

[Tech Topic—Wimba Voice Email Tool]

Creating a Voice Email

The Voice Email tool permits you to send an audible (and textual) message to any/all those enrolled in your Blackboard course. It can be created as a link, and re-used, with replies archived, or as a simple one-time voice email.

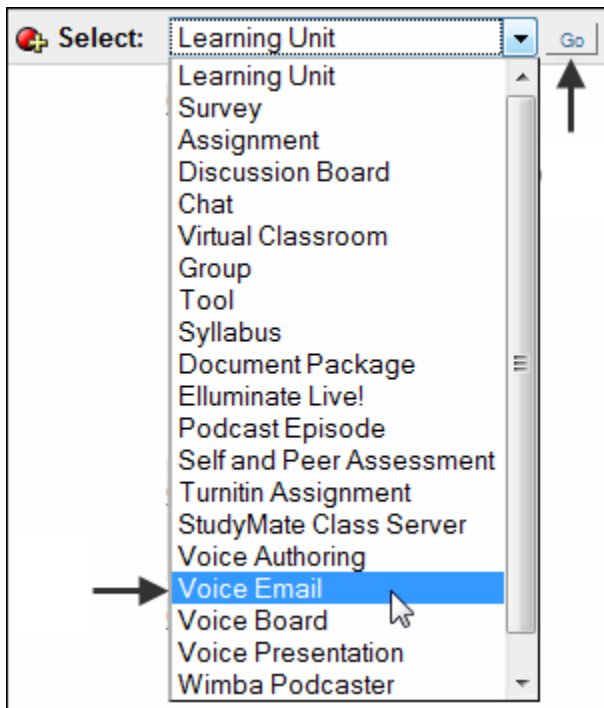


There are two ways to initiate a Wimba Voice Email within Blackboard. The first inserts a link into a content area in your Blackboard course, which can be visible to students or not, can contain a reply link or not, and can be configured for voice quality and availability within the course. The To: options using this first method are either to all instructors, all students, or all enrolled (both instructors and students). The second method is simpler. It straightforwardly sends a voice email to selected students and/or instructors, but cannot contain a reply link, and does not offer the same configurations as method 1.

Here are the details.

Method 1

After logging in to Blackboard, entering your courses, and selecting a content area, choose Voice Email from the Edit View Select drop-down:



The Add Voice Email configuration screen will appear:

Add Voice Email

1 Information

Title:
80 characters maximum

Color:

Description:

2 Settings

Audio quality:

Max message length:

Include Reply Links: Yes No

Pre-fill Subject field?: Yes No

3 Email Recipients

Instructors:

Students:

All:

4 Options

Make the content available: Yes No

Open in new window: Yes No

Track number of views: Yes No

Choose date and time restrictions

Display After: Oct 28 2008

Display Until: Oct 28 2008

09 30 AM

5 Submit

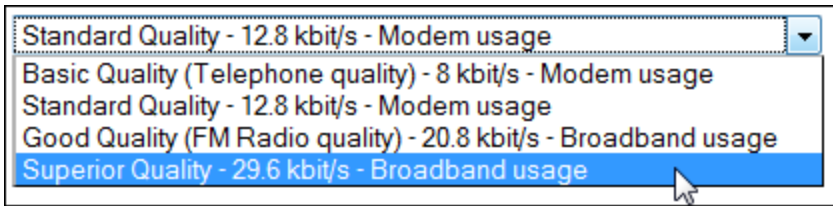
Click **Submit** to finish. Click **Cancel** to quit.

1. Information.

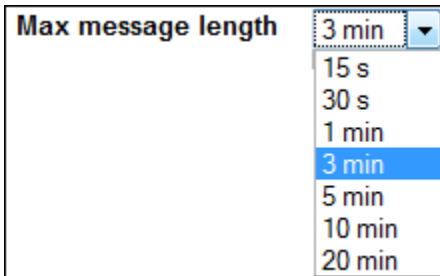
If you do not supply a title for your voice email link “Voice Email” will be the default title. The Description is optional, and any description you supply will not appear with the link, but will appear under the title of the link after it is clicked when the Voice Email java form is loaded.

