How To Create and Manage a PRS Roster

A Roster can be created *on-the-fly* during an RF Class. First, you start the Class, then you have the students join the Class. Students cannot join the Class until they have entered their Student ID into their RF Clickers.

> **Note**
> If the Clicker is the student's personal Clicker, the Student ID has to be entered only once. It is permanently stored in the Clicker's memory. If the Clicker has been configured as a Loaner, the Student ID has to be entered each time the student joins the Class. It is deleted from the Clicker's memory when the Class is ended and the Clicker is turned off.

During a Session, the Student ID, as well as the Clicker ID, is transmitted with each Response to guarantee the student's Responses are accurately attributed to him. At the end of the Session, all transmissions are saved in a Session file. At that time, you will be prompted to save changes to the Roster. When you click on *Yes*, the RF Clickers that are new to the Class will be added to the Roster. If this was the first time any Clickers joined this Class, all of the Clickers, being new to the Class, are added to the Roster. As new students participate in subsequent Sessions for the Class, you will be prompted to add the new Student IDs to the Roster.

> **Note**
> The updated Roster will not display until you end the Class.

Your Class Roster will look similar to the sample shown here. You can add names to the Roster either manually, or using the Merge Roster function. Use the Add Name To Roster function to manually add names to the Roster.

If your class is large, you will probably want to merge a roster containing the student names into the Class Roster, rather than manually adding student names. We recommend waiting to do this until your class has stabilized, usually after the Drop/Add period is over.

Merge vs. Overwrite

You will note that when you have associated a Roster with a Class – whether by means of importing an existing Roster, or creating one on-the-fly, as described earlier – the Import Roster Function Button becomes the Merge/Import Roster Function Button. You now have the choice of overwriting the current Roster with an updated Roster, or merging a roster into the current one. Typically, when you *overwrite* the existing Roster with an updated Roster, the updated Roster contains complete profiles for each student. You are updating the makeup of the Roster, that is, adding the profiles of students who have added your Class and removing the profiles of the students who have dropped it. When you *merge* a roster file with the current Roster, it is usually to add information to each existing (and incomplete) student profile, in addition to adding new profiles of the students who have added the Class. What the merge cannot do, however, is delete the records of students who have dropped the Class. That has to be done using the Delete Name From Roster function. And, that's why you'll want to wait until the Class Roster is fairly stable, so you don't have to go through the Roster numerous times to delete student profiles.

Merging a Roster

The file that you want to merge with the Class Roster must be in a *.csv* format. PRS Roster files and those files generated using the Blackboard PRS Building Block employ this format. After you are assured your merge file is in the correct *.csv* format, you can use the *Non-PRS Roster Importer* described below to map the fields in your merge roster to the fields in the PRS Roster and to perform the merge operation.

1 Select the RF Class and click on the Import/Merge Roster Function Button.

The following options are displayed.
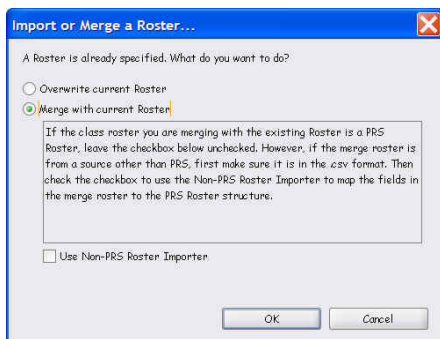
2 Click on the *Merge*... radio button and read the instructions in the text box. If you are going to be merging a roster file that is in a *.csv* format but does not employ the standard PRS Roster file structure, click on the checkbox to start up the *Non-PRS Roster Importer*. (It is invoked after you select the merge file from the Browser.) Click on the **OK** button.

3 Navigate to the *.csv* file you want to merge with the Class Roster. Click on the **Open** button.

The fields in the roster file that you are going to merge with the Class Roster are listed in the left pane of the *Non-PRS Roster Importer*. The fields in the PRS Class Roster are listed in the right pane. Compare the two lists. You are going to eliminate the fields from the merge file list that don't have comparable fields in the PRS Roster file list. Then you will arrange the fields in the PRS Roster list so each is next to its equivalent field in the merge roster file list. This identifies the fields that are to be mapped before the roster files are merged.

