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Blackboard Learn Environment

About Using Blackboard Learn

The following are some things to keep in mind when using Blackboard Learn.

- The Blackboard administrator at your school has the ability to disable certain tools within the application. If you encounter tools that you are unable to access, contact the administrator.
- The openness of Blackboard Learn allows you and the Blackboard administrator at your school to be very creative. The names for items in Blackboard Learn may differ from those in the documentation.
- Building Blocks allows schools to integrate external applications, tools, content, and services into Blackboard Learn.

Browser Compatibility

For information about supported web browsers and operating systems, see [Browser Support](#).

Contact your school's computing help desk for information on which version of Blackboard Learn your school is using, as compatibility varies by version.

You can use [Blackboard Mobile Learn](#) on a variety of mobile devices, including BlackBerry®, Android™, and iPhone OS devices such as iPhone and iPod Touch. Contact your school’s computing help desk for information on whether your school has made Blackboard Mobile Learn available.

Printing Course Content

Because Blackboard Learn is web-based, printing is handled through your web browser, or, if the content is an attached file such as a Microsoft Word or Excel document, through that program.

Most browsers have a ‘Help’ option that can explain more about printing.

If you need assistance printing course content, contact your school's computing help desk.

Browser Support

Microsoft Windows

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Internet Explorer 9¹</th>
<th>Internet Explorer 8¹</th>
<th>Firefox ESR²</th>
<th>Firefox (Final Release Channel)³</th>
<th>Chrome (Stable Channel)⁴</th>
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<td>Certified</td>
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<td>Certified</td>
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<td>Windows Vista (64-bit)</td>
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<th>Safari 5.0</th>
<th>Safari 4.0</th>
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<th>Firefox (Final Release Channel)</th>
<th>Google Chrome (Stable Channel)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Certified</td>
<td>Compatible</td>
<td>Certified</td>
<td>Certified</td>
<td>Certified</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Unsupported by Apple</td>
<td>Unsupported by Apple</td>
<td>Certified</td>
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<tr>
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</table>


2 Firefox 8 and Mac OS are not compatible with the drag and drop functions on Blackboard Learn.

3 The Firefox Release Channel is the fully tested version by Mozilla and intended to be the most stable. This channel is updated roughly every six weeks. More information is available at [http://blog.mozilla.com/blog/2011/04/13/new-channels-for-firefox-rapid-releases/](http://blog.mozilla.com/blog/2011/04/13/new-channels-for-firefox-rapid-releases/).

4 The Chrome Stable Channel is the fully tested version by Google and intended to be the most stable as the name implies. This channel is updated roughly every 2-3 weeks for minor releases and 6 weeks for major releases. More information is available at [www.chromium.org](http://www.chromium.org).

5 Firefox 8 and Mac OS are not compatible with the drag and drop functions on Blackboard Learn.

### Accessibility and JAWS

Blackboard strives to make all its products as accessible as possible. JAWS for Windows 11 and 12 were used during accessibility testing for SP 10.

### JRE Support

Blackboard Learn requires the latest version of Sun JRE 7. JRE 6 will continue to work with SP10. The JRE can be downloaded from [http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/downloads/index.html](http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/downloads/index.html). Windows system administrators who want to provide auto-download for users can find the .cab file link for the appropriate JRE at [http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/autodownload-140472.html](http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/autodownload-140472.html).

### Java Applet Code Signing

Java applets bundled with Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP10 are now signed with a timestamping authority, [https://timestamp.geotrust.com](https://timestamp.geotrust.com), which certifies that the Blackboard code signing certificate was valid at the point in time when the applet was signed. Web browser client JDKs that trust the timestamping authority will run the applets without error, even after the Blackboard code signing certificate expires. All JDKs since version 1.5 trust this timestamping authority by default.

### Technologies Not Supported

The following technologies are **not** supported:

- Internet Explorer 6, 7
- Firefox 1.x, 2.0, 3.0, 3.5, and 3.6
- Safari 2.0, 3.x and any version on Windows
Course Components

The Blackboard Learn environment allows you to easily navigate, provide data, edit items, and change options that affect how users interact with the interface.

The Blackboard Learn Interface

- Page header: The area at the top of the screen that contains the tabs, the My Places link, and the links for Home, Help, and Logout. The tabs you see in the page header will depend on the capabilities your school has licensed. To learn more, see The Page Header.
- Content frame: Displays the selected tool or Content Area. By default, when you enter a course, the Home Page appears. Instructors select the first page, which is called the course entry point. To learn about selecting yours, see Selecting the Course Entry Point.
- Action Bar: Rows at the top of the page containing page-level actions such as Build Content, Search, Delete, and Upload. The functions on the Action Bar change depending on where you are in your course. The Action Bar can contain multiple rows of functions such as on the main Grade Center page.

- Mac OSX 10.3, 10.4, 10.5
- Java 5, although it may continue to work
**Course Menu:** The access point for all course content. Instructors decide which links are available here. To learn more, see [The Course Menu](#).

**Control Panel:** The central access point for course management functions. Instructors can manage the course style, course tools, and users from this area. Student do not see the Control Panel. To learn more, see [The Control Panel](#).

**Edit Mode:** When **Edit Mode** is **ON**, all the instructor functions are shown, such as **Build Content** on the Action Bar in a Content Area or the appearance of the Action Link. When **Edit Mode** is **OFF**, you are viewing the page in student view. The **Edit Mode** function appears to users with a role of Instructor, Teaching Assistant, Course Builder, and Administrator.

**Tabs:** Blackboard Learn includes two common sets of tabs, discussed in the following tables.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tab</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Institution</td>
<td>The <strong>My Institution</strong> tab contains tools and information specific to each user’s preferences. Tools and information are contained in modules. You can add and delete modules from your <strong>My Institution</strong> tab. The Blackboard administrator at your school may restrict access to or require specific modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Click a link on the <strong>Courses</strong> tab to access a course and the Course Catalog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If your school licenses community engagement, you also have access to the following tabs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tab</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>The <strong>Community</strong> tab lists organizations specific to each user, the Organization Catalog for your school, and Discussion Boards. Click a link on the <strong>Community</strong> tab to access an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>The <strong>Services</strong> tab contains links to other institutional offerings outside of Blackboard Learn. The links are set by the Blackboard administrator at your school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, community engagement enables your school to create custom tabs and present different tabs to users based on Institution roles.

*Note:* The Blackboard administrator at your school can rename the tabs appearing in the page header.

**The Page Header**

The **Page Header** is the area at the top of the screen that contains the tabs, the **My Places** link, and the links for **Home**, **Help**, and **Logout**. The tabs you see in the page header will depend on the capabilities your school has licensed. For example, if your school has licensed the content management capability, you will see a **Content Collection** tab. The page header remains the same as you access other areas and courses in Blackboard Learn.

*Note:* The Blackboard administrator at your school can rename the tabs appearing in the page header.

The **My Places** link allows users to edit their personal information that is seen by other course members and to set privacy options. Users can also add an avatar image to use in their courses. Users can upload an avatar image that is a photo or a creation representing an alter ego. Avatar images appear throughout a course, such as in the page header, in the **What’s New** module, and with journal entries. The recommended pixel size for an avatar image is 150 by 150.

*Note:* Adding an avatar is a function that must be enabled by the Blackboard administrator at your school.

To learn about the components on the **My Institution** tab, see [My Institution Tab](#).
Course-to-Course Navigation

In Blackboard Learn, when moving to a new area or page, only the material in the content frame changes. The tabs and header frame remain static so that they are always available for quick access to navigation features. When you want to navigate between your courses, you can use the Courses tab or the course-to-course navigation feature.

Courses tab: You can access the list of courses you are enrolled in or teaching by clicking the Courses tab.

Course-to-course navigation: If you are enrolled in or teach more than one course, you can access all your courses using the course-to-course navigation feature. Click the Action Link next to the course title and select another course from the contextual menu. For example, if you are viewing the Announcements page in one course and select another course from the contextual menu, you are taken to that course’s Announcements page. You can easily go from one course’s Grade Center to another to begin your grading tasks.

Note: Depending on the default theme your school uses, you may see a house icon instead of the current course’s title.

Course Modules

On the My Institution tab, you see a collection of Course Modules that contain tools such as a calculator, or display dynamic information such as grades, alerts, and announcements. You can use the links in modules to navigate to areas in your courses. You can add Course Modules to Module Pages only, such as the My Institution tab or a course Home Page.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school can rename modules and determines which are available.

To learn more about modules, see Working with Modules, Common Notification Modules, and How to Create a Module Page.
The Course Menu

The Course Menu appears on the left side of your course window. It is the cornerstone for the organization and navigation of your course. You create links on the Course Menu to present tools and materials to users. You can customize its appearance and order the links.

You can make two views available to users. If available, users can view the Course Menu links in one of the following two views:

- **List View**: Displays only the top level of course materials. Links can appear as buttons or text.
- **Folder View**: Displays course materials as a directory tree. Users can expand the view to show the hierarchy of course navigation.

*Note*: The Blackboard administrator at your school can restrict options to maintain a consistent style for all courses. This can include making some tools unavailable or setting permanent course area names.

Use the following steps to create a link on the Course Menu.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The *Add Menu Item* drop-down list appears.
2. Select the type of content to create.
3. Type a **Name** for the link. Complete any other required text boxes, such as **URL** for Web Link.
4. Select the **Available to Users** check box to enable users to see the link on the Course Menu. You can create content ahead of time, make it unavailable, and then make it available at the appropriate time.
5. Click **Submit**. A link to the new content appears on the Course Menu.
**Tip:** Create an uncluttered Course Menu to maintain efficient navigation for your users, and try to limit the number of links included in the Course Menu. Use Content Areas to hold related items and give your course organization and structure.

The following table lists the types of content and tools you can include on the Course Menu. You can also include subheaders and divider lines to help visually organize the links for your users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Area</td>
<td>Content Areas are the top-level course areas. They hold all of your course materials. They are created, linked, and managed on the Course Menu. Typically, courses contain multiple Content Areas. After creating a Content Area, you add content to it, such as online lectures, multimedia, tests, and communication tools. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Course Areas for Content</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank Page</td>
<td>The Blank Page tool allows you to include files, images, and text as links on the Course Menu. Include blank pages on the Course Menu for critical information, as too many links on the Course Menu can overwhelm students. Remove blank pages from the Course Menu as soon as the information is no longer needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool Link</td>
<td>Create a link to an available tool in the course, such as the Calendar or Journals. You can also create a link to the Tools page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Link</td>
<td>Create a shortcut to an existing area, tool, or item in a course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Link</td>
<td>Create a link to a URL to provide quick access to a resource on the Internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Page</td>
<td>Create a module page and select the individual modules to include. The modules you select can be tools, such as a calculator, or the modules can display information, such as grades, alerts, and tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subheader</td>
<td>A subheader is unlinked text. You can group related links under a subheader to help users find information quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divider</td>
<td>A divider is a line that visually divides the Course Menu to help users find information quickly. After you create it, you can move it to the appropriate position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reordering and Managing the Links on the Course Menu**

You can organize and rename the Course Menu links to make them easier for students to use.

A Use the drag-and-drop function to reorder Course Menu links.

B Alternatively, use the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool ( ) to reorder the links.
Click a link’s Action Link (✓) and select Rename to change its title. Select Hide Link to make it unavailable to students. Click Show Link to make it available to students. If you Delete a Content Area, all content items within it are also permanently deleted. This action is final.

With Edit Mode set to ON, an unavailable link title appears with a square with a diagonal line through it ( clearColor). Students do not see the link on the Course Menu.

The Control Panel

All course administration is accessed through links in the Control Panel. This area is only available if you have one of the following defined course roles:

- Instructor
- Teaching assistant (TA)
- Grader
- Course builder
- Blackboard administrator

To learn more, see Course Roles.
The Control Panel appears below the Course Menu for all courses and is comprised of the areas listed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Files or Content Collection</td>
<td>Each course has its own Course Files area accessed in the Files section of the Control Panel. With Course Files, an instructor has access to all files from a central location inside the course. Course Files is relative to the course, so only content for the course is stored there. Content is not shared across courses taught by the same instructor. Content in Course Files can be used in multiple places within the course just by linking to it. If your school licenses content management, the full functionality of the Content Collection is available through this area. With it, schools have a common content repository where content can be shared. Therefore, content from other courses and from your personal directory can be added to the course and managed through the Content Collection. The section heading Content Collection appears instead of Files in the Control Panel. To learn more, see About Course Files and About Content Management and the Content Collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Tools</td>
<td>Contains all the available tools that are added to a course. Once added, these tools are administered from the Control Panel. To learn more, see Course Tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Provides links to Course Reports, the Early Warning System, and the Performance Dashboard, which are used to view information about student activity and content usage, and to be notified about performance based on criteria created by instructors. To learn more, see Generating Course Reports, Early Warning System, and Using the Performance Dashboard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Center</td>
<td>Provides links to the Needs Grading page, the Full Grade Center, default Smart Views of the Grade Center, and any Smart Views created by instructors. Smart Views appear in an indented list under Full Grade Center. To learn more, see Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users and Groups</td>
<td>List, enroll, edit, and remove users from a course. Create and administer formal groups of students to collaborate on work. To learn more, see Enrolling and Managing Users and Course Groups and Tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customization</td>
<td>Control enrollment options and guest and observer access. You can change the properties of a course, such as its name, availability, and Language Pack. You can use the Quick Setup Guide and Teaching Style page to modify the appearance of your course. Change tool availability to control which tools are available in your course and which users have access to them. To learn more, see Setting Enrollment Options, Allowing Guest and Observer Access, Setting Course Properties, Language Packs, Setting Course Style Options, and Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packages and Utilities</td>
<td>Import, export, and archive a course, check course links, copy all or part of the course, and move selected files to Course Files or the Content Collection (when available). To learn more, see Importing Course Packages, Exporting and Archiving Courses, Checking Course Links, Copying Courses, Moving Files to Course Files.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Offers support contacts and online documentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contextual Menus**

Throughout Blackboard Learn, items that are acted upon by a user have a contextual menu associated with them. The contextual menu is accessed when the Action Link is clicked. The Action Link is represented by an icon represented by one or two down-pointing arrows, depending on the system theme your school has chosen. Click it to access the contextual menu containing options for many components in Blackboard Learn, such as content items, Course Menu links, or Grade Center columns. The options in the contextual menu vary depending on the component.
Common Contextual Menu Options

The following options are common to many items in Blackboard Learn. If an option does not appear, you cannot perform it on that item.

- Open
- Edit
- Copy
- Move
- Delete

Other Contextual Menu Options

These options will vary depending upon the type of item and a user's role. The following list is not comprehensive.

- Adaptive Release options
- Metadata
- Statistics Tracking
- User Progress
- Email
- Manage
- Grade
- Mark as New

Course Map

The course map is a collapsible tree directory you can use for navigation within a course. You can view the map from the Course Menu, Collaboration Sessions, and the Performance Dashboard.
Viewing the Map From the Course Menu

You can open the course map from the Folder View on the Course Menu. Select Expand All to see all available content, areas, and tools.

Viewing the Map From the Performance Dashboard

When you view the course map from the Performance Dashboard, the availability of items, tools, and review status for the specific user appear.

Select the icon in the Adaptive Release column to view the course map for a specific user. The availability of each item and the review status for the user selected is indicated.

This following table includes a description of the icons used in the Performance Dashboard:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptive Release and Review Status Icons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🏷️ Visible: This item is visible to that course user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⚠️ Invisible: This item is not visible to that course user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Reviewed: This item has been marked as reviewed by the course user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🎯 Not Reviewed: This item appears as not reviewed to the course user</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Viewing the Content Map From a Virtual Classroom

The content map is similar to the course map, except the tree directory only displays available Content Areas and does not allow users to navigate to other course areas, such as tool pages. To open the content map, select Content Map in the Classroom Toolbox of a Virtual Classroom.
Edit Mode

When **Edit Mode** is **ON**, all the instructor-level functions are shown, such as **Build Content** on the Action Bar in a Content Area or the appearance of the Action Link. When **Edit Mode** is **OFF**, you are viewing the page in student view. The **Edit Mode** function only appears if you have a role of Instructor, Teaching Assistant, Course Builder, and Administrator.

Edit Mode allows instructors, TAs, course builders, and administrators to make changes to content in the course view instead of navigating through the Control Panel.

![Edit Mode ON](ON.png)

*Note:* The Blackboard administrator at your school may disable this feature.

Paging Options

You can edit the paging options to specify how many items appear on a page in Blackboard Learn. For example, you can determine how many forums appear on the main Discussion Board page or how many items appear on the **Needs Grading** page.

The default is 25 items per page and the maximum number of items is 1,000 per page. Clicking **Show All** displays all items and causes the other controls to disappear. For performance, the items per page should not be greatly expanded.

Use the following steps to edit the paging options.

1. Click **Edit Paging**.
2. Type a number in the **Items per page** text box. If the number is greater than the total number of items, then all items appear. If the number is less than one, then one item appears.
3. Click **OK**.

**Related Tutorials**

- [Your Course Environment](Flash movie | 3m1s)
- [Getting Started with Your Course Environment](PDF file | 7.00 MB)

Working With Text

Using the Content Editor

The content editor allows you to add and format text, insert equations and hyperlinks, tables, and attach different types of files to content. The editor appears throughout the system as the default editor.

The content editor or WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor is based on the industry standard TinyMCE platform. TinyMCE is a javascript-based WYSIWYG content editor that provides a stable, robust user experience. The legacy WebEQ equation editor has been replaced with a new mathML equation editor (WIRIS).

The content editor is always available to all users. Your school can control the availability of specific tools within the content editor, but users no longer need to explicitly opt in or opt out of using the content editor.

*Note:* Your school and your instructor control the content editor’s features and availability. If you have difficulty accessing the content editor, contact your school’s computing help desk for assistance.
Two Views of the Content Editor

The content editor has two view modes: simple mode and advanced mode. Change the view in the upper-right corner of the content editor.

**Simple Mode**

The simple mode contains a minimal set of the most used text formatting functions. Click the show more (\[\downarrow\]) function—represented by two down pointing arrows—to access more editor functions. To learn more, see Simple Content Editor Features.

![Simple Content Editor Features](image)

**Advanced Mode**

The advanced mode includes every available formatting and object attachment function. Click the show less (\[\uparrow\]) function—represented by two down pointing arrows—to view only one row of functions. To learn more, see Advanced Content Editor Features.

![Advanced Content Editor Features](image)

Functions not currently available appear grayed out. For example, the functions to apply or remove a hyperlink are available only when you select text or an object in the text box.

**IMPORTANT!** Your school can turn on and off certain functions such as spell check and the math editor.

**Note:** Depending on your school’s HTML policy, certain tags and attributes are not allowed in the content editor and will not work. If you have questions about this, contact your instructor or school about being granted the appropriate privilege for using unrestricted/trusted HTML input.

**Adding and Editing Content**

By default, Blackboard Learn formats text to 12-point, left-justified Arial. Use the content editor functions to apply other formatting. With the mouse pointer positioned in the text box, you can use four methods for adding, formatting, and editing text and objects:

- Content editor functions. To learn more, see Simple Content Editor Features and Advanced Content Editor Features.
- Right-click contextual menu. To learn more, see Using the Right-Click Contextual Menu.
● Keyboard shortcuts. To learn more, see Keyboard Shortcuts for the Content Editor.
● Direct editing of the HTML code. To learn more, see HTML Code View.

Best Practice: Copying and Pasting Text to Prevent Loss
To protect against losing work if an internet connection loss or software error occurs, you may choose to type in an offline simple text editor, such as Notepad or TextEdit, and copy and paste your work into Blackboard Learn. Alternatively, before submitting or saving, you can select and copy all of the text typed in Blackboard Learn. Select the text and right-click to copy it. You may also use key combinations for copying and pasting:

- **Windows**: CTRL+A to select all the text, CTRL+C to copy, and CTRL+V to paste.
- **Mac**: COMMAND+A to select all the text, COMMAND+C to copy, and COMMAND+V to paste.

Simple Content Editor Features
In the content editor’s simple mode, you see a single row of functions. Click the show more (🔧) function—represented by two down pointing arrows—to access more editor functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="bold.png" alt="Bold" /></td>
<td>Bold the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="italic.png" alt="Italic" /></td>
<td>Italicize the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="underline.png" alt="Underline" /></td>
<td>Underline the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="font.png" alt="Font" /></td>
<td>Select the font face for the text. Click the down arrow next to the displayed current font to select from a list of all available fonts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="size.png" alt="Size" /></td>
<td>Select the size of the text. Click the down arrow next to the displayed current font size to select from a list of all available font sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="color.png" alt="Color" /></td>
<td>Set the text color. Click the down arrow to select a different text color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="bullets.png" alt="Bullets" /></td>
<td>Create a bulleted list. To learn more, see Working With Lists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="number.png" alt="Number" /></td>
<td>Create a numbered list. To learn more, see Working With Lists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="spell.png" alt="Spell Check" /></td>
<td>Begin the automatic spell check. Click the down arrow to select a different language. To learn more, see Using the Spell Checker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="hyperlink.png" alt="Hyperlink" /></td>
<td>Add a new or edit an existing hyperlink. To learn more, see How to Use Links.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="remove_hyperlink.png" alt="Remove Hyperlink" /></td>
<td>Remove a hyperlink from the selected text or object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="preview.png" alt="Preview" /></td>
<td>Opens a preview window showing how the content will appear after submitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="expand.png" alt="Expand" /></td>
<td>Open the context editor help information pop-up display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="advanced.png" alt="Advanced" /></td>
<td>Expand the content editor window to fill the entire browser frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="access_advanced.png" alt="Access Advanced" /></td>
<td>Access the advanced content editor features.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Advanced Content Editor Features

In the content editor’s advanced mode, you see three rows of functions. Click the show less (.getDrawable) function—represented by two down pointing arrows—to view only one row of functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1 Functions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bold the selected text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italicize the selected text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underline the selected text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display text with a horizontal line through the letters (strikethrough).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a paragraph style for the text. Click the down arrow next to the displayed current style to select from a list of all available styles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select the font face for the text. Click the down arrow next to the displayed current font to select from a list of all available fonts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select the size of the text. Click the down arrow next to the displayed current font size to select from a list of all available font sizes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a bulleted list. To learn more, see <a href="#">Working With Lists</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a numbered list. To learn more, see <a href="#">Working With Lists</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set the text color. Click the down arrow to select a different text color.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set the text highlight (background) color. Click the down arrow to select a different highlight color.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove all formatting, leaving only the plain text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opens a preview window showing how the content will appear after submitting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opens the context editor help window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand the content editor window to fill the entire browser frame.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collapse functions to one row of the most used text formatting functions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 2 Functions</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/cut.png" alt="Cut" /></td>
<td>Cut the selected items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/copy.png" alt="Copy" /></td>
<td>Copy the selected items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/paste.png" alt="Paste" /></td>
<td>Paste the most recently copied or cut items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/search.png" alt="Search" /></td>
<td>Search for and replace text. To learn more, see Using Find and Replace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/undo.png" alt="Undo" /></td>
<td>Undo the previous action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/redo.png" alt="Redo" /></td>
<td>Redo the previous action—available only if an action has been undone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/align-left.png" alt="Align Left" /></td>
<td>Align text to the left margin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/align-center.png" alt="Align Center" /></td>
<td>Align text in the center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/align-right.png" alt="Align Right" /></td>
<td>Align text to the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/align-both.png" alt="Align Both" /></td>
<td>Align text to both the left and right margins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/indent.png" alt="Indent" /></td>
<td>Move the text or object to the right (indent). Click again to indent further.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/outdent.png" alt="Outdent" /></td>
<td>Move the text or object to the left (outdent). Click again to outdent further. You cannot outdent text beyond the left margin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/superscript.png" alt="Superscript" /></td>
<td>Make the text into a superscript.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/subscript.png" alt="Subscript" /></td>
<td>Make the text into a subscript.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/edit-link.png" alt="Edit Link" /></td>
<td>Add a new or edit an existing hyperlink. To learn more, see How to Use Links.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/remove-link.png" alt="Remove Link" /></td>
<td>Remove a hyperlink from the selected text or object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/right-text.png" alt="Right Text" /></td>
<td>Enter text to the right of the current mouse pointer location (default).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/left-text.png" alt="Left Text" /></td>
<td>Enter text to the left of the current mouse pointer location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/horizontal-line.png" alt="Horizontal Line" /></td>
<td>Add a thin horizontal line to the current mouse pointer position, spanning the entire width of the text area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/centered-line.png" alt="Centered Line" /></td>
<td>Add a thin centered line, setting width, height relative to the current mouse pointer position, and whether to use shadows. To learn more, see Inserting Lines and Horizontal Rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/insert-space.png" alt="Insert Space" /></td>
<td>Insert a nonbreaking space character at the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/spell-check.png" alt="Spell Check" /></td>
<td>Begin the automatic spell check. Click the down arrow to select a different language. To learn more, see Using the Spell Checker.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 3 Functions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/insert-link.png" alt="Insert Link" /></td>
<td>Add a link to a file in the text box. The Insert Content Link window appears. You can link to the following file types: DOC, DOCX, EXE, HTML, HTM, PDF, PPT, PPTX, PPS, PPSX, TXT, WPD, XLS, XLSX, and ZIP. You can link to a file from your computer, from Course Files or the Content Collection, or a URL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="https://example.com/insert-image.png" alt="Insert Image" /></td>
<td>Embed an image in the text box or edit an existing selected image. The Insert/Edit Image window appears. You can add the following file types: GIF, JPG, JPEG, BMP, PNG, and TIF. You can add images from your computer, from Course Files or the Content Collection, or a URL. To learn more, see Adding Images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Media Clip" /></td>
<td>Embed a media clip in the text box or edit an existing selected media object. The <strong>Insert/Edit Media</strong> window appears. From the <strong>Type</strong> drop-down list, select the type of media you want to add: Flash (default), HTML 5 video, QuickTime, Shockwave, Windows Media, Real Media, Iframe, and Embedded Audio. You can add media files from your computer, from Course Files or the Content Collection, or a URL. To learn more, see <strong>Adding Media Files</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="WIRIS Formula" /></td>
<td>Opens the <strong>WIRIS Formula Editor</strong> page—the visual math equation editor page. To learn more, see <strong>Using the Math Editor</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Mashups" /></td>
<td>Add a Mashup to the text box. Click to display a drop-down list and select Flickr® Photo, SlideShare presentation, YouTube™ Video, or NBC Content. To learn more, see <strong>Adding Mashups</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Nonprinting" /></td>
<td>Click to show all nonprinting characters. Click again to hide them from view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Blockquote" /></td>
<td>Format the text as a blockquote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Special Character" /></td>
<td>Opens the <strong>Select Special Character</strong> window. Select a symbol to insert at the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emoticon" /></td>
<td>Opens the <strong>Insert Emoticon</strong> window. Select the emoticon to insert at the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Anchor" /></td>
<td>Position the mouse pointer where you want the anchor to appear and click to open the <strong>Insert/Edit Anchor</strong> window. Use anchors to position (anchor) other items and objects, such as images. To learn more, see <strong>Using Anchors</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Preview" /></td>
<td>Opens a preview window so you can see how the content will appear after publishing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Insert/Edit Table</strong> window. To learn more about tables, see <strong>Working With Tables</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Row Properties" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Table Row Properties</strong> window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Cell Properties" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Table Cell Properties</strong> window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Row" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank row in the table above the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Row" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank row in the table after the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Row" /></td>
<td>Delete the current row from the table. If you select multiple rows, all are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Column" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank column in the table to the left of the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Column" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank column in the table to the right of the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Column" /></td>
<td>Delete the current column from the table. If you select multiple columns, all are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Merge" /></td>
<td>Merge two or more selected table cells into a single cell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Split" /></td>
<td>Split previously merged table cells. If the cell or cells are not ones that were merged, nothing happens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="HTML Code" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>HTML Code View</strong> window. Then, you can directly edit the content HTML code. This feature is intended for experienced web developers. To learn more, see <strong>HTML Code View</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="CSS" /></td>
<td>Edit the cascading style sheet (CSS). This feature is included for experienced web developers. To learn more, see <strong>Advanced Image Settings</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Working With Lists**

- **Ordered/Numbered List**: Creates an ordered or numbered list, or adds a numbered list item. Click
the down arrow (:hidden_icon:) to select from the available list ordering schemes. Choices include:

- Alphabetic
- Roman numerals
- Greek symbols

- **Bullet List**: Creates an unordered or bullet list, or adds a bulleted list item. Click the down arrow (:hidden_icon:) to select from the available bullet list symbols.

### Using the Spell Checker

Click the spell checker (:hidden_icon:) icon to turn the automatic spell check function on or off. Click the down arrow to select a different language’s dictionary. You will see wavy, red underlining for words detected as potentially misspelled or not found in the loaded dictionary. If you resume typing text, the spell checker function switches off.

Right-click an underlined word to view a menu, allowing you to:

- See a list of suggested correction.
- Ignore the single instance.
- Ignore all occurrences of the indicated word.

**Note**: Your school determines if the spell checker function is available and which spelling dictionaries are loaded in.

### Using Find and Replace

Use find (:hidden_icon:) to search for matching text and, optionally, replace it with other text.

**Finding Text**

In the pop-up window, click the Find tab and type the text to find.

For **Direction**, choose whether to search up or down from the current mouse pointer position. Select the **Match Case** check box to match upper and lower case. Clear the check box to ignore case. If the text is located, it appears highlighted in the text box.
Click **Find Next** to locate the next match or **Close** to close the window. You can also click the **Replace** tab to switch to the replace text function.

### Replacing Text

To search for and replace text from one tab, click the **Replace** tab.

Type the text you want to replace. For **Direction**, choose whether to search up or down from the current mouse pointer position. Select the **Match Case** check box to match upper and lower case. Clear the check box to ignore case. Click **Enter** or **Return**. If the text is located, it appears highlighted in the text box.

In the **Replace with** text box, type the text to replace the located text with and choose an action:

- **Replace**: Replace the next instance found.
- **Replace All**: Replace every matched instance.
- **Find Next**: Find the next match and highlight it, but do not change the text.

You can also click the **Find** tab to switch to the search-only function.

### How to Use Links

Select text or an object, and click the link function (🔗) to add a new hyperlink or edit an existing hyperlink. To remove a link, select the link and click the remove link function (🔗). You can also link and remove links using the right-click contextual menu. You must use the **http://** protocol when typing or pasting an address for the link.

**Note:** Unless you select text or an object, the insert/edit link and remove link functions are grayed out and unavailable. If you click remove link for something that has no hyperlink, nothing happens.

You can specify a link to a website, a file from your computer, or an item in Course Files or the Content Collection.
In the **Target** drop-down list, choose where to open the link:
- Open in this window/frame.
- Open in a new window.
- Open in parent window/frame.
- Open in top frame, replacing all current frames.

Type an optional title for the window or frame displayed when users click the link. Optionally, select a link class. If no other choices are available, the drop-down list may only show **Not Set**.

### Inserting Lines and Horizontal Rules

**Line**: Click the line function ( ) to add a thin horizontal line to the current mouse pointer position, spanning the entire width of the text area.

**Horizontal Rule**: Click the horizontal rule function ( ) to add a thin centered line. You can set:
- Width in pixels or as a percentage of the total available width of the text area.
- Height of the line relative to the current position.
- Whether to have the line shadowed or not—default is with shadow.

Use the **Width** drop-down list to choose pixels or percentage. Use the **Height** drop-down list to choose **Normal** or a height increment from 1 to 5. Click **Insert** to add the line or **Cancel** to close the window.

### Adding Images

Click the insert/edit image function ( ) to embed an image in the text area or edit an existing selected image. Alternatively, embed an image using the right-click contextual menu. You can also use the contextual menu to
edit the properties of an existing selected image.

You can add the common image types, such as GIF, JPG, JPEG, BMP, PNG, and TIF.

**Note:** Whenever possible, use compact, compressed file formats such as JPG or PNG to reduce the time required to download the embedded image.

**General Image Settings**

On the **General** tab, embed an image from one of the following:

- To create a link to a file outside of the local system, type or paste a URL in the **Image URL** text box. You must use the http:// protocol.
- To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
- To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
  - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
  - OR-
  - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

**Note:** To email a link to a file you are including, you must first submit the content item so the file can be assigned a permanent URL. In the Content Collection or Course Files, access the file's 360 View. Copy the permanent URL address and paste it in an email.

**Image description**: Optionally, type a description for the image. Recommended for accessibility readers.

**Title**: Optionally, type a title for the image.

**Appearance Settings**

The **Appearance** tab allows you to control image placement and appearance. A sample thumbnail display on the right side of the window shows how the various choices will appear.

- **Alignment**: Placement of the image relative to the nearby text. Choices include baseline, top, middle, bottom, text top, text bottom, left, and right.
- **Dimensions**: Image size displayed in pixels. **Important:** If not set, the actual image size populates the boxes.
  
  If you select the check box for **Constrain Proportions** and add a measurement, the image is resized without horizontal or vertical distortion.

- **Vertical space**: In pixels, the margin reserved above and below the image.
**Horizontal space**: In pixels, the margin reserved on either side of the image.

**Border**: In pixels, applies a border around the image.

**Style**: Whenever you change the appearance settings, this box displays the HTML code used to format the image. If necessary, you can enter additional code or alter the existing code.