2. Settings.

- In the settings section you can select audio quality. We recommend “Superior Quality 29.6 k/bits – Broadband usage”. This is supported even by 56k modems and will provide a far superior listening quality.



- Max Message Length can be set depending on your needs. Remember that if you are going to make this link accessible to students in the course, these settings will apply if the link is re-used.



- “Include Reply Link” requires a Yes/No answer. The default is No. If you wish your students to audibly reply to your voice email, however, it is most convenient to set this to Yes.
- “Pre-filled Subject field?” If you wish to provide a pre-filled Subject field in the email, type it in this field. Unlike the standard Blackboard email tool, the Wimba Voice Email tool does not automatically include the course ID in the subject field.

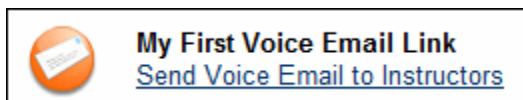
3. Recipients.

Your choices in this field are Instructors, Students, or All, which, in the case of Palomar College, means simply both instructors and students.

4. Options.

- Make the content available by default is set to Yes. This means that anyone enrolled in the class will be able to see this link and re-use it as long as it is available. If set to No you, the instructor, will be able to use the link, but it will not be visible to students. You might want to set it up this way for reasons discussed below.
- The other options are the standard Blackboard availability and tracking options. Set them as you wish.

When finished configuring the link, click Submit. You will see the following link appear in whatever content area you chose to receive it.



Of course, had you chosen “students” in the Recipients configuration the link text would say “Send Voice Email to Students”.

When the link is clicked the following java form is loaded which contains the standard voice recorder embedded in a mail form. Type any textual information you wish, record your message, and click Send to send it.

My First Voice Email Link

A possible description of the link.

Send Archives

From: tgray@palomar.edu

To: ar.edu, sphillips@palomar.edu, hdavis@palomar.edu

Subject: A Sample Message

Audio: 0:00 -0:00

Please use the Reply link in this email to reply --tg

Wimba Voice Email

POWERED BY WIMBA

After you click send, you will receive a confirmation that the voice email has been sent.

Voice Email sent

Your Voice Email has been sent.
You can now send a new Voice Email.

Ok

Your voice email, when it arrives, will look like this:

This is a Wimba Voice Email, recorded for you by tgray@palomar.edu.

[Click here to listen to your message.](#) ←

Problems hearing your message? Copy and paste the following URL into your browser:
[http://palomarvoice.wimba.com:80/palomarvoice/player?action=display&rid=palomar bb 18453 1 983845 1&mid=41-1225214072593](http://palomarvoice.wimba.com:80/palomarvoice/player?action=display&rid=palomar%20bb%2018453%201%20983845%201&mid=41-1225214072593)

Please use the Reply link in this email to reply --tg

[Reply with your voice](#) - [Reply all](#) - [New Voice Email](#)

If you feel this message has been used for spam, please contact abuse@wimba.com.

