Linking Google Documents into Blackboard

In technical writing, there is a concept known as “single source publishing” that might be of use to you as you develop your online course materials for our seminar and for your other teaching. In simplest form, “single source publishing” means that you develop master documents that can be pushed out to multiple locations and in multiple formats. For our teaching, this concept enables us to develop materials once and then use them in multiple course sections (and even across multiple learning systems), without having to keep track of different published iterations.

Conceptually, here’s what I mean:

- I develop a course document in a cloud hosted application, such as Google Docs.
- I publish this document and obtain a link that I can use to share it with others.
- I login to my learning management system; instead of uploading content into the LMS, I link back to the Google Document. I can use the same link as many times as I want, in as many courses as I want, for as long as I want.

All of the materials that I developed for our course were never actually uploaded into Blackboard. Rather, these documents sit in my Google Drive, and I link back to them. Whenever I update the document in Google Drive, the changes automatically are reflected in all linked locations.
Step One: Create a Google Document

Week Six--Online Learning

Group A Readings (These fall under the heading of more traditional academic scholarship and provide a background context for the week's work)

Comparison of Student Learning Outcomes in Online and Traditional Classroom Environments in a Psychology Course

Promoting distance education is an important policy on many college campuses, so evaluating to what extent online learning environments affect learning outcomes is critical to their success.
Step Two: Publish URL

First: In your Google Doc, click the File menu item, and then select Publish to web...

Then: Copy the URL for your published document:

Publish to the web

Control publishing
This document is published to the web.

- Require viewers to sign in with their Workspace credentials
- Automatically republish when changes are saved

Stop publishing

Note: Publishing will make this content viewable by anyone, but not change the document's sharing settings. Learn more.

Get a link to the published document

Document link
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QbpIB...

Embed code
<iframe src="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QbpIB..." width="600" height="600" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen="true"></iframe>

Or share this link using: Google+ Gmail Facebook...
Step Three: Create a New Item in Your Online Course Shell

Naming and process conventions might vary with your specific LMS, but look for an option that enables you to create a new item. In WSU’s current version of Blackboard, this option is available under the Build Content menu—Item:
**Step Four: Enter the Link to Your Document**

In the Item dialog, enter the URL (link) for your published document. I normally enter simple “*click here*” text, and then use this text as the foundation for my link. Here the text:

1. **Content Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Week Six Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color of Name</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Text:

```
Click here for week six's materials.
```

I highlight the portion of the text that I want clickable:

1. **Content Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Week Six Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Color of Name</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Text:

```
Click here for week six's materials.
```
And I then click the link button (it looks like a small chain link) on the formatting tool bar, which displays the following dialog window:

I paste the URL for my published document in the **Link Path** field. I also select the **Open in New Window (_blank)** option so that my linked document displays properly in the user’s browser (some LMS don’t like active content displayed in their environments). When done, I click **Insert**.

Here’s the new item that contains an active link to my Google Doc. I can do the same process as many times as I want for as many instances as I want.

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**Week Six Test**

[Click here for week six’s materials.](#)