### Advanced Image Settings

Use the advanced image settings to specify an alternative image based on mouse activity. You can also set additional identification, language, and link parameters. Normally, you do not need to set or change these settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Image</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Mouse Over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Mouse Out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Direction</td>
<td>-- Not Set --</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Code</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image Map</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Description Link</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Adding Media Files

Click the insert/edit embedded media function ( ) to embed a media clip in the text area or edit an existing selected media item. You can also use the right-click contextual menu to edit the properties of an existing selected media clip.
General Media Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Flash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File/URL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constrain Proportions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type:** From the drop-down list, select the type of media you want to add, including:

- Flash (default)
- QuickTime
- Shockwave
- Windows Media
- Real Media
- Iframe
- Embedded Audio

After setting the media type:

- To create a link to a media file outside of the local system, type or paste a URL in the **File/URL** text box. You must use the `http://` protocol.
- To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
- To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
  - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
  - OR-
  - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

*Note:* To email a link to a file you are including, you must first submit the content item so the file can be assigned a permanent URL. In the Content Collection or Course Files, access the file's 360 View. Copy the permanent URL address and paste it in an email.

- **Dimensions:** Size displayed in pixels. **Important:** If not set, the actual size populates the boxes.
  - If you select the check box for **Constrain Proportions** and add a measurement, the file is resized without horizontal or vertical distortion. You are able to preview the file in the window.

Advanced Media Settings

On the **Advanced** tab, you can set advanced display parameters, as well as a number of options specific to Flash media only.
### Advanced:
- **ID**: Set an identification code for the media.
- **Name**: Type a name for the media.
- **Align**: Set whether to align the media to the top, right, bottom, or left.
- **Background**: Set a background color for the media.
- **V-Space and H-Space**: Set vertical and horizontal margins for space around the embedded media.

### Flash options:
- **Quality**: Set the playback quality for the Flash media. Choices are high, low, autolow, autohigh, and best.
- **Scale**: Select a resizing option for Flash media. Choices are show all, no border, exact fit, and no scale.
- **WMode**: Set a display mode for the media. Choices are window, opaque, and transparent.
- **SAlign**: Set the position alignment for the media within the Flash media player. Choices are left, top, right, bottom, top left, top right, bottom left, and bottom right.
- **Auto Play**: Select to have the Flash media play automatically when selected.
- **Loop**: Select so the media file loops (replays) after reaching the end.
- **Show Menu**: Select to show the Flash media player menu.
- **SWLiveConnect**: Used only in older Flash media. When selected, allows the player and browser to exchange information. Typically, this parameter is not necessary.
- **Base and Flash Vars**: Manually configure the Flash options. These features are intended for advanced web developers needing a high degree of control and customization over the Flash player appearance and behavior.

### Media Source Settings
In the **Source** tab, you can enter custom media HTML code. This feature is intended for advanced web developers.
Adding Mashups

A mashup combines elements from two or more sources. When you view a YouTube™ video in a Blackboard Learn course as part of the course content, you are experiencing a mashup.

Click the insert mashup function ( ) to display a drop-down list and select from the following:

- Flickr® Photo
- SlideShare Presentation
- YouTube™ Video
- NBC Content

*Note:* Your school determines the availability of specific mashup types.

After you select a mashup type, you can search for content to fit your course. Then, you set viewing and presentation options.

Before submitting, click the preview function ( ) to see how the mashup will appear in the content item. Close the preview window to make changes. When you are satisfied with the selection and options, click **Submit** to continue or **Cancel** to abort adding the mashup.

To learn more about how instructors can use mashups in their courses, see [How to Create Mashups](#). To learn more about how students can use mashups, see [Mashups](#).

Using the Math Editor

The math editor delivered within the content editor provides an interface for creating and managing math formulas in your course. The math editor is written by WIRIS and is standard-based using the latest MathML standard for describing math formulas for display in browsers. Additionally, the created formulas are saved as the MathML for future editing AND as a PNG file for rapid deployment to browsers.

Click the launch math editor function ( ) to open the math equation editor window, the WIRIS Formula Editor.

*Note:* Javascript must be enabled for the math editor to function.

*Rich Set of Feature*

- Basic operations
- Matrix calculus
- Calculus and series
- Logic and set theory
- Units
- Greek alphabet

*Improved Rendering Experience*

The math editor automatically converts formulas and equations to images so that users do not need to download an applet to view them. The formulas and equations continue to remain fully editable for an author.

*Supports Copy/Paste*

The math editor supports copying and pasting of MathML formulas and equations directly in the editor.
Supports Legacy Equations

The math editor continues to support W3C MathML standards and extracts MathML from the pre-SP8 legacy math editor.

Course Conversion Support

If upgrading from other platforms such as CE 4 or Vista, the math editor can accommodate the formulas and equations from these platforms.

Understand the Tabs

The tabs at the top of the page allow you to select different elements:

- General
- Operators
- Symbols
- Big operations
- Matrix mathematics
- Arrows
- Greek symbols
- Superscript, subscript, and accents
- Other miscellaneous math elements
- Functions

To learn more, click the Manual link to access the WIRIS website user manual.

Working With Tables

Click the insert/edit table function ( ) to begin adding a table in the text area. Alternatively, you can use the insert/edit table command from the right-click contextual menu.

Note: Most of the table functions are unavailable (grayed out) unless you place the mouse pointer inside an existing table.
General Tab

On the General tab, you can set the basic properties for a table. Note that after creation, you can edit a table using the table functions and commands. You can resize a table by clicking and dragging the table border anchors.

- **Columns**: Type the initial number of columns for the table. The default is set to two columns.
- **Rows**: Type the initial number of rows for the table. The default is set to two rows.
- **Cell Padding**: Type a number in pixels for the individual table cells’ padding.
- **Cell Spacing**: Type a number in pixels to separate the table cells.
- **Alignment**: Select the table alignment: center, left, or right. If not set, the current paragraph alignment is used.
- **Border**: Creates a simple black line border around the table. Type a number in pixels for the width of the table border. The default is set to one pixel.
- **Width**: Set the width of the table in either pixels or a percentage of the available display width. The default is set to 200 pixels.
- **Height**: Set the height of the table in either pixels or a percentage of the available display height. If left blank, the table is sized automatically as needed to fit the content.
- **Class**: Set the HTML class for the table. If your setup does not use classes, ignore this setting
- **Table Caption**: Select the check box so the table is created with a caption cell at the top. A table caption appears as the title of the table.

Advanced Tab

On the Advanced tab, you can set additional properties for a table.
- **ID**: Type a table description or identifier.
- **Summary**: Type a description for a table.
- **Style**: Allow HTML code overrides for the placement, size, appearance, and border.
- **Language Code**: Assign a language code to a table—used in translations.
- **Background Image**: Use a graphic image to appear as a background for a table. You can provide a URL to create a link to an image file outside of the local system.
  - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
  - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
    - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
    - OR-
    - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
- **Frame**: Set the table frame parameter: void, above, below, hsides, lhs, rhs, vsides, box, or border.
- **Rules**: Set rules for the table content: none, groups, rows, cols, or all.
- **Language Direction**: Set whether text entered in the table goes left to right or right to left from the mouse pointer position.
- **Border Color**: Set the color for the table border.
- **Background Color**: Set the background color for the table.

**Setting Row and Cell Properties**

Row properties affect an entire table row or a number of selected table rows. Cell properties affect the current table cell or a number of selected cells.

**Row Properties**

Click inside an existing table and click the table row properties function ( ) to open the **Table Row Properties** window. You can set formatting parameters to control how the contents of a table row or selected rows will appear.
General Tab

On the General tab, you can:

- **Row Type**: Set whether the row is a header, body, or footer.
- **Alignment**: Set the alignment of the row’s cell contents to center, left, or right.
- **Vertical alignment**: Set the alignment of the row’s cell contents to top, center, or bottom.
- **Class**: Set the row content HTML class. If classes are not used, ignore this setting.
- **Height**: Manually set the height of the row. Otherwise, the row expands or contracts as needed to fit the contents.

From the drop-down list at the bottom of the window, select to:

- Update the current row or selected rows only (default).
- Update odd rows in the table.
- Update even rows in the table.
- Update all rows in the table.

Advanced Tab

On the Advanced tab, you can set additional row properties.

- **ID**: Type a row description or identifier.
- **Style**: Allow HTML code overrides for the placement, size, appearance, and border.
- **Language Direction**: Set whether text entered in the row goes from left to right or right to left from the mouse pointer position.
- **Language Code**: Assign a language code to a row—used in translations.
- **Background Image**: Use a graphic image to appear as a background for a row. You can provide a URL to create a link to an image file outside of the local system.
  - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
  - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
    - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
-OR-

- If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

  - **Background Color**: Set the background color for the row.

  ![Table Cell Properties](image)

**Cell Properties**

Click the table cell properties function ( ) to open the **Table Cell Properties** window. You can set formatting parameters to control how the contents of a table cell or selected cells will appear.

![General Tab](image)

**General Tab**

On the **General** tab, you can:

- **Alignment**: Set the alignment for a cell contents to center, left, or right.
- **Cell Type**: Set a cell content type to data or header.
- **Vertical Alignment**: Set the alignment for a cell contents to top, center, or bottom.
- **Scope**: Expand the modification selection beyond an individual cell and applies the changes to a column, row, row group, col group.
- **Width**: Manually set the width of a cell.
- **Height**: Manually set the height of a cell.
- **Class**: Set the row content HTML class. If classes are not used, ignore this setting.

From the drop-down list at the bottom of the window, select to:
- Update the current cell or selected cells only (default).
- Update all cells in a row.
- Update all cells in a table.

**Advanced Tab**

On the **Advanced** tab, you can set additional cell properties.

- **ID**: Type a cell description or identifier.
- **Style**: Allows HTML code overrides for the placement, size, appearance, and border.
- **Language Direction**: Set whether text entered in a cell goes from left to right or right to left from the mouse pointer position.
- **Language Code**: Assign a language code to a cell—used in translations.
- **Background Image**: Use a graphic image to appear as a background for a cell. You can provide a URL to create a link to an image file outside of the local system.
  - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
  - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
    - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
    - OR-
    - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
- **Border Color**: Set the color for a cell border.
- **Background Color**: Set the background color for a cell.

**Editing Tables**

Click inside an existing table to make the table editing functions active in the content editor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert/Edit Table" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Insert/Edit Table</strong> window. If clicked inside a table, a new table is created inside the first one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Row Properties" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Table Row Properties</strong> window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Table Cell Properties" /></td>
<td>Click to open the <strong>Table Cell Properties</strong> window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert Row Before" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank row before the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert Row After" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank row after the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Delete Row" /></td>
<td>Delete the current row from the table. If you select multiple columns, all of them are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert Column Left" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank column to the left of (before) the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Insert Column Right" /></td>
<td>Insert a blank column to the right of (after) the current mouse pointer position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Delete Column" /></td>
<td>Delete the current column from the table. If you select multiple columns, all of them are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Merge Cells" /></td>
<td>Merge two or more selected cells into a single table cell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Split Cells" /></td>
<td>Split previously merged table cells. If the cell or cells are not ones that were merged, nothing happens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To resize a table, in addition to using table, row, or cell properties, you can also press and drag one of the table border anchors. These are positioned at each of the table corners—to make the entire table larger or smaller. You will also find them in the middle of each side—left, right, top, and bottom—to resize the table horizontally or vertically.

**Right-Click Contextual Menus**

You can also right-click anywhere inside an existing table to access a contextual menu. Select **Insert/Edit Table** to access some editing properties for an existing table.

**Using Anchors**

You can use anchors to position (anchor) other items and objects, such as images. Position the mouse pointer where you want the anchor to appear, and click the anchor function (🔗) to open the **Insert/Edit Anchor** window. Type a name for the anchor and click **Insert** to add it.

To modify an existing anchor, select it and click the anchor function.

To remove an anchor, select it and press the **Delete** key.

**Note:** Deleting an anchor also deletes the object or text anchored to it.

**Advanced Functions**

**HTML Code View**

Click the HTML code view function (HTML) to open the **HTML Code View** window. Then, you can directly edit the content HTML code. When finished, click **Update** to apply your changes or **Cancel** to abort.

The content editor performs some code verification. To keep the code valid and working, HTML tags are added or removed as needed. However, you might enter invalid codes or tags, and the content editor’s auto-correcting capabilities may not catch all issues. Displayed results can be unpredictable.

**Note:** This feature is intended for experienced web developers.
**Editing CSS**

Click the edit CSS function (css) to edit the cascading style sheet (CSS) for the page.

*Note:* This feature is intended for experienced web developers.

In the **Edit CSS Style** window, using the tabs and individual settings, you can customize nearly all of the basic formatting defaults for the current content editor display. Each tab controls a different category of style overrides.

- **Text:** Set the font face, size, style, weight, and aspects of text appearance.
- **Background:** Use a background color or image, and set how it is displayed.
- **Block:** Set formatting options at the paragraph level, including word and letter spacing, alignment, indenting.
- **Box:** Set defaults for drawn boxes.
- **Border:** Set the style, width, and color for all aspects of table and object borders.
- **List:** Set defaults for formatted lists.
- **Positioning:** Set the overall page positioning, placement, and clipping preferences.

Click **Apply** or **Update** to make the changes or **Cancel** to abort.

**Using the Right-Click Contextual Menu**

In the content editor, you can place your mouse pointer in the text area and right-click to access a contextual menu. The menu includes the editor's most commonly used functions.
- **Cut**: Cut the selected text or object.
- **Copy**: Copy the selected text or object.
- **Paste**: Paste the most recently cut or copied text or object.
- **Link**: Visible only when you select text or an object and opens the insert/edit link window. To learn more, see How to Use Links.
- **Remove Link**: Visible only when you select text or an object and removes any hyperlink. If you click remove link for something that has no hyperlink, nothing happens.
- **Image**: Add or edit an image. To learn more, see Adding Images.
- **Alignment**: Open a sub-menu, allowing you to align text to the left margin, center, right margin, or both margins.
- **Insert/Edit Table**: Place your mouse pointer inside an existing table and click this option to access the available editing features.

**Note**: Cut, copy, and paste functions may not be available in all browsers.

### Keyboard Shortcuts for the Content Editor

The content editor supports the keyboard shortcuts listed in the following table. Please note that Mac users use the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key. In the table, these are indicated by "MAC:" and COMMAND is abbreviated as CMD.

**Note**: If you use the shortcut keys that move selected items one character left, right, up, or down, the object you are moving is absolutely positioned. An absolutely positioned element is determined by pixels so moving it up once moves it up one pixel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyboard Shortcut</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RIGHT ARROW</td>
<td>Move one character to the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT ARROW</td>
<td>Move one character to the left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOWN ARROW</td>
<td>Move down one line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP ARROW</td>
<td>Move up one line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+RIGHT ARROW (MAC: CMD+RIGHT ARROW)</td>
<td>Move right one word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard Shortcut</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+LEFT ARROW</td>
<td>Move left one word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+LEFT ARROW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>END</td>
<td>Move to the end of the line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td>Move to the start of the line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+DOWN ARROW</td>
<td>Move down one paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+DOWN ARROW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+UP ARROW</td>
<td>Move up one paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+UP ARROW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE DOWN</td>
<td>Move down one page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE UP</td>
<td>Move up one page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+HOME</td>
<td>Move to the beginning of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+HOME</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+END</td>
<td>Move to the end of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+END</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selection</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection one character to the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+LEFT ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection one character to the left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection right one word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+SHIFT+LEFT ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection left one word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+SHIFT+LEFT ARROW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+UP ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection up one line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+DOWN ARROW</td>
<td>Extend the selection down one line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+END</td>
<td>Extend the selection to the end of the current line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+HOME</td>
<td>Extend the selection to the start of the current line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+PAGE DOWN</td>
<td>Extend the selection down one page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+PAGE UP</td>
<td>Extend the selection up one page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+SHIFT+END</td>
<td>Extend the selection to the end of the document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Editing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKSPACE</td>
<td>Delete the selection. Or, if you make no selection, delete the character to the left of the mouse pointer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+BACKSPACE</td>
<td>Delete all of a word to the left of the mouse pointer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+BACKSPACE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+C MAC: CMD+C</td>
<td>Copy the selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+V MAC: CMD+V</td>
<td>Paste cut contents or copied contents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Working With Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyboard Shortcut</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+X MAC: CMD+X</td>
<td>Cut the selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELETE</td>
<td>Delete the selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSERT</td>
<td>Toggle between inserting and overwriting text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+Z</td>
<td>Undo the most recent formatting command.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+Z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+Y</td>
<td>Redo the most recent undone command.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTRL+F</td>
<td>Find text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC: CMD+F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHIFT+F10</td>
<td>Display the contextual menu. This is the same as a right-click.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Formatting HTML Content

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) coding consists of special tags placed around the text to be formatted. These tags tell web browsers and other HTML-enabled applications how to show the encoded text when displayed by a computer.

Following are some basic HTML coding to add simple formatting to course content. Additional resources for learning more about HTML may be found in [Other HTML Resources](#).

### What is HTML

HTML is the set of codes used to format (or "mark up") Web pages. A single piece of HTML code is called a "tag." HTML tags are surrounded by pointed brackets ("<" and ">"). Tags usually come in pairs.

For example, the pair of HTML tags to create bold text looks like this:

```html
&lt;strong&gt;This text will be bold.&lt;/strong&gt;
```

The `<strong>` tag means "start bold here." The end tag, `</strong>`, means "end bold here." End tags always include the forward slash ("/").

### Paragraph Formatting Using HTML

In HTML, a paragraph break is used to put a single blank line between paragraphs. A hard return inserts no blank line. The tag is used alone at the end of a paragraph, or as a pair. If used as a pair, the "align=left|center|right" modifier may be included in the beginning tag to control placement.

For example, the following tag would create a right-aligned paragraph:

```html
&lt;p align=right&gt;Fourscore and seven years ago, our founding father set forth upon this continent a new nation.&lt;/p&gt;
```
Text Formatting Using HTML

The following tags are used for basic text formatting:

- **Bold text tag**: `<strong>text</strong>`
- **Italic text tag**: `<em>text</em>`
- **Underlined text tag**: `<u>text</u>`
- **Font format tags**: `<font>text</font>` (Font formats include `face=`, `color=`, `size=`)

The font tag requires at least one of the modifiers (face, color, or size).

The face modifier is set to any font, but the person viewing the page must also have that font installed on their computer. For that reason, it is best to use only common fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier New.

The color modifier will recognize basic colors, including black, white, gray, red, blue, yellow, green, purple, orange, cyan, magenta, and so forth.

The size modifier does not refer to typical font point sizes. In HTML fonts are sizes 1 through 7. The default font size is 3.

**Note:** Because each user may set the default font point at which their browser will display text, these font sizes are relative. For example, one user might have their browser's default font set to 10-point Times while another has their browser's default font set to 12-point Times. The HTML tag would create 10-point Times text on the first computer, and 12-point on the latter, since 3 is the default size.

Users may use plus or minus signs to indicate sizes relative to the default. For example, the following HTML would create text that is two steps larger than the default font size:

```
<FONT size=+2>Bigger, Better, Faster!</FONT>
```

Creating Links with HTML

Links are created using the 'anchor' tag.

```
<a href="URL">Clickable text</a>
```

In the following example, the words 'Blackboard Inc.' will turn into a link that directs the user to the Blackboard home page.

```
<a href="http://www.blackboard.com/">Blackboard Inc.</a>
```

When displayed, the link will look like this: Blackboard Inc.

Creating HTML with Other Tools

Course developers do not have to learn everything about HTML. They may also use web authoring tools to generate HTML. There are many applications that may be used for this. Some examples are:

- **Word processors**: Microsoft© Word™, Corel© WordPerfect™, Apple© AppleWorks™, Sun© StarOffice™, and almost every other contemporary word processor contains the ability to convert word processing documents to a Web page coded in HTML. However, the conversion from a word processing document to an HTML Web page is often not perfect, especially for documents with complex formatting.

- **WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) Web-authoring tools**: These tools provide an environment similar to a word processor for developing Web pages and entire Web sites. There are many products to choose from, including, Adobe© Dreamweaver™, Adobe© GoLive™, NetObjects© Fusion, and Microsoft© FrontPage™.
**HTML Editors**: Applications like BareBones© Software's BBEdit™ provide an editing environment for HTML documents. While they are not WYSIWYG, HTML editors usually have a "preview" mode that allows users to switch between viewing the raw HTML codes and previewing how those codes will look in the browser. These products help write HTML faster and easier, but they presume the user is already knowledgeable about HTML.

**Incorporating HTML Generated with Other Applications**

Instructors may decide to incorporate HTML generated content with other applications into their courses. There are two options for including this content:

Save the content as an HTML file and upload the HTML file itself into Blackboard Learn. In the course area, next to the **Special Action** field, select **Create a link to this file**. Blackboard Learn will automatically detect images in an HTML file and prompt you to upload the images as well.

Copy and paste the HTML code into a text box.

**Troubleshooting HTML Code**

Blackboard recommends that you **do not use** the following in a course:

- Do not use multiple frames.
- Do not use `<applet>` tags inside the text box. These tags may cause errors in the content.

**Other HTML Resources**

There are many online resources for additional information about HTML. One valuable and definitive resource is The World Wide Web Consortium located at [http://www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org).

**Working With File Attachments**

You can add file attachments to different areas in a course, such as to a content item, an assignment, or a discussion board post. Users open a file by clicking a link to the file that appears in the course.

Locate the file to be attached to your course using one of the following options:

- To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
- To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
  - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
  - **OR**
  - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

After selecting a file to attach, you may add a name for the link to the file. This link title appears to users, instead of the name of the document. For example, you could assign "Biology Syllabus" as the link title instead of using the file name `syllabus_bio_101.doc`.

**Accepted Characters in File Names**

Blackboard Learn allows the use of all characters in file names. However, a user's operating system and browser may limit the types of characters accepted. For example, some browsers do not accept multi-byte characters, and some may not have the languages installed to display the special alphabetic characters specific to them.
Recognized Attachment File Types

The following file types are recognized by Blackboard Learn. These files can appear within a content item.

**Note:** Blackboard Learn can recognize additional file types and associated applications if a MIME extension is added. Contact your school to learn more about adding MIME extensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extension</th>
<th>File Type</th>
<th>Programs associated with the File Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAM</td>
<td>Multimedia</td>
<td>Adobe® Authorware® plug-in. Note that the .aam file is the starting point for a series of files that must be enclosed in a .ZIP file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIFF</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASF</td>
<td>Multimedia</td>
<td>Microsoft® .NET™ Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Real Audio Player™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVI</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Video player (not Macintosh® compatible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Microsoft® Word or other word processor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXE</td>
<td>Executable</td>
<td>Executable file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIF</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Graphics program or web browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTML, HTM</td>
<td>Web page</td>
<td>HTML editor or web browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPG, JPEG</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Graphics program or web browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIF</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Graphics program or web browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP3</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPE</td>
<td>Audio/Video</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPG, MPEG</td>
<td>Audio/Video</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOOV,MOVIE</td>
<td>Movie</td>
<td>QuickTime® movie player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOV</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Movie or media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDF</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Adobe® Acrobat® Reader®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Portable Network Graphics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPT, PPS</td>
<td>Slideshow</td>
<td>Microsoft® PowerPoint® and PowerPoint® Player®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QT</td>
<td>Movie</td>
<td>QuickTime™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Real Audio Player™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Real Audio Movie™</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTF</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Rich Text Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWF</td>
<td>Multimedia</td>
<td>Adobe® Shockwave® plug-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIFF, TIF</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Graphics program or web browser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TXT</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Text or HTML editor, word processor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAV</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMA</td>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Audio media player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMF</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>Microsoft® Windows®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMV</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Microsoft® Windows®</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sharing and Exchanging Files in Courses

You have several options in Blackboard Learn for sharing and exchanging files with students.

**Items and Files**

For distributing files to students, you can use **Items** or **Files** within a content area. You also have the ability to make items and files available for a set period of time or to apply **adaptive release** rules to limit access to students who have met a set of requirements.

You may also use Course Files or the Content Collection, if your school licenses content management to store files and link to them in a content area.

**Assignments**

You can create assignments to receive student files. Again, Assignment availability can be limited by date and time, or by the application of **adaptive release criteria**. A major benefit is the ability to download all files submitted through an assignment in a single compressed ZIP file, rather than a file-by-file workflow.

**Group File Exchange**

The **course groups** feature allows you to create subsets of students and give them their own workspace to collaborate within a course. One groups tool is the **File Exchange**, which permits group members and instructors to upload and manage documents in the group area. As only designated members can access the group area, this solution allows for cooperative editing as well as simple file exchange.

**Blogs, Journals, and Wikis**

The interactive features of **blogs**, **journals**, and **wikis** provide another alternative for file sharing within a course.

- Journals, a tool that is private between the instructor and an individual student, can be used to give feedback on files shared by the student, or to distribute personalized files to students.
- The more public nature of the blogs tool permits students to receive feedback from their peers on shared documents through the comments feature, while retaining your ability to share files by attaching them to your own blog entries.
- The collaborative space of wikis is an option for multiple students and instructors to share and exchange files, or to create a shared document within the content editor.

Blogs, journals, and wikis can also be created within **group** areas.

**Discussion Board**

Another option for file sharing is the **discussion board**. Threaded posts within the discussion board enable discussions of documents to be tracked easily.
Online Teaching Strategies

A large part of successful learner outcomes is figuring out the best teaching strategies for your subject matter and students. Keeping students engaged and excited about learning is a combination of course design and student management.

The following webinars are part of the Blackboard Innovative Teaching Series (BITS). BITS brings Blackboard community experts to you, sharing their top strategies and pedagogy for increasing educator efficiency and improving learning outcomes. These recordings vary from 10 to 60 minutes in length. Each webinar has a technical follow-up session.

Strategies to Engage Students

With learner engagement at the forefront of developing and delivering an effective online course, this session examines how course developers and instructors can teach students writing strategies while employing the same strategies used when in developing a course. This hands-on writing course includes engaging techniques that can be applied to numerous content areas with an emphasis on course objectives, expectations, collaboration, and ongoing feedback.

Follow-Up to Strategies to Engage Students

This follow-up webinar demonstrates the technical how-to's of implementing the best practices presented in Strategies to Engage Students.

Ten Ideas to Help Students be More Engaged in Online Classes

This webinar provides straightforward methods for helping your students become more engaged in your online classroom. This session presents simple and effective ideas that can be introduced easily into an on-going class.

Follow-up to Ten Ideas to Help Students be More Engaged in Online Classes

This follow-up webinar demonstrates the technical how-to's of implementing the best practices presented in Ten Ideas to Help Students be More Engaged in Online Classes.

Assessing Student Engagement for Continuous Course Improvement

Instructors and professors need to know whether students are engaged in a course. It is challenging to measure the level of engagement as the course progresses and make continuous improvements. This session shares broad strategies for monitoring and assessing engagement throughout your courses and provides some tips and tricks to implement them.
Follow-up to Assessing Student Engagement for Continuous Course Improvement

This follow-up webinar demonstrates the technical how-to's of implementing the best practices presented in Assessing Student Engagement for Continuous Course Improvement.

Follow-up to Efficient Collaboration and Team Building in the Distance Learning Environment

To deepen student collaboration, instructors often employ group or team projects and activities. Facilitation and management of group activities online can be time consuming. This session explores strategies for efficiently promoting student collaboration and successfully building teams in the online environment.

Language Packs

Language packs present Blackboard Learn using language and cultural norms matched to different audiences. Language pack preferences are defined at the system level, the course or organization level, and finally at the user level.

At the system level, the Blackboard administrator defines one language pack as the system default. This is the language pack that appears when no other language pack is specified at the course level or at the user level.

At the course level, instructors can set a language pack and enforce it. Enforcing a language pack means that all users will view the language pack. For example, one possible reason to enforce a language pack’s use is for a course teaching that language. If the language pack is not enforced, and a user has a preferred language pack associated with their account, the user’s language pack will override the course language pack.

At the user level, individuals may select their preferred language pack, unless a language pack choice has been set to be enforced.

*Note:* The default names in the system are translated and appear differently in each language pack. Customized names, such as changing the name of a tool, are not changed with the language pack. These values stay the same through all language packs.

How to Set a Language Pack

1. On the Control Panel, click **Customization** and then click **Properties**.
2. Select a language pack from the **Language Pack** drop-down list.
3. Click **Enforce Language Pack** to always display this course in the selected language pack.
4. Click **Submit**.
If a language pack is not chosen for a course, the course will display in the user’s preferred language pack or, if the user has not set a preferred language pack, the system default language pack.

**Course Areas not Impacted by Language Pack Selections**

For the most part, the Control Panel appears in the selected language pack of a course. It does not appear in the language pack selected for the user. In a few places within a course, the page will display using the system default or the user’s preferred language pack rather than the course language pack. The following pages will not display in the selected course language pack:

- Control Panel > Course Information > Edit Item, Copy Item, Add Item, Delete Item
- Control Panel > Copy Files to Content Collection
- Control Panel > Discussion Board > Add Forum
- Control Panel > Announcements > Confirmation receipt

**Related Tutorials**  
[Changing the Course Language Pack](#)  
(Flash movie | 1m 53s)

**Accessibility**

Blackboard is committed to ensuring that the platform is usable and accessible. The code and user interface design techniques are continually audited to ensure the application is usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Audits of our software releases are conducted by a third party to ensure the accessibility of the products. For Blackboard Learn 9.1’s conformance with the accessibility standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act using the [Voluntary Product Accessibility Template® (VPAT®)](http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility) tool, see the [VPAT for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1](http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility).

To learn more about Blackboard’s commitment to accessibility, see [http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility](http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility).

**About the Structure of Blackboard Learn Pages**

A logical heading structure was put in place to properly structure the page and allow users to navigate using headings. Headings are used consistently throughout the application giving users the ability to quickly understand the structure of any page in the application and move to the appropriate section of the page or content item quickly and easily.

As is required, a single H1 is provided to identify the page the user is looking at. In Blackboard Learn, the page title (example "Course Documents") is always the H1.

H2 headings are used to delineate major sections of a page. These headings are generally hidden and allow screen reader users to skip directly to each major page section. For example, a Course page has two H2 headings: one for the Course Menu and one for the main content located immediately above the action bar on the content page.

H3 headings are typically used as the title of content items or key content elements on a page. For example, the title of an assignment on a "Course Documents" page is an H3 so the user can easily find it.

**Note:** To reduce the visual clutter on a page, a number of elements are hidden until they receive either mouse or keyboard focus. After focus is given, these elements become active and follow typical keyboard interaction models.
About Keyboard Navigation

Industry standard keyboard interactions are used throughout Blackboard Learn to move between menus, open menus and select items within a menu. Keyboard navigation patterns may differ between browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Chrome), but the interactions within any particular browser are common and consistent.

Note: If you are using a Mac with Firefox or Safari and are having difficulty navigating using your keyboard you may need to review and update your operating system and browser settings to ensure they are properly configured for keyboard navigation. To learn more, see:

- Firefox setup
- Firefox keyboard navigation tips
- Mac general setup

About Keyboard Navigation for the Course Quick Setup Guide

The Quick Setup Guide wizard is an accordion object and uses the standard navigation. The wizard opens by default when an instructor opens their course for the first time. You can also access it from the Control Panel under Customize. Type "Welcome" in your browser's Find tool and press ESC on your keyboard.

Note: If you are using a Mac with Firefox or Safari and are having difficulty navigating using your keyboard you may need to review and update your operating system and browser settings to ensure they are properly configured for keyboard navigation. To learn more, see:

- Firefox setup
- Firefox keyboard navigation tips
- Mac general setup

Navigating Within The Quick Setup Guide

Within the Quick Setup Guide press:

- UP and DOWN ARROW keys on your keyboard to move between the names of the sections in the accordion.
- SPACEBAR or ENTER on your keyboard to open a section. After the section is open, the focus will still be on the heading, press TAB to navigate to the sub-list. The sub-list is coded as radio buttons allowing you to use arrow keys to navigate between items. Stopping on the item selects it.
- SPACEBAR on your keyboard to make an item active or inactive.
- TAB on your keyboard to enter the open section of the accordion and change the options within the section. After you have reached the end of a section, clicking TAB again will take you to the title of the next accordion section.

Navigating Within The Structures Step

Within the Structures step, you must select a structure to use it. If you do not select a structure, the current structure will be used.

Navigate to each structure to read about and preview it. To open the link to learn more about the course structures:

1. Press TAB on your keyboard to open a list of links. Press SPACEBAR on your keyboard for a description.
2. Press TAB again to proceed to the next link, the Help page.
3. Press TAB to proceed to sample content. This is the last link in the step.
4. Press TAB to return to the structures step.

**Note:** If you leave the Structures step, the current selected structure will open when you return to that step. To select a structure to use, press the SPACEBAR on your keyboard to select it. Press the SPACEBAR again to deselect the structure. Visually, this turns the Use this structure button on and off.

**Accessibility Training Resources**

**Universal Design and Accessibility for Online Learning Enrollment**

If you would like guidance in building courses that are accessible or learning more about technology and accessibility, we encourage you to enroll in our free self-paced course, *Universal Design and Accessibility for Online Learning*, available through CourseSites. Click Self-Enroll.

**Universal Design and Accessibility for Online Learning Course Archive**

Download a copy of the course archive to customize and facilitate at your own school. This archive (1.9 MB) is compatible with Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP 8. Do not unzip or open the archive. A System Administrator must restore the course to the system.
Course Options

Setting Course Properties

Properties control the functional settings of a course.

>How to Access Course Properties

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Properties.

Providing a Name and Description

You can change the name and description of a course. This name appears as the displayed course name throughout Blackboard Learn. The description appears in the course catalog.

Using Course Classification

You can safely ignore these fields. Course classification is not part of or related to course categorization for the course catalog. When you create each course, a default classification value is listed. These fields were used in previous versions of Blackboard Learn but exist now only to ensure backward compatibility with building blocks or other plug-ins.

