LEARNING OBJECTS

Search LX User Guide
version 1.0

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1. Search LX User Guide

The Search LX User Guide is divided into the following sections.

The Overview follows.

1. Search LX Overview ▲ top

Search LX is a powerful system tool that enables full text search of all content in the Blackboard system. With Search LX, users can easily and quickly locate documents, announcements, calendar items and other types of Blackboard content without the need to navigate into respective content areas. The following are among the kinds of content Search LX provides quick access to:

- course content
- uploaded files (.doc, .pdf, .txt, .html, etc)
- course catalog
- staff information
- announcements
- calendar entries

2. Accessing Search LX within Blackboard ▲ top

There two common Search LX Tools that your system administrator will most likely set up for your institution. One is the Institution Search and the other is the Course Search

2.1 Accessing the Institution Search

The Institution Search allows searching of all content in Blackboard, regardless of its type. The Institution Search is always easily accessible in the upper right corner of the top frame in Blackboard.
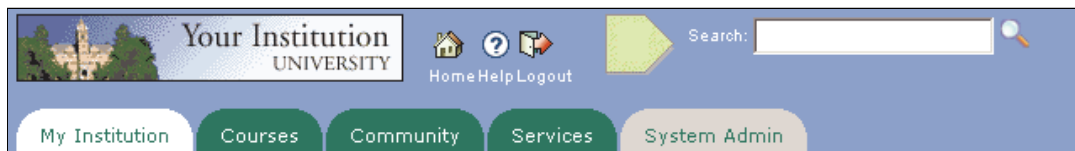

Figure 2.i Accessing the Institution Search

2.2 Accessing the Course Search

The Course Search, provided as a course tool, provides easy searching within a specific course.

1 Go to the Courses tab in your portal.
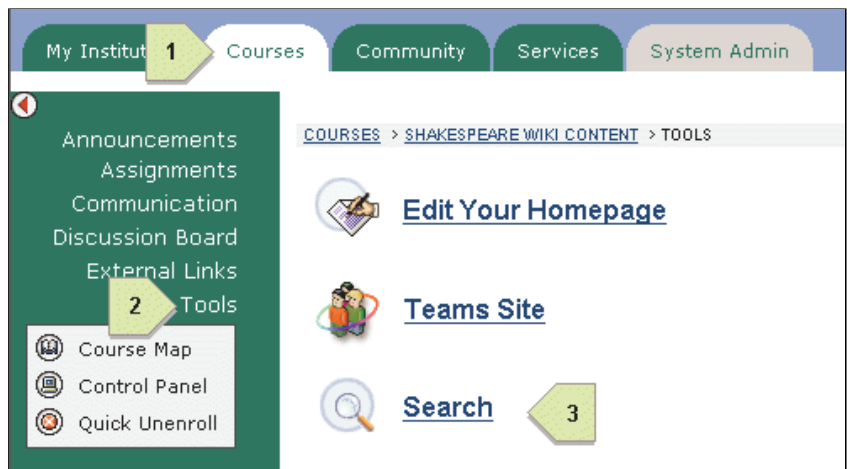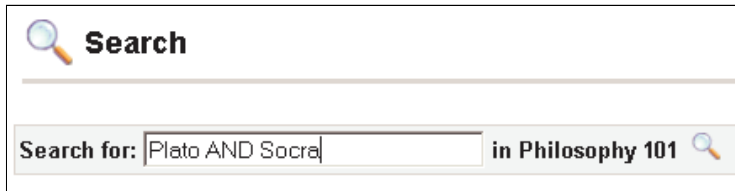
2 Click on 'Tools'.

3 Click on the 'Search' link.

Figure 2.ii Accessing the Course Search

3. Performing a Basic Search ▲ top

The Basics of Learning Object's Search

To enter a query into Search LX, just type in a few descriptive words and hit the 'enter' key or click on the Search Icon 🔍. Search LX will return all content that contains any of words in your query. If you wish to return all documents that contain all of the keywords entered, simply type 'AND' (be sure to use all caps) between them. To further narrow your search simply add additional keywords separated by 'AND'.

Figure 3.i Typing a Simple Query

Choosing Keywords

For best results you will need to choose good keywords.

Try the obvious first. If you're looking for course documents on Shakespeare, enter "Shakespeare" instead of "authors". Use words that are likely to appear in the document you are searching for. "Shakespeare AND 'Twelfth Night'" will give better results than "Shakespeare AND Comedies".

Automatic Exclusion of Common Words

Search LX ignores common words and characters such as "where" and "how", as well as certain single digits and single letters, because they tend to slow down your search without improving the results.

Matching Exact Phrases

To match an exact phrase with Search LX, enclose the phrase in quotes. For example, entering "William Shakespeare" (using quotes) in the search field will match against those documents containing the author's name.