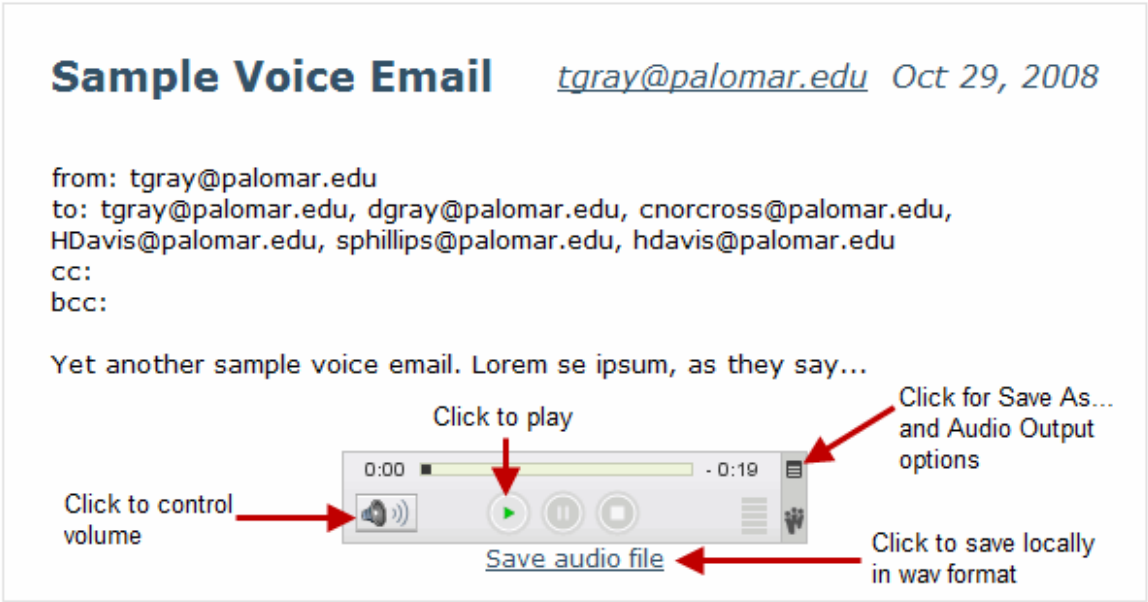
In order to hear it, your recipients will have to click the “Click here” link. When they do, a web form will load with the java voice player embedded in it. Your recipients will have the ability to “Save audio file” from this form, if they wish to keep a local copy of the voice email in wav format.

Sample Voice Email

Sample Voice Email tgray@palomar.edu Oct 29, 2008

from: tgray@palomar.edu
to: tgray@palomar.edu, dgray@palomar.edu, cnorcross@palomar.edu, HDavis@palomar.edu, sphillips@palomar.edu, hdavis@palomar.edu
cc:
bcc:

Yet another sample voice email. Lorem se ipsum, as they say...



Click to play

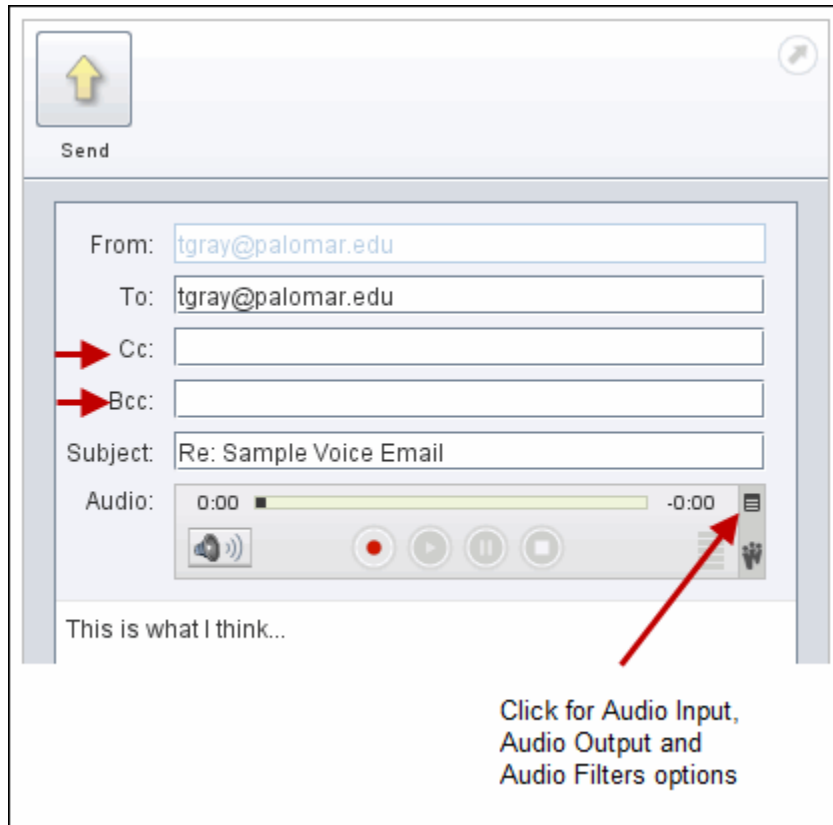
Click to control volume

Click for Save As... and Audio Output options

Click to save locally in wav format

[Save audio file](#)

When your recipients click “Reply with your voice”, a web page will load with a java form similar to the one in the Blackboard course with the java sound recorder embedded in it which will allow them to record a message back to you. It will also contain Cc: and Bcc: fields.