Setting Course Availability

You can set courses to be available or unavailable. If the course is available, all users participating in the course have access. If the course is unavailable, access is determined by course role. Instructors, course builders, teaching assistants (TAs), and graders can see and access unavailable courses from My Courses and the course list, but they are marked as unavailable. Students cannot access unavailable courses.
regardless of the course duration. Unavailable courses do not appear in the course catalog.

Setting the Course Duration

Course duration defines the time in which students may interact with a course.

- **Continuous**: The course is always available.
- **Select Dates**: The course is available according to specific dates. Courses may have a start date, but no end date. After the end date, courses are not available to students, but are otherwise unchanged.
- **Days from the Date of Enrollment**: Use this option to place a time limit on courses calculated from the date a student enrolls. This is the best option for self-paced courses.

Using Terms to Set Availability and Duration

If your school has associated a term with a course—for example, Spring 2012 Semester or Winter Session 2011—you can set a course to use these preset dates.

When a term is available for a course, additional options appear with Set Availability and Set Course Duration.

- **Use Term Availability**: The course is available during the term dates, but unavailable before and after. The name of the term is listed.
- **Use Term Duration**: The course runs for the entire duration of the term, beginning on the first date of the term and ending on the last. The actual dates are listed for the associated term.

Categorizing the Course

The course catalog lists the courses that are offered through the system and is made available to users by your school. The categories in the course catalog are also created and maintained by your school. You can add your course to one or more categories. Courses added to a category are listed in the course catalog under that category.

Select a catalog category and use the arrow functions to move the category to the Selected Items box. You can select more than one category. Repeat the process to add another category. The course appears under the selected categories. Invert Selection selects categories that are not selected and clears categories that are selected. Use this to exclude one or two categories without having to click all the other categories.

Selecting a Language Pack

Language packs change the language of buttons, titles, and other text supplied by the system. Language pack preferences are defined at the system, course, and user level.

At the system level, your school defines one language pack as the system default. This is the language pack that appears when no other language pack is specified at the course level or at the user level.

At the course level, you can set a language pack that is different from the default to make all users in a course view the same language pack. For example, one reason to enforce a specific language pack is in a course designed to teach that language.

If the language pack is not enforced, users can set a preferred language pack that is different from the course language pack by changing the setting in the drop-down list accessed from next to your name in the page header: Settings > Change Personal Settings > Set Language Pack. Enforcing the language pack overrides individual users’ language choices.
Note: Customized names for Content Areas and tools are not changed with the language pack. These values stay the same for all language packs. The default names in the system are translated and appear differently in each language pack.

To learn more, see Language Packs.

Setting Course Files Options

The course files properties are available only if your school licenses content management.

- **Course Files Default Directory**: Type or browse for the directory to contain the course files for this course. This is the default location where files are saved for the course and does not conflict with the Content Collection Home Page setting.

- **Display**: Each item in the Content Collection has a contextual menu that provides access to the available actions. When working in the course files area on the Control Panel, the selected option configures the menu to display all of the Content Collection options that are available when working on the Content Collection tab or only the course-specific options.

Setting Course Style Options

Style options control the appearance, theme, Course Menu style and layout, content appearance, course entry point, and the banner image for a course. On the Control Panel, expand the **Customization** section and select **Teaching Style** to access course style options.

Selecting a Course Structure

Course structures contain course areas, optional content examples, and instructions to help you design your course. Select a structure to view its description and preview of what its menu looks like when added to a course. You can opt to include content examples when adding a course structure to your course.

A selected course structure’s content is **added** to your course and does not replace existing Course Menu items and content. You can edit and delete course structure content in the same way as other created or imported content. Before you begin, export or archive your course to ensure you have an original version before adding a course structure, or request an empty course for experimenting with course structures.

To select a course structure:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Customization** section and select **Teaching Style**.
2. On the **Teaching Style** page, in the **Select Course Structure** section, the left column displays all course structures in a scrollable list. Select different course structures to browse their descriptions and Course Menus. In the preview, you can click a Course Menu link to learn the purpose of that item in the course structure.

   **Note**: If the **Select Course Structure** section is not visible, the Blackboard administrator at your school has disabled it.

3. Decide on a course structure and click **Use This Structure** to select it. Your selected course structure is indicated by a green check mark at the top of the course structure selection tool.

   To revert, click **Existing Menu** in the course structures' list and click **Use This Structure**. No changes are made to your course if **Existing Menu** is selected.

4. After selecting a course structure, the **Include content examples** check box is revealed. Select it to add content items and instructions as well as the course structure’s menu links. If you do not include content examples, only menu links are added to your course.
5. Click **Submit** to add the course structure content to your course. Click **Cancel** to exit without adding a course structure.

Including content examples populates the course structure with content items appropriate for the course structure type. The content examples are intended to be guidelines for creating your own content. The sample content is unavailable so that students cannot view it. If you decide to use the content examples, edit them to fit your course and make the items available to users.

For more information on the different course structures, see [Using Course Structures](#).

### Selecting the Course Entry Point

The **Course Entry Point** is the first area displayed to users upon entering a course. The default course entry point is the Home Page and contains modules that alert students to activity in the course. You can change the entry point by selecting an available area from the drop-down list. Available entry points are all the areas appearing on the Course Menu.

Changing the entry point takes effect immediately for users who log in to the system after the change. Users who are in the system when the change takes place will see the new entry point the next time they log in again.

### Applying Themes

If your school uses the Bb Learn 2012 system theme, you can select a course theme from this page. Course themes add a background image to the course display and change the color of the menu, buttons, controls, and so on. Use the scrollable list to select the appropriate course theme from the thumbnail sample images. It is possible to change the theme again at any time. Themes do not affect course content or a chosen course.
structure.

**Note:** Themes are available only if your Blackboard administrator has enabled them. If themes are not available, the course themes icon does not appear.

Alternatively, you can change course themes from anywhere in your course using the Change Course Theme function. Point to the ( ) icon to view a drop-down list showing all the available course themes, and click one to select it. Scroll through the theme preview box and select a theme.

The course theme changes immediately to the new choice. To change the theme, select another.

**Selecting the Menu Style**

This setting determines whether the Course Menu appears as plain text with a colored background or as graphical buttons with text on them. When choosing menu colors, select colors for the background and text that display a high level of contrast to ensure readability and accessibility.

As you make choices in the **Select Menu Style** section, the Preview sample menu shows what the settings will look like once submitted.

Select Text and choose the background color and text color by clicking the Action Link to access the color swatches. A large palette of preset colors is available, or you can provide a hexadecimal color value. Select a color and click Apply.

Select Buttons and expand the Button Library to choose from the following options:

- **Button Type:** From the drop-down list, select Pattern, Solid, or Striped.
- **Button Shape:** From the drop-down list, select Rounded Corners, Rectangular, or Rounded Ends.
- **Button Color:** Optionally, to narrow the available choices, type a color or button name and click Search.

As each option is selected, the buttons shown in the Button Library change to reflect the current choices. Click a button in the library to select it.

**Setting the Course Menu Display Option**

In the Course Menu Display section, two menu layouts are available: Folder View and List View. You can set the default menu view and allow users to access one or both views, meaning users can switch between them.

- **Folder View** displays course materials as a directory tree. You can expand the view to show the hierarchy of course navigation.
- **List View** displays the top level of course materials. You can choose to display links as buttons or text.

**Setting the Default Content View**

The Default Content View setting determines how content items appear in folders when users access the course for the first time.

- **Icon Only** displays content items as titled icons with no descriptions.
- **Text Only** displays content items as titles with short text descriptions only.
- **Icon and Text**, the default option, displays titled icons with descriptions.
Changing the default content view affects only new Content Areas. To change all existing pages as well, select the check box to **Apply this view to all existing content**.

**Selecting a Banner**

You can add a banner image to appear at the top of the course entry point. The banner image is automatically centered.

Use **Browse My Computer** to locate an image file on your computer. You cannot use images stored in Content Collection or Course Files; however, a copy is stored there with each new upload. If you delete the image from the course entry page, the image file remains in the course storage repository.

A recommended size for banners is approximately 480 by 80 pixels. When selecting a banner image, keep in mind that users can resize their browser windows, expand and collapse the Course Menu, and use monitors of varying sizes and screen resolutions. After uploading a banner, view it under those varying conditions to ensure that it appears as intended.

**Course Structures**

**Using Course Structures**

*Build Your Course: 1, 2, 3...GO!*

Even if you are new to online instruction, course structures enable you to create a course in a short amount of time. Use a course structure's Course Menu links, instructions, and content examples to jump-start your course organization and create a meaningful learning experience for students.

After completing three basic steps, your course will be ready for students.

**Step 1: Select a Course Structure**

Before you begin, you can export or archive your course before adding a course structure to ensure you have an
original version. To learn more, see Exporting and Archiving Courses.

**IMPORTANT!** A selected course structure’s content is added to your course and does not replace existing menu items and content. You can delete unnecessary items.

Select a course structure on the Teaching Style page.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Teaching Style.
2. On the Teaching Style page, in the Select Course Structure section, the left column displays all course structures in a scrollable list. Select different course structures to browse their descriptions and preview their Course Menus. In the preview, you can click a Course Menu link to learn the purpose of that item in the course structure.

   **Note:** If the Select Course Structure section is not visible, the Blackboard administrator at your school has disabled it.

3. Decide on a course structure and click Use This Structure to select it. Your selected course structure is indicated by a green check mark at the top of the course structure selection tool.

   To revert, click Existing Menu in the course structures’ list and click Use This Structure. No changes are made to your course if Existing Menu is selected.

4. After selecting a course structure, the Include content examples check box is revealed. Select it to add content items and instructions as well as the course structure’s menu links. If you do not include content examples, only menu links are added to your course.

5. Click Submit to import the course structure and optional content examples to your course. Click Cancel to exit without making changes to your course.
Alternatively, select a course structure in the pop-up Quick Setup Guide. If your Blackboard administrator has enabled it, the pop-up window appears each time you enter your course until you disable it at the bottom of the window. Or, you can access the pop-up window using the following steps.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Quick Setup Guide.
2. Expand the Choose a Course Structure section. The left column displays all course structures in a scrollable list. Select different course structures to browse their descriptions and preview their Course Menus. In the preview, you can click a Course Menu link to learn the purpose of that item in the course structure.

   **Note:** If the Choose a Course Structure section is not visible, the Blackboard administrator at your school has disabled it.

3. Decide on a course structure and click Use This Structure to select it. Your selected course structure is indicated by a green check mark at the top of the course structure selection tool.

   To revert, click Existing Menu in the course structures list and click Use This Structure. No changes are made to your course if Existing Menu is selected.

4. After selecting a course structure, the Include content examples check box is revealed. Select it to add content items and instructions as well as the course structure’s menu links. If you do not include content examples, only menu links are added to your course.

5. Click Apply Changes to import the course structure and optional content examples to your course. Click Cancel to exit without making changes to your course.
If you browse and select a different course structure from the list after clicking **Use this Structure** and opt to include content example, the **Include content examples for** phrase does not update until a new course structure is applied.

**Tip:** Add only one structure to a course. Adding more than one course structure in the same course can result in duplicate menu items and content. To prevent this, create or request an empty course to experiment with additional course structures.

For detailed descriptions of each course structure, see [Selecting a Course Structure](#).

**Step 2: Include Content Examples -OR- Start Fresh**

Including a course structure's content examples populates your course with items appropriate to the course structure type. The content examples are intended to be edited for your own use and are designed to inspire both experienced and novice Blackboard Learn instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Include Sample Content?</th>
<th>Content Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>If you decide to include content examples, your course will contain:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pedagogical information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Step-by-step instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teaching tips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Links to video tutorials and Blackboard Help topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Course material: content items, tools, assignments, tests, surveys, announcements, Web Links, and Mashups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content examples are <strong>unavailable to students</strong> and have a distinct visual style that is removed automatically when an item is made available. For most course structures, the topic of oceanography is used for the sample items to demonstrate how items and tools can be used with your teaching method. You have the option to edit these items and make them available so students can view them -OR- delete them and create new items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users who are familiar with Blackboard Learn can include content examples to see samples of course material and explore new tools and features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> When you add a course structure to your course, a folder named &quot;sample_content&quot; is added to your course's storage repository: Course Files or the Content Collection. The folder contains the files used in the course structure's examples. If you already have folders in Course Files or the Content Collection, the &quot;sample_content&quot; folder appears in an &quot;ImportedContent&quot; folder. If you add multiple course structures to the same course, additional &quot;ImportedContent&quot; folders appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>If you have experience using the features in Blackboard Learn and are comfortable building different types of material in your course, you can exclude content examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you do not include content examples, the course structure's Course Menu links are added, but provide empty areas where you can create content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you want to include the course structure’s content examples, select the **Include content examples** check box. If you have content in your course, the course structure's content appears also.
Step 3: Create Content

After selecting a course structure, you can customize your course. The following checklist provides the essential tasks for preparing your course for students.

Change Edit Mode to ON to reveal editing features.

Organize the Course Menu

You can rename, reorder, delete, hide, and add Course Menu links as needed. Deleting a Content Area link from the Course Menu is a quick way to delete an entire area as well as the items within it. However, the Content Area and all items within it are permanently deleted. This action is final. If you are unsure, hide the Content Area instead.

If a tool link on the Course Menu does not work, the tool is not enabled. You can delete the link or ask the Blackboard administrator at your school to enable it.

If you did not include content examples, the course structure’s Course Menu links provide empty areas where you can create content.

To learn more, see The Course Menu.

Create Content Items, Tool Links, and Files

After your Course Menu is organized, you can upload files from your computer, edit existing content, and create new content and tool links. Using a wide variety of content types and tools provides a rich, interactive learning experience for your students.

To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.

Edit, Move, Copy, and Delete Content

When you add a course structure with content examples to your existing course, the content examples appear in addition to the existing content and are unavailable to students. You can edit, move, copy, or delete any of the content.

As you are building your course, if you are still developing some content or do not want students to see it, make it unavailable.

To learn more, see Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content.

Preview Your Course as a Student

Be sure to preview your content as a student. In the upper right of your course, change Edit Mode to OFF to see the student view.
If you include a link to a tool in a Content Area, the tool’s content must be made available before students can access it.

**Note:** If an item is visible that you do not want students to see, change **Edit Mode to ON** and make the item unavailable or delete it.

If possible, log in as a mock student so you can experience the course exactly as a student does. Work through your course content and activities, and try out the tools. You may find something is not functioning as you want, helping you resolve issues before students encounter them.

Visit the [On Demand Learning Center](#) for short video tutorials about creating course areas, tools, and content.

### Selecting a Course Structure

Course structures are predefined course materials such as Course Menu links, instructions, and content examples that you can add to your course to begin the design process quickly.

- A selected course structure’s content is **added** to your course and does not replace existing menu items and content in your course.
- A selected course structure’s links appear at the top of your Course Menu.
- You can edit or delete course structure content in the same way as other created or imported content.
- The optional content examples are guidelines for creating your own course material. This content is set to unavailable so that students cannot view it.

You can export or archive your course before adding a course structure to ensure you have an original version. To learn more, see [Exporting and Archiving Courses](#).

### Important!
Adding a course structure does not replace existing Course Menu items and content. The course structure’s content is **added** to the existing content and Course Menu in your course, and you can delete what is not needed.

You can use any theory or model for teaching in Blackboard Learn because it is open, flexible, and centered on enhancing student achievement. Blackboard offers five categories of course structures you can use as a launching pad to create your course, organize content, share knowledge, and build communities.

Select a course structure from the list to learn more about the pedagogy, tools, and content types used to meet its teaching goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on Activity</th>
<th>Focus on Communication</th>
<th>Focus on Content</th>
<th>Focus on Systems</th>
<th>Focus on Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>By Chapter</td>
<td>ANGEL</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>Guided Discussion</td>
<td>By Lecture</td>
<td>Blackboard Classic</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Session</td>
<td>Social Learning</td>
<td>By Lesson</td>
<td>Blackboard Learn - Default</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Web 2.0</td>
<td>By Module</td>
<td>CourseInfo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expedition-Based</td>
<td></td>
<td>By Subject</td>
<td>eCollegial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>By Topic</td>
<td>Open Source 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Format</td>
<td></td>
<td>By Unit</td>
<td>Open Source 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Format</td>
<td></td>
<td>Science-Focused Traditional</td>
<td>WebCT 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WebCT 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Structure: Activity

In activity-based courses, students are actively engaged in hands-on activities, experiments, and problem-solving. Students are encouraged to search for answers and solutions independently, putting principles into action. You can also include opportunities to do research, public service, volunteer work, field study, and internships.

Promote online interaction with the Conversations discussion forums to help students reflect upon their experiences and connect with classmates. If students are engaged in independent activities, you can use Live Chat for meetings.

This course structure works well for subjects that connect theory and practice, such as anthropology, Earth sciences, language immersion, government, and social sciences.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Activity course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Activities is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can add folders for each activity. Include similar content, such as links to articles on relevant research or practices, activity permission slips and forms, class work and homework instructions, and activity assignments. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations</td>
<td>Use the Conversations discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the activities, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each activity, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this activity? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Chat</td>
<td>Use the text-based Live Chat for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay on Track</td>
<td>The customizable Stay on Track Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tips and Resources</td>
<td>In the Tips and Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in the activities by directing them to recommended reading, such as books or articles on research and theory, and links to websites of companies or organizations using those techniques. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Plan</td>
<td>In the Game Plan Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a list of scheduled activities, textbook information, options for volunteer or practicum placements, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Info</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor Info. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.
Course Structure: ANGEL

If you are familiar with the ANGEL Learning environment, this course structure provides a similar menu.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using the Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the ANGEL course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>The customizable Home Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About This Course</td>
<td>In the About This Course Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Create events on the course calendar to mark due dates or reminders to help students plan their work and meet deadlines. To learn more, see Course Calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons</td>
<td>Lessons is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content items, such as readings, instructions, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the lessons presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find ideas for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invite conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>Alerts in the What's New and To Do modules help students plan their work. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Create course tasks to help students stay on track on long-term projects or give them additional reminders. Students can also create personal tasks. To learn more, see Tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student User Guide</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Alerts</td>
<td>Visible only to instructors, the Alerts and Needs Attention modules notify you of student progress. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Blackboard Classic**

If you are familiar with the Blackboard Learning System environment (Release 8.0 or earlier), this course structure provides a similar menu.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Blackboard Classic course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>Keep students on track with regular announcements. You can link to specific items such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. To learn more, see Managing Announcements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Information</td>
<td>In the Course Information Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Documents</td>
<td>Course Documents is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and your lectures. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see Creating and Editing Assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Links</td>
<td>In the External Links Content Area, share relevant links to websites to offer students resources to learn more and provide ideas for research projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Options

Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

Course Structure: Blackboard Learn - Default

This course structure provides the basic Course Menu links that are included in a Blackboard Learn (Release 9.0 and later) default course.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Blackboard Learn - Default course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homepage</td>
<td>The customizable Homepage includes modules providing students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information. This Module Page includes Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>In the Information Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Options > Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Content**  | Content is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, assignments, and tests.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#). |
| **Resources** | In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the lessons presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find ideas for projects or papers.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#). |
| **Discussions** | You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem?  
To learn more, see [About the Discussion Board](#). |
| **Groups** | Create private, collaborative workspaces in Groups for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. For example, each group can research a theory and then show the rest of the course members how to apply it across situations. You can change the composition and size of groups for new projects throughout the term.  
To learn more, see [Course Groups and Tools](#) and [Creating Groups](#). |
| **Tools** | Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access.  
To learn more, see [Managing Tool Availability](#). |
| **Help** | Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk. |

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: Case Study

Use the case study approach to engage students in critical thinking for real-world situations. As facilitator, guide students as they turn basic knowledge into principles that can be applied across cases. By placing them in real situations, and requiring them to make decisions, students learn to connect their knowledge of facts with the need for analytical skills.

Course Menu items such as Brainstorm discussion forums, Apply the Theory wiki, and Blog About It reflect the importance of both group and individual work in a case study course.

This course structure works well for classes that make use of practical examples to expose students to relevant issues, such as ecology, public policy, engineering, economics, social science, and law classes.

### What Does the Course Menu Look Like?
### Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Case Study course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case Studies</strong></td>
<td><em>Cases Studies</em> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. Use it to prepare your students for the in-depth study of the cases ahead. Create folders divided by case or topic and include all related materials, such as instructions, readings, lectures, and assignments. Provide students with clear guidelines for what their responsibilities are when discussing a case study in class. Set some ground rules for participation and communicate the specific goals you want them to accomplish. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brainstorm</strong></td>
<td>In the <em>Brainstorm</em> discussion forums, you can create formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to each case study, and informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. In each forum, you can model skills of questioning and help students exercise their skills of debate. Good discussion is generated by the types of questions that you ask and ensures that students are considering all angles of a case study. To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply the Theory</strong></td>
<td><em>Apply the Theory</em> links to your course’s wiki where students can share and collaborate on content. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. As students identify the core issue and suggest solutions, they become actively involved in the analysis. If roadblocks or too much consensus occur, you can assign students roles in the case, and they can take on new perspectives as they continue to contribute. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blog About It</strong></td>
<td>In their Blog About It entries, students can test theories and receive feedback from you and their classmates. Help students develop their theories further by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. Direct students toward ideas they may have missed because of their previous interests and knowledge. Optionally, enable grading to assess students' overall contributions to the case study. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>In the References Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Because many case studies can spark debate, help students discover the material they can use to develop their theories by providing rich sources. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agenda</strong></td>
<td>The customizable Agenda Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Overview</strong></td>
<td>In the Course Overview Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Instructor</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, wiki contributions, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: By Chapter**

This course structure organizes your course by chapters in the required textbook and works well for subjects, such as medicine, language, or mathematics. Encourage questions, interactivity, and reflection with the Discuss forums, Chat, and Blogs.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Chapter course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td><strong>Chapters</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as links to articles and readings, instructions for class work and homework, your lectures, and the chapter's tests. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Organizer</strong> Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Use the <strong>Discuss</strong> forums to post discussion questions related to each chapter's readings and class work. Require student participation and encourage conversation by making the discussions graded. You can also use discussions for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>Assign a blog entry for each chapter so students have a space to think through aspects of the topic they find interesting or challenging. You can require students to write on a specific topic or allow them to react freely. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's Blog entries. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based Chat area for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in your lectures by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Use the Glossary tool to build or upload a list of commonly-used course terminology for students to refer to. As needed, you can add terms to the list for each chapter. To learn more, see Glossary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>In the Syllabus Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, chapter outlines, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Conference Session**

Designed as a collaborative web environment for you and your co-presenters to plan and build session material, this course structure serves as an interactive community for participants before, during, and after the conference.

You can make areas such as Session Plans available only to the presenters, and allow participants to view the Research or Resources & Links areas.
What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Conference Session course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>With Announcements as the course entry point, participants will see news upon entering the course. You can provide session reminders and changes to the schedule to help keep everyone on track. To learn more, see Managing Announcements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Information</td>
<td>In the Session Information Content Area, include basic information such as the date, time, and location of the session, and a program description. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Presenter</td>
<td>List presenters' biographies and contact information in My Presenter so participants can learn more about each presenter or contact them with questions. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Materials</td>
<td>Post content in Session Materials for participants to access and download. You can make readings and handouts available prior to the session, and follow up after by uploading the presenter's slideshow or video recordings of the session. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources &amp; Links</td>
<td>In the Resources &amp; Links Content Area, you can share additional material such as relevant web articles and a research bibliography. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>In the Participation Content Area, participants can share thoughts and ask questions in the discussion forums and blogs. Create a lively discussion on your session's topic by posing questions and responding to participants' ideas. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area, About the Discussion Board, and About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Visible only to presenters, you can use the Research Content Area to share files and links during the session research and planning process. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Plans</td>
<td>Plan your session by collaborating in Session Plans, visible only to presenters. You can exchange versions of the slideshow or script, generate ideas for discussion topics or blog entries, and distribute responsibilities among presenters. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give participants access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Constructivism**

In a constructivist course, students are actively involved in the learning process as you facilitate by asking questions and proposing ideas. As they are challenged to blend their own experiences with new ideas, they create more complex and critical theories.

Students can collaborate in Groups, the Share blog, and the Knowledge Base wiki. The journal in Reflect allows students to process their knowledge individually.

This course structure works well for courses with experiments, research projects, and field trips as central parts of the curriculum.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Constructivism course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Learning Hub**   | The **Learning Hub** is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each topic. Include similar content, such as readings, movies, and assignments. These materials prepare students to demonstrate synthesis of their existing knowledge with new concepts in their blogs, wiki pages, and groups.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#). |
| **Weekly Planner** | The customizable **Weekly Planner** Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks.  
To learn more, see [Notifications Dashboard Display](#).                                                                                                                   |
| **Knowledge Base** | In the **Knowledge Base** course wiki, student create course content by adding resources, definitions, images, and links to multimedia on topics that you propose. As students create and edit pages together, the wiki tracks changes and additions so you can observe each student's contribution as well as the final product.  
To learn more, see [Wikis](#).                                                                                                                                         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>In the Share blog, offer starter questions or scenarios to prompt students to share unique perspectives in their entries. Peer commenting further challenges and develops the learners' ideas. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflect</td>
<td>In the Reflect journal, students write about learning experiences and track their expansion of knowledge across time. Journals are visible only to you and the individual. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based Chat area for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, virtual office hours, and student project planning time. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Create private, collaborative workspaces in Groups for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. For example, each group can research a theory and then show the rest of the course members how to apply it across situations. You can change the composition and size of groups for new projects throughout the term. To learn more, see Course Groups and Tools and Creating Groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>In the Course Overview Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Coach</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Coach. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning arranges course activities around small group interaction. Each member of the group is equally responsible for the success of the group, and is individually accountable for his or her participation. Groups can vary in size and composition, depending on the learning goal. You can rearrange the groups' membership as needed during the duration of your course.

You can use the Learning Activities area to introduce topics and activities, and then student groups conduct research and work together to produce a product to present to the class.
The Teams spaces and Our Wiki allow you to monitor the progress of the groups and the class as a whole. The My Reflections journal is a space where students can communicate with you individually as they manage their participation in the groups.

This course structure works well for any curriculum centered around group work, such as theater, vocational programs, or social studies.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Cooperative Learning course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td><strong>Learning Activities</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each activity. Include similar content, such as the schedule for class work and homework, links to articles and readings, and each group’s roster and instructions. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the <strong>Resources</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in the activities by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Wiki</td>
<td>Students use wikis to share and collaborate on content. <strong>Our Wiki</strong> is available to the entire course, and you can give each group a private wiki in the <strong>Teams</strong> area. Ask students to contribute individually to the course wiki, creating pages such as chapter reviews and compilations of activity resources. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Share</td>
<td>Assign a blog entry for each activity in <strong>Idea Share</strong> to give students an opportunity to share their thoughts. Making the blogs graded and requiring students to comment on each other’s entries encourages a class-wide conversation about each activity. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Blogs</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Reflections</td>
<td>Journal entries are visible only to you and the student, allowing them to reflect on their experiences independently. During each group-based learning activity, ask students to talk about how their group is performing in <strong>My Reflections</strong>. This will give you insight into which groups need assistance dividing work effectively. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Journals</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based <strong>Chat</strong> area for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums or blogs, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. You can also allow groups to chat privately in the <strong>Teams</strong> area so they can plan their project work together. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>Create private, collaborative workspaces in <strong>Teams</strong> for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. To encourage students to take on different group roles, change the composition and size of groups for each learning activity, and vary the tools available to the group depending on each project’s goals. To learn more, see <a href="#">Course Groups and Tools</a> and <a href="#">Creating Groups</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s New</td>
<td>The customizable <strong>What’s New</strong> Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as <strong>Announcements</strong>, <strong>My Calendar</strong>, <strong>To Do</strong>, <strong>What's New</strong>, and <strong>My Tasks</strong>. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Info</td>
<td>In the <strong>Course Info</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a schedule of activities, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Options

#### Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Coach</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Coach. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: CourseInfo

If you are familiar with the Blackboard CourseInfo learning environment, this course structure provides a similar menu.

### What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

**Image:** Course Information

**Oceanography 101**

- Announcements
- Course Information
- Course Documents
- Assignments
- External Links
- Discussion Board
- Tools
- Help

**Course Information**

**SAMPLE: Course Description and Objectives**

**Description**

This course provides a survey of the four elements of oceanography: apply their knowledge to global economic, social, and environmental mining, habitat loss, pollution, coastal development, faunal extinction.

**Objectives**

**Using Your Course Menu**

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the CourseInfo course structure.
### Course Options

#### Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>To learn more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>Keep students on track with regular announcements. You can link to specific items, such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. To learn more, see Managing Announcements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Information</td>
<td>In the Course Information Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Documents</td>
<td>Course Documents is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and your lectures. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see Creating and Editing Assignments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Links</td>
<td>In the External Links Content Area, share relevant links to websites to offer students resources to learn more and provide ideas for research projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: Daily

You can use the daily course structure for short, intense class terms or when a segment of material needs to be presented or learned in a defined time period.

In the Daily Work Content Area, add folders for each day. Content in each of the folders should follow a consistent layout for easy navigation, with similar content items, activities, and tools. This uniformity helps students adhere to the schedule.

When students need to complete work on a daily basis, communication is vital. Students can use the Log It journals to reflect on the daily course content and communicate privately with you. Use the Discuss forums to encourage conversation among students and the announcements in Today's Buzz to communicate daily reminders and give encouragement.

This course structure works well for intensive training sessions and shortened summer or winter terms.
What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Daily course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Today's Buzz** | Keep students on track in a daily course with regular announcements. You can link to specific items, such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. Using **Today's Buzz** as the course entry point ensures students will see announcements when they enter the course.  
To learn more, see Managing Announcements. |
| **Daily Work** | **Daily Work** is your central instructor-designed Content Area. Create a folder for each day of the course, including materials such as a schedule for class and homework, readings, activity instructions, assignments, and tests. Provide students with a familiar layout so they can find information easily and know exactly how to proceed for each new set of material.  
To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area. |
| **Discuss** | Pose questions about each day's topic in the **Discuss** forums to extend class conversations. Encourage student participation by grading the forums and responding to individual posts. Students can also use discussions as a space to ask and respond to each other's questions.  
To learn more, see About the Discussion Board. |
## Course Options

### Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log It</strong></td>
<td>Log It journals are an excellent place to communicate with and get to know students individually in a fast-paced daily course. Journal entries are visible only to you and the student, allowing them to reflect on their experiences privately, receive feedback before submitting graded work, or ask questions. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Journals</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
<td>Communicate urgent information to individual users or groups of users through course Email. Use announcements and email to let students know about unexpected changes in the schedule or to offer clarification on high-priority assignments. To learn more, see <a href="#">Email</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meet</strong></td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in Meet for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, virtual office hours, and student project planning time. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Startup</strong></td>
<td>In the Startup Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, course outline, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Updates</strong></td>
<td>The customizable Updates Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see <a href="#">Contacts</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see <a href="#">My Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Tool Availability</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: eCollegial

If you are familiar with the Pearson eCollege® course management system, this course structure provides a similar menu. eCollege is a registered trademark of Pearson.
What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the eCollegial course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Content Type</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Home</td>
<td>The customizable Course Home Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What’s New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>In the Syllabus Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, course outline, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, Week 2, Week 3, Week 4, Week 5, Week 6, Week 7, Week 8, Week 9, Week 10, Week 11, Week 12, Week 13, Week 14, Week 15</td>
<td>In each weekly Content Area, create folders for your course materials, such as readings, instructions, assignments, and tests. Provide students with a familiar layout so they can find information easily and know exactly how to proceed for each week. To simplify the Course Menu, you can hide Content Areas that students do not need immediately so they can focus on the current week. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Checklist</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webliography</td>
<td>In the Webliography Content Area, share relevant links to websites to offer students resources to learn more and provide ideas for research projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.
Course Structure: Expedition-Based

Expeditionary learning gives your students active, exploratory experiences with your curriculum. Activities you design for each topic, such as fieldwork, field trips, web quests, or interviews, are the basis for students' work. The Expedition-Based course structure integrates the instructor-designed areas, such as Explorations and Trip Resources, with student-centered areas, such as Base Camp, Storytelling, and My Trip Journal.

This course structure works well for classes in outdoor and wilderness education, practicums, hands-on and observational sciences such as botany and ornithology, and community-focused courses that require a number of trips and interactions outside the classroom.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

![Course Menu Example]

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Expedition-Based course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explorations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Explorations</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each chapter or topic. Include all materials for the learning expedition, such as instructions, locations, websites, readings, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Trip Journal</strong></td>
<td>In <strong>My Trip Journal</strong>, entries are visible only to you and the student. You can pose thought-provoking questions or allow students to freely reflect on their field experiences and online interactions. With regular entries, students can see the evolution of their learning over time. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Journals</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stay on Track</strong></td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Stay on Track</strong> Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as <strong>Announcements</strong>, <strong>My Calendar</strong>, <strong>To Do</strong>, <strong>What's New</strong>, and <strong>My Tasks</strong>. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storytelling</strong></td>
<td>The <strong>Storytelling</strong> wiki enables students to share and build content, such as summaries of field trips or interviews, and highlighting the concepts learned during participation. As students create and edit pages together, the wiki tracks changes and additions so you can observe each student's contribution as well as the final product. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base Camp</strong></td>
<td>Use the <strong>Base Camp</strong> discussion forums for required assignments, such as developing interview questions for a guest expert, and for informal interactions, such as debriefing after field trips or web quests. To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fireside Chat</strong></td>
<td>Use the live, text-based <strong>Fireside Chat</strong> area for virtual office hours, student project planning, or interviews with experts in the field. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trip Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the <strong>Trip Resources</strong> Content Area, include field trip maps, permission forms, recommended reading, optional documents, and relevant web articles so that interested students can learn more or find topics for projects. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roadmap</strong></td>
<td>In the <strong>Roadmap</strong> Content Area, provide a course plan that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus, planned expeditions, supplies needed for fieldwork, grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader Information</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in <strong>Leader Information</strong>. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see <a href="#">Contacts</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their <strong>My Grades</strong> pages. To learn more, see <a href="#">My Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Tool Availability</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.
Course Structure: Experiential Learning

Centered on the concept that knowledge is created through concrete experiences, hands-on learning opportunities for students are at the core of an experiential course. Events are followed by reflection to develop applicable knowledge and theories for future action.