Capitalization

Search LX searches are NOT case sensitive. All letters, regardless of how you type them, will be understood as one case. For example, searches for "Shakespeare", "SHAKESPEARE", and "sHaKeSpEaRe" will all return the same results.

4. Interpreting Search Results ▲ top

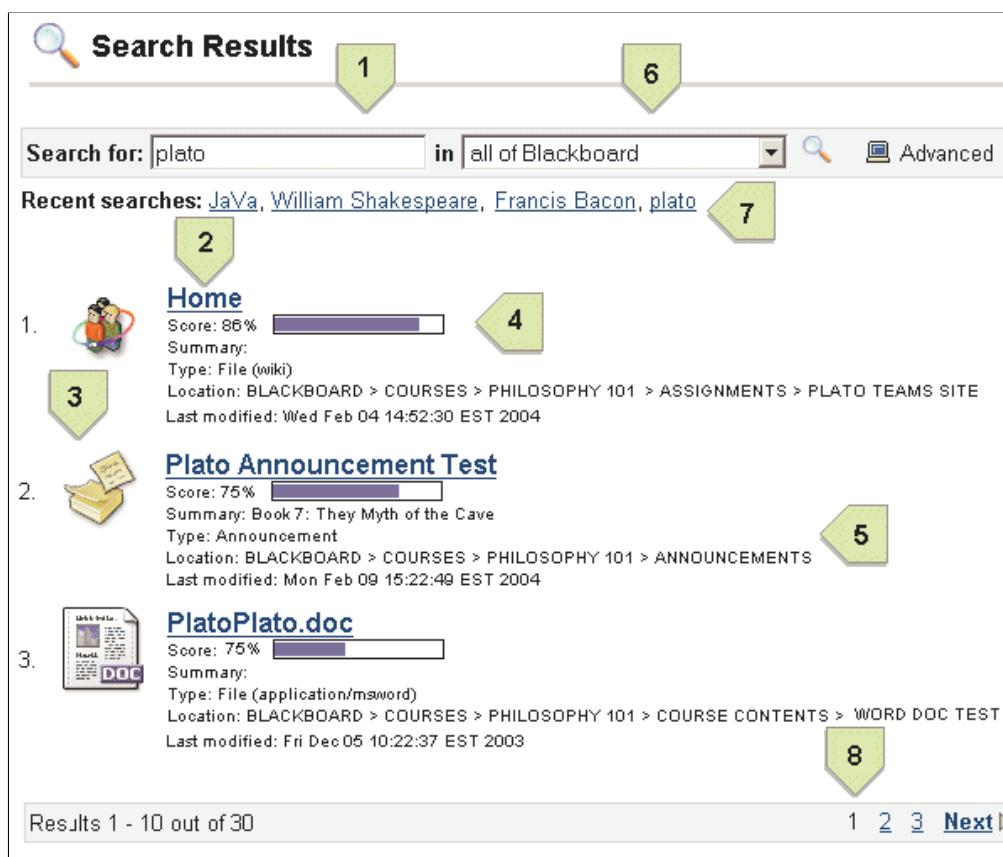The following shows a sample search results page. There are eight important elements on this page.

Figure 4.i Interpreting Search Results

1 **Search Query.** The search query that generated the current results is displayed here. To modify the search, simply enter new search keywords and hit enter.

2 **Content Link.** Each search result prominently displays the name of the content item that has matched. This name is also a link to the matched content. Click on it view the content item directly.

3 **Content Type Icon.** Each content type within blackboard has been assigned an icon for easy identification within the results.

4 **Score.** A relevency score is provided that is used to rank the results against the total set of matches for your query.

5 **Content Information.** Information about the matched content, such as a Summary, the Type of content, the Location, and Last Modified is also provided.

6 **Search Scope.** A control to further refine the scope of your search is provided. The example shown above is searching all of blackboard. Use this control to narrow the search scope to within a specific course, for example.

7 **Recent Searches.** A list of recent searches is provided just under the top search controls. Click on a recent search link and you will be returned to its results.

8 **Results Navigator.** Finally, at the bottom of the search results is a navigation bar that provides information about the total number of hits returned and allows to you navigate from page to page in the results. By default, ten hits are returned per page.