> **Note** The only field you are required to have in both files when you merge a roster file into the PRS Roster is the Student ID. This is the key indexing field. The Net ID field in the PRS Roster can be used to store any information, including Usernames, or Blackboard or WebCT system-specific data.
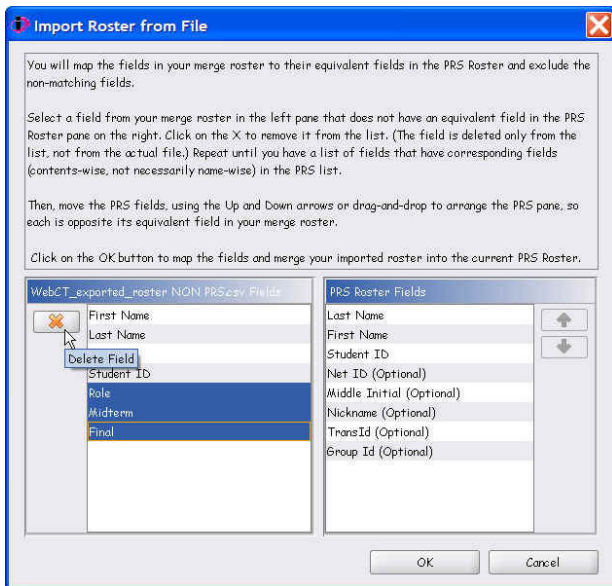
1 Select the fields in the merge roster file that don't have an equivalent field in the PRS Roster. Click on the **X** button to delete the fields from the list. (The fields are deleted only from the list; they remain intact in the merge roster file.)

2 Select a field and use the Up and Down arrow keys to move it into position next to its matching field in the merge roster list. You can also select a field in the PRS Roster list and drag-and-drop it next to its matching field.

3 When each field in the PRS Roster list is next to its equivalent field in the merge roster list, click on the **OK** button.

The fields are mapped and the contents of the mapped fields are merged into the PRS Roster as demonstrated in the example below.

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a PRS Roster
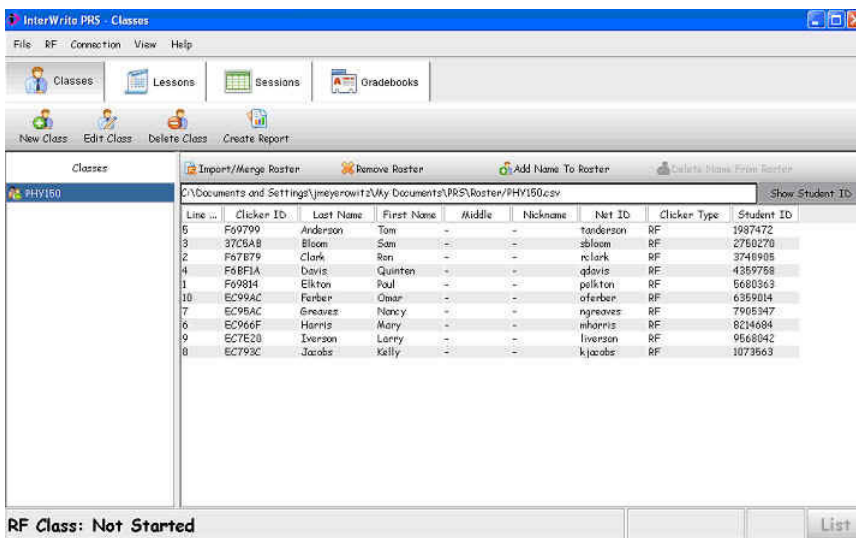
Merging Blackboard Rosters

Before you can merge rosters created in Blackboard, you have to install the Blackboard PRS Building Block. The installation of this Blackboard module is described in Chapter 7 of the *InterWrite PRS User's Guide*. Additional information can be found in the *How To Use Blackboard with PRS* tutorial. Once the Blackboard PRS Building Block is installed on your Blackboard system, you will be able to *View* the PRS Roster that is derived from your Blackboard class roster and *Download* it. The downloaded Blackboard roster file will be PRS-ready, that is, in a format that is identical to that of Rosters generated by PRS. Simply select the *Merge with current Roster* radio button and leave the *Use Non-PRS Roster Importer* checkbox unchecked.

The Excel *.csv* Format

All PRS roster files are in a *.csv* format and can be opened with Excel. Excel will alert you that the file is in the *.csv* file format and ask whether you want to retain the format. It is essential that you maintain roster files in the *.csv* format. Be sure you read the prompts carefully, so you don't accidentally change the file format to *.xls*. If you are going to use Excel to make changes to your PRS Roster file, we recommend you make a backup of the original PRS Roster file before you proceed. By default, PRS Roster files are stored in **C:\My Documents\PRS\Roster**.

> **Note**
>
> The System Type of the Class upon which this tutorial is based is Open. You can learn more about the Open Class System Type in the *How To Profile a Class* tutorial.
>
> The Loaner Clicker configuration was mentioned in the Note about inputting the Student ID. Clicker configurations are discussed in the *How To Configure an RF Clicker* tutorial.
>
> Both of these tutorials deal with fundamental PRS concepts that you should understand before you get into the creation and management of Rosters.