The type of experiences provided depend on the subject area and course requirements, but can include work-study programs, laboratory experiments, role-playing simulations, and problem-solving activities.

You can share instructions or information about each experience through the Action Plans Content Area and monitor group and individual progress through Our Blogs, the My Reactions journal, and the Round Table discussion forums.

This course structure works well for courses with hands-on requirements such as zoology and veterinary science, physical education, drivers' training, social work, and education practicums.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Experiential Learning course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action Plans</strong></td>
<td><em>Action Plans</em> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each activity. Include similar content, such as links to articles or websites, forms, activity instructions, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborate</strong></td>
<td>Students use the <em>Collaborate</em> wiki to create and edit content as a group. The class can use the wiki to create lists of resources while planning an activity, build a glossary of course terms, design solutions for problem and projects, or record the results of an experiment or observation. The wiki tracks changes and additions so you can observe each student's contribution as well as the final product. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Round Table</strong></td>
<td>You can use the <em>Round Table</em> discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the activities, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each activity or project, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this activity? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our Blogs</strong></td>
<td>In <em>Our Blogs</em>, students can share their thoughts with each other by writing blog entries about each activity or experience. Making the blogs graded and requiring students to comment on each other's entries encourages a class-wide conversation about each activity. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Blogs</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Reactions</strong></td>
<td>The <em>My Reactions</em> journals are an excellent place to communicate with and get to know students individually. Journal entries are visible only to you and the student, allowing them to reflect on their experiences privately. For group projects, ask students to write about how their team is working together to gauge which groups need assistance dividing work effectively. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Journals</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups</strong></td>
<td>Create private, collaborative workspaces in <em>Groups</em> for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. For example, each group can research a theory and then show the rest of the course members how to apply it across situations. You can change the composition and size of groups for new projects throughout the semester. To learn more, see <a href="#">Course Groups and Tools</a> and <a href="#">Creating Groups</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the <em>Resources</em> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Tool Availability</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Organizer</strong></td>
<td>The customizable <em>Course Organizer</em> Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting Started</strong></td>
<td>In the <em>Getting Started</em> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, scheduled activities, opportunities for practicum and volunteer placements, and important dates. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Facilitator</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Facilitator. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Guided Discussion**

Guided discussion is an active learning technique that encourages students to reflect on their own experiences, explore alternative ways of thinking, connect to a topic, and improve analytical skills.

As students participate, they demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the course topics, promoting a deeper comprehension of the material. You can use guiding questions to help students create content together, allowing you to become a facilitator of information rather than the lecturer.

While much of the class discourse takes place in the Discuss It! forums, small teams of students working in Group Think increases students' interactivity with each other as they construct, rather than acquire, knowledge. Students can reflect on the course content and communicate privately with you in My Journal.

This course structure works well for intermediate and advanced humanities and social science courses in where students can expand their basic knowledge through conversation.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Guided Discussion course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss It!</td>
<td>Most of your interaction with students will occur in the Discuss It! forums. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to use as the basis of your students’ formal grades. Create questions that allow students to showcase their deeper understanding of course material and practice basic thinking skills. To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s Meet</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in Let’s Meet for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking discussions arise in Discuss It!, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. Follow up the session with discussion questions that help students expand on the solutions and opinions offered. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Journal</td>
<td>In their My Journal entries, ask students to reflect on the discussions and their experiences. Because this is private communication with you, students can receive feedback about their writing before they post in discussions or let you know how they feel the discussions are progressing. As you communicate with and get to know your students individually, they may feel more at ease in the course discussion forums. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Content Type

| **Group Think** | Create private, collaborative workspaces in **Group Think** for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. For example, each group can research a theory and then show the rest of the course members how to apply it across situations. You can change the composition and size of groups for new projects throughout the semester. After each small group develops their ideas in their own group’s Discussion Board, the class can reconvene in **Discuss It!** and share their varying perspectives. To learn more, see **Course Groups and Tools** and **Creating Groups**. |

| **References** | In the **References** Content Area, you can share guidelines for participation in **Discuss It!** and offer additional resources to interested students who want to learn more. Direct students toward recommended reading and Internet articles that may help them formulate opinions about the questions posed in the discussion forums. To learn more, see **Creating Content in a Course Area**. |

| **Dashboard** | The customizable **Dashboard** Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as **Announcements**, **My Calendar**, **ToDo**, **What's New**, and **My Tasks**. To learn more, see **Notifications Dashboard Display**. |

| **Course Overview** | In the **Course Overview** Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as how discussion posts are graded, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see **Creating Content in a Course Area**. |

| **My Facilitator** | Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in **My Facilitator**. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see **Contacts**. |

| **My Grades** | Students can see the status of their gradable discussion posts and other assignments on their **My Grades** pages. To learn more, see **My Grades**. |

| **Tools** | Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see **Managing Tool Availability**. |

| **Help** | Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk. |

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: Lab Format

Lab format courses increase student involvement, allowing participants to develop a functional understanding of the course content.

Typical lab-based courses begin with the presentation of lectures, followed by reading and research. Next, students use lab time to reinforce the concepts and skills learned. In a lab, they can evaluate evidence, identify problems and questions, gain experience, draw conclusions, and make decisions based on observations.

An instructor may demonstrate the lab activities, individual students may perform their own activities, or groups can collaborate on lab work.
This course structure works well for a variety of subjects, such as science, computer skills, foreign language, engineering, agriculture, and health sciences. This structure is also ideal for self-paced courses where tutorials and presentations are used to prepare students for lab work.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**

![Course Menu Example](image)

**Using Your Course Menu**

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Lab Format course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lab Supplies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lab Supplies</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lab or chapter. Include similar content, such as links to readings, lab instructions and materials lists, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the <strong>Resources</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>You can use the Hypotheses discussion forums for formal discussions of lab activities. Before a lab or experiment, ask students to discuss their predictions or questions they hope to answer. After the lab or experiment is complete, have them compare their experiences and results. Require student participation and encourage conversation by making the discussions graded. To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Conclusions</td>
<td>After each lab or experiment, ask students to report their results. Use the My Conclusions blogs as a more formal space than discussions, where students can narrate their process and outcomes. Encourage students to comment on each other's blogs to provide feedback and different experiences. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Groups</td>
<td>For labs or experiments that lend themselves to teamwork, create private workspaces in Lab Groups for smaller sections of students. You can change the composition and size of groups throughout the course, and vary the tools available to the group depending on each activity's goals. To learn more, see Course Groups and Tools and Creating Groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Use the Glossary tool to build or upload a list of commonly-used course terminology for students to refer to. You can create the entire glossary at the beginning of your course or add to it with each chapter or lab. To learn more, see Glossary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and Due</td>
<td>The customizable New and Due Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>In the Methods Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, lab guidelines, required supplies and equipment, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader Info</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Leader Info. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: By Lecture**

One of the most common ways to deliver course content to students is through lectures. In Blackboard Learn, you can ask students to read your lectures, listen to a recording of your voice, or view slide presentations of the material. You can add dimension to your lectures with videos that you create or links to external multimedia sources.
You can use other tools to encourage students to interact with you and other course members. Your lectures can stimulate students to reflect on their experiences and learning in the My Reactions blog and the Questions and Answers discussion forums.

This course structure works well for large introductory courses at the university or post-graduate level where lectures are the primary delivery method.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Lecture course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td><strong>Lectures</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lecture. Include similar content, such as objectives, readings, instructions, assignments, and your lectures in varying formats to spark interest. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions and Answers</td>
<td>You can use the <strong>Questions and Answers</strong> discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to lecture topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lecture, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation around your lectures. What is the critical message of this lecture? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Reactions</td>
<td><strong>My Reactions</strong> links to your course's individual blogs. Students can make a blog entry after each lecture so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to your presentation. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Blogs</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Center</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in <strong>Meeting Center</strong> for additional class meetings, question-and-answer sessions, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. Follow up the session with discussion questions that require students to comment on the ideas presented in your lecture and the chat session. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the <strong>Resources</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in your lectures by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro Materials</td>
<td>In the <strong>Intro Materials</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a lecture schedule, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay on Track</td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Stay on Track</strong> Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Instructor</td>
<td><strong>My Instructor</strong> links to the <strong>Contacts</strong> tool. Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course. Include contact information such as email addresses and phone numbers, and office hours, and location. To learn more, see <a href="#">Contacts</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their <strong>My Grades</strong> pages. To learn more, see <a href="#">My Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Tool Availability</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: By Lesson**

Use the lesson-based course structure to organize your course sequentially. In the **Our Conversations** discussion forums, help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate understanding of the course...
material. Students can reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you in the Reflections journals.

This course structure works well for material that needs to be learned in a prescribed order, such as math or foreign languages.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Lesson course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lessons</td>
<td><strong>Lessons</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as instructions, readings, assignments, and assessments. Link to external multimedia sources to enhance the content. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Conversations</td>
<td>You can use the <strong>Our Conversations</strong> discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the lessons, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Reflections</td>
<td>The My Reflections journals are an excellent place to communicate with and get to know students individually. Journal entries are visible only to you and the student, allowing them to reflect on their experiences privately, receive feedback before submitting graded work, or ask questions. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Use the Glossary tool to build or upload a list of commonly-used course terminology for students to refer to. As needed, you can add terms to the list with each lesson. To learn more, see Glossary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in your lessons by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>The customizable What's New Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Basics</td>
<td>In the Course Basics Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a course schedule, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Details</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor Details. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: By Module**

A module is an independent unit or lesson. Modules are usually self-contained and students can access them in any order, making them suitable for self-paced courses. For example, an astronomy course might present each planet’s information and assignments as a distinct module so that students can select which planet to explore first.

Utilize the Collaborate wiki and Discuss forums to help students work together on course content and connect with each other. To further encourage cooperation, use the Study Teams area to assign students to smaller group discussions, research assignments, and projects.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Module course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modules</strong></td>
<td>Modules is your central instructor-designed Content Area. Use folders to organize content you want to share with students, such as handouts, lectures, readings, assignments, and tests. If your course's modules are larger topics, create a folder for each module, and then folders inside that to break content up by unit or week. Providing students with a similar layout in each folder helps them find information easily. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Teams</strong></td>
<td>Create private, collaborative workspaces in Study Teams for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. You can change the composition and size of groups throughout the course, and vary the tools available to the group depending on each module or project's goals or content. To learn more, see Course Groups and Tools and Creating Groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in the modules by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>You can use the Discuss forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each module, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this topic? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>Collaborate links to the Wikis tool, where students create pages of information about each module, such as reading summaries, relevant links, glossaries of terminology, and questions for further research. The wiki tracks changes and additions so you can observe each student's contribution as well as the final product. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td>In the Requirements Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Instructor</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Today</td>
<td>The customizable New Today Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Open Source 1**

If you are familiar with the Moodle™ course management system, this course structure provides a similar menu. Moodle is a registered trademark of the Moodle Trust.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Open Source 1 course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Course News**    | **Latest News** links to the course announcements where you can give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. You can also link to specific course areas or items so they can access the information they need quickly and easily.  
To learn more, see [Managing Announcements](#). |
| **Recent Activity**| The customizable **Recent Activity** Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks.  
To learn more, see [Notifications Dashboard Display](#). |
| **My Grades**      | Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their **My Grades** pages.  
To learn more, see [My Grades](#). |
| **Instructor Alerts** | Visible only to instructors, the **Alerts** and **Needs Attention** modules notify you of student progress.  
To learn more, see [Notifications Dashboard Display](#). |
| **Participants**   | **Instructor Information** creates profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in **Instructor Information**. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location.  
To learn more, see [Contacts](#). |
|                    | The **Roster** tool lists enrolled students and their contact information.  
To learn more, see [Roster](#). |
| **Topics**         | **Course Overview** In the **Course Overview** Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important term dates.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#). |
|                    | **Topic Outline** In the **Topic Outline** Content Area, you can provide students with a schedule of what is ahead. You can upload a file or create content items for segments of time so students can view the information easily and often.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#). |
| **Activities**     | **Assignments** Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed.  
To learn more, see [Creating and Editing Assignments](#). |
|                    | **Databases** In the **Databases** Content Area, you can create folders for important documents students need to access for each lesson. Blackboard Learn courses have a central storage repository where you can store files for distribution to students. Course Files is the file repository available with all courses and is not accessible to students. However, if your school licenses content management, the file repository is named the Content Collection, and students may have permission to access and store files.  
To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area](#) and [About Course Files](#). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forums</strong></td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other’s questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students’ participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glossary</strong></td>
<td>Use the Glossary tool to build or upload a list of commonly-used course terminology for students to refer to. To learn more, see Glossary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lessons</strong></td>
<td>Lessons is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and your lectures. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quizzes</strong></td>
<td>In the Quizzes Content Area, you can provide students with one place to find all the tests and quizzes for the semester. Consider offering students an initial ungraded quiz so they can become familiar with the interface. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual tests and quizzes unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see About Creating Tests and Surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in your lessons by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wiki</strong></td>
<td>In the course wiki, students can share and collaborate on content. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. Ask students to address an issue discussed in a lesson so they become actively involved in the analysis. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blogs</strong></td>
<td>Students can make a blog entry after each lesson so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to the content. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other’s blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journals</strong></td>
<td>In their journal entries, ask students to comment on the lessons and their experiences. Because this is private communication with you, students can receive feedback about their writing before it is submitted as a graded assignment. They can also let you know how they feel the course is progressing. As you communicate with and get to know your students individually, they may feel more at ease sharing their thoughts with their classmates in the discussion forums, course wiki, and in their blogs. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools and Help</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student User Guide</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school’s computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Open Source 2**

If you are familiar with the Sakai® open source course management system, this course structure provides a similar menu. Sakai is a registered trademark of the Sakai Foundation.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**

![Course Menu Screenshot]

**Using Your Course Menu**

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Open Source 2 course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home</strong></td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Home</strong> Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as <strong>Announcements</strong>, <strong>My Calendar</strong>, <strong>To Do</strong>, <strong>What's New</strong>, and <strong>My Tasks</strong>. To learn more, see <strong>Notifications Dashboard Display</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Announcements</strong></td>
<td>Keep students on track with regular announcements. You can link to specific items, such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. To learn more, see <strong>Managing Announcements</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Create events on the course calendar to mark due dates or reminders to help students plan their work and meet deadlines. To learn more, see Course Calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>In the Syllabus Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important term dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>In the Resources Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the course content by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modules</td>
<td>Modules is your central instructor-designed course area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each module. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and your lectures. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see Creating and Editing Assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forums</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each module, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of the reading assignment? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>In the Tests &amp; Quizzes Content Area, you can provide students with one place to access all the tests and quizzes for the semester. Consider offering students an initial ungraded quiz so they can become familiar with the interface. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual tests and quizzes unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see About Creating Tests and Surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>Students can make a blog entry after each module so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to the content. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiki</td>
<td>In the course wiki, students can share and collaborate on content. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. Ask students to address an issue presented in one of your lectures so they become actively involved in the analysis. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Use Email to communicate timely information to individual course users or groups of users. To learn more, see Email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their <strong>My Grades</strong> pages. To learn more, see <strong>My Grades</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student User Guide</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <strong>Managing Tool Availability</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Project Format**

Use the project format course structure to help students investigate real-world problems and propose solutions. You can gauge student progress and understanding as they advance through a project, and offer feedback and direction when needed.

You can assign students to group projects using the **Teams** area. Whether they work in groups or independently, project work allows students to refine several skills, such as problem-solving, researching, organizing, critical thinking, and their interpersonal interactions. When students make decisions about their projects, they become active, engaged learners and are more responsible for their learning.

Critiquing the end result and reflection during all stages of the process are integral parts of a project-based course. Students can use their **My Ideas** blogs to express their opinions and the **Solutions** wiki to share the problem resolutions they generated.

This structure works well in courses where students produce portfolios of their work, such as photography, web design, or creative writing. It is also useful for courses where exploration and discovery expand student knowledge, such as math, business, or social science.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Project Format course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td><em>Projects</em> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each project. Include similar content, such as links to articles or websites, project guidelines and instructions, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see <a href="https://example.com">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td><em>Materials</em> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="https://example.com">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams</td>
<td>For projects that lend themselves to teamwork, create private workspaces in <em>Teams</em> for smaller sections of students to build knowledge together. To encourage students to take on different group roles, change the composition and size of groups throughout the course, and vary the tools available to the group depending on each project's goals. To learn more, see <a href="https://example.com">Course Groups and Tools</a> and <a href="https://example.com">Creating Groups</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solutions</td>
<td>Students create and edit pages together in the Solutions wiki, and the wiki tracks changes and additions so you can observe each student's contribution as well as the final product. When students are working on projects, you can ask them to collaborate on pages such as a list of useful websites or bibliography, or propose ideas for further exploration. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Ideas</td>
<td>Students can share their project work in the My Ideas blogs. Encourage students to post weekly about their successes and challenges. Requiring students to comment on each other's blogs creates a community where students can recommend solutions and celebrate achievements together. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect Live</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in Connect Live for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, virtual office hours, or student project planning time. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planner</td>
<td>The customizable Planner Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>In the Overview Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, required supplies, project deadlines, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Advisor</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Project Advisor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

Course Structure: Science-Focused

You can use the science-focused course structure to present information and lab materials to students and provide areas for reflection and collaboration.

Use the Units Content Area to organize your course by lab, project, or lecture. Incorporating relevant projects, experiments, or lab activities encourages students to be active participants in their learning, allowing them to gain deeper knowledge of the course content.

Students can record their ideas, research, and solutions in the Experiment Journal, discuss their findings in Discoveries, or collaborate in the Lab Wiki.

This course structure works well for science courses, especially those that include hands-on activities.
What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Science-Focused course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td><strong>Units</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each unit. Include similar content, such as objectives, readings, instructions, assignments, lectures, and tests. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Tips</td>
<td>In the <strong>Research and Tips</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the units presented by directing them to specific web sources and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find ideas for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discoveries</strong></td>
<td>You can use the Discoveries discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing questions related to the units, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can creategradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each unit or lab, ask reflective questions to invoke further exploration. What were your observations? Which scientific theory does this support and why? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lab Wiki</strong></td>
<td>In the Lab Wiki, students can share and collaborate on content. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. Provide students with a problem, and ask them to submit theories and solutions. While exploring the problem and sorting out relevant facts, they can help each other develop logical conclusions. In the wiki's instructions, provide guidelines for participation and grading. Also, consider assigning a lead scientist to keep everyone on track, divide tasks as needed, and promote participation. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiment Journal</strong></td>
<td>In their Experiment Journal entries, ask students to reflect on the experiments, units, and their experiences in the wiki. Because this is private communication with you, students can receive feedback about their writing before they post it for the class to view or before submitting assignments. As you communicate with and get to know your students individually, they may feel more at ease in the course discussion forums and wiki. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Journals</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Live Chat</strong></td>
<td>Use the text-based Live Chat feature for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, experiment roundups, and virtual office hours. As thought-provoking discussions arise, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations in real-time. Follow up the session with discussion questions that help students expand on the solutions and opinions offered. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terminology</strong></td>
<td>Terminology links to the Glossary tool where you can build or upload a list of commonly-used scientific terminology for students to refer to. To learn more, see <a href="#">Glossary</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td>In the Methods Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as how labs are graded, textbook information, an experiment schedule, a list of lab supplies, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Instructor</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see <a href="#">Contacts</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Updates</strong></td>
<td>The customizable Updates Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What’s New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as lab assignments, tests, wiki contributions, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see <a href="#">My Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Social Learning**

Social learning is based on the concept that students learn new information and behaviors by observing and interacting with peers.

This course structure enables students to build knowledge together in Blogs and Wikis. As students create course content, it is important to motivate them to contribute and model appropriate behavior. Utilize The Hub to share readings, assignments, and instructions, and Social Circles to create communities of learners.

This course structure works well for courses and career paths that require cooperative work, such as communication, advertising, and business.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Social Learning course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Hub</td>
<td><strong>The Hub</strong> is your central instructor-designed Content Area. Create folders divided by topic and include all materials that students need to develop a basic knowledge of the topic. These readings, web resources, and assignments provide a launching pad for course discussions. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikis</td>
<td>You can create starter pages in <strong>Wikis</strong> and assign students to flesh out a particular area. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. If too much consensus or roadblocks occur, assign duties to students so they can take on new perspectives as they contribute. To learn more, see <a href="#">Wikis</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Do You Think?</td>
<td><strong>The What Do You Think?</strong> discussion forums are ideal for student-led conversations, where the leader changes weekly. You provide the topics as well as modeling and guidance, but allow the students to find resources and reach their own conclusions. You can also create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students’ participation and knowledge. To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>In <strong>Blogs</strong>, you can provide relevant scenarios to prompt students to share unique insights in their entries. Peer commenting further challenges and develops the learner’s ideas. Students read each other’s entries and gain new perspectives. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Blogs</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Circles</td>
<td><strong>Social Circles</strong> links to the <strong>Groups</strong> tool where you can create private, collaborative workspaces for small groups of students to form learning communities. For example, group members can specialize in one aspect of the group’s assigned topic and teach it to other members of their group. You can change the composition and size of groups for new projects throughout the semester. To learn more, see <a href="#">Course Groups and Tools</a> and <a href="#">Creating Groups</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s Talk</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in <strong>Let’s Talk</strong> for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. Offer students sessions where the class meets to get to know each other and keep the agenda light. After students are comfortable communicating with you and their classmates in this environment, use chat for more academic purposes. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums or intriguing arguments are presented in the blogs, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. Follow up the session with discussion questions that help students expand on the solutions and opinions offered. To learn more, see <a href="#">Chat</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Today</td>
<td>The customizable <strong>New Today</strong> Module Page includes modules providing students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information. Modules include <strong>Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What’s New</strong>, and <strong>My Tasks</strong>. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Basics</td>
<td>In the <strong>Course Basics</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Options > Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Facilitator</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Facilitator. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

Course Structure: By Subject

Use the subject-based course structure to organize your materials by area of study. The Course Menu contains Content Areas for each subject, which can be easily renamed to fit your course.

This course structure works well for elementary and middle school environments where one teacher is responsible for more than one subject for a set of students, such as Language Arts, Social Studies, and Health, or where multiple teachers share the same course. Alternatively, you might break a single subject into a set of defined areas. For example, a Language Arts course could have separate pages for grammar, literature, composition, spelling, and vocabulary. In either arrangement, students can access any of the areas easily on the .

The discussion forums in Talk About It help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate their understanding of the course material. Students can use My Journal to reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Subject course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Use these Content Areas to present your course materials categorized by subject. They can be easily renamed to fit your course's subject matter. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders in each Content Area for individual chapters or units. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, lectures, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk About It</td>
<td>You can use the Talk About It discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Journal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Aids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Info</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Planner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Journal</strong></td>
<td>In their journal entries, ask students to comment on the lessons and their experiences. Because this is private communication with you, students can receive feedback about their writing before it is submitted as a graded assignment. They can also let you know how they feel the course is progressing. As you communicate with and get to know your students individually, they may feel more at ease sharing their thoughts with their classmates in the discussion forums. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Aids</strong></td>
<td>In the Study Aids Content Area, you can share additional resources so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented in your lessons by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Syllabus</strong></td>
<td>In the Syllabus Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Info</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Teacher Info. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Planner</strong></td>
<td>The customizable My Planner Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What’s New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Announcements</strong></td>
<td>Keep students on track with regular announcements. You can link to specific items, such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. To learn more, see Managing Announcements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school’s computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: By Topic**

Use the topic-based course structure to organize your course in self-contained segments.

Utilize The Buzz discussion forums for students to generate ideas and share resources. Editorials provide a space for students to blog about their insights and opinions and get feedback from peers. Students can use their Reflection journals to contemplate on their experiences and communicate privately with you.

This course structure works well for self-paced courses that allow students to select which topic to complete next as well as courses that use current events to demonstrate concepts.
What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Topic course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics</td>
<td>Use Hot Topics as your central instructor-designed Content Area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each topic or lesson. Include similar content, such as objectives, readings, instructions, assignments, and your lectures. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadlines</td>
<td>The customizable Deadlines Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Buzz</td>
<td>You can use the The Buzz discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each topic, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this topic? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorials</td>
<td><strong>Editorials</strong> links to your course's individual blogs. Students can make a blog entry after each topic so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to course content. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong> links to your students' private journals. In their journal entries, ask students to comment on the topics and their experiences. Because this is private communication with you, students can receive feedback about their writing before it submitted as a graded assignment. They can also let you know how they feel the course is progressing. As you communicate with and get to know your students individually, they may feel more at ease sharing their thoughts with their classmates in the discussion forums and in their blogs. To learn more, see About Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Sources</td>
<td>In the <strong>Additional Sources</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the topics presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find ideas for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>In the <strong>Overview</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a topic schedule, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Details</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in <strong>Instructor Details</strong>. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Progress</td>
<td>Students can see the status ofgradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their <strong>My Grades</strong> pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: Traditional**

This course structure organizes the online environment by content type or function. For example, there are Content Areas for assignments, tests, and your content.

Communication tools such as the **Discussion Board** are available on the Course Menu for easy access.

The **Home Page** is the course entry point, providing access to important information each time your students log in.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Traditional course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Page</td>
<td>The customizable Home Page Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Information</td>
<td>In the Course Information Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Instructor</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Content is your central instructor-designed course area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each chapter or topic. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Options

#### Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>To learn more, see</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed.</td>
<td>Creating and Editing Assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>In the Tests &amp; Quizzes Content Area, you can provide students with one place to access all the tests and quizzes for the semester. Consider offering students an initial ungraded quiz so they can become familiar with the interface. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual tests and quizzes unavailable after their due dates have passed.</td>
<td>About Creating Tests and Surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions.</td>
<td>About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based Chat area for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, virtual office hours, or student project planning time.</td>
<td>Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages.</td>
<td>My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access.</td>
<td>Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Alerts</td>
<td>Visible only to instructors, the Alerts and Needs Attention modules notify you of student progress.</td>
<td>Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: By Unit

The unit-based course structure organizes your content into sections. For example, you might divide a music appreciation course into four units of study: history, composers, musical techniques, and significant works.

With separate links on the Course Menu for each unit, you can require students to follow a prescribed order or select units in the order they prefer.

You can provide students with a rich, interactive environment by utilizing a range of communication tools. Blog It provides students a way to share their thoughts and collect feedback from peers, Collaborate enables students to work side-by-side on wiki pages, and Course Dialogue promotes discussions among students.

This course structure works well for subjects that divide easily into large categories, such as historical time periods, psychological schools of thought, or styles of composition and rhetoric.

### What Does the Course Menu Look Like?
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the By Unit course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit A</td>
<td>In each Unit Content Area, provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment by creating folders for each category or time period. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, lectures, assignments, and tests. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Dialogue</td>
<td>You can use the <strong>Course Dialogue</strong> discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing questions related to each unit, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each unit, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation around the course content. What is the critical message of this unit? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>Collaborate links to your course's wiki where students can share and collaborate on content. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. Ask students to address an issue discussed in the unit so they become actively involved in the analysis. If roadblocks or too much consensus occur, you can assign students roles to help them further develop their wiki pages. For example, you can ask one student to incorporate graphics to help clarify the text. Ask another student to assign pages to other students with specific tasks attached, such as finding sources or exploring the opposite side. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog It</td>
<td>In Blog It, students can make a blog entry after each unit so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to the course content. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialize</td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in Socialize for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. Offer students sessions where the class meets to get to know each other and keep the agenda light. After students are comfortable communicating with you and their classmates in this environment, use chat for more academic purposes. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums or intriguing arguments are presented in the blogs, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. Follow up the session with discussion questions that help students expand on the solutions and opinions offered. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and Due</td>
<td>The customizable New and Due Module Page provides students with an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Aids</td>
<td>In the Study Aids Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the units presented by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find ideas for projects or papers. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Basics</td>
<td>In the Course Basics Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a unit breakdown, textbook information, and important term dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Info</td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Instructor Info. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Students can see the status ofgradable items such as assignments, tests, wiki contributions, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.
Course Structure: Web 2.0

Interactive and collaborative Web 2.0 tools engage learners with your course material. Students create content together in Our Wiki and use the Share blogs to communicate their thoughts and comment on others’ work. Use Course Central to share readings, assignments, and instructions. You can weave Mashups into your course to make content come alive with embedded YouTube™ videos, Flickr® photos, and SlideShare presentations. Students can add Mashups to their content as well.

This structure works well for courses reliant on current events and trends, such as political science, media studies, and digital education.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Web 2.0 course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss</strong></td>
<td>You can use the Discuss forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. After each topic, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this topic? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Share</strong></td>
<td>Share links to your course's individual blogs. Students can make a blog entry after each topic so they have a space to think through aspects of the material they find interesting or challenging. You can ask students to answer a specific question or allow them to react freely to course content. Students can extend classroom conversations by commenting on each other's blog entries. You can help them develop their thoughts by offering encouragement, more background information, and supplementary resources. To learn more, see About Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meet</strong></td>
<td>Use the live, text-based chat feature in Meet for additional class meetings, real-time interaction in asynchronous courses, and virtual office hours. Offer students sessions where the class meets to get to know each other and keep the agenda light. After students are comfortable communicating with you and their classmates in this environment, use chat for more academic purposes. As thought-provoking questions arise in the discussion forums or intriguing arguments are presented in the blogs, schedule chat sessions so students can continue the conversations live. Follow up the session with discussion questions that help students expand on the solutions and opinions offered. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Central</strong></td>
<td>Course Central is your main instructor-designed Content Area. Create folders divided by subject and include all materials that students need to develop a basic knowledge of the topic. These readings, web resources, and assignments provide a starting point for students' online interaction. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our Wiki</strong></td>
<td>You can create starter pages in Our Wiki and task students with fleshing out a particular area. As they create and edit pages together, they develop interpersonal skills and the capacity to solve problems in a team environment. If too much consensus or roadblocks occur, assign duties to students so they can take on new perspectives as they contribute. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recent Activity</strong></td>
<td>The customizable Recent Activity Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intro Materials</strong></td>
<td>In the Intro Materials Content Area, provide basic course information that students can refer to throughout the semester. Include a syllabus, grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. If chat sessions are mandatory, be sure to list dates so students can adjust their schedules. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Mentor</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in Course Mentor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see Contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Grades</strong></td>
<td>Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, wiki contributions, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see My Grades.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Options > Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

Course Structure: WebCT 1

If you are familiar with the former WebCT Campus Edition or Vista 8 course management systems, this course structure provides a similar menu.

What Does the Course Menu Look Like?

Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the WebCT 1 course structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Content</td>
<td><strong>Course Content</strong> is your central instructor-designed course area. To provide your students with an easy-to-navigate and familiar environment, you can create folders for each lesson or chapter. Include similar content, such as readings, instructions, and your lectures. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>Keep students on track with regular announcements. You can link to specific items, such as a test or assignment, give students reminders, or let them know about new or revised course material. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Announcements</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>In the <strong>Assessments</strong> Content Area, you can provide students with one place to access all the tests for the semester. Consider offering students an initial ungraded quiz so they can become familiar with the interface. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual tests unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see <a href="#">About Creating Tests and Surveys</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Store assignments in a single Content Area for students to access and submit. To provide students with feedback before assigning final grades, you can allow more than one attempt on an individual assignment. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual assignments unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating and Editing Assignments</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Create events on the course calendar to mark due dates or reminders to help students plan their work and meet deadlines. To learn more, see <a href="#">Course Calendar</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as posing weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other’s questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students’ participation and knowledge. After each lesson, ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What is the critical message of this lesson? What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Discussion Board</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Modules</td>
<td>Use the <strong>Learning Modules</strong> Content Area to create structured learning paths that contain content items such as files, folders, and tools. Learning Modules are containers for content that include a table of contents and can require sequential viewing of content. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>Use <strong>Mail</strong> to communicate timely information to individual course users or groups of users. To learn more, see <a href="#">Email</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roster</td>
<td>The <strong>Roster</strong> tool lists enrolled students and their contact information. To learn more, see <a href="#">Roster</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>In the <strong>Syllabus</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Links</td>
<td>In the <strong>Web Links</strong> Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the course content by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Course Options** - Course Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Manual</strong></td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More Tools</strong></td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see <a href="#">Managing Tool Availability</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Course Structure: WebCT 2**

If you are familiar with the former WebCT Campus Edition 4 course management system, this course structure provides a similar menu.

**What Does the Course Menu Look Like?**

![Course Menu Image](image)

**Using Your Course Menu**

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the WebCT 2 course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homepage</strong></td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Homepage</strong> includes modules providing students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information. This Module Page includes <strong>Announcements</strong>, <strong>My Calendar</strong>, <strong>To Do</strong>, <strong>What's New</strong>, and <strong>My Tasks</strong>. To learn more, see <a href="#">Notifications Dashboard Display</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Syllabus</strong></td>
<td>In the <strong>Syllabus</strong> Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, textbook information, and important dates. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating Content in a Course Area</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor Info</strong></td>
<td>Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in <strong>Instructor Info</strong>. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location. To learn more, see <a href="#">Contacts</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>In the Assessments Content Area, you can provide students with one place to access all the tests for the semester. Consider offering students an initial ungraded quiz so they can become familiar with the interface. To help students locate current content easily, use folders or make individual tests unavailable after their due dates have passed. To learn more, see About Creating Tests and Surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>You can create discussion forums for formal assignments, such as weekly questions related to the course topics, and for informal interactions, where students ask and respond to each other's questions. You can create gradable discussion forums and threads to assess students' participation and knowledge. Ask reflective questions to invoke conversation. What would you do in this particular situation? How would you approach solving this problem? To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Use the Glossary tool to build or upload a list of commonly-used course terminology for students to refer to. To learn more, see Glossary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Course Tools</td>
<td>Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

### Course Structure: Weekly

Organizing content by time can help students stay on track. In Previous Weeks, create a folder for each week of the course. Course material in each of the weekly folders should follow a consistent layout for easy navigation, with similar content items, activities, and tools. You can make folders for future weeks unavailable until they are needed to keep students focused.