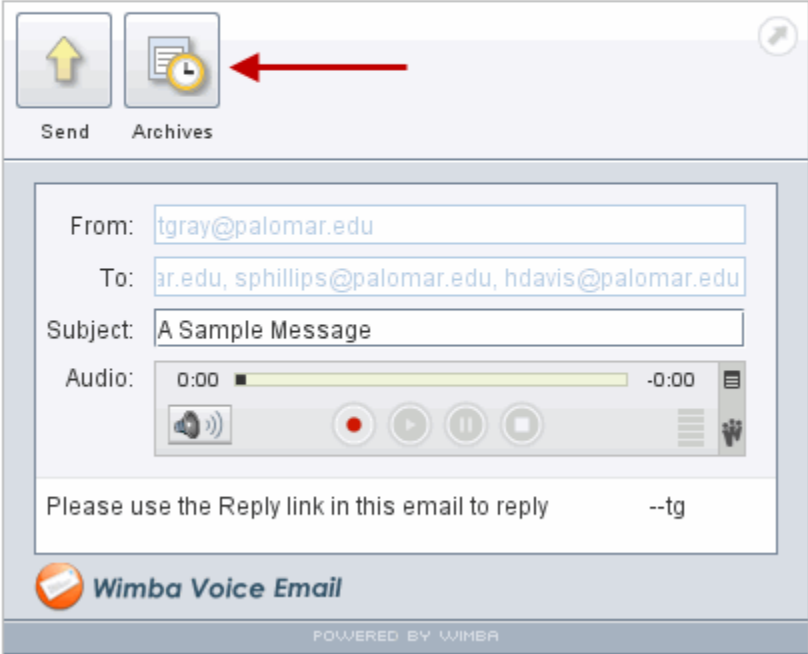


If they click “Reply all” a similar form will load with the original sender in the To: field and other original recipients in the Cc: field. A Bcc: field will also be present.

An extremely useful feature of this method is the “Archives” button in the original course link.

My First Voice Email Link

A possible description of the link.



The screenshot shows a web interface for Wimba Voice Email. At the top, there is a title "My First Voice Email Link" and a subtitle "A possible description of the link." Below this, there are two buttons: "Send" with an upward arrow icon and "Archives" with a document icon and a clock icon. A red arrow points to the "Archives" button. Below the buttons is a form for sending an email. The "From" field contains "tgray@palomar.edu". The "To" field contains "ar.edu, sphillips@palomar.edu, hdavis@palomar.edu". The "Subject" field contains "A Sample Message". Below the subject field is an audio player with a progress bar from 0:00 to -0:00 and playback controls. At the bottom of the form, it says "Please use the Reply link in this email to reply" followed by "--tg". The footer of the interface includes the Wimba Voice Email logo and the text "POWERED BY WIMBA".

The Archive will contain a record, by date.

When clicked, an archive of all replies and replies to replies (etc.) will be revealed, with the ability to play/save one or any/all of them using the Export button.

My First Voice Email Link

A possible description of the link.

