Save and Submit Your Test: Once all questions in a test have been answered, you can click "Save All Answers" to save your answers, but **you will also have to click "Save and Submit" to complete your test.**

Most tests will be set to auto-submit as soon as your time is up. If the timer is set on the test, you must finish all the questions within the allotted time to receive credit on them. Once you start the test, the timer runs whether or not you are logged into the test, so be sure to complete the test during the allotted time.