Each week, change the Current Week link in the Course Menu so that it points to the current week's folder. This gives students one-click access to the week's activities without needing to determine which week to choose.

Use Course Dialogue to address questions. The Ideas to Share blogs help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate understanding of course material. The Weekly Journal enables students to reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you.

This structure works well for courses where students need to move through the content at the same pace.

### What Does the Course Menu Look Like?
Using Your Course Menu

The following table describes the Content Areas and course tools included in the Weekly course structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Week</strong></td>
<td><em>Current Week</em> is a Course Link that provides students with one-click access to the week's course activities. Each week, modify this Course Link so that it points to the location of the current week's folder. The Previous Weeks Content Area contains the folders for each week of content. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planner</strong></td>
<td>The customizable <strong>Planner</strong> Module Page provides students with a single place to go for an overview of current course information such as Announcements, My Calendar, To Do, What's New, and My Tasks. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Dialogue</strong></td>
<td>You can use the <strong>Course Dialogue</strong> discussion forums to pose questions on weekly topics. Encourage interaction by responding to posts and grading forums so students are required to participate. You can also use discussions for informal interactions, where students can ask you and each other questions about the course. To learn more, see About the Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Ideas to Share** | Students use the Ideas to Share blogs to demonstrate their understanding of each week's course materials. You can give students a topic to blog about, or allow them to explore their own questions and ideas. Encourage students to comment on each other's entries to extend the conversation.  
To learn more, see About Blogs. |
| **Weekly Journal** | Weekly Journal entries allow you to communicate with and get to know students individually. Entries and your comments are visible only to you and the student, allowing them to reflect on their experiences privately, receive feedback before submitting graded work, or ask questions.  
To learn more, see About Journals. |
| **Syllabus** | In the Syllabus Content Area, provide materials that students can access throughout the semester. Include a syllabus or other basics, such as grading policies, a weekly schedule, textbook information, and important dates.  
To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area. |
| **Previous Weeks** | In the Previous Weeks Content Area, create a folder for each week of your course. This area provides access to all prior content, but students use the Current Week Course Menu link for one-click access to the current week's folder.  
Course material in each folder should follow a consistent layout for easy navigation, with similar content items, activities, and tools. Include a schedule for the week, links to relevant articles or websites, instructions for activities, assignments, and tests. Make folders for future weeks unavailable until they are needed.  
To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area. |
| **Going Further** | In the Going Further Content Area, you can share additional material so interested students can learn more. Help students expand on the information presented each week by directing them to specific web articles and recommended reading. Students can also use these resources to find topics for projects or papers.  
To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area. |
| **My Instructor** | Create profiles for yourself, other instructors, teaching assistants, and guest lecturers participating in your course in My Instructor. Include contact information such as email addresses, phone numbers, office hours, and location.  
To learn more, see Contacts. |
| **My Grades** | Students can see the status of gradable items such as assignments, tests, blog entries, and discussion posts on their My Grades pages.  
To learn more, see My Grades. |
| **Tools** | Give students access to all available course tools on a single page. Add commonly used course tools to the Course Menu for easy access.  
To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability. |
| **Help** | Blackboard Help contains searchable how-to information. Students in need of additional assistance should contact the school's computing help desk. |

Customize the course structure by renaming, removing, hiding, or adding Content Areas and links to tools.

**Frequently Asked Questions About Course Structures**

This collection of frequently asked questions provides answers to common questions about course structures. It also provides links to more detailed information available in Blackboard Help.

**Why do I want to use a course structure?**
Course structures provide a jump-start to the process of building your course by including Course Menu links and related content designed for the teaching method you chose. You can use the content examples as templates for your own content. Even if you are an experienced Blackboard Learn instructor, you might find new ideas in a course structure.

**Should I include content examples?**

Content examples include pedagogical information, instructions, and course items. Even if you have experience working in Blackboard Learn, the pedagogical information and content examples can give you ideas about tools or new approaches.

Content examples are unavailable to students and you can edit, move, copy, or delete them.

**How do I know what students see or do not see in my course?**

Be sure to preview your content as a student. In the upper right of your course, change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to see the student view. If an item is visible that you do not want students to see, change **Edit Mode** to **ON** and make the item unavailable or delete it. If you include a link to a tool in a Content Area, the tool’s content must be made available before students can access it.

If possible, log in as a mock student to experience your course exactly as a student does. Do you know where to start? Are the instructions complete? Do you know what to do next? Can you access what you need with as few clicks as possible?

**What if I have some online content prepared already?**

Course structures are **added** to your course and do not replace your existing content. Include content examples when you add a structure to your course and discover new ways to present the content you have already developed.

**How do I limit the number of tools available to my students?**

You can control which tools appear to students when they access the **Tools** page. For example, if you do not intend to use the Messages tool, make it unavailable. No one can see it or access it, including you, until it is available again. If a tool is unavailable, existing content is not deleted. Once the tool is available again, the content becomes available.

If you want to determine which tools are available to students in your course, use the following steps.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Customization** section and select **Tool Availability**.
2. On the **Tool Availability** page, make the availability adjustments required.
   a. To make a tool available, select the tool’s check box.
   b. To make a tool unavailable, clear the tool’s check box.
3. Click **Submit**.

**Note:** If no selection check box appears for a tool, it has been turned off by the Blackboard administrator at your school. Tools with a dash ( - ) in a column do not have availability settings in the system that can be changed.

To learn more, see [Managing Tool Availability](#).

**How do I copy or move content items?**

You can copy and move content items to rearrange your course material. For example, if a Content Area
contains a large number of items, move them into folders to help users navigate. Some content items have copy and move restrictions. For example, you can copy or move a Course Link, but only to another area within the same course. You cannot copy assignments, tests, and surveys, but you can move them within the same course.

- Copying content does not delete it from the original location in your course.
- Moving content removes it from its original location in your course.

For items that cannot be copied, the Copy option does not appear in the item's contextual menu.

If a course area contains items that cannot be moved to another course, such as a test, the option to move it to another course does not appear on the Move page.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item to copy or move.
3. For the item you want to copy or move, click its Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Copy** or **Move**. If **Copy** or **Move** is not available for an item, it does not appear in the contextual menu.
5. On the Copy page or Move page, select the Destination Course from the drop-down list. The default setting is the current course. Only courses where an instructor has a role permitting content copying appear in the list. For items that cannot be moved out of the current course, Destination Course is already listed as the current course and the drop-down list does not appear.
6. Click Browse to select the Destination Folder.
7. Click Submit.

To learn more see [Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content](#).

### What if I have areas of my course that are "under construction" and not ready for students?

Planning is one of the most important aspects in developing your course. Develop an outline of what you want to include in your course, build your content, test it, and get feedback on your instructional methods.

Sometimes it is not possible to have all of your content prepared and tested by the first day of class. A strategy to consider is preparing and testing content for the first few weeks of class and making only that content available to students. Hide all Content Areas that you are still working on. You can develop and test the next portion of content as students are working on the material you have made available.

Check your course in the student view to be sure you only show the course areas that you intend to. In the upper right of your course, change Edit Mode to **OFF** to see the student view.

### Setting Enrollment Options

Enrollment options control how students enroll in the course. For more information on how to enroll students, see [Enrolling Students in Course Groups](#).

### How to Customize Student Enrollment Options

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. On the Control Panel in the Customization section, select **Enrollment Options**.
3. Select the appropriate enrollment option.
- **Instructor/ System Administrator:** This option gives the instructor or the Blackboard administrator at your school control of the enrollment process. Select the check box to create a link for students to email an enrollment request to the course instructor. This link appears in the Course Catalog.

- **Self Enrollment:** This option allows students to enroll themselves in the course.
  - Use the date fields to set a **Start Date**, an **End Date**, or both to control the time frame that students can self-enroll. If no dates are selected, the student may self-enroll at any time, unless the course is made unavailable or the course duration dates have passed.
  - An **Access Code** also can be used to verify the self-enrollment process. The benefit of using an access code is it provides a degree of control over who can and cannot self-enroll in a course, but leaves it up to the student to initiate and complete the enrollment process.

### Checking Course Links

After you create content and link to files stored in Course Files, you can verify that links are still valid with the link checker tool. For example, if you delete a linked file from Course Files and run the tool, you are informed of a broken link.

You can run this tool on a regular basis to check the validity of your links in your course content. After you copy, restore, or import a course, you can run the tool to be sure everything is linked as you expect. Users with access to items in Course Files can move and delete items, or edit the permissions on an item. These actions may impact the validity of links items in your course.

**IMPORTANT!** When you link to a file in Course Files, all course users are given read permission to the file. When you check links, the only permission that is verified is read permission for all course users.

### Course Areas Checked

The link checker tool detects broken links for the following areas:

- Content Areas
- Learning Modules
- Lesson Plans
- Folders
- Announcements, calendar events, and tasks
- Discussion board, journals, and blogs

**Note:** Links to Course Files items in tests (including surveys and question pools) are not checked by the tool.

### How to Enable Check Course Links

For each of your courses, you can enable or disable the link checker tool.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Customization** section and select **Tool Availability**.
2. On the **Tool Availability** page, select the check box for **Check Course Links**. Clear the check box to disable the tool.
3. Click **Submit**.
**Note:** Your school can disable this tool for the entire system.

**How to Check Course Links**

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Packages and Utilities** section and select **Check Course Links**.
2. On the **Broken Links** page, click **OK** to start the tool. This operation may take a few minutes to run. The length of the process depends on the number of links within your course.
3. After the tool is run, the page displays links that are pointing to deleted files or those with broken paths.
4. For more information, access an item’s contextual menu and select **Details**.

**Bulk Deleting Course Information**

Bulk deleting course information is most useful at the end of a course. It allows you to select information to be deleted from a course and keeps the rest of the course areas for use in the future. For example, you can delete students and grades from a course, but keep the content.

You can also delete any selected course or other materials as well.

When deleting users, bulk delete deletes all users with a role of student from the course. Teaching Assistants, graders, and course builders will not be deleted.

**Note:** Consider archiving the course first so that it can be restored to its exact state before a bulk delete.

**How to Bulk Delete Course Information**

1. On the Control Panel, under **Packages and Utilities**, click **Bulk Delete**.
2. In the **Select Content Materials to Delete** section, select the check boxes for **Content Materials** within the course that will be deleted. For example, if **Staff Information** is selected, all of the data associated with staff information will be deleted.
3. In the **Select Other Materials to Delete** section, select the check boxes for content found in other areas within the course that will be deleted. For example, if **Discussion Board** is selected all of the discussion boards in the course will be deleted.
4. In the **Confirmation** section, type **Delete** in the **Type 'Delete' to complete this request** field to confirm the bulk delete.

**Course Roles**

Course roles control access to the content and tools within a course. Each user is assigned a role for each course in which they participate. For example, a user with a role of teaching assistant in one course can have a role of student in another course.

The course role is set when a user is enrolled. It can also be edited after enrollment from the Control Panel.

Course roles include:

- Course Builder
- Grader
- Guest
- Instructor
- Student
- Teaching Assistant (TA)

**Note:** Administrators may edit the names, capabilities, and privileges associated with existing course roles, as well as create new course roles. Therefore, some of the information listed here may not accurately reflect your available course roles.

To learn about enrolling users or changing course roles, such as promoting a student to teaching assistant, see [Enrolling and Managing Users](#).

### Course Builder

The course builder role has access to most areas of the Control Panel. This role is appropriate for a user to manage the course without having access to student grades. A course builder can still access the course if the course is unavailable to students. A course builder cannot delete an instructor from a course.

Course builders have access to the areas of the Control Panel in the following list. The tools and functions within each area can vary depending on the settings that the Blackboard administrator at your school has put into place, including enforcing a course template and customizing the role of course builder. The instructor can also limit the availability of certain tools and functions. To learn more, see [Managing Tool Availability](#).

- Course files
- Content Collection
- Course tools
- Users and groups
- Customization
- Packages and utilities
- Help

### Grader

A grader assists the instructor in the creation, management, delivery, and grading of items, such as tests and discussion board posts. A grader also assists the instructor with managing the Grade Center. A grader cannot access a course if it is unavailable to students.

Graders have access to the areas of the Control Panel in the following list. The tools and functions within each area can vary depending on the settings that the Blackboard administrator at your school has put into place, including enforcing a course template and customizing the role of grader. The instructor can also limit the availability of certain tools and functions. To learn more, see [Managing Tool Availability](#).

- Course files
- Content Collection
- Course tools
- Evaluation
- Grade Center
- Packages and utilities (limited access)
- Help

### Guest

Guests have no access to the Control Panel. Areas within the course are made available to guests, but typically they can only view course materials, but do not have access to tests and assessments, or have
permission to post on discussion boards.
Visitors, such as prospective students, alumni, or parents can be given the role of guest.

Instructor

Instructors have access to all areas in the Control Panel. This role is generally given to those developing, teaching, or facilitating the class. Instructors may access a course that is unavailable to students.

Administrators can limit instructor access to the following features of the Control Panel:

- List users
- Edit users
- Create user
- Batch create users
- Delete users
- Enroll users
- Settings
- Import
- Export
- Archive

Student

Student is the default course role. Students have no access to the Control Panel.

Teaching Assistant

The teaching assistant (or TA) role is that of a co-teacher. Teaching assistants are able to administer all areas of a course. Their only limitations are those imposed by the instructor or Blackboard administrator at your school. A teaching assistant cannot delete an instructor from a course.

Teaching assistants have access to most all tools and features in the Control Panel.

Even if the course is unavailable to students, teaching assistants still have access to the course. Teaching assistants are not listed in the Course Catalog listing for the course.
Notifications

About The Notifications Dashboard

The Notifications Dashboard contains four basic modules that give information to users based on their enrollment and their role in the system. Which modules are available and what type of notifications are delivered is set up by the Blackboard administrator at your school. Users with multiple enrollments will receive information in modules for all their classes and organizations. Users with multiple roles will receive information in modules for all their roles. Users can navigate to individual items to take action.

For all users, each course contains a Notification Dashboard specific to that course. If your school licenses community engagement, this information may be part of an additional Notifications Dashboard tab on the My Institution tab, which contains information for all courses in which the user is enrolled.

Instructors can customize the notifications that appear on this page, as well as opt to have email notifications sent to their account.

The page displays these modules:

- **Needs Attention**: Displays all items in a course that require some type of interaction. Instructors, teaching assistants (TAs), and graders see student submissions that need grading, such as assignments, tests, surveys, blog and Discussion Board posts, and journal entries.

- **Alerts**: Displays past due and early warning notifications for all courses. Instructors, TAs, and graders see the users in each course that have past due items and who have generated early warning messages. Links are provided to email students and view early warning system rules. Students see any assignments, tests, or other items that are past due and any early warning messages received.

- **What’s New**: Displays a list of new items in all relevant courses and organizations. Instructors, TAs, and graders see any new assignments that have been submitted, tests that have been submitted, new Discussion Board posts, blog entries, and journal entries. Students see new discussion board and blog posts, new grades posted, new content that is available. To learn more, see What's New Module.

- **To Do**: Displays the status (Past Due/Due) of relevant course work. Students see any grade items that have listed due dates in two categories, what is past due and what is due in the future. Links to relevant course items are provided. To learn more, see To Do Module.

**Note**: The To Do Notifications module is not the same as the Tasks tool. To learn more about tasks, see Tasks.

Where Is It?

For Blackboard Learn users, by default, the Notifications Dashboard displays as the homepage for a course. (If your Blackboard administrator has enabled it, you may be able to manage this setting.) It only displays information for that specific course.

If your school licenses community engagement, the Notification Dashboard can also be accessed through a secondary tab on the My Institution tab. The user may be able to manage this setting. The page displays information and items for all courses.

Who Can Use It?

The Blackboard administrator at your school controls the ability for users to view the Notifications Dashboard, to configure the notifications that display in the page, and to receive email notifications. In addition, the Blackboard administrator at your school can allow or disallow users to control any or all notifications or email...
How to Turn It On

The Notifications Dashboard is on for the system by default. If it is turned off by the Blackboard administrator at your school, then it is not possible for an instructor to turn it on.

To turn off the Notification Dashboard, navigate to the Settings page for the Notifications Dashboard. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Settings.

Email Notifications

You can select to receive email notifications for updated, impending, or created items.

Notifications Dashboard Rules

Rules for Items to Display as Notifications

Items must follow these rules to be viewed in the Notifications Dashboard area for the user views:

- A notification for that item is set to On in the Notifications Dashboard Settings area.
- The item or Discussion Board forum is made Available.
- The start date for the item has passed.
- The adaptive release criteria are met by a student.
- An Early Warning System rule is broken by a student.
- For an assessment, assignment, survey, or grade item to display in the Alerts area for instructors, or the To Do area for students, there must be a due date.

Rules for the Removal of Notifications

A notification will be deleted from the Notifications Dashboard area because of one of the following actions:

- The item is deleted by the user.
- The item is made Unavailable.
- The item's end date is reached.
- The adaptive release rules are no longer met by the student.
- The Early Warning System Rules are no longer broken by the student.
- The item has passed its duration as determined in Notifications Dashboard Settings page. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Settings.

Rules for the Removal of Specific Items as Notifications

The following table clarifies the information for removal of specific items as notifications.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Action to Automatically Remove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Student Group created</td>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>The Notifications Dashboard duration setting for notifications will delete this notification. To configure this setting, navigate to the Notifications Dashboard Settings page. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board posts, Blog entries, Journal entries</td>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>The unread posts or entries are viewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course information</td>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>If the item contains a review status, when it is marked as reviewed it will be deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, Assignment, Announcement, Survey, Group or Content Available</td>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>The Notifications Dashboard's duration setting for notifications will delete this notification. To configure this setting, navigate to the Notifications Dashboard Settings page. To learn more, see Notifications Dashboard Settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, Survey, or Assignment</td>
<td>Alerts</td>
<td>Student submits the item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, Survey, or Assignment</td>
<td>Needs Attention</td>
<td>The instructor grades the item.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Using the Notifications Dashboard**

Instructors can navigate to specific areas to take action on notifications and can control the appearance of the Notifications Dashboard. Community engagement users can also navigate to courses within the modules.
Setting Notifications in a Module

Notifications appear in modules where they are viewed, deleted and acted upon. Click the Actions contextual menu to:

- **Expand All**: Displays all the items in the module.
- **Collapse All**: Collapses all the items in the module.
- **Dismiss All**: Removes all the notifications in the module.

To look at each item in a module, click the item. This will expand the notification list. Each notification in the list will have its own contextual menu. Use this menu to take action on a specific notification. Actions available for notifications may include:

- **View Details**: Navigate to the course area such as the Early Warning System, discussion board, or the Grade Center to see the details of the notification. (To learn more, see [Early Warning System](#) and [Grade Center](#).)
- **Refresh**: Refresh an Early Warning System Rule.
- **Email**: Send email to students.
**Note:** Removing the notification only deletes the notification, and does not delete the item from the course. To learn more about the removal of a notification, see Notifications Dashboard Rules.

**Controlling the Appearance of the Dashboard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To...</th>
<th>Do...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collapse modules</td>
<td>Click the minimize icon (-).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open module in a new</td>
<td>Click the new window icon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>window</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move modules</td>
<td>Move the mouse pointer over the module until the cross-hair mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pointer appears. Click, hold, and drag the module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add modules</td>
<td>Click Add Module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit module settings</td>
<td>Click the Manage Module Settings icon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the color</td>
<td>Click Personalize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notifications Dashboard Display**

The Notifications Dashboard displays notifications for changes to items. These notifications are displayed in different modules, which can be added, removed, and customized.
The following items can generate different notifications:

- Content item
- Course information
- Assignments
- Tests
- blog entries
- Surveys
- Journal entries
- Discussion Board posts
- Grade changes
- Early Warning System rules
- Group information
- Announcements
For Blackboard Learn - Enterprise license users, the Notifications Dashboard area displays in each course, and displays notifications only for that course.

If your school licenses community engagement, the Notifications Dashboard modules also display in the MyBlackboard area or My Institution tab and display notifications for all courses.

**Display Modules**

Notifications for these items are categorized in modules. The following table explains the three most common modules, their information, and layout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Information and Appearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Needs Attention| Any submitted item by a user for review or grading by the instructor. Categories of the possible notification types:  
  - Grade Tests: The tests and the corresponding users who have submitted the tests.  
  - Grade Assignments: The assignments and the corresponding users who have submitted the assignments.  
  - Grade Surveys: The surveys and the corresponding users who have submitted the surveys. |
| Alerts         | The Past Due area displays any assessment, assignment, or survey that has passed its due date with no submission by the student. The Early Warning System area displays any rule and the list of students who have violated that rule. |
| What's New     | The Communication area displays the number of unread Discussion Board posts for each forum, the unread blog entries, and the unread Journal entries. The Materials area displays any updated, submitted, or created content, tests, assignments, and surveys. |

**Student Display**

The following table explains the most common notification modules that students see, their notifications, and layout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Information and Appearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Do</td>
<td>The What's Past Due area displays any assessment, assignment, or survey that has passed its due date with no submission by the student. The What's Due displays information about any assessment, assignment, or survey that contains a due date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's New</td>
<td>The Communication area displays the number of unread Discussion Board posts for each forum, the unread blog entries, and the unread Journal entries. The Materials area displays any updated, submitted, or created items, such as tests, assignments, announcements, surveys, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alerts</td>
<td>The Past Due area displays any assessment, assignment, or survey that has passed its due date with no submission by the student. The Early Warning System area displays any rule the student has violated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be aware that students will have the ability to re-order the courses and organizations in the My Courses and My Organization modules. They will also be able to select what information within each course or organization that they want to appear.

**Specific Feature or Item Notification Behavior**

The following table explains the information that displays for specific feature or item notifications.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Important Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>For any group, submissions by the group will be viewed by the instructor as a group submission, and not as notifications of submissions by each individual user in the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>The number of unread posts for a course is displayed. Clicking on the number will navigate the user to the Discussion Boards main page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blog</td>
<td>The number of unread blog entries for a blog is displayed. Clicking on the number will navigate the user to the blog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>The number of unread journal entries for a journal is displayed. Clicking on the number will navigate the user to the journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests or Assignments with Multiple Attempts</td>
<td>The most recent attempt information and link will display.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notifications Dashboard Settings

**IMPORTANT!** If the Blackboard administrator at your school has defined the settings for notifications, email notifications, the duration of a notification, or due date reminders, those settings overrides will take precedence over any user setting.

If allowed by the Blackboard administrator at your school, you can decide:

- Which notifications appear on the dashboard
- Which notifications will generate email messages
- Which type of email format notifications will be sent, individual or daily digest
- The number of days before the removal of a notification
- To create due date reminders for notifications

### How to Access the Edit Notifications Settings Page

Click **My Places** then **Edit Notifications Settings** to locate the **Edit Notifications Settings** page.

This page displays **General Notification Settings**.

- **Edit General Settings**: Defines the general notification settings such as email format, deletion schedule, and reminder schedule for courses and organizations.
- **Edit Individual Course Settings**: Displays the current notification settings for courses in which a user is enrolled. Changes to the notification settings for a specific course can be made.
- **Bulk Edit Notification Settings**: Select a set of courses or organizations to update and change the notification settings for them in one step.
- **Edit Individual Organization Settings**: Displays the current notification settings for organizations in which a user is enrolled. Changes to the notification settings for a specific organization can be made.

### Choosing the Email Notification Type

You can choose to receive an email message for each notification, or choose to receive a daily digest email that contains information about all of the notifications for that day. You can also set the preferred delivery time for the daily digest sent by email.
• **Individual:** Email messages are sent for each notification. For Early Warning System details, unread discussion board messages, unread blog posts, and unread journal entries, however, the digest selection is necessary.

• **Daily Digest:** All notifications are collected and sent in a daily digest email. Set the time to Send Daily Email Digest.

### Creating a Duration for Notifications

Set the number of days until a notification is automatically deleted.

### Creating Due Date Reminders

The user can set due date reminders for notifications. This reminder will be emailed to the user.

Set the number of days before the due date to send an email.

The email will be sent as a digest email or as individual emails depending upon the option selected by the user. To learn more about selecting email type, see [Choosing the Email Notification Type](#) in the Notifications Dashboard settings.

### Choosing Notification Types and Email Notification

It is possible to decide the notification types and emails to receive.

All notification types, by default, are turned on. These notifications are displayed in the Notifications Dashboard modules.

All email notification types, by default, are turned off, an email will be sent out corresponding to that notification. Though for the following items, email notifications can only be sent out if daily digest email is selected:

- Early Warning System Rule details
- Unread discussion board messages
- Unread blog posts
- Unread journal entries

After choosing the appropriate settings, click **Submit** to save these settings.

If in a course's **Edit Notification Settings** page, it is possible to **Save to All**, so that the settings will affect all of your courses.
Student Course Experience

Making a Course Available or Unavailable

A course must be made available before students enrolled in the course will be able to view or access the course and its content. However, you may wish to make a course unavailable during the building process, or after a scheduled course has finished.

How to Make a Course Available

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section, and select Properties.
3. Under the third section, Set Availability, click Yes to make the course available to users.
4. Optionally, under the fourth section, Set Course Duration, choose one of the following options:
   - Continuous (default) to leave the course available without a specified start or end date
   - Select Dates to choose a start and/or end date
   - Days from the Date of Enrollment to specify a specific length of time users have to access the course after enrolling. This is the best option for self-paced courses.
5. Click **Submit**.

**How to Make a Course Unavailable**

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. On the Control Panel, expand the **Customization** section and select **Properties**.

3. In the **Set Availability** section, click **No** to make the course unavailable to users.
4. Click Submit.

If a course is unavailable, access is determined by course role. Blackboard administrators, instructors, course builders, teaching assistants, and graders can see and access unavailable courses from My Courses and the Course List, but they are marked as unavailable. Students cannot access unavailable courses regardless of the course duration. Unavailable courses do not appear in the Course Catalog.

Related Tutorials  Making Your Course Available (Flash movie | 1m 35s | 790 KB)

Managing Tool Availability

You can select which tools are available in your course and which users have access to them. For example, if the Messages tool will not be used, make it unavailable. No one can see it or access it, including you, until it is made available again. On the Tool Availability page, available tools are listed alphabetically.

The Blackboard administrator at your school can turn off select tools, making those tools unavailable for use in your courses. The administrator can also remove your ability to choose who has access to select tools.

How to Access Tool Availability Settings

On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Tool Availability. Select or clear the check boxes of the tools you want to use in your course and which users will have access to these tools.

- **Available:** The tool is available throughout your course and open to all users that have a role permitting the use of the tool.
- **Visible to Guests:** The tool is visible (read-only), but not usable to Guests when Guests are permitted in your course.
- **Visible to Observers:** The tool is visible (read-only), but not usable to Observers when Observers are permitted in your course.
- **Available in Content Areas:** You can place a link to a tool in one or more Content Areas in your course.

Circle with diagonal line: The Blackboard administrator at your school made the tool unavailable.

If tools are made unavailable after a period of being available, either at the course level by you or at the system level by the Blackboard administrator at your school, no content is deleted from the system. If the tools are made available again, the existing content remains and becomes accessible.
Filtering the Display

Click **Filter** on the action bar to sort the table based on availability status for the tool and for the role users have in a course. Filtering makes it easier to see which tools are available and visible, and change settings based on those criteria.

About Building Blocks

If your school has licensed any Building Blocks, they will appear in the list of tools on the **Tool Availability** page.

*Related Tutorials*  [Turning Tool Availability On and Off](#) (Flash movie | 2m 0s)

Enrolling and Managing Users

The **Users** page lists all enrolled users in a course and allows you to manage their settings. In many cases, your school handles course enrollments for registered students and manages their accounts. If your school's policies allow it and your Blackboard Administrator gives you the appropriate permissions, instructors can add or delete users as well as change passwords, roles, profile information, and availability in a course.

Access the **Users** page from the Control Panel under **Users and Groups**.

About Enrolling Users

There are three ways to enroll a user. These options are available from the **Enroll User** drop-down menu or the **Batch Enroll** button on the action bar.

- **Create a User**: Users created in a course are automatically enrolled in that course.
- **Find Users to Enroll**: Users that have an existing account in the system can be enrolled in the course.
- **Batch Enroll**: Enroll multiple users to the course all at once and assign them a course role.

How to Create Users

Your Blackboard Learn administrator manages the ability of instructors to create new users. If you are unable to create users, contact your Blackboard administrator for more information.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Users and Groups** section.
2. Click **Users**.
3. On the **Users** page, point to **Enroll User** and select **Create User**.
4. Provide the required information and any other relevant personal information.
5. Select a **Role** and **Availability** for the user.
6. Click **Submit**.

For institutions with multiple information systems, creating users may occur in a different information system accessed by a link at the top of this page.

Information about users is stored in a user profile. The Blackboard administrator at your school determines which the fields of data in the user profile are displayed to users and which are editable by users.
How to Find Users to Enroll

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section.
2. Click Users.
3. On the Users page, point to Enroll User and select Find Users to Enroll.
4. Type a username or click Browse to search for users. Only users that are not already enrolled in the course will be identified in a search for users.
5. Select or type as many usernames as desired. Separate multiple usernames with commas.
6. Select a Role and Enrollment Availability for the users.
7. Click Submit

Located Users: The results of a search will display up to 25 names on a page. Searches that result in more than 25 users will display users on multiple pages. It is not possible to enroll multiple users who appear on different pages. Instead, select users to enroll from a single page and click Submit. Redo the search to select additional users to enroll.

Availability: Users who have been made Unavailable by your Blackboard administrator cannot be enrolled in a course. Users who have been enrolled in a course but made Unavailable by you will not see the course in My Courses and do not have access to the course. You need to set the course to Available for these users so they can see they are enrolled in the course.

How to Batch Enroll Users

Batch Enroll Users adds multiple users to the course and assign them a course role. Users that do not exist in the system will be created in the system and added to the course. User data is defined in a batch file that must be created outside the system. Common creation tools are text editors and Microsoft Excel.

Your Blackboard administrator manages the ability of instructors to batch enroll users. If you are unable to batch enroll users, contact your Blackboard administrator for more information.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section.
2. Click Users.
3. On the Users page, click Batch Enroll Users.
4. Click Browse to locate the batch file, and select a Delimiter Type, if necessary.
5. Click Submit.

Information about Batch Files

Batch files are .txt files that can hold large quantities of information to upload to the system. Each batch utility contains specific instructions on creating the batch file. The following batch file standards are universal.

- Each file must be one of the supported file types: TXT (plain text) or CSV (comma-separated values)
  
  Note: Microsoft Excel versions 2003 and later automatically insert double quotes in every field if the worksheet is saved as a .csv file.

- Each file must be in DOS format. Files in Mac or UNIX format must be converted to DOS.

- Each field must be enclosed in double quotation marks. For example: "John"

- If quotation marks appear in a field, use an escape character to indicate that the next character does not mark the end of the field. The escape character is a backslash (\). For example: "\"NICKNAME\""
Each field must be separated with one of the following delimiters: comma, colon, or tab. When selecting AUTO, only one type of delimiter may be used in each batch file. For example:
"John","Smith" or "John":"Smith"

Each record must be on a separate line. For example:
"John","Smith"
"Samantha","Baker"

Do not include blank lines between records. The blank line will be processed and return an error.

Blackboard recommends that each batch file not exceed 500 records because of timeout restrictions associated with most browsers.

How to Remove Users From a Course

Removing users from a course is final and cannot be undone. All of the information associated with the users, such as Grade Center information, assessment and assignment information, and course statistics are also deleted. Discussion board posts, received messages, and email are not deleted. Deleted users and their corresponding information cannot be restored to the course. However, it is possible to re-enroll the user into the course without any associated data.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section.
2. Click Users.
3. Select the check boxes next to the users you want to remove from the course.
4. Click Remove Users From Course.
5. A pop-up window warns you that the action is final. Click OK to delete the user.

Alternatively, you can delete users one at a time by using the option in their contextual menus.

1. On the Users page, click a user's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Remove Users From Course.
3. A pop-up window warns you that the action is final. Click OK to delete the user.

Managing Settings for Users

The following functions are accessed by clicking a user's Action Link to access the contextual menu. The options include:

- **Edit**: Personal information about a user can be updated from this page.
- **Change User's Password**: The user will receive an email notification after the password is changed.
- **Change User's Role in Course**: Select the role for the user. This setting only affects the course you are teaching. To learn about roles, such as student or teaching assistant (TA), see Course Roles.
- **Change User's Availability in Course**: Set the user's availability to Yes or No. This setting only affects the course you are teaching. Availability is displayed in the far right column on the Users page.
- **Remove Users From Course**: Select this option to delete users. You will be prompted to confirm the removal.

Searching for Users in a Course

In Blackboard Learn, you can search for users from several areas.
Because searching for users requires access to the Control Panel, the ability to search for users is only available if you have one of the following defined course roles:

- Instructor
- Teaching assistant (TA)
- Grader
- Course builder
- Blackboard administrator

To learn more, see Course Roles.

