FAQ - Merging Courses

This document may offer answers to common questions, concerns, or issues that you may encounter related to merging courses or sections in the Springboard system.

What is a Course Merge?
A course merge is an administrative function for Springboard that merges the classlists of two or more individual courses or sections into an entirely new course “shell.”

How do I get courses merged?
To initiate a course merge, contact Springboard Help by sending an email to springboardhelp@uakron.edu. In the email, include a detailed description with the department-course-section-semester code numbers (eg. - 1000 101 100 4127) that you want to have merged. You can request multiple merges in a single email.

Can I merge the courses myself?
No, course merges are currently an action that the Springboard support staff must perform.

Is there a limit to the number of courses/sections that can be merged?
No. Any number of courses, or course sections, or courses and sections can be merged into a single course “shell.” The courses can originate in different departments, from different topics if desired. The only stipulation is that approval to merge the courses must be obtained from every instructor of record for all of the courses involved in the merge.

How long does the process take?
Once all of the necessary information is received, activating a course merge is done as quickly as the support staff can perform it. There is a scheduled, system-wide completion step that occurs once per day, so the new merged course becomes available the next day. The entire process generally takes 2-3 days.

Why would I want to request a merge?
There are several reasons that you may wish to merge courses or course sections. Some of them may be:

1. You will have access to all of the students with the same content/news item/email/or whatever you wish to communicate to them.
2. You will only need to insert/create the course content once.
3. You can merge multiple and/or unused course listings into a single line item, simplifying your access display. Additionally, if the courses are unused and you leave them inactive the students will not even see them.

Can I still view individual sections in the grade roster and class list after the merge?
Yes. You can access students by individual sections in a number of functions within Springboard by using Groups and identifying the section number as the sort item for viewing.
Can I have courses merged automatically every semester?
Unfortunately, at this point we do not have a method to automatically merge courses. There are situations where instructors prefer to keep the courses separate, more than one section of a course is offered, instructors are changed early in the semester, etc. However, we are currently looking at ways to flag courses that are commonly merged each semester. The merge would not be automatically done, but it would potentially make things run a little more smoothly. This is still in the works, so we would recommend that you keep an eye on the DDS blog - http://blogs.uakron.edu/dds - where we post reminders to instructors to have their courses merged, along with other notices and information.

When should I request to have my courses merged?
The best time to request that your courses be merged is before the start of a new semester. It is also best to have courses merged before you insert any content/materials.

Can courses be merged at any time other than when you recommended?
It is possible to have courses merged at any time but there are considerations and potentially negative impacts.

Are there any risks, or problems surrounding the merging of courses?
There are several things to consider in the course merging process that you need to be aware of. Some of them are:

1. If you have inserted course content or material into your Springboard courses before they are merged, it will delay your access to the merged course and involve additional work to transfer the content from the original location to the new merged course “shell.”
2. If courses are merged after they have been activated and students have viewed them, the changes in course title, etc. that appears may confuse your students.
3. Student submissions: discussion posts, dropbox items, quiz attempts, entered grades and feedback, etc. will be hidden and CANNOT BE TRANSFERRED TO THE NEW MERGED COURSE.