5. Course Search ▲ top

When Search is accessed from the tools list within a course, the scope of the search is automatically narrowed to return results only within the current course. As you can see in the following figure the search scope control has been changed from a select list to a text string that displays the name of the current course. All searches done this way are limited in scope to the current course.
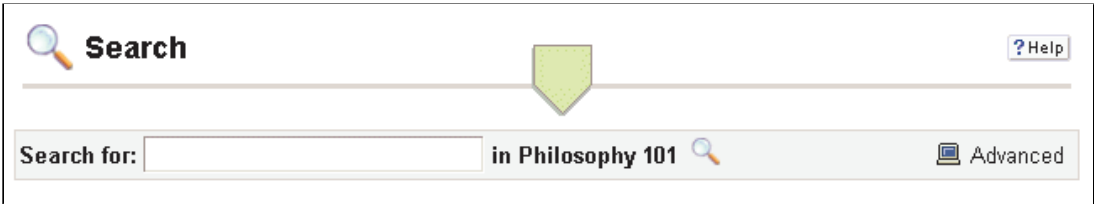

Figure 5.i Course Search

6. Advanced Search ▲ top

Often times it is desired to have more precise control over the scope of the search or the search criteria for this an Advanced Search feature is provided. To access the Advanced Search, click on the Advanced Search button in the top control bar of the search results as shown below.
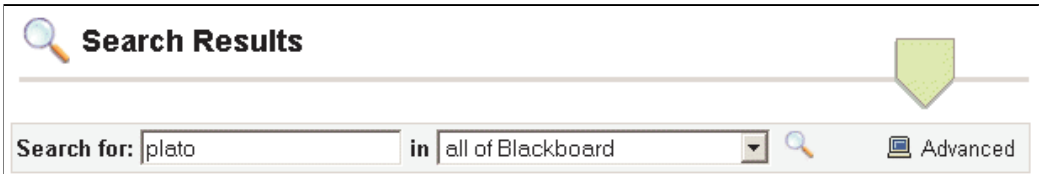

Figure 6.i Advanced Search

This will bring you to a secondary search screen that allows you finer control over the search criteria and scope. The following figure shows the advanced search features.

Figure 6.ii Advanced Search Controls

The Advanced Search screen allows to further specify your keyword criteria as well as limit the scope of your search to certain kind of content types and within certain courses or organizations. You can combine any number of additional search parameters on this screen.

1   **Keywords - all of these words.** Enter a list of keywords separated by a space in this field. The search will return only those documents that contain ALL of the keywords entered.

2   **Keywords - this exact phrase.** Enter a phrase in this field and the search will return only those documents that contain the exact phrase entered.

3   **Keywords - some of these words.** Enter a list of keywords separated by a space in this field. The search will return those documents that contain one or more of the keywords you have entered.

4   **Keywords - none of these words.** Enter a list of keywords in this field and search will return only those documents that do not contain ANY of the keywords entered.

5   **Content Type.** To narrow your search to specific content types within Blackboard, specify the types here.

6   **Within a Course or Organization.** To narrow your search to a specific set of courses/organizations, specify them here.

7   **Submit Search.** To execute your search click 'Submit'

7. Optional Search Configurations ▲ top

Your administrator may have also configured Search LX to add additional search fields in various locations within Blackboard. The following describes the optional Search LX tools that you may find.

- Search Portal Module
- Search Portal Tool
- Search Portal Box

7.1 Search Portal Module

This module will make Search LX available in the 'My Institution' tab of the Blackboard portal as shown in the figure below.

Figure 7.1.i Search Portal Module

1 **7.2 Search Portal Tool**

Your administrator may enable Search LX to add a link to Search LX in the left-most 'Tools' area of the 'My Institution' tab of the Blackboard portal as shown in the figure on the right.

2 **7.3 Search Portal Box**

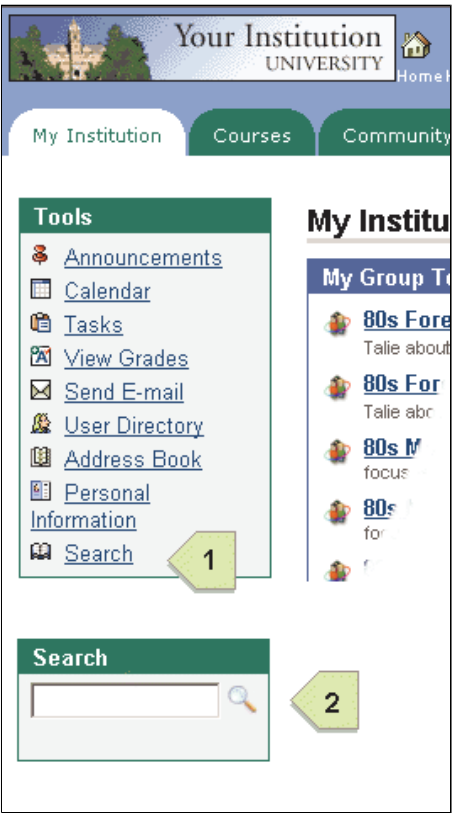Your administrator may enable Search LX to add a search control inline on the left side of your 'My Institution' page, just below the 'Tools' links.

Figure 7.2.i Search Portal Tool and Box