How to Search for a User by First Name, Last Name, Email, or Username

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section and select Users.
2. Select one of the following: first name, last name, email address, or username.
3. Select one of the following: Contains, Equal to, or Starts with.
4. Type one of the following: first name, last name, email address, or username.
5. Click Go. All matching entries are displayed.

How to Search Using a Value Found in the User’s Name

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section and select Users.
2. Type a value in the search text box.
3. Click Go. All matching entries are displayed.

How to List All Users in a Course

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section and select Users.
2. Click Go. All users are displayed.

Tip: You may prefer to download the list in spreadsheet format. To learn more, see Grade Center.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section and select Full Grade Center.
2. Point to Work Offline to access the drop-down list and select Download.
3. Select the columns that you want to download. The list of students are included automatically.
4. Click Submit and save the file.

Allowing Guest and Observer Access

You can control whether or not the guest and observer roles have access to your course.

Guests in a course can include guest lecturers, potential students, or other users who are not directly participating in your course.

Observers are typically assigned to follow specific users in Blackboard Learn without interacting with the system. Observers are able to view the course and track student progress. Also, you can communicate Early Warning System notifications to observers as well as students, or just to the observers of a student.

How to Allow Guest and Observer Access
1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Guest and Observer Access.
3. On the Guest and Observer Access page, select Yes for Allow Guests and Allow Observers to allow guests and observers to view your course.

How to Customize Guest and Observer Access

The Blackboard administrator at your school can allow or disallow guest and observer access to certain features of courses, such as Content Areas and tools.

**IMPORTANT!** System settings override course settings when restricting access. If the system does not permit guest access to a tool, guests enrolled in a course cannot be permitted access to the tool at the course level.

It is possible to give guest and observer access to individual features that are not overridden at the system level. The features are visible (read-only), but not usable to guests and observers when they are permitted in your course.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Customization section and select Tool Availability.
2. On the Tool Availability page, you can control guest and observer access by selecting or clearing check boxes. Tools with a circle with a diagonal line icon in a column do not have availability settings in the system that you can change. To learn more, see Managing Tool Availability.

The following table lists the tools that are either unavailable on the system level to both guests and observers or only available to the observer role. The Blackboard administrator can disallow availability for a specific tool in the following list for the observer role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Unavailable to Both the Guest and Observer Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Unavailable to guest role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Grades</td>
<td>Unavailable to guest role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roster</td>
<td>Unavailable to guest role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubrics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>Unavailable to guest role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related Tutorials

[Permitting and Restricting Guest and Observer Access](#) (Flash movie | 1m 51s)
Controlling the Release of Content

About Adaptive Release

Adaptive release controls the release of content to users based on a set of rules created by the instructor. The rules may be related to availability, date and time, individual users, group membership, scores or attempts on any Grade Center item, calculated columns in Grade Center, or review status of an item in the course.

The following options are available:

- **Adaptive Release**: Create basic rules for an item. Only one rule per item can be created, but the rule can have multiple criteria, all of which must be met.
- **Adaptive Release Advanced**: Create sophisticated combinations of release rules by adding multiple rules with multiple criteria to a single content item. Users must meet all the criteria of one of the rules to gain access.
- **User Progress**: View the details on an item for all users in a course. This page includes information about whether the item is visible to the user and whether the user has marked the item as reviewed.

Adaptive Release Rules and Criteria

A basic adaptive release rule consists of a set of criteria that defines the visibility of a content item to users. If a rule has multiple criteria, the user must meet all criteria before the item is available. Advanced adaptive release enables you to create multiple rules for a single content item, and each rule can consist of multiple criteria.

For example, suppose you add a rule for an assignment to allow users in Group A to view the assignment after a specific date. This rule would consist of membership criteria and date criteria. Another rule for this assignment can allow all users in Group B to view the assignment once they had completed Homework #1. This rule would consist of membership criteria and Grade Center completion criteria.

*Note*: Only one membership criterion and one date criterion can be created for each rule. Multiple Grade Center criteria and review status criteria can be added to each rule.

Adaptive Release Rules During Course Copy, Archive, and Export

Adaptive release rules and user progress information are only included during a full course copy that includes users, and during archive and restore operations. Rules and user progress information are not saved during a copy of course materials into a new course or during a copy of course materials into an existing course. They are also not saved during export and import operations.

Enable and Disable the Adaptive Release Feature

The Blackboard administrator at your school controls the availability of the adaptive release feature. If this feature is made available, course developers can add basic or advanced adaptive release rules.

If the Adaptive Release tool is disabled by the Administrator, all rules that have been created will disappear. Also, adaptive release related links on the Manage page will no longer appear. If the tool is later re-enabled, the links on the Manage page will reappear and any data associated with adaptive release (such as the rules) will be saved. Any adaptive release rules that had previously been set also reappear.

Visibility of Items with Adaptive Release Rules

Once any adaptive release rules have been established for an item, visibility of that item is restricted to those users who meet the criteria of those rules.
For example, suppose you create a content item called “Introduction” in a Content Area. At this point, all course users would be able to see that content item. Next, you create a rule restricting the item to Group A users. Now, only members of Group A can see Introduction—all other course users do not see it.

Next, you add another criterion to this rule, restricting it to Group A members who have received at least 80 points on Test #1. Now, only members of Group A who have also scored 80 or greater on Test #1 will see Introduction. All other users, including Group A members who scored less than an 80 on the pre-test, will not see Introduction.

If no adaptive release rules have been created, the item is available to all users in the course depending on the item availability and date restrictions set during item creation or editing.

Note: If an adaptive release rule is created, but no criteria for it are defined, the content will display to all users. This is true even if there are other rules associated with the item. One blank criterion will allow the content display to all users.

View Availability of an Item on User Progress Page

You can create one or more adaptive release rules to narrow the availability of a content item. It may be difficult to remember which users may access each piece of content. The User Progress page displays details on the visibility of a content item and the adaptive release rules pertaining to it on a user-by-user basis. If Review Status is enabled for the item, an icon is displayed to show if the user has reviewed the item along with a date and time stamp for when the review was registered for that user.

If no adaptive release rules have been created for that item, the visibility column is based simply on availability of the item itself. For example, if the item is available, the Visible icon is displayed for all users.

Differences Between Basic Adaptive Release and Advanced Adaptive Release

Basic adaptive release enables you to create one rule for a single item. That rule can contain multiple criteria.

Advanced adaptive release enables you to create multiple rules for a single item. If you want to create different criteria for different users on the same item, more than one rule is needed. For example, you can set up a rule for Group A that enables these users to view Test 1 after completing Assignment A. You can set up a separate rule for Group B that enables them to see Test 1 after completing Assignment B.

Unavailable Items and Adaptive Release Rules

Item availability set on the Add Item page supersedes all adaptive release rules. If the item is unavailable, it is unavailable to all users regardless of any rules established. This allows course developers to develop rules and only make items available when finished with rule creation.

View Content with Rules Through the Course

If you view Content Areas through the course as a student would with Edit Mode set to OFF, the student view is based on item availability and adaptive release rules. For example, if adaptive release is used to make an item available to a Group, and you yourself are not a member of the Group, you will not see the item if accessed through the Course Menu. The same is true for unavailable items. If an item is added to a course, but is not made available, the you will not see it when you access the Content Area through the Course Menu.

To learn more, see Edit Mode.
Managing Adaptive Release Rules

How to Add a Basic Adaptive Release Rule

Basic adaptive release rules allow you to add and edit one rule for a single piece of content. This single rule may have multiple criteria. For example, the rule may require a student to meet both date criteria and review status criteria before the content is available. Advanced adaptive release rules can also be used to add multiple rules to a single piece of content.

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Open the contextual menu for an item and click Adaptive Release.
4. Complete one or more sections of the Adaptive Release page—date, membership, grade, review status, and so on.
5. Click Submit.

How to Add an Advanced Adaptive Release Rule

Advanced adaptive release allows you to add multiple rules to a single content item. If multiple rules are created, the content is visible to the user if any of the rules are met. Each rule may have multiple criteria. For example, one rule may allow users in Group A with a score above an 85 on a Test to view the content item. Another rule for the same item may allow users in Group B to view the same content item only after a specific date.

Rules that cannot be satisfied by any user will be noted because they will not provide any access to the specified content item.

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Open the contextual menu for an item and click Adaptive Release: Advanced.
4. Click Create Rule. The Add Rule page appears.
5. Type a name for the rule and click Submit.
6. Point to Create Criteria and select date, grade or membership and fill in the criteria. Click Submit when the rule is complete.
7. On the Action Bar, click Review Status to add this type of criteria the advanced adaptive release rule. Browse and select the content item to be reviewed before the content is released.
8. Repeat Steps 6 and 7 to add multiple criteria to an item.

How to Copy an Adaptive Release Rule

You may find it easier to copy an existing adaptive release rule rather than creating a new one from scratch. Once the rule is copied, the name can be changed and the rule edited. Rules may only be copied within a single content item; a rule from one content item may not be copied to another content item.

Follow these steps to copy an adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Select the check box next to the rule you would like to copy and select **Copy** in the Action Bar.
5. An exact replica of the rule appears at the bottom of the list. It has the same name as the original rule starting with ‘Copy of’.
6. Open the contextual menu of the copied rule and click **Edit Criteria** to make changes to the name or criteria.

### How to Edit an Adaptive Release Rule

Rules are managed and edited from the **Adaptive Release** page. The criteria of a rule and the name of a rule are managed separately.

#### Changing the Name of an Adaptive Release Rule

Follow these steps to change the name of a rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Open the contextual menu for an item and click **Adaptive Release: Advanced**. The **Adaptive Release: Advanced** page appears.
4. Select **Manage** from the contextual menu for the rule that needs to be edited. The **Manage Rule** page appears.
5. Edit the **Rule Name** and select **Submit**.

#### Editing the Criteria of an Advanced Adaptive Release Rule

Follow these steps to edit the criteria of an advanced adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Open the contextual menu for an item and click **Adaptive Release: Advanced**. The **Adaptive Release: Advanced** page appears.
4. Select **Edit Criteria** next to the rule that needs to be updated. The **Manage Criteria** page appears. Criteria may be added, edited, and deleted. Select **OK** when the changes are complete.
5. Repeat Step 4 to change any additional criteria related to the content item.

#### Editing a Basic Adaptive Release Rule

Follow these steps to edit a basic adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Open the contextual menu for an item and click **Adaptive Release**. The **Adaptive Release** page appears.
4. Make any necessary changes and click **Submit**.

**Note:** These steps can also be used to edit a rule with one criteria created on the **Advanced Adaptive Release** page.

### How to Delete an Adaptive Release Rule

Both advanced and basic adaptive release rules can be deleted from the **Adaptive Release: Advanced** page.
1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Select the rule to delete. Multiple rules may be selected. Click Delete.

Adding Adaptive Release Criteria

About Adaptive Release Criteria

Criteria are the parts that define an adaptive release rule. You can apply one or more criteria to each rule. For example, one rule may make content available after a specific date, while another rule, with multiple criteria, may make content available to a Course Group after a specific date.

The following table describes available criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Date and Time | Display content based on a date or time. Options include:  
  - After a specific date  
  - Until a specific date  
  - Within a time frame |
| Username | Display content to one or more users. |
| Course Groups | Display content to members of one or more groups in a course. |
| Grade Center Column | Display content item to users based a grade or a calculated column. |
| Grade Center: Item with at least one attempt | Display content based on a recorded attempt by the user, instead of a required score. For example, if a student has completed the test or a grade has been entered for a submitted assignment. |
| Grade Center: Item with a specific score | Display content based on a required score. Options include:  
  - Less than or equal to  
  - Greater than or equal to  
  - Equal to |
| Grade Center: Item with a score between X and Y | Display content based on a range of scores. For example, if a student scores between 85 and 100 on an exam. |
| Review Status an item | Display content to the user only after an associated item has been marked as Reviewed. |

About Date Criteria

Date criteria enable content to be displayed according to date and time. Content may be displayed after a specific date, until a specific date, or within a time frame.

You can set date restrictions when creating or editing an item, when adding a date criterion in an adaptive release rule, or both. For example, suppose an item is made available during creation from December 1 to December 30. Adaptive release could be used to extend the availability to a small group of users until January 15.

Note: If the date is changed on the item itself, for example on the Edit Item page, and adaptive release date criteria already exist, a warning message appears. The same is true if you attempt to add adaptive release date criteria and a date for the item has been set on the Add or Edit Item page.
How to Add Date Criteria to a Rule

Date criteria are created with the same information for basic adaptive release rules and advanced adaptive release rules. You can add more criteria to a rule, in addition to date criteria, to further narrow the availability of an item.

Follow the steps below to add date criteria to an advanced adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Click Create Rule. The Add Rule page appears.
5. Type a name for the rule and click Submit.
6. On the Action Bar, point to Create Criteria and select Date. The Date page appears.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Criteria</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display an item after a specific date</td>
<td>Select the check box next to Display After. Select a date and time using the selection menus. The item will appear to users after this date and time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display an item until a specific date</td>
<td>Select the check box next to Display Until. Select a date and time using the selection menus. The item will appear to users until this date and time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About Membership Criteria

Membership criteria allow content to be displayed according to username and course groups. You can set up criteria that use one or both of these options. You can make this item available to a course group, or make this item available to a course group and other specific individuals.

Make Content Available to Specific Users

Membership criteria are useful for making content available to a specific user or set of users. For example, if a student requests a way to earn more points for class, you could agree, but decide to not offer this option to the rest of the students in the course. You would create an extra credit content item and only releases it to the single student through the membership criteria.

Make Content Available to Groups

Membership criteria may be used to manage content for groups within a course.

For example, suppose a class is divided into three groups and each group has a different assignment. They are instructed to learn the topic and then present the material to the entire class. You have materials specific to each group's assignment. You would load the material for Group 1 as content items, and release the material only to Group 1. Then, you would the material for Group 2 as content items, and release that material only to Group 2. This same process is used for Group 3.

When a group presents the material to the class, you may then change the release rule on that material so it becomes available to the entire class. (Alternatively, if you know the date of presentation ahead of time, the date criteria may be used to make the content available for the rest of the class.)


**How to Add Membership Criteria to a Rule**

Membership criteria are created with the same information for basic adaptive release rules and advanced adaptive release rules. You may add more criteria to a rule, in addition to membership criteria, to further narrow the availability of an item.

Follow the steps below to add a membership criterion to an advanced adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Click **Create Rule**. The **Add Rule** page appears.
5. Type a name for the rule and click **Submit**.
   - **OR**-
   Select **Edit** from the contextual menu for an existing rule on the **Adaptive Release** page to edit its criteria.
6. On the Action Bar, point to **Create Criteria** and select **Membership**. The **Membership** page appears.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Criteria</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Users</td>
<td>In the <strong>Username</strong> field enter one or more user names, separated by commas or click <strong>Browse</strong> to search the system. Use the <strong>Course Membership</strong> window to search for and select user names to add to the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Groups</td>
<td>All groups in the course appear in the <strong>Items to Select</strong> box, even those that are unavailable. Use the arrows to move groups from the <strong>Items to Select</strong> field to the <strong>Selected Items</strong> field. Content is displayed to all of the groups that appear in the <strong>Selected Items</strong> field.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**About Grade Center Criteria**

Grade Center criteria can be used to release content based on item attempt, item score, or a calculated column. A number of different score values may be selected, including the following:

- A score greater than a set value
- A score less than a set value
- A score that equals a specific value
- A score that falls within a range of values

**Make Content Available Based on Grade Center Attempt**

Grade Center criteria are useful if you want to make content visibility dependent on attempts made by students on tests or assignments. For example, suppose you prepare a pre-test for students to complete before review materials are made available. This enables students to discover for themselves which topics they should study more.

End-of-term surveys are another use for attempt-based criterion. Some institutions require that an end-of-term survey is attempted at least once before the final exam is made available.
Make Content Available Based on Grade Center Score or Calculated Column

Grade Center criteria can make content available based on a specific score or a calculated column in the Grade Center. Many courses rely on progression, where students must learn one topic before moving to another.

If you want students to have passed the assignment on basic verb conjugation before viewing the material on advanced verb conjugation, you can create a rule that allows only students who have received at least a 70 on the basic verb conjugation assignment to view the advanced verb conjugation material.

You can also establish a range of values for content release, such as releasing an extra credit item to users who scored between 60 and 80, and releasing a different item with more intense remediation for students scoring below 60. In this case, you create two content items and releases one to users who fall into the 60-80 range and releases the other to students who received less than 60.

How to Add Grade Center Criteria to a Rule

Grade Center criteria are created with the same information for basic adaptive release rules and advanced adaptive release rules. You may add more criteria to a rule, in addition to Grade Center criteria, to further narrow the availability of an item.

Tip: Only one Grade Center item can be selected for each Grade Center criterion. However, multiple Grade Center criteria may be added to a single advanced adaptive release rule. For example, within a single rule, you can specify a criterion that makes Project A available after Survey #1 is complete and another criterion that makes Project A available after a score greater than 70 on Test #2 is recorded. In this example, only students who have completed Survey #1 and scored higher than 70 on Test #2 may view Project A.

Follow the steps below to add a Grade Center criterion to an advanced Adaptive Release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Click Create Rule. The Add Rule page appears.
5. Type a name for the rule and click Submit.
6. Select Grade from the contextual menu for an existing rule on the Adaptive Release page to edit its criteria.
7. On the Action Bar, point to Create Criteria and select Grade. The Grade page appears.
8. Select the Grade Center item for this criterion in the Select Grade Center Column drop-down list.

Grade Center items are listed by their categories, such as assignment or discussion. Possible points are also included to help you determine the score range.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Center Condition</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User has at least one attempt for this item</td>
<td>Select the option User has at least one attempt for this item to release the content based on a submitted attempt rather than the score achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make content available based on less than, greater than, or equal to score</td>
<td>Use the options in the Score drop-down list to select Less Than, Greater Than, or Equal To. Type a numeric score in the box for the score threshold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make content available for a score within a range of values</td>
<td>Select the option Score Between or Percent Between. Type the range of values in the boxes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About Review Status Criteria

Review status criteria are used to release content based on the user’s review of a specific content item. For example, you can create a criterion that makes Assignment #1 available only after students have marked Homework #1 reviewed.

How to Add Review Status Criteria to a Rule

Review status criteria are created with the same information for basic adaptive release rules and advanced adaptive release rules. You can add more criteria to a rule, in addition to review status, to further narrow the availability of an item. Review status may be applied to a Learning Module but may not be applied to individual files within a Learning Module.

Follow the steps below to add a review status criterion to an advanced adaptive release rule:

1. Open a Content Area from the Control Panel.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
4. Click Create Rule in the Action Bar to add a rule. The Add Rule page appears.
5. Type a name for the rule and click Submit.
   -OR-
   Select Edit from the contextual menu for an existing rule on the Adaptive Release page to edit its criteria.
7. Select Browse to open the Course Map. Click an item in the map to select it for review status criteria. Review Status will be turned on for this item. Users must mark the item reviewed before the content including this rule is available.

Users and Groups

Course Groups and Tools

About Course Groups

Course groups allow instructors and students to create groups of students within a course. These course groups have their own area in Blackboard Learn to collaborate on course work, and these spaces are equipped with tools to assist in the collaborative process. If included in a course, the Course Menu item Groups accesses the Groups page. There you can create, manage, and access course groups.

About Course Group Tools

Students access the tools added to a group homepage in the Group Tools section. Only the instructor and the group members can access tools enabled for the group, with the exception of the Group Blog and Group Wiki tools. Group Blogs and Wikis appear to all course members when the tools are accessed on the Tools page.
Available group tools include the following:

- **Group Blog**: Users within the group can add entries and comments to the Group Blog to share ideas. You can grade Group Blogs, but once a Group Blog is set to be graded, it cannot be changed. When a grade is added for a Group Blog, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member’s grade to assign a different grade than the group’s.

- **Collaboration Tools**: Users within the group can create and attend real-time chat or Virtual Classroom sessions.

- **Group Discussion Board**: Users within the group can communicate as a group, as well as create and manage their own forums. The Group Discussion Board is available only to group members, not to the entire course.

- **File Exchange**: Users within the group and instructors can use this tool to upload documents to the group area. All group members and the instructor can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them. Files appear in the order they were uploaded. This tool is only available to groups.

- **Group Journal**: Users within the group can share their thoughts with each other and communicate with the instructor. Journal entries made in the Group Journal are visible to all group members and the instructor. You can grade Group Journals, but once a Group Journal is set to be graded, it cannot be changed. When a grade is added for a Group Journal, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each Group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member’s grade to assign a different grade than the group’s.

- **Group Tasks**: Users within the group can define and separate the workload into tasks, while distributing the list to the entire group. Each task has a status and a due date to help keep members on track. Group members can view the group assigned tasks in the Group Tasks tool or in the Course
Tasks tool. Other course members and the instructor will not see tasks for groups they are not enrolled in when viewing the Course Tasks tool.

- **Group Wiki**: Wikis are used to create a collaborative space for group members to view, contribute, and edit content. By default, Group Wikis can be read by all course members, but only members of the group can make a comment on a Group Wiki page. An instructor can change the default setting to allow only group members to view a Group Wiki. You can grade Group Wikis, but once a Group Wiki is set to be graded, it cannot be changed. When a grade is added for a Group Wiki, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. You can edit an individual member’s grade to assign a different grade than the group’s.

Where links appear in this list, you can click on them for more information about the specific tool.

**Related Tutorials**
- [Creating a Group](#) (Flash movie | 3m 39s)
- [Creating Group Sets](#) (Flash movie | 2m 28s)
- [Getting Started with Groups](#) (PDF file | 12.2 MB)

**Creating Groups**

You can create formal groups of students to collaborate on work, and create these groups one at a time or in sets. You can manually select group members or allow students to self-enroll. Each group has its own space, or homepage, with links to tools to help students collaborate. Only the instructor and the group members can access the group tools.

There are two group creation options available:

- Create a Single Group
- Create a Group Set

**About Group Enrollment Methods**

**Self-Enroll** allows students to add themselves to a group using a sign-up sheet. You can make sign-up sheets available to students on the groups listing page or by adding a link to a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. When you create a group using sign-up sheets, the group can be immediately available to use or made available after all members have signed up. Self-enrollment is an option available for both single groups and group sets.

**Manual Enroll** allows an instructor to assign each student in the course to a group. Manual enrollment is available for both single groups and group sets.

**Random Enroll** is available for only group sets and automatically distributes membership into groups based on a designated number of students per group or the designated number of groups. Random distribution applies only to students who are currently enrolled in the course. Additional students can be enrolled manually. When naming a set of groups, the name of each group has a number added to it when they are first created. For example, a set of groups named "Research" results in groups named "Research 1," "Research 2," and "Research 3," depending upon the number of groups in the set. You can edit the group names after they are created.

**Accessing Groups**

You can access groups from the **Tools** link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu.
Two Default Options

Access groups using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Groups.

Alternatively, on the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section and select Groups.

How to Add a Groups Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access groups often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Groups.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students.

**How to Access Groups in a Content Area**

You can manually add links to individual groups and sign-up sheets in Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders. You can set up a Content Area to include all the content and tools your students need for the week. After reading the weekly lecture, and viewing the slide presentation, students can also access the Groups tool to complete the group assignment. Students do not need to navigate anywhere else in the course to complete all the required activities for the week.

When you add a link to a specific group in a Content Area, all students will see the link, however, if the student is not a member of the group, he or she will not be able to access the group homepage.
**Adding a Group Link in a Content Area**

You can follow the same steps for adding link to Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is **ON** and access the course area where a group link will be added, for example, the **Chapter 1** Content Area.

2. On the Action Bar, point to **Tools** to access the drop-down list, and select **Groups**.

3. On the **Create Link: Group** page, select the type of link: Link to the Groups page, to a group, or to a group set. If linking to a group or group set, select it from the list.

4. Click **Next**.
5. On the next **Create Link: Group** page, complete the **Link Information** to specify how it will appear in the Content Area. Select **Options**, if you want.

6. Click **Submit**.

---

**Create Link: Group**

* Indicates a required field.

### 1. Link Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link Name</td>
<td>Oceanography Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color of Name</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Group: Oceanography Issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text**

Select the text editor and options as needed.

Click the link to be directed to the Group page.

**Path:** body

- **Save as Reusable Object**

### 2. Options

- **Available**: Yes/No
- **Track Number of Views**: Yes/No
- **Date Restrictions**: Display After/Until

---

**Accessing the Groups Link**

Navigate to the Content Area, and click the **Group** link. You will be directed to the group homepage.
How to Create a Single Group

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Groups.
   - OR -
   On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section, and select Groups.
2. On the Groups listing page, point to Create Single Group on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list. Select Self-Enroll or Manual Enroll.

3. On the Create Group page, type a Name and optional Description.

4. Select the Yes option to make the Group Available. If you do not want the group to be available at this time, select No.
5. Select the check boxes for the course tools you want to make available to the group.

6. Select the Grade option and type Points possible for Blogs, Journals, and Wikis, if you want to grade student submissions.

7. Select the check box for Allow Personalization to allow students to add Personal Modules to the group homepage. Only the group member who added the modules can view them.

8. For Self-Enroll Sign-up options, type the Name of Sign-up Sheet. Type the Maximum Number of Members. Select any other Sign-up options you want to include.

   -OR-

   For Manual Enroll Membership section, select the students from the Items to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to add the selected names to the Selected Items box.

9. Click Submit.
# Create Group

1. **Group Information**
   - Name: Oceanography Issues
   - Description:
     ```text
     This group will investigate the following issues:
     - How does human population growth threaten coastal areas?
     - How can we measure these threats?
     - Who is responsible for solving the problem?
     ```

2. **Tool Availability**
   - Blogs: No grading
   - Collaboration
   - Discussion Board
   - Email
   - File Exchange
   - Journals: No grading
     - Grade: Points possible: 50
   - Tasks
   - Wikis: No grading
     - Grade: Points possible:

3. **Module Personalization Setting**
   - Allow Personalization

4. **Membership**
   - Items to Select:
     - Chu, Cathy (Instructor)
     - Gonzales, Monica
     - Lopez, Bruce
     - Paul, Dwight
     - Spooner, Sarah
     - Tsai, Mark
   - Selected Items:
     - Farrell, Andy
     - Casper, Chris
     - Brown, Tony
Note: For Windows, to select multiple users in a row, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each name needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key. You can also select all course members with the Select All function.

Result
The newly created group appears on the Groups listing page.

How to Create a Group Set
1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Groups.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section, and select Groups.
2. On the Groups listing page, point to Create Group Set on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list. Select Self-Enroll, Manual Enroll or Random Enroll.

3. On the Create Random Enrollment Group Set page, type a Name and optional Description.

4. Select the Yes option to make the Group Available. If you do not want the group set to be available at the present time, select No.
5. Select the check boxes for course tools you want to make available to the group set.

6. Select the **Grade** option and type **Points possible** for **Blogs**, **Journals**, and **Wikis**, if student submissions will be graded.

7. Select the check box for **Allow Personalization** to allow individual group members to add Personal Modules to the group homepage. Only the group member who added the modules can view them.

8. For Self-Enroll **Sign-up options**, type the **Name of Sign-up Sheet**. Type the **Maximum Number of Members**. Select any other **Sign-up options** you want to include.

   - **OR**-

   For Manual Enroll **Group Set Options** section, type the **Number of Groups** to create.

   - **OR**-

   For Random Enroll **Membership** section, type the **Number of Students per Group** to create or the **Number of Groups**. Select an option to **Determine How to Enroll any Remaining Members** in the groups.

9. Click **Submit**.
Create Random Enrollment Group Set

1. Group Information
   - Name: Research
   - Description: This group will perform a research study based on assigned topic.

   - Group Available: Yes

2. Tool Availability
   - Blogs
     - No grading
     - Grade: Points possible: [ ]
   - Collaboration
   - Discussion Board
   - Email
   - File Exchange
   - Journals
     - No grading
     - Grade: Points possible: 50
   - Tasks
   - Wikis
     - No grading
     - Grade: Points possible: [ ]

3. Module Personalization Setting
   - Allow Personalization

4. Membership
   - Determine Number of Groups by
     - Number of Students per Group
     - Number of Groups
   - Determine How to Enroll any Remaining Members
     - Distribute the remaining members amongst the groups
     - Put the remaining members in their own group
     - Manually add the remaining members to groups

Related Tutorials
  - Creating a Group (Flash movie 3m 39s)
  - Creating Group Sets (Flash movie 2m 28s)
Editing Groups

On the Groups listing page, you can create groups, as well as edit and manage them. Each group’s contextual menu provides quick access to the group homepage and email. You can also access the options to edit group properties and delete groups.

Editing a group allows you to add or remove members, as well as change its name, availability, and tools.

- **Open**: This option opens the group homepage, where course or group modules can be added. Also, click **Customize Page** on the Action Bar to change the color theme of the page. If **Allow Personalization** was enabled, students also have access to these options.

- **Edit**: This option opens the **Edit Group** page. Edit any of the initial options chosen when the group was created, with the exception of changing the Grade option for graded Blogs, Journals, and Wikis.

- **Email**: This option allows you to send an email message to the entire group or to select members in it. To learn more, see **Sending Email to a Course Group**.

- **Delete**: If a group is no longer needed and **Delete** is selected from the contextual menu, a **Delete Confirmation** page appears. If grade columns exist in the Grade Center for the group, such as for a graded Group Blog, Group Journal, or Group Wiki, the columns can be retained. On the **Delete Confirmation** page, do not select the check boxes for any columns that need to be preserved.

About Group Settings

Group settings are accessed from the Action Bar on the Groups listing page.

Group settings provide you with the options to allow students to create their own self-enrollment groups from the Groups listing page and to allow students to edit the name, description, and maximum number of students able to join the student created group.
Enrolling Students in Course Groups

You can create a single course group or multiple groups in which students are enrolled manually, randomly, or by allowing the students to enroll themselves. These enrollments can be changed at any time. To learn more about creating groups and enrolling students in them, see Creating Groups.

Group Membership Flow Diagram

The following diagram provides an overview of the process of enrolling students in course groups:
Removing a User from a Course Group

Sometimes members need to be removed from a course group. This can only be done by course instructors and Blackboard administrators; students cannot remove themselves from a group.

How to Remove a User from a Course Group

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Groups**.
   - OR -
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Users and Groups** section, and select **Groups**.
2. On the **Groups** page, click the Action Link for the group, and select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Group** page, go to **Membership**. Remove the member by moving the name out of **Selected Items** box.

4. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The group member is now removed from the group. To verify that the user has been removed, go to the group homepage to check the list of members.
Sending Email to a Course Group

Instructors and course group members can send email messages to selected group members or the entire group. Emails are sent to members’ external email addresses.

Sending an Email Message within a Course Group

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Groups.
      -OR-
      On the Control Panel, expand the Users and Groups section, and select Groups.
2. On the Groups listing page, click a group name.

3. On the group homepage, select Send Email in the Group Tools section.
4. On the **Send Email** page, select the recipients from the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the **Selected** box.

5. Type a **Subject** and **Message**.

6. Click **Attach a file** to browse for file from your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.

7. Click **Submit**.
Creating Group Assignments

Instructors can create a group assignment and release it to a specific group within a course. You can create a single assignment and assign it to all groups, or create several unique assignments and assign them to individual groups. Only the instructor and the members in the group have access to the assignment.

You can create an assignment that is to be completed and submitted by a single group or multiple groups. Each group submits one collaborative assignment and all members receive the same grade.
The overall grade for the assignment can appear to users as a numeric value, letter grade, percentage, text, or as complete/incomplete, depending upon the primary display choice for the column created in the Grade Center for the assignment.

*Note:* A grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center for group assignments.

**Prerequisites and Cautions**

- A course groups must exist prior to creating any group assignments for it.
- Students who are enrolled in more than one group receiving the same assignment will be able to submit more than one attempt for this assignment. It may be necessary to provide these students with an overall grade for the assignment.
- Students who are not enrolled at the time that a group assignment has been submitted do not have access to that submission. These students can see only that the submission occurred.
- Students who are removed from the group cannot see the group assignments. They can access their submissions from My Grades.
- If the assignment is edited between creation and the due date, the entire group may lose any work already in progress.
- If a group is deleted from the assignment after they have begun the work and prior to submission, they will lose access to the assignment and lose their work.

**How to Create a Group Assignment**

To create a group assignment, change Edit Mode to ON.

1. Access the course area where the group assignment will be created. For example, most often this will be in the Assignments Content Area.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Assessment to access the drop-down list, and select Assignment.
3. On the Create Assignment page, type a Name and Instructions. (On the Groups page, group members click this name to access the assignment.) You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.
4. Optionally, attach a file using Browse My Computer or Browse Content Collection.
5. Type the Points Possible.
6. Select the check box to Make the Assignment Available. Alternatively, you can leave this box unchecked if you want to make the assignment unavailable at the present time.
7. Select the option for Number of Attempts. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to limit the availability of the assignment. You can use the Date Selection Calendar to select the date, and Time Selection Menu to select the time.
8. Optionally, select a Due Date.

9. In the Recipients section, select the Groups of Students option.

10. In the Items to Select box, select the group or groups. Click the right-pointing arrow to move the selection into the Selected Items box. To select multiple groups in a row, press and hold the SHIFT key and click each group. To select groups out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each group. You can also select all groups with the Select All function.

11. Click Submit.
Create Assignment

1. Assignment Information
   - Name and Color: Initial Group Plan
   - Black
   - Instructions
     As a group, decide on your topic for the group presentation. Follow the details in the attached document to ensure your group has attended to all considerations and has sufficiently narrowed the focus. Each Group member will receive the same score for this assignment.