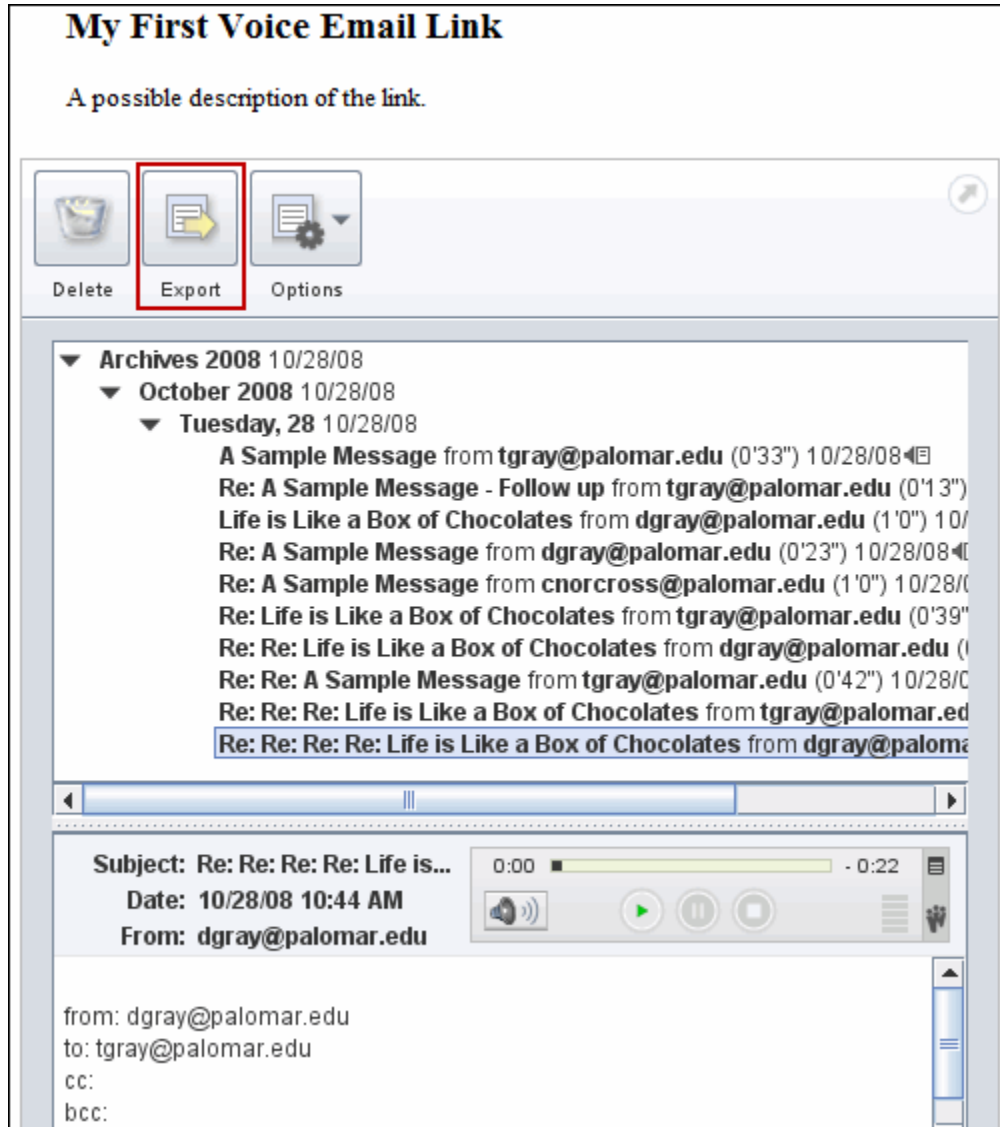
Delete Export Options

Archives 2008 10/28/08
October 2008 10/28/08
Tuesday, 28 10/28/08

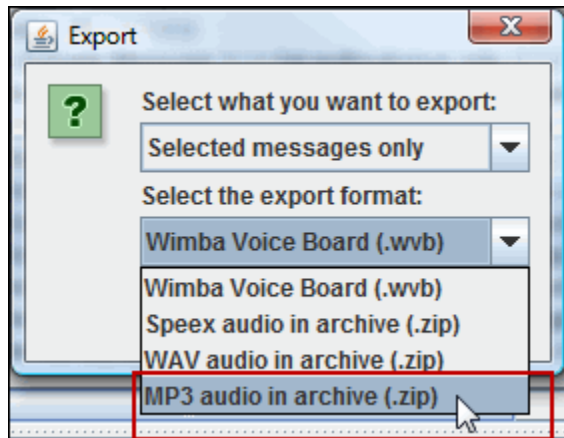
A Sample Message from tgray@palomar.edu (0'33") 10/28/08
Re: A Sample Message - Follow up from tgray@palomar.edu (0'13")
Life is Like a Box of Chocolates from dgray@palomar.edu (1'0") 10/
Re: A Sample Message from dgray@palomar.edu (0'23") 10/28/08
Re: A Sample Message from cnorcross@palomar.edu (1'0") 10/28/08
Re: Life is Like a Box of Chocolates from tgray@palomar.edu (0'39")
Re: Re: Life is Like a Box of Chocolates from dgray@palomar.edu (1'
Re: Re: A Sample Message from tgray@palomar.edu (0'42") 10/28/08
Re: Re: Re: Life is Like a Box of Chocolates from tgray@palomar.edu
Re: Re: Re: Re: Life is Like a Box of Chocolates from dgray@paloma