2. Assignment Files
   - Attach File: Browse My Computer
   - Attached files
     | File Name                      | Link Title       | Do not attach |
     |--------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
     | assignment_checklist.docx      | assignment_checklist.docx | Do not attach |

3. Grading
   - Points Possible: 50

4. Availability
   - Make the Assignment Available
     - Number of Attempts
       - Allow single attempt
       - Allow unlimited attempts
       - Number of attempts: 3
     - Limit Availability
       - Display After
       - Display Until
     - Track Number of Views

5. Due Dates
   - Due Date

6. Recipients
Note: Allowing multiple attempts permits users to submit their work for a group assignment more than once and receive comments and a grade for each submission. If multiple attempts are allowed, the most recent graded attempt's score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the assignment's column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu. Select Edit Column Information and select from the options in the Score Attempts Using drop-down list.

Grading Group Assignments

You can assign grades to group assignments through the Needs Grading page or through the Grade Center. When a group assignment is created, a grade column is automatically created. Group assignments that have been submitted, but not graded, are indicated with an exclamation mark—the needs attention icon—in the Grade Center. All group members' cells display the exclamation mark, regardless of who submitted the group assignment.

For general information on entering grades in the Grade Center, see Grading Assignments. For information on grading individual assignments, see Grading Assignments.

When reviewing group assignment submissions, instructors can provide a grade and feedback. You also have the option of returning the submission to the group with comments only, so the assignment can be refined further and then resubmitted for a grade.

How to Grade a Group Assignment

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the Grade Center section to expand it, and select Assignments.
2. In Grade Center, locate the column for the group assignment, and a cell for the student’s group assignment containing an exclamation mark.
3. To grade a single group assignment, point to any group member’s cell and click the Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu. Select Group Attempt.
   -OR-
   To grade all submissions, point to the column header and click the Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu. Select Grade Attempts.
4. On the **Grade Group Attempt** page, expand the **Assignment Information** area to review instructions, associated dates, and attempt status.

5. The submission content can be found under **Review Current Attempt**. Click the file name to view any attached files.

6. Type a **Group Grade**.

7. Optionally, type feedback in the **Feedback to Group** area and attach files for the student to review.

8. Optionally, type **Instructor Notes** and attach files (not viewable by students).

9. Click **Save as Draft** to complete grading at another time. The attempt remains ungraded and the student can access feedback, if provided.

   -OR-

   Click **Submit** to complete the grading of this group only.
Grade Group Attempt: Initial Group Plan

View: Assignments 1 Total
Group Name: Oceanography Issues (Attempt 1 of 1)
Status: Needs Grading
Item: 1 of 1

Assignment Information
Instructions: As a group, decide on your topic for the group presentation. Follow the details in the attached document to ensure your group has attended to all considerations and has sufficiently narrowed the focus. Each group member will receive the same score for this assignment.

Due Date
Submitted Date: Tuesday, April 12, 2011 10:27:13 PM EDT
Status: Needs Grading
Group Members: Andy Farrell (afarrell), Christopher Casper (ccasper), Mina Akbar (makbar), Tony Brown (tbrown)
Submitted By: Andy Farrell

1. Submission History

Attempt #1 (You are reviewing this attempt)

2. Review Current Attempt

Submission
Attached Files: Oceanography Issues Group Presentation final.docx
Comments: This is our final group output.

3. Grade Current Attempt

Group Grade: 45 out of 50

Feedback to Group

Very good group work, but some parts need to be narrowed down. Include all your references.
Grading a Group Assignment with Multiple Attempts

If more than one attempt has been submitted by the group, all attempts appear in the contextual menu for the grade's cell. After selecting an attempt, type a grade and feedback. Click Save and Next or View Previous to navigate between attempts. The last attempt’s grade appears in the group members’ cells by default. If the last of the multiple attempts is ungraded, the exclamation mark remains in the cell.

If multiple attempts were allowed when you created it, the most recent graded attempt's score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the assignment's column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu. Select Edit Column Information and select from the options in the Score Attempts Using drop-down list.
How to Grade Group Assignments Anonymously

You can grade items without viewing student information. The attempts will be displayed in a random order, without system identifying information, to you (or your designated grader) for grading. Anonymous grading is helpful to reduce potential bias from the instructor, grader, or teaching assistant when grading. Anonymous grading may also be appropriate when having students grade each other’s work.

**Grade Anonymously** is available from the column header contextual menu in the Grade Center. This action will open a new attempt with all system user identification removed. Any unsaved changes to the current attempt will be lost.

**How to Change Attempt Score Displayed in Grade Center**

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the Grade Center section to expand it, and select Assignments.
2. In Grade Center, access a Grade Center column’s contextual menu, and click Edit Column Information.
3. On the **Edit Column** page, select an option from the **Score attempts using** drop-down list.

4. Click **Submit**.
Note: Previous attempts appear in the Submission History section of the Grade Group Attempt page. To learn more, see Working with the Grade History.

How to Edit a Group Grade

Follow the same steps for How to Grade a Group Assignment to change a group’s grade. Edit the Group Grade and Feedback to Group, and click Save and Exit.

How to Change an Individual Member’s Group Grade

You can assign an individual group member a different grade than the group by editing the grade for the member in the Grade Center. If a group member’s grade is changed, and a new group grade is given, the new group grade does not affect the individual’s new grade. The individual’s new grade does not appear to the other group
1. In Grade Center, access the member’s Grade Details page.

2. On the Grade Details page, click Edit User Attempt.
3. On the Group member's Grade Details page, type a new grade in the Current Grade Value.
4. Type optional Feedback to User.
5. Type optional Grading Notes, only available to the instructor or assigned grader.
6. Click Save.
Grade Details

User: Mina Akbar (makbar)  Column: Initial Group Plan (Assignment)

Current Grade: 45.00 out of 50 points
Grade based on Grade of Last Attempt
Due: None
Calculated Grade: 45.00

View Attempts

Edit: Manually Override  View Column Details  Grade History

Date Submitted (or Saved)  Value  Feedback to User  Grading Notes  Actions

Current Grade Value
36.00
Mark this attempt as Ignored

Feedback to User
Nicely done. Include all your references.
Path: body

Grading Notes
Path: body

Result
The new grade for the group member appears on the member’s Grade Details page and in the member’s cell in the Grade Center.

How to Revert a Member’s Edited Grade
You can revert a member’s edited grade to the original group grade, which all group members received. To learn more, see Overriding Grades.

1. In Grade Center, access the member’s Grade Details page.

2. After a member’s group grade has been edited, the Revert To Group Grade function appears. Click Revert To Group Grade.

3. Click OK.
4. Click **Return to Grade Center** to return to the Grade Center page and view the grades.

**Adding and Deleting Group Members**

If a member of a group is added after a grade is given for a group assignment, the new member will not receive a grade, as they were not part of the process. Even if the instructor updates the group grade, the new member does not receive a grade. A grade can be added for the new member from the member’s **Grade Details** page, but there is no submission available to view when grading.

If a member of a group is removed, and a grade has been added for a group assignment, any grading updates will be applied to that group member’s cell. To remove a score for a member removed from a group, click **Clear Attempt** on the member’s **Grade Details** page.
Student Performance

Rubrics

A rubric is an assessment tool listing evaluation criteria for an assignment, and provides a means to convey to students your expectations for the quality of completed assignments. Rubrics can help students organize their efforts to meet the requirements of an assignment, and you can use them to explain evaluations to students. Another value in using rubrics is they can help ensure consistent and impartial grading.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

About Rubrics

Rubrics are made up of rows and columns. The rows correspond to the various criteria of an assignment. The columns correspond to the level of achievement expressed for each criterion. A description and point value for each cell in the rubric defines the evaluation and score of an assignment. There is no limit to the number of rubrics that can be created.

How to Create a Rubric

New rubrics default to three rows and three columns.

1. On the Control Panel, click Course Tools.
2. Select Rubrics.
3. On the Rubrics page, click Create Rubric.
4. Type a Name for the rubric. The name is the title text that identifies the rubric.
5. Optionally, provide a description of the rubric to make it easier to associate it to relevant assignments.
6. Edit the rubric grid. To learn more, see How to Edit the Rubric Grid.
7. Click Submit.

How to Edit the Rubric Grid

Edit the rubric grid so it corresponds to the type of feedback and scoring appropriate for the assignment.

1. Click Add Row to add a new criterion at the bottom of the grid.
2. Click Add Column to add a new level of achievement to the grid.
3. Choose a Rubric Type from the drop-down list:
   - No Points: Feedback only.
   - Points: Single point value for each Level of Achievement.
   - Point Range: Range of values for each Level of Achievement.
   - Percent: Flexible depending on each assignment’s possible points.
   - Percent Range: Range of values for each Level of Achievement. During the grading process, you select the appropriate percentage level for a particular Level of Achievement and the system calculates the points earned by multiplying the weight x achievement percentage x item points.
4. Click Edit from a label’s contextual menu to change their names. A label identifies the rows and columns with heading names.
5. Type a point or percentage value for each row.
6. Type a description defining the criteria and the associated Level of Achievement.
7. Click Submit.

Each cell has a 1000-character limit. You can reorder rows and columns by clicking the reordering functions located above the labels.

Once a rubric is used for grading, you cannot edit it. You can copy the rubric to create a duplicate rubric that you can edit. To learn more, see How to Copy and Edit a Rubric.

Options when using percent-based rubrics:

- Select the Show Criteria Weight check box on the Action Bar to show or hide criteria weights. If additional rows are added when weights are hidden, weights for new criteria are distributed equally.
- Use the Balance Weights function after adding a new row to keep all criteria weighted equally. If individual criteria weighting is preferred, type percentages for each criteria. The Show Criteria Weight check box must be selected for the Balance Weights function to appear.
- The total weight for all criteria must equal 100%. No row may have a 0% weight. At least one Level of Achievement must have a value of 100%.

How to Copy and Edit a Rubric

Copying a rubric is helpful if you have similar assignments for your students that will follow the same criteria. This allows you to keep the settings and simply rename the rubric. You can also copy a rubric when you want to edit a rubric that was already used for grading.
You can duplicate a rubric by selecting the **Copy** option from the rubric's contextual menu. A copy is created automatically with the name of the rubric in parentheses followed by the number one. For example, "Introductory Speech" can be copied to create "(Introductory Speech)(1)."

You can edit the rubric's name to add a new name by selecting **Edit** from the rubric's contextual menu. The **Edit Rubric** page allows you to edit all the settings for a rubric.

### How to Associate a Rubric

Associated rubrics are visible under the grading and rubrics settings for:

- Assignments
- Essay, short answer, and file response test questions
- Blogs and journals
- Wikis
- Discussion Board threads and forums

You can also associate a rubric in the Grade Center by selecting **Edit Column Information** from the column's contextual menu.

To associate a rubric during the editing or creation process, point to **Add Rubric** to access the drop-down list and choose one of the options.

- **Select Rubric** associates a rubric that was created in the Rubrics area of Course Tools.
- **Create New Rubric** opens a pop-up window to allow immediate creation of a new associated rubric.
- **Create From Existing** uses a previously created rubric as a template to create a new associated rubric.

When associating a points-based rubric, the option to use the rubric's points value as the **Points Possible** are available after clicking **Submit** on the rubric creation or selection page.

### How to Manage Associated Rubrics

While editing an item with an associated rubric, you can change the rubric’s options.

Below an associated rubric’s name, manage associated rubrics using the icons to **Remove Rubric Association**, **View Rubric**, or **Edit Rubric**.

- **Remove Rubric Association** severs the connection to a rubric, but does not delete the rubric itself. If the rubric was already used for grading in this assignment, removing the association also removes those evaluations and the attempts need to be regraded.
- **View Rubric** opens a preview that you cannot edit, with a link to view associated items and print the rubric.
- **Edit Rubric** opens the associated rubric to allow for immediate editing. If the rubric was already used for grading, you cannot edit it.

For the **Type**, you can designate a rubric as **Used for Grading** or **Used for Secondary Evaluation**. If multiple rubrics are associated, you can use only one as the primary grading rubric, designated as **Used for Grading**.

**Show Rubric to Students** offers four options for rubric visibility.

- **No** does not allow students to view the rubric at any time.
- **Yes (With Rubric Scores)** allows students to view the rubric when the item is made available, including possible point or percentage values.
- **Yes (Without Rubric Scores)** allows students to view the rubric when the item is made available, but does not include the possible point or percentage values.
- **After Grading** allows students to view the rubric only after grading their submissions is completed.

### How to Import and Export Rubrics

To facilitate sharing rubrics between Blackboard Learn courses, you are able to export and import rubrics. You should not edit the rubric outside of Blackboard Learn.

1. On the Control Panel, click **Course Tools**.
2. Select **Rubrics**.

   - **OR** -

   To export a rubric, select the check box next to the rubric's name and click **Export**. You can download and import the file into a different course or share it with other instructors for use in their Blackboard Learn courses.

### How to Grade With Rubrics

Before grading with a rubric, you need to associate it with one of the following gradable items:

- Assignments
- Essay, short answer, and file response test questions
- Blogs and journals
- Wikis
- Discussion Board threads and forums

To learn more, see [How to Associate a Rubric](#).

Follow these steps to grade using rubrics:

1. Access the gradable item in the Grade Center, on the **Needs Grading** page, or from the tool.
2. Click **View Rubric** to review or begin grading with the associated rubric.
3. In **Grid View**, click a cell to apply that point value to the grade. If a rubric with point ranges is used, select the appropriate value from the drop-down list. To change the selection, click another cell in the same row. Optionally, type **Feedback** to the student in the text box that appears when a cell is selected.
4. Optionally, click **List View** to switch displays and select an option for each criterion to apply that point value to the grade. Optionally, select the check boxes to **Show Descriptions** for criteria and to **Show Feedback** text boxes.
5. A running **Raw Total** score appears as point selections are made. Optionally, type a score in the **Change the number of points box** to override the selected score, and type overall **Feedback** to the student using the full features of the included Text Editor.

   **Note:** The **Raw Total** displays the score rounded to two decimal places.
6. When grading is complete, click **Exit** to leave the rubric without saving any selections, or click **Save** to save the score and feedback and return to the attempt. Click **Save and Next** to use another associated rubric for evaluation.
How to View Associated Content

You can associate a single rubric with multiple assignments. A report listing all items associated to the rubric is available from the Rubrics tool.

1. On the Control Panel, click Course Tools.
2. Select Rubrics.
3. Access the rubric’s contextual menu and select View Associated Content.
4. On the View All Items page, click an item name to edit the association or click OK to return to the main Rubrics page. If an item was already used for grading, a rubric evaluation report is available in the item's contextual menu. This report provides statistics for an item that was graded with a rubric.

How to Run a Rubric Evaluation Report

A rubric evaluation report provides a comprehensive report of statistics for an item that was graded with a rubric. If you want to evaluate a rubric or its use in a course, you can run the report at any point in the grading process.

1. On the Control Panel, click Course Tools.
2. Select Rubrics.
3. Access the rubric’s contextual menu and select View Associated Content.
4. If an item was already used for grading, a contextual menu is available next to the item's name on the View All Items page. Point to the item's contextual menu and select Rubric Evaluation Report.
5. On the Run Reports page, select a Format, Start Date, and End Date.
6. Click Submit.
7. If your school licenses content management, you may choose to Save to Content Collection. Otherwise, click Download Report to view the report or Run a new Report to change format or date criteria. Click OK to return to the main Rubrics page.

The Rubric Evaluation Report delivers three statistics about the rubric's use in grading the item. Average Rubric Performance shows the average total score of all attempts scored using the rubric. Average Rubric Criteria shows average scores, compared against the possible points, for each criterion. Frequency Distribution shows the distribution of scores across each level of achievement.

Related Tutorials

Grading With Rubrics (Flash movie | 3m 17s) | Associating a Rubric With a Gradable Item (Flash movie | 3m 11s) | Creating a Rubric (Flash movie | 3m 10s)

Early Warning System

About the Early Warning System

The Early Warning System helps you recognize when a student performance problem is emerging or becoming more serious. You can use this rule-driven communication tool to send email messages to students and their observers when Early Warning System rule criteria are met. Rules are created by instructors and can be based on a test score, calculated column, due date, or course access.

You can communicate a warning in an email message to the student only, to a parent or advisor that is assigned as an observer, or both. You can use the default message or edit it. The Notification History creates a record for each Early Warning message sent.
When using the Early Warning System, keep the following in mind:

- The Early Warning System does not continuously monitor the course. You need to refresh the Early Warning System rules periodically to discover incidents that trigger a warning. The Early Warning System does not automatically notify students and observers; notification email messages are sent by instructors from the Review Rule Status page.
- The Blackboard administrator at your school may turn off access to the Early Warning System based on policies at the institution. If the Early Warning System is on at the system level, you may still turn it off within the course.

**Using the Early Warning System with the Performance Dashboard**

In the Performance Dashboard, the Early Warning Column shows the number of warnings for a student and the total number of rules that may trigger a warning. Clicking on the data in this column will open the Early Warning System. The Early Warning System column displays only if the tool is turned on in the course.

**Related Tutorials**

- [Sending Notifications](Flash movie | 3m42s)

**Managing Early Warning System Rules**

You can create rules to determine when the Early Warning System generates a warning for a student’s performance. Rules can monitor for unsatisfactory student grade performance, tardiness in completing assignments, or when the student simply has not been accessing the course for a predetermined period of time.

There are three types of rules:

- **Grade Rule**: Based on a score for a grade or calculated column in the Grade Center. Students who score above or below the defined threshold for a specific grade trigger the notification system.
- **Due Date Rule**: Based on a defined due date for an assignment, test, or survey. Students who do not complete an assignment, test, or survey by the due date trigger the notification system. Due date rules cannot be created for manually graded items.
- **Last Access Rule**: Based on the date users last accessed the course. Students who have not accessed the course for a defined number of days trigger the notification system.

**How to Create a Rule**

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the Evaluation section to expand it, and select Early Warning System. The Early Warning System page appears.
2. Click Create Rule to access the drop-down list, and select Grade Rule, Due Date Rule, or Last Access Rule. The associated Add Early Warning System Rule page appears.
3. In the Rule Name box, type a name for the rule.
4. Next to Availability, select the radio node next to Yes to activate the rule.
5. Under Rule Criteria, enter or select the information for the rule.
6. Click Submit.

*Tip*: When creating grade rules, Grade Center items are listed by their categories, such as assignment or discussion. Possible points are also included to help you determine the threshold value for the rule.

**How to Edit a Rule**

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the Evaluation section to expand it, and select Early Warning System. The Early Warning System page appears.
2. Click the contextual menu for a rule and select **Edit**.
3. Change the rule information and criteria.
4. Click **Submit**.

**Tip:** You can change the availability of rules by selecting one or more rules from the list on the **Early Warning System** page and then choosing **Set Available** or **Set Unavailable** from the Actions drop-down list.

### How to Remove a Rule

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the **Evaluation** section to expand it, and select **Early Warning System**. The **Early Warning System** page appears.
2. Select one or more rules from the list.
3. Click **Delete**. In the pop-up window, confirm that the selected rules should be deleted.

It is also possible to remove individual rules by clicking the contextual drop-down list next to the rule name and selecting **Delete**.

**Note:** Deleting a rule is permanent and cannot be undone.

### How to Refresh Rules

The Early Warning System does not continuously monitor the course. You need to refresh the Early Warning System rules periodically to discover incidents that trigger a warning. The Last Refresh column on the Early Warning System page indicates the most recent refresh of a rule.

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the **Evaluation** section to expand it, and select **Early Warning System**. The **Early Warning System** page appears.
2. Select one or more rules from the list.
3. Click **Refresh** from the Action Bar. The selected rules run and any events that trigger the rule create a warning.

**Tip:** You may refresh a single rule while viewing its **Review Rule Status** page.

### Related Tutorials

**Sending Notifications** *(Flash movie | 3m 42s)*

### Reviewing Early Warning System Rule Status and Notifying Users

The Early Warning System helps you notify students and observers when students' performance meets pre-specified rule criteria. Rules can be created to monitor for unsatisfactory student grade performance, tardiness in completing assignments, or when the student simply has not been accessing the course for a predetermined period of time.

You can view the status of a rule to see which students generated warnings and send email notifications to them. The Early Warning System does not automatically notify students and observers. It is up to you to communicate the warning to the student and, if set, to selected observers, parents, and so on, by sending an email message from the **Review Rule Status** page.

### How to Review Rule Status

The **Review Rule Status** page lists all users in the course and identifies whether or not their performance meets the criteria for the rule.

For example, if you set a grade rule to trigger an alert for users with a score less than 65, those students with a score with less than 65 would show **Yes** in the **Meets Criteria** column. The page also displays when the
student was last notified regarding their performance. You can access the contextual menu for a user to review that user's status against all rules.

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the **Evaluation** section to expand it, and select **Early Warning System**. The **Early Warning System** page appears.
2. Click the Action Link for a rule to access the contextual menu and select **Review Rule Status**. The **Review Rule Status** page appears.
3. Click **Display** to filter the results.
4. You can also click **Refresh** if necessary to redisplay the most current rule status list.

**How to Send Email Notifications**

Communicating alerts to users does not happen automatically. You select which users to notify and can customize the email message.

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the **Evaluation** section to expand it, and select **Early Warning System**. The **Early Warning System** page appears.
2. Click the Action Link for a rule to access the contextual menu and select **Review Rule Status**. The **Review Rule Status** page appears.
3. Select the users requiring notification email messages.
4. From the **Notify** drop-down list, choose the roles that will receive email notifications associated with the selected users:
   - **Student Only**: Notification messages are sent to the selected students only.
   - **Observer Only**: Notification messages are sent only to users assigned as observers for the selected students. (Examples of possible observers might include parents or guardians, tutors, school course monitors, and so on.)
   - **Student and Observer**: Notification messages are sent to the student and any assigned observers.
   - **Other**: This option allows you to manually enter email addresses for the recipients of the notification.
5. Edit the **Subject** and **Message**. The notification can include attachments. Selecting **Include list of recipients** delivers a copy to the sender and includes a list of recipients.
6. Click **Submit** to send the notification.

**How to View the Notification History**

The notification history serves as a record of Early Warning System communications and is used to confirm that students were made aware of performance problems. The notification history lists each notification by individual user. It includes a search function for narrowing the results.

1. Scroll down to the Control Panel, click the **Evaluation** section to expand it, and select **Early Warning System**. The **Early Warning System** page appears.
2. Click **Notification History** in the Action Bar. Use the **Search** function or sort by column to find specific notifications.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Sending Notifications] (Flash movie | 3m 42s)
Monitoring Student Activity

You can track student activity, such as attendance, in your courses. Blackboard Learn has different tools to track student logins, the time students have spent in the course, and what pages in the course they are accessing.

- **Statistics Tracking** - With Statistics Tracking you can run a report to view detailed information about your content, including how many times an item was view by students and when it was accessed. To learn more, see [How to Enable Statistics Tracking and View Statistics Reports](#).
- **Course Reports** - With Course Reports you can get a detailed picture of student activity in your course. This includes details about which students are accessing your course and when. To learn more, see [Generating Course Reports](#).
- **Performance Dashboard** - The Performance Dashboard provides you with a view into all types of user activity in a course. To learn more, see [Using the Performance Dashboard](#).
- **Last Access Grade Center** user column - One of the default user columns, the Last Access user column identifies when a user last accessed a course. To learn more, see [About User Columns in the Grade Center](#).

Generating Course Reports

You can run several types of **Course Reports** to view information about course usage and activity. You can view summaries of course usage including which course areas are used most frequently and course access patterns for specific students.

About Course Report Types

You can search the list of reports for keywords in the names or descriptions to find the report that generates the information you need. Available reports include:

- **All User Activity Inside Content Areas** displays a summary of all user activity inside Content Areas for the course. Use this report to determine which students are active in your course and which content areas they are using.
- **Course Activity Overview** displays overall activity within your course, sorted by student and date. Data includes the total and average time spent per user and the total amount of activity the user had in the course. You can also click an individual student's name to access their **Student Overview for Single Course** report. This report can help you determine which days of the week students are active in your course and see how much time overall students spend.
- **Course Coverage Report** displays data on course items that have been aligned to goals.
- **Course Performance** displays how a single course performs against a selected set of goals.
- **Overall Summary of User Activity** displays user activity for all areas of the course, as well as activity dates, times and days of the week. Use this report to view student access as well as how often Course Tools are being used.
- **Student Overview for Single Course** displays an individual student's activity within your course, sorted by date. Data includes the total overall time the student spent in the course as well as detailed information about the student's activity, such as which items and Content Areas the student accessed and the time spent on each. Use this report to check a particular student's course activity.
- **User Activity in Forums** displays a summary of user activity in Discussion Board Forums in the course. You can see which forums are used the most.
- **User Activity in Groups** displays a summary of user activity in Groups for the course. You can see if students are active in their groups.

*Note:* Depending on how your school has licensed and configured Blackboard Learn, additional reports may be available. Contact your school’s computing help desk or Blackboard administrator for assistance.

### How to Generate Course Reports

To generate a course report:

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Evaluation** section and select **Course Reports**.
2. On the **Course Reports** page, click the Action Link for a report to access the contextual menu.
3. Select **Run**.
4. On the **Run Reports** page, select the **Report Specifications**. Options vary depending on the type of report.
   - **Select Format**: Choose an output format from the drop-down list. Valid formats are PDF, HTML, Excel, or Word. Charts do not display in Excel format.
   - **Select a Start Date** and **Select an End Date**: For reports covering a specific period of time, select to set beginning and ending dates for the report.
   - **Select Students**: For reports to be run on a single student, select the student name from the drop-down list.
   - **Select Users**: Select one or more users for the report. For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each user needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.
   - **Average Range** and **Target Performance Level**: This is required for course performance reports. These reports can also be set to **Show Unavailable Students** and/or **Show Unaligned Students**.
5. Click **Submit**. If a course report includes a large number of users, it can take several minutes or longer for a report to be generated. PDF and HTML formats open directly in a new window. Excel and Word prompt you to save the file first. To print reports, use the print function in the application window that the report opened in.

*Note:* Enable pop-ups for your browser if you are prompted.

6. After a report is successfully run, you can:
   - **Save to Content Collection**: If your school licenses content management, you can save the report to a folder in the Content Collection.
   - **Download Report**: Save the report to your computer.
   - **Run a New Report**: Return to the **Run Reports** page to run the report again with different criteria.
7. Click **OK** when finished.

### How the System Counts Hits

When viewing reports that include hit or access statistics a hit is tracked every time a request is sent to Blackboard Learn. For example, when tracking use of the Discussion Board:

- A student accesses the Discussion Board (1 hit)
- Clicks a forum (2 hits total)
Using the Performance Dashboard

The Performance Dashboard provides you with a view into all types of user activity in a course or organization. All users enrolled in the course are listed, including instructors, students, teaching assistants, graders, observers, and guests, with pertinent information about that user’s progress and activity in the course.

Before You Begin

The Blackboard administrator at your school must enable the tool and make it available. When enabled by the administrator, the Performance Dashboard will be on by default in all courses.

Viewing the Performance Dashboard

To access the Performance Dashboard, scroll down to the Control Panel and select Evaluation to expand it. Click Performance Dashboard.

The Performance Dashboard page appears and displays a summary of information for the course:

- **Last Name, First Name, and Username**: The user’s name, and the user name they use to log in to Blackboard Learn.
- **Role**: The user’s defined role within the course. Examples of roles include instructor, student, grader, teaching assistant, guest, observer, and so on. It is possible for a user to have one role in a course, and a different role in another. To learn more, see Course Roles.
- **Last Course Access**: The date and time when the user last accessed the course.
- **Days Since Last Course Access**: The number of days that has elapsed since the last time the user accessed the course.
- **Review Status**: Displays how many items have been reviewed. To view a detailed view of reviewed items, click the number shown. If the Review Status tool has not been enabled for the course, this column does not appear.
- **Adaptive Release**: Displayed only if the Adaptive Release tool is enabled in the course, clicking on the icon opens a new window showing a directory tree overview of the entire course relative to the user, and the access status. For more details, see [Linking to Adaptive Release Controls](#).
- **Discussion Board**: Displayed only if the Discussion Board tool is enabled in the course, this column lists the number of Discussion Board comments created by this user. Clicking a number link opens the **Discussion Board** page listing all of the selected user’s Discussion Board comments in the course.
- **Early Warning System**: Displayed only if the Early Warning System tool is enabled in the course, this column shows the number of triggered rules and the number of total rules that may trigger a warning. For example, **2/6** would mean the user has triggered two rules out of six total. Clicking on the data in this column will display a page showing the Early Warning System status for the user. The Early Warning System column will only display if the tool is turned on in the course.
- **View Grades**: Displayed only if the **Grade Center** is enabled, this column provides direct links to the Grade Center: Fully Grade Center.

You can click **Print** to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format. All applicable columns may be sorted.

### Understanding the Review Status Indicator

The numbers provided in the **Review Status** column of the Performance Dashboard indicate the number of items that the student has marked as **Reviewed**.

Using adaptive release rules in a course creates multiple tracks for students to progress through. This allows for the possibility that each student will have a different requirement for marking certain items in a course as **Reviewed**. At any time in a course, items in a student’s track may or may not be visible to them. The Performance Dashboard provides an at-this-moment view of the item availability and the student’s progress on reviewing items.

The **Review Status** number for each user links to a list of the items that the user sees as **Reviewed** and **Mark Reviewed** in the course.

The **Review Status** column is only visible if the Review Status tool has been enabled for the course.

### Linking to Adaptive Release Controls

The **Adaptive Release** indicator in the Performance Dashboard for each user opens a course map tree view of the Course Menu, showing every possible item in the course. Icons beside each item in the course map indicate the visibility of an item to that course user, and the review status of any items with a review requirement, if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptive Release and Review Status Icons</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Visible" /></td>
<td>Visible: This item is visible to that course user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Invisible" /></td>
<td>Invisible: This item is not visible to that course user.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adaptive Release and Review Status Icons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
<td>This item has been marked as Reviewed by the course user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Reviewed</td>
<td>This item is displayed as Mark Reviewed to the course user, but has not yet been marked as reviewed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The Adaptive Release column is visible only if the Adaptive Release tool has been enabled for the course.

**Related Tutorials** 🎥 Performance Dashboard (Flash movie | 1m 40s)
Course Tools

About Third Party and External Tools

Your school can choose to connect extra tools to Blackboard Learn. Many of these tools are created by companies other than Blackboard. If you have questions, your school's computing help desk is the best place to start. For more information, click the links below to access the tool or company's website.

- Blackboard Mobile™
- Blackboard Collaborate™ (formerly Wimba and Elluminate)
- Respondus® (including Respondus LockDown Browser™)
- Turnitin ®

Managing Announcements

Announcements post timely information critical to course success. You can add, edit, and delete announcements from the Announcements page. This is an ideal place to post time-sensitive material including:

- When assignments are due
- Changes to the syllabus
- Corrections/clarifications of materials
- Exam schedules

When adding an announcement, you can also send the announcement as an email to students in the course. This ensures that students receive the announcement even if they do not log in to the course. Announcements are accessed from the Control Panel under Course Tools.

How to Create Announcements

Announcements appear in the order posted, with the most recent announcements appearing first.

1. In the Course Tools area of the Control Panel, click Announcements.
2. From the Action Bar, click Create Announcement.
3. Provide a Subject and Message.
4. Set the Duration.
   - Select Not Date Restricted to keep the announcement visible until it is manually removed.
   - OR-
   - Select Date Restricted to limit the announcement's visibility by date and time.
5. If the announcement is **Date Restricted**, select the **Display After** and/or **Display Until** check boxes and type the dates and times. Alternatively, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times.

6. Select the **Override User Notification Settings** check box to send students an email containing the announcement. The email will be sent to all students, even those who choose not to receive announcement notifications through email. This can be useful for very important or urgent announcements.

7. Optionally, link to a course area, tool, or item using the **Browse** button.

8. Click **Submit**.

**Note:** Notifications settings are managed by the local Blackboard administrator. Consult the Blackboard administrator or computing help desk for assistance with announcement notifications.

### How to Reorder Announcements

Announcements appear below the movable bar in the order posted, with the most recent announcement appearing first.

However, it is possible to pin an announcement to the top of the list. To do this, drag it above the movable bar reading, "New announcements appear below this line". This will keep the announcement at the top of the list and prevent new announcements from superseding it.

### How to Edit Announcements

Click **Edit** from the contextual menu of the announcement you want to edit. Make your changes and **Submit**.

### How to Delete Announcements

To delete an announcement, click **Delete** from the contextual menu of the announcement. Confirm the deletion. This action is final and cannot be undone.

**Related Tutorials**

- **Creating Announcements**

**About Blackboard Scholar**

Blackboard Scholar provides easy integration of relevant, reliable resources and dynamic streams from Scholar directly into a course. From the Scholar page, you can register with Blackboard Scholar and turn web links into Scholar bookmarks.

**IMPORTANT!** The Blackboard Scholar social bookmarking service will be discontinued on January 13, 2012. To retain access to your Scholar bookmarks, you should export your bookmarks from the Scholar system.

**Exporting Scholar Bookmarks**

Follow these steps to export your Blackboard Scholar bookmarks for use in a browser or social bookmarking service:

1. Log in to Scholar. You can login to Scholar by clicking the **Scholar** tab (or in Vista/CE on the **Scholar** link in your course). You can also log in directly with your Scholar user name and
2. Click on the Settings link in the upper right of the main screen.
3. Click on Export Bookmarks.
4. Select Export All My Bookmarks and click the Export button.

Your Scholar bookmarks, including the tag information, will be exported as an HTML file. This file can be imported into a browser to manage your bookmarks on your local computer or imported into some other social bookmarking services, like Delicious (http://www.delicious.com). For instructions on how to import into a browser or another service, refer to the help or documentation for the browser or other service.