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Life is... 0:00 - 0:22
Date: 10/28/08 10:44 AM
From: dgray@palomar.edu

from: dgray@palomar.edu
to: tgray@palomar.edu
cc:
bcc:

The image shows a screenshot of an email client interface. At the top, there's a title "My First Voice Email Link" and a subtitle "A possible description of the link." Below this is a toolbar with three buttons: "Delete", "Export", and "Options". The "Export" button is highlighted with a red rectangle. Underneath the toolbar is a list of email archives, showing a tree structure for "Archives 2008", "October 2008", and "Tuesday, 28". A list of email subjects is displayed, including "A Sample Message", "Re: A Sample Message - Follow up", "Life is Like a Box of Chocolates", and several "Re:" replies. Below the list is a video player interface for an audio message. The subject of the message is "Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Life is...", the date is "Date: 10/28/08 10:44 AM", and the sender is "From: dgray@palomar.edu". The video player shows a progress bar from 0:00 to 0:22 and includes play, pause, and stop buttons. At the bottom, the email headers are visible: "from: dgray@palomar.edu", "to: tgray@palomar.edu", "cc:", and "bcc:".

When the Export button is clicked, you will have the option of choosing what to export (i.e., the entire “Voice Board” (meaning the entire thread of discussion based on this voice email) or selected messages (Shift-clicking a range, or Ctrl-clicking individual messages will select them, and you will see them appear with a colored background). There are four choices for the export format:

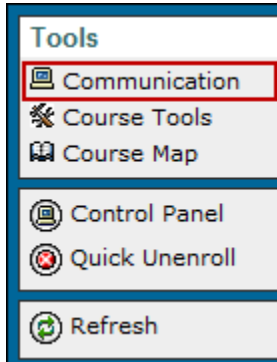


We recommend using “MP3 audio in archive (.zip)”. This means that you will be able to download all selected messages in a single zipped file, which you can then “unzip” or extract on your local system if you need to.

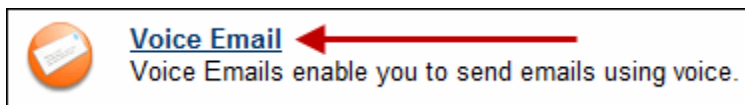
To summarize, method 1 has the advantages of being configurable: You can set audio quality, max message length, include reply links, pre-fill a subject field, and apply all the normal Blackboard availability and tracking options. It has the disadvantage of being unable to send to selected individuals. It can only be sent to instructors, students, or all enrolled. It functions more like a thread in a voice board (see separate documentation for the voice board) rather than an email. If your intention is to set up an audio discussion topic, and carry it out via email, then this is the method to use.

Method 2

Once logged into your course, if your objective is to send a simple voice email, not necessarily expecting a voice response, the simplest method is to click the Communication link in the Blackboard Tools box (on the left of your screen below your course content menu items):

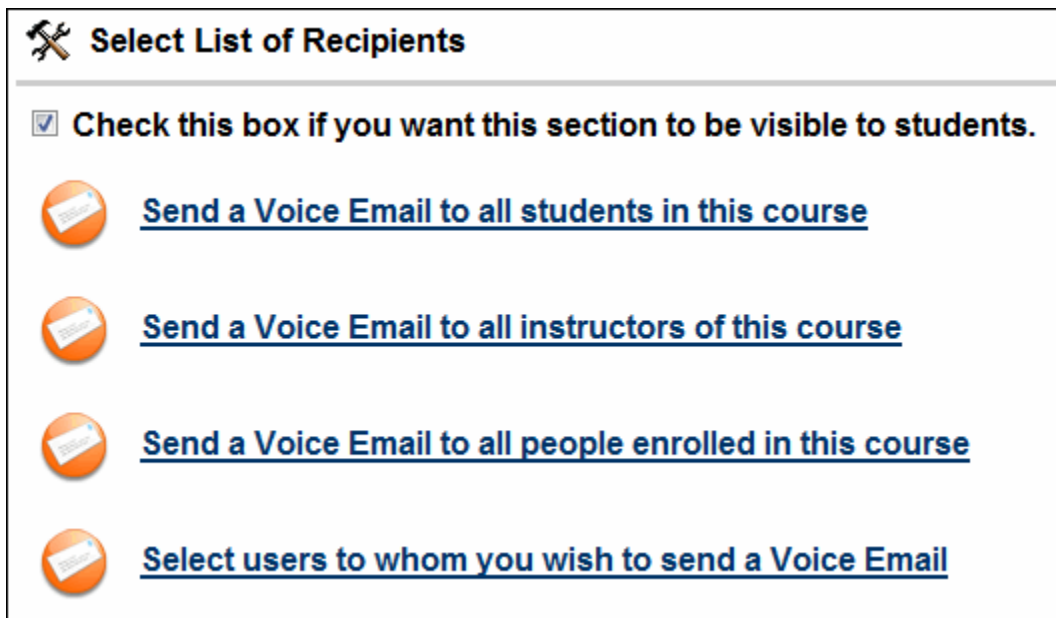


The following Voice Email link will appear on the next screen:



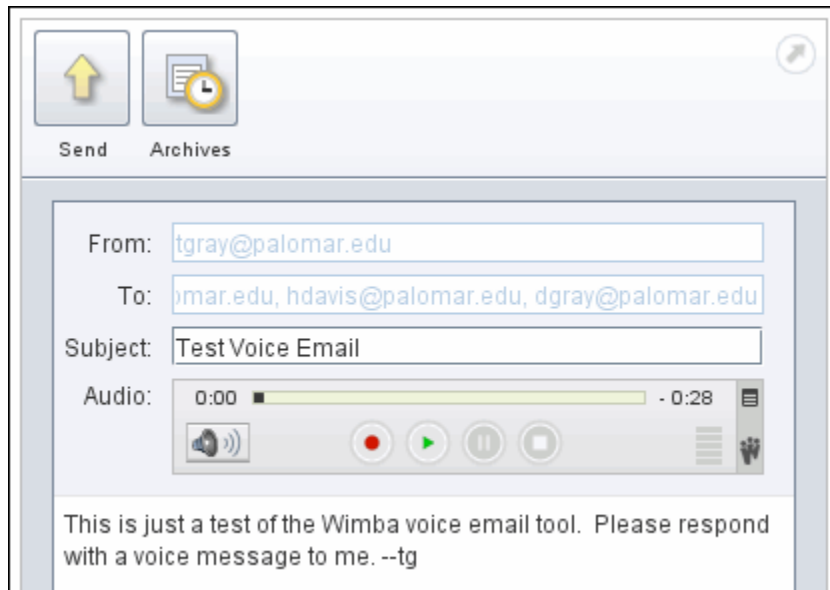
Click it.

You will then see the following "Select List of Recipients" screen:



Select the group to who you wish to send the voice email, or, if you are sending to a select group, click the "Select users" link and place a check next to those you wish to receive the email.

You will then see the Voice Email java form, with From:, To:, Subject:, Audio:, and text entry fields. Type whatever you wish in the text entry field. Click the red "Record" button to record your audio. Use the standard controls to play it back, pause, stop or record again. Re-recording will overwrite the first recording.



The recipient will receive an email form that contains a clickable link to play your voice email audio. This method, however, does not include a link for an audio reply. If you wish your students to have audio reply capabilities, then use method 1 described above to send your voice email, or provide instructions to them on using this tool in the Communications area of the course.

Method 2 does not contain any of the configuration options of method 1. It simply sends a voice email. We recommend method 2 for simple, audio communications. Method 1 is more elaborate, and is really a sub-set of the voice board where the intention is to set up a discussion based on an initial voice recording. In some ways it is easier to use, however, since it perpetually lives, as a link, in your Blackboard course rather than relying on a separate email client for access.