How to Register with Blackboard Scholar
1. In the Course Tools area of the Control Panel, click Blackboard Scholar.
2. Click Register/View Scholar Start Page.
3. Type Username and Password.
4. Click Login.

How to Import Web Links into Blackboard Scholar
1. In the Course Tools area of the Control Panel, click Blackboard Scholar.
2. Click Copy Web Links to Blackboard Scholar bookmarks.
3. Select the links.
4. Click Submit.

To Learn More About Scholar
- The Scholar web site: http://scholar.com
- The Scholar Wiki site: http://wiki.scholar.com/display/SCLR/

Contacts
Contacts is a place where you can add profile information about yourself and other staff that is distributed to students. This is a good location to provide information about office hours, phone numbers, and other links to help students find the people who have important roles in the course.

Groups of selected contact information can be combined into folders. For example, you could create a folder named Teaching Assistants and assign all TA contacts to that folder.

Accessing Contacts
You can access the Contacts tool from the Tools link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You can also add a customized link to the Course Menu.
Two Default Options

Access the Contacts tool using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Contacts.

-OR-

Alternatively, in the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Contacts.

How to Create or Edit a Contact

You can add or edit contacts through the Create Contact or Edit Contact page.

Both the Create Contact and Edit Contact pages function in a similar manner. The Create Contact page displays with empty fields while the Edit Contact page opens with the selected contact's current information and details already populated.

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Contacts.

-OR-

On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Contacts.
2. On the **Contacts** page, click **Create Contact**.

   - **OR**-

   To edit a profile, click **Edit** from the contextual menu.

3. On the **Create Contact** page, provide the necessary **Profile Information**. The following table describes the available fields.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Type the person's title. This title will appear before the first name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Type a firstname.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Type a lastname.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Type an e-mail address. This is a required field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Phone</td>
<td>Type a work phone number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Location</td>
<td>Type an office location. (Limit is 255 characters.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Type office hours. (Limit is 255 characters.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Type any additional information about the person. (Limit is 255 characters.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Select **Yes** to **Make the Contact Available** to students. If you select **No**, none of the information provided on the page will appear to students.

5. Optionally, for **Attach Image**, click **Browse** to search for an image of your contact. This image will be included next to the profile on the **Contacts** page.

   **Note:** The image size should be 150 x 150 pixels.

6. Optionally, for the **Personal Link**, type the URL for the contact's home page. When adding a URL, include the full address and protocol. For example, http://www.blackboard.com. This link appears with the profile on the **Contacts** page.

7. Click **Submit**.
The contact’s profile appears on the Contacts page.
How to Create or Edit a Contacts Folder

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Contacts.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Contacts.
2. On the **Contacts** page, click **Create Folder**.

-OR-

To edit a profile, click **Edit** from the contextual menu.

3. On the **Create Folder** page, select a **Name** from the drop-down list or enter a new name.

4. Select a color for the folder name.
5. Type a description of the folder in the **Text** field.
6. Select **Yes** to make the folder available.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The folder appears on the **Contacts** page.
How to Add a Contacts Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access the Contacts tool often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Contacts.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click Submit.
The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students, or permit guests to access the link.

Related Tutorials  🎥 Creating a Course Contact (Flash movie | 1m 50s)

Course Calendar

You can use the Course Calendar to provide students with dates for course related events. Course Calendar events appear to all members of the course. If students access the calendar while in your course, they will only see the entries you have added. If they access the calendar from the My Institution tab, it includes the following:

- Their personal entries
- Entries for all courses in which they are enrolled
- Entries for any organizations in which they are enrolled
- Institution-wide events

Common entries you may include in the Course Calendar are:

- Section meetings
- Assignment due dates
- Exams
- Guest speakers

Accessing the Course Calendar

You can access the Course Calendar from the Tools link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu.
Two Default Options

Access the Course Calendar using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Calendar.

Alternatively, in the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Course Calendar.

How to Add a Course Event

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Calendar.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Course Calendar.
2. On the Course Calendar page, click Create Course Event on the Action Bar.

3. On the Create Course Event page, type the Event Name.

4. Type the Event Description. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.
   
   Note: There is a 4,000 character limit for event descriptions.

5. Type the Event Date. Optionally, use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar to select the date.
6. Type the **Event Start Time** and **Event End Time**. Optionally, use the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select the times.

7. Click **Submit**.

---

**Result**

The event name appears as link on the Course Calendar. Click the link to display the event description.
How to Delete or Edit a Course Event

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Calendar.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Course Calendar.
2. To delete a course event, on the **Course Calendar** page, navigate to the date of the event to delete. Select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the event.

-OR-

To edit a course event, on the **Course Calendar** page, navigate to the date of the event to edit. Select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the event.
How to Use the Calendar Jump To

You can view the calendar by day, week, month, year or by specific date. If viewed by month, only the first few characters of the event title appear on the calendar. Click the event link for details.

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Calendar.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Course Calendar.
2. On the **Course Calendar** page, click **Jump To**.

3. On the **Calendar Quick Jump** pop-up window, type a date in the **Select a Date** field (using the **mm/dd/yyyy** format) or use the **Date Selection Calendar** to select a date.

4. Select the **Month**, **Week**, or **Day** options to **Select the type of view**.

5. Click **Submit**.
How to Add a Calendar Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access the Course Calendar often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can also customize the name of the link.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.
2. Select **Tool Link**.
3. Type a **Name** for the link.
4. From the **Type** drop-down list, select **Calendar**.
5. Select the **Available to Users** check box.
6. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link's Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students. For example, if you intend to use the Course Calendar after week three, you can create all the events you need at the beginning of the term and hide the link until it is needed.

**Email**

The Email tool allows you to send email to other people in your course from within Blackboard Learn without launching an external email client, such as Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo. Emails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users. A copy of this email is sent to the sender by default.
IMPORTANT! Blackboard Learn keeps no record of sent or received emails. When you receive or send an email, the email will appear in the Inbox of your external email client. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date.

You can send email to the following people in a course:

- **All Users**: Sends email to all users in the course.
- **All Groups**: Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course.
- **All Teaching Assistant Users**: Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.
- **All Student Users**: Sends an email to all students in the course.
- **All Instructor Users**: Sends email to all of the instructors for a specified course.
- **All Observer Users**: Sends email to all of the observers for a specified course.
- **Single/Select Users**: Sends email to select users.
- **Single/Select Groups**: Sends email to select groups.
- **Single/Select Observer users**: Send email to a single observer or select observers in the course.

*Note*: Recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

**Before You Begin**

- Blackboard Learn only recognizes email addresses and file names with standard characters (a-z, A-Z, 0-9, @ and period (.)). The system cannot recognize files or email addresses with spaces or special characters, such as ?, !, #, &, %, or $.
- Blackboard Learn requires some text content in the subject line to send email successfully. Leaving the subject line blank can prevent the message from being delivered.

**Accessing Email**

You can access the **Send Email** tool from the **Tools** link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu. To learn more, see [How to Add an Email Link to the Course Menu](#).
Two Default Options

Access the Email tool using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Send Email.

-OR-

Alternatively, in the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Send Email.

How to Send an Email

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Send Email.

-OR-
On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Send Email**.

2. On the **Send Email** page, click one of the options listed to send the email, for example, **Single/Select Users**.
3. For the **Single/Select Users** or **Single/Select Groups**, select the recipients in the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the **Selected** box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the recipient list. Click **Invert Selection** and selected users are no longer highlighted and those users that are not selected will be highlighted.

   **Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each user needed. For Mac systems, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key. You can also use the **Select All** function to send an email to all users.

4. Type your **Subject**.

5. Type a **Message**.

   **Note:** To email a link to a file you are including in a content item, you must first submit the content item so the file can be assigned a permanent URL. In the Content Collection or Course Files, click the file’s Action Link and select **360 View**. Copy the **Permanent URL** address and paste it in an email.

6. Optionally, select the **Return Receipt** box to send a copy of the message to the sender.

7. Click **Attach a file** to browse for file from your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.

8. Click **Submit**.
Result

A receipt page appears after the message is sent listing all recipients. The receipt page does not confirm that users received the message. It only confirms that the message was sent.

How to Add an Email Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access their email often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Email.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click **Submit**.

Result

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students.

Troubleshooting

- Your email address is not visible unless you choose to make it visible to course members. You can find this setting in the page header above the tabs at: **My Places > Personal Information > Set Privacy Options**. On this page, you can choose the information you want course members to see.
- You can change your external email address used in your course. Change your email address by going to **My Places > Personal Information > Edit Personal Information**. Type your preferred email address and click **Submit**.
- Email clients, such as Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo, may identify email from Blackboard Learn as junk mail and either automatically delete the email or move it to a junk mail folder. If you have problems,
check your user preferences or options for settings regarding the handling of junk email. You can also change your email address.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Sending Email](#) (Flash movie | 1m 49s)

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**Glossary**

Each course has its own glossary of terms, and each entry consists of the term and an accompanying definition. You need to enable the glossary before students can view it. When the glossary is ready for students to view, make sure the Glossary tool is available.

The glossary controls all of the entries in the course glossary.

**Accessing the Glossary**

You can access the glossary from the [Tools](#) link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu. To learn more, see [How to Add a Glossary Link to the Course Menu](#).
Two Default Options

Access the glossary using the default **Tools** link on the Course Menu. On the **Tools** page, select **Glossary**.

-OR-

Alternatively, in the Control Panel expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Glossary**.

**About Creating a Glossary**

If you plan to build a large glossary, you can upload a file containing all, or most of the terms, and then update the glossary by manually adding more terms. This is the most efficient way to create a large glossary for a course. To learn more, see **About Uploading a Glossary File**.

Manually adding glossary terms alone is especially useful for a short glossary consisting of a few terms or for updating terms in an existing glossary. To learn more, see **How to Create a Glossary Term**

**Note:** Use the **Check Spelling** function to make sure there are no misspellings in your terms and definitions.
About Uploading a Glossary File

To create a glossary file for uploading, type the terms and definitions in spreadsheet software, such as Microsoft® Excel®. Files must have one term and one definition per line, with the term in one column and the definition in the next column. Save the file as CSV (comma separated values).

Alternatively, you may use a simple text editor to create your glossary file. With one entry per line, separate the term from the definition by a comma or by a tab. Next, save the file in CSV format or TXT format.

After you have created your glossary file, upload it using the Glossary tool. You have the option to either update an existing glossary or replace it altogether. After the glossary has been uploaded, you can make further updates by adding terms manually or uploading another file.

Note: If duplicate terms are in the uploaded file, they will replace those in the existing glossary.

Glossary File Format

Within the CSV file, each entry is separated by a hard return and the term and the definition are separated by a comma. For example:

"Apple","A red fruit."
"Onion","A vegetable."

Although it is not always necessary to enclose the term and the definition in quotation marks, Blackboard strongly recommends this practice to avoid processing errors.

Example:

"Apple","A delicious fruit, usually <b>red</b> in color. Apples are grown all over the world and are an important religious and mythical symbol to several cultures. The Pacific Northwest region of the United States, particularly Washington state, is famous for its apples.<br>However, most refined apple lovers agree that the best apples come from the Hudson River valley area of New York. Perhaps this is why New York City is nicknamed, "The Big Apple."

"Onion","Onions are a tasty vegetable with green stalks and a white, yellow, or red bulb. For the best-tasting Onions, visit the "Onion Capital of the World" Pine Island, New York."

Quotation marks that appear in a definition or a term must be escaped. This means that the quotation mark must be identified as part of the definition or the mark will be read as the end of the definition. Quotation marks may be escaped using a backslash (\") or another set of quotation marks (""").

Batch Files

Batch files are .txt files that hold large quantities of information to upload to the system. Each batch utility contains specific instructions on creating the batch file. The following batch file standards are universal.

- Each file must be one of the supported file types: CSV or TXT.
  
  Note: Microsoft® Excel® versions 2003 and later automatically insert double quotes in every field if the worksheet is saved as a .csv file.
  
- Each file must be in DOS format. Files in MAC or UNIX format must be converted to DOS.
  
- Each field must be enclosed in double quotation marks. For example: "ENG_201"
  
- If quotation marks appear in a field, use an escape character to indicate that the next character does not mark the end of the field. The escape character is a backslash (\). For example: "\"ENG_201\""
Each field must be separated with one of the following delimiters: comma, colon, or tab. When selecting AUTO, only one type of delimiter may be used in each batch file. For example: "ENG_201", "English Literature" or "ENG_201"; "English Literature"

Each record must be on a separate line. For example:
"ENG_201", "English Literature"
"ENG_201", "English Literature"

Do not include blank lines between records. The blank line will be processed and return an error.

Blackboard recommends that each batch file not exceed 500 records because of timeout restrictions associated with most browsers.

How to Upload a Glossary File

   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Glossary.
2. On the Glossary page, click Upload Glossary from the Upload/Download drop-down list.

3. On the Upload Glossary page, click Browse to locate and upload the file.

4. Select one of the upload file options.
   - Add the Terms in this File to the Glossary: Select this option to supplement the existing glossary with a list of new terms. If a term appears in both the existing glossary and the file, the definition in the file will replace the definition in the existing glossary. If the same term appears two or more times in the file, the last definition for the term will appear in the glossary.
   - Delete all Glossary Terms and Replace with the Terms in this File: Select this option to delete the existing glossary and replace it with the terms in the upload file.

5. Click Submit.
How to Create a Glossary Term

**Tip:** Use the Check Spelling function to make sure there are no misspellings in your terms and definitions.


   - OR -

   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Glossary.

2. On the Glossary page, click Create Term.
3. On the **Create Term** page, type the **Term**.
4. Type the **Definition** in the text box.
5. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The term is added to the glossary.
How to Download a Glossary

Downloading a glossary creates a comma separated values data file (CSV) of the glossary. Each entry is separated by a hard return and within each entry the term and the definition are separated by a comma.

Downloading a glossary is useful for adding terms to another course. The glossary can be edited offline and then uploaded to another course.

   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Glossary.
2. On the **Glossary** page, click **Download Glossary** from the **Upload/Download** drop-down list.
3. On the **Download Glossary** page, click **Download**.
4. On the pop-up window, select **Save As** and click **OK** to save the glossary file to your computer.
Note: The glossary may be edited in a spreadsheet program such as Excel or in a text editor such as Notepad and then uploaded to the glossary. Make sure to keep the formatting of the file intact to ensure a smooth upload.

How to Add a Glossary Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access the glossary often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Glossary.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click Submit.

Result

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students.
Messages

Messages are private and secure text-based communication that occurs within a course and among course members. Although similar to email, you must be logged in to the course to read and send messages. Using the Messages tool instead of the Email tool can also be more reliable. Problems with incorrect or out-of-date student email addresses do not affect course communication.

Students are not notified if they receive a new message, so advise them to make routine checks for new messages. Both incoming and outgoing messages are saved in the Messages tool.

Messages are organized in folders, marked as Read or Unread, moved to other folders, or deleted. The Messages area has two folders, Inbox and Sent which you cannot rename or delete.

Note: The Blackboard administrator can choose to allow or not allow users to create personal folders. By default, users may not create personal folders.

Accessing Messages

You can access the Messages tool from the Tools link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu. To learn more, see How to Add a Messages Link to the Course Menu.
Two Default Options

- OR-

Alternatively, on the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Messages.

How to Send a Message

- OR-
On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Messages.

2. On the Messages page, click Create Message on the Action Bar.
3. On the **Compose Message** page, select **To** and a list of course members appears.

4. In the **Select Recipients: To** line box, select the recipients and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the **Recipients** box. You can use the **Cc** and **Bcc** functions to send the message to those users that may be interested in the message, but are not the primary recipients. When using **Bcc**, other recipients do not know that the users listed in the **Bcc** field are receiving the message.

5. Type the **Subject**.

6. Type the **Body**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. You may only upload from Course Files or the Content Collection.

7. In the **Attachment** section, optionally, add an attachment from your computer. If you do not see this function, the Blackboard administrator at your school has not enabled message attachments.

8. Click **Submit**.
**Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple users in a row, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each name needed. For Mac systems, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key. You can also select all course members with the Select All function.

### How to Create a Message Folder

You can create personal folders to help organize your messages. Personal folders are only for storing messages. Messages received always appear in the **Inbox** folder first and messages sent always appear in the **Sent** folder. Once a message appears, you can move it into a personal folder.
1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Messages**.

-OR-

On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Messages**.

2. On the **Messages** page, click **Create Folder** on the Action Bar.
3. On the **Add Folder** page, type the name of the new personal folder in the **Name** box.

4. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new personal folder is created.
How to View a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Messages**.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Messages**.

2. On the **Messages** page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the Folder page, click the link in the message's Subject column.
How to Reply to a Message

   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Messages.

2. On the Messages page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message's **Subject** column.

4. On the **View Message** page, click **Reply** to compose a message to the sender or **Reply All** to reply to the sender and all other recipients of the message already populated in the **To:** field.
5. On the **Reply to Message** page, compose your message. You can add other users to the message. The **Body** of the message is already populated with the text of the original message.

6. Click **Submit**.
How to Forward a Message
1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Messages**.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Messages**.

2. On the **Messages** page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message’s **Subject** column.

4. On the **View Message** page, click **Forward** to send a copy of the message to someone else.
5. On the **Forward Message** page, select the recipients in the **Select Recipients: To line** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the **Recipients** box.

6. Click **Submit**.

**Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple users in a row, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each name needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key. You can also select all course members with the **Select All** function.

### How to Move a Message

You can move messages from any folder to a personal folder. Using personal folders is a good way to organize messages so they are easy to find later. Use the **Move Message** function to move messages from one folder to another. You cannot move a message to the **Sent** folder or the **Inbox** folder.

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Messages**.

   - **OR**-

   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Messages**.
2. On the Messages page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the **Folder** page, select the check box for each message and click **Move**.

4. On the **Move Message** page, select a folder from the **Select a Personal Folder** drop-down list. This is the folder where you will store your messages. The messages are deleted from the old folder after they have been moved to the new folder.

5. Click **Submit**.
How to Delete a Message

   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Messages.
2. On the **Messages** page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the Folder page, select the check box for each message and click **Delete**. Exercise caution because deleting a message is final and cannot be undone.

### How to Print a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Messages**.

   -OR-

   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Messages**.
2. On the **Messages** page, select the folder that contains the message.
3. On the Folder page, click the link in the message's Subject column.

4. On the View Message page, click Print. The message is printed using the web browser's print settings.
How to Add a Messages Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access the Messages tool often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link as needed.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Messages.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click Submit.

Result

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link (_pages) to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students.
Roster

The Roster tool, available to students in the Course Tools area, allows users to view a searchable list of students enrolled in a course.

Instructors wishing to access a list of users enrolled in a course should access the Users page in the Groups and Users section of the Control Panel. To learn more, see Searching for Users in a Course.

The Roster pulls information from the system’s Personal Information tool. Students can access their personal information from the Tools panel of any tab, or from the My Places link in the Blackboard header. Within this tool, students can choose which information is available to the user directory and the course roster.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school can make the personal information, user directory, or roster tools unavailable.

Tasks

The Tasks tool is used to organize projects or activities (referred to as tasks) by defining task priority and tracking task status.

A user can create tasks and post them to the Tasks page. Each user can post personal tasks to their page. Instructors can post tasks to users participating in their courses, and administrators can post tasks to all users’ Tasks pages. Task information is arranged in columns that display the priority, task name, status, and due date.

Tasks are also available as a course group tool for tasks that are specific to a smaller group within a course.

Note: The To Do Notification Module that appears in a course display course relevant information only. To learn more, see About The Notifications Dashboard.

Accessing Tasks

You can access Tasks from the Tools link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You can also add a customized link to the Course Menu. To learn more, see How to Add a Tasks Link to the Course Menu.
Two Default Options

Access **Tasks** using the **Tools** link on the Course Menu. On the **Tools** page, select **Tasks**.

-OR-

Alternatively, in the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section and select **Tasks**.

**Viewing Tasks**

By default, tasks are listed from highest priority to lowest—not by date. To view tasks listed by due date, click the **Due Date** heading. Use the status columns to view how many students have reported their progress or completed a task.
How to Create or Edit a Course Task

You can create or edit tasks by accessing the Create Course Task page or Edit Course Task page. The fields on the Create Course Task page and Edit Course Task page are the same. The Create Course Task page opens with empty fields where as the Edit Course Task page opens with a task already populated.

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Tasks.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Tasks.
2. On the **Tasks** page, click **Create Course Task** on the Action Bar.

   -OR-

   To edit an existing task, click **Edit** from the contextual menu for a particular task.
3. On the Create Course Task page, type a Task Name.

4. Type a Description. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.

5. Type a Due Date, or use the Date Selection Calendar to select the date.

6. Select the level of priority of your task from the Priority drop-down list. You can assign a priority of Low, Normal, or High.

7. Click Submit.
How to Delete a Course Task

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Tasks**.
   - OR -
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Tasks**.
2. On the Task page, select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the appropriate task. This action is final and cannot be undone.
How to View Task Progress

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Tasks**.
   -OR-
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Tasks**.
2. On the **Task** page, click a task title to access the **View Task** page. The **View Task** page displays all students' progress for that task.
### Tasks

#### Create Course Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper Topic</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>Friday, April 8, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign up for Group Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday, April 25, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Chat Review Session</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday, April 22, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### View Task

1. **Task Information**
   - **Task Name**: Term Paper Topic
   - **Description**: Select your term paper topic. See the syllabus for the due date and specific instructions.
   - **Due Date**: Friday, April 8, 2011
   - **Priority**: High

2. **Task Status**
   - Andy Farrell: Not Started
   - Bruce Lopez: Completed
   - Cathy Chu: Not Started
   - Chris Casper: Completed
   - Dwight Paul: In Progress
   - Juan Hernandez: Not Started
   - Mark Tsai: Not Started
   - Mei Wong: Not Started
   - Monica Gonzales: Not Started
   - Sarah Spooner: Not Started
   - Tony Brown: In Progress
How to Add a Tasks Link to the Course Menu

If you want students to access Tasks often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.

1. Ensure Edit Mode is ON and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a Name for the link.
4. From the Type drop-down list, select Tasks.
5. Select the Available to Users check box.
6. Click Submit.

Result

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students. For example, if you intend to use Tasks after week three, you can create all the tasks you need at the beginning of the term and hide the link until it is needed.
Blogs

About Blogs

A blog—a shorthand term that means web log—is a personal online journal that is frequently updated and intended for general public access and use. Most blogs also have some kind of commenting system, so that people can respond to and interact with one another. Blogs encourage students to clearly express their ideas and addresses the need to expand various aspects of social learning. Moreover, they are an effective means of gaining insight into students' activities and provide a way to share the knowledge and materials collected.

In Blackboard Learn, blogs are created and managed by instructors, and only enrolled users can view and create entries and comments in them.

How to Use Blogs in Blackboard Learn

In Blackboard Learn, blogs consist of two elements:

- **Blog entries**: Text, images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments added by course members open for comments.
- **Comments**: Remarks or responses to blog entries made by other course members, including the instructor.

You can choose to allow students to participate in blogs in three ways:

- **Course Blogs**: You can create a Course blog and determines the topic to be addressed. All course members can add blog entries and add comments to blog entries.
- **Individual Blogs**: You can create a blog for individual course members to use. However, only you are able to add blog entries. All other course members can view and add comments.
- **Group Blogs**: If you enable the blogs tool for a group of users:
  
  - Group members can add blog entries and make comments on blog entries, building upon one another.
  - All course members can view group blogs, but non-group members can only add comments.

A group blog is different from a threaded discussion in that each entry does not need to continue the discussion of the previous entry, but can be a complete thought on its own.

**Note:** As the course instructor, you have full control over all blogs in your course and can edit and delete entries in any of the blog types and can delete user comments.

Related Tutorials ➤ Creating a Blog (Flash movie | 2m 4s) | ➤ Creating and Editing Blog Entries (Flash movie | 2m 7s) | ➤ Commenting on a Blog Entry (Flash movie | 1m 27s)

Creating a Blog

Blog writing assignments are another medium for reflective learning. With this type of assignment, students are expected to display their research, analytical, and communication skills through a series of commentaries meant for public consumption and comment.
In the course environment, blogs are only able to be viewed by enrolled users. Similar to journals, blogs can be used as a graded assignment or ungraded to gather opinions and information. To learn more about journals, see Journals.

You can create one or more blogs for use by students in their courses. Blog topics must be created before students can add their entries.

### How to Create a Blog Topic

1. Access the course.
2. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
3. In the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section.
4. Select **Blogs**.
5. On the **Blogs** listing page, click **Create Blog** on the Action Bar.
6. On the **Create Blog** page, type a **Name** for the blog.
7. Type optional **Instructions** for the blog. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
8. Under **Blog Availability**, select the **Yes** option to make it available to users.
9. Use the **Display After** and **Display Until** date and time fields to limit the availability of the blog. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.
10. Under **Blog Participation**, select **Individual to All Students** or **Course**. Select **Allow Anonymous Comments** for individual blogs or **Allow Anonymous Entries and Comments** for course and group blogs, if needed.
11. Under **Blog Settings**, select **Monthly** or **Weekly Index Entries**.
12. Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries**.
13. Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users to Delete Comments**.
14. Select **No grading** or the **Grade** option and type the number of **Points possible**. Points possible will apply to one or more entries made by the user to the blog topic. Once a blog is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the Grade Center. It is permanently gradable and cannot be set to **No grading**.
15. Optionally, select the box and the number of entries required to show participants in **Needs Grading** status. Applying this setting will show the Needs Grading icon in the Grade Center and place the entries in the queue on the Needs Grading page after the specified number of entries have been made.
16. Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to **Add Rubric**. To learn more, see Rubrics.
17. Click **Submit**.

The blog topics appear in alphabetical order on the **Blogs** listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

You can also provide links to blogs in course areas such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders. To learn more, see Linking to Tools in a Course Area.

### Creating Blog Entries

Instructors and users can create blog entries and other course members can make comments on the entries.
As the instructor, you can use blog entries to provide structure for discussions on class topics and other issues. On the Blogs listing page, under each blog title, students can see if the blog belongs to a group, the course, or to individual students. Group blogs can be read by all course members, but to make an entry, the user must be a group member.

**How to Create a Blog Entry**

1. On the Blogs listing page, select a blog title.
2. On the blog's topic page, click Create Blog Entry on the Action Bar.
3. On the Create Blog Entry page, type a Title for the blog entry.
4. Type text in the Entry Message text box. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
5. If enabled, select the check box for Post Entry as Anonymous, if appropriate.
6. Alternatively, under Blog Entry Files, browse for a file to attach to the blog entry.
7. Click Post Entry to submit the blog entry or click Save Entry as Draft to add the entry later.

**How to View Drafts**

To view or add saved drafts, click View Drafts on the Action Bar on the Blogs listing page.

**Commenting on a Blog**

Because blogs are meant to be read by others, students can comment on one another’s blog entries, whether they belong to an individual, the course, or a group.

As the instructor, you determine if comments can be made anonymously or deleted, and you can also delete any user's comment by clicking the X. Comments cannot be edited after they are posted.

**How to Comment on a Blog Entry**

1. On the Blogs listing page, select a blog title.
2. On the blog's topic page, select a blog to view by selecting the user's name in the side panel under View Entries by. The user's blog entries open in the content frame.
3. Click Comment following the user's entry. The Comment text box appears.
4. Type a comment in the Comment text box.
5. Click Spell Check at the bottom of the Comment text box to check the spelling of the content before continuing.
6. If enabled, select the check box for Comment on Entry as Anonymous, if appropriate.
7. Click Add. Click the Comments link below the entry to view the comment.

**Related Tutorials**

- Creating a Blog (Flash movie | 2m 4s)
- Creating and Editing Blog Entries (Flash movie | 2m 7s)
- Commenting on a Blog Entry (Flash movie | 1m 27s)
Editing and Managing Blogs

You can edit basic properties of a blog topic, including the name, instructions, availability, and other custom settings. Once a blog topic is designated for individuals or the course, you cannot change it to the other. You can edit any user’s blog entries and can delete blog topics. You can also delete comments, but cannot edit them.

How to Edit a Blog

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Blogs listing page, click a blog’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Edit.
4. On the Edit Blog page, make the desired changes to name, instructions, and so on.
5. When finished, click Submit.

How to Delete a Blog

Note: Deleting a blog cannot be undone. Be certain this is what you want to do before confirming the deletion.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Blogs listing page, click a blog’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Delete.
4. Click OK in the confirmation window. All entries and comments are deleted.

Note: When a graded blog is selected for deletion, a Delete Confirmation page appears. Select the appropriate check box or boxes to delete the blog or the blog and the Grade Center column.

How to Change the Availability of a Blog

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Blogs listing page, select the check box next to the appropriate blog.
3. Point to Availability on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Make Available or Make Unavailable.

Troubleshooting Blog Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If</th>
<th>Then</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a blog is deleted while users are posting</td>
<td>the blog and all comments are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a blog is made unavailable while users are posting</td>
<td>the blog remains visible to the instructor in Edit Mode, but does not appear to users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries setting is changed</td>
<td>entries remain, but users cannot edit them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If

the Allow Users to Delete Comments setting is changed

Then

comments remain and users cannot delete them.

the blog is set to be graded

the setting cannot be changed. The blog needs to be deleted and the Grade Center column must be deleted from the Grade Center to remove it. The Grade Center column for the blog can also not be included in Grade Center calculations, if the blog entries are needed, but will not be graded.

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Related Tutorials

- Creating a Blog (Flash movie | 2m 4s)
- Creating and Editing Blog Entries (Flash movie | 2m 7s)
- Commenting on a Blog Entry (Flash movie | 1m 27s)

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Grading Blogs and Journals

You can grade participation in blogs and journals for individuals and groups. Once a blog or journal topic is set to be graded, a grade column is automatically created in the Grade Center. Then, individual student and group entries can be graded from the blog or journal topic page, where all entries and comments can be referenced, as the grade is determined. An assigned grade can also be edited from the blog or journal topic page and the Grade Center is updated. Students can view their blog or journal grades in the My Grades tool.

About Grading Blogs and Journals

You can grade the quality of the discussion, as well as the number of entries and comments that are made by an individual or a course group.

Grades for blogs and journals are changed, deleted, reverted, and overridden just like other grades in the Grade Center.

You can determine whether or not students can view their own grades and feedback by editing the column information in the Grade Center. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

Changing a Topic from Graded to Ungraded

A graded blog or journal topic cannot be changed to ungraded. The only way to change from graded to ungraded is to delete the graded blog or journal topic from the blogs or journals listing page and the Grade Center, and create a new ungraded topic.

Alternatively, to retain entries, set the blog or journal Grade Center column to not be included in calculations. In essence, the blog or journal continues to be considered a graded one by the Grade Center, but any results or grades assigned are ignored.

Understanding Graded Blog and Journal Topic Pages

The blog topic page contains a side panel where entries are graded for individuals and course groups. The side panel consists of three sections which expand to four when grading begins:

- **About this Blog**: Shows the type, number of entries, and number of comments.
- **View Entries by**: Students who have submitted one or more entries appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Click a student’s name to access the Blog Grade section, where grades, feedback and grading notes are added. Use the Previous User and Next User arrows in this section to navigate among students to grade or click a student’s name in the list. Click Show Members

---

**without Entries** to see all students in the course; students who have not added entries are included in this list. Click **Hide Members without Entries** to return to the list of students who have entries needing a grade.

- **Index**: For a selected student or all course members, view a list of entry titles added during the index span—by month or by week.

The journal topic page contains a side panel where entries are graded for individuals and course groups. The side panel consists of three sections which expand to four when grading begins:

- **About this Journal**: Shows the author, number of entries, and number of comments.
- **More Journals**: Students who have submitted one or more entries appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Click a student’s name to access the **Journal Grade** section, where grades, feedback and grading notes are added. Use the **Previous User** and **Next User** arrows in this section to navigate among students to grade or click a student’s name in the list. Click **Show Empty Journals** to see all students in the course; students who have not added entries are included in this list. Click **Hide Empty Journals** to return to the list of students who have entries needing a grade.
- **Index**: For a selected student, view a list of entry titles added during the index span—by month or by week.

The grading process for blogs and journals can begin from the Grade Center, the **Needs Grading** page, the Course Tools area in the Control Panel, or the course location where the blog or journal has been deployed.

**How to Grade Blog Entries for Individuals**

1. Access the blog topic page and select the blog entry or entries to grade by selecting the student’s name in the side panel under **View Entries by**. The student’s blog entry or entries open in the content frame.
2. Under **Blog Grade** in the side panel, click **Edit Grade**.
3. Type a point total in the **Current Grade Value** text box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded blog, click **View Rubric**. To learn more, see [Rubrics](#).
4. Optionally, type **Feedback** for the student and **Grading Notes**, which appear to the instructor and grader only. You can also use the **Spell Check** function in the bottom of each text box. Click **Text Editor** to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
5. Click **Save Grade** to add the grade, feedback, and grading notes to the **Blog Grade** section and to the Grade Center.
6. The grade, feedback, or grading notes can be edited by clicking the **Edit Grade** function again at any time. The changes appear in the **Blog Grade** section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the **Grade History** tab on the student’s **Grade Details** page.

**How to Grade Journal Entries for Individuals**

1. Access the journal topic page and select the journal entry or entries to grade by selecting the student’s name in the side panel under **More Journals**. The student’s journal entry or entries open in the content frame.
2. Under **Journal Grade** in the side panel, click **Edit Grade**.
3. Type a point total in the **Current Grade Value** text box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded journal, click **View Rubric**. To learn more, see [Rubrics](#).
4. Optionally, type Feedback for the student and Grading Notes, which appear to the instructor and grader only. You can also use the Spell Check function in the bottom of each text box. Click Text Editor to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.

5. Click Save Grade to add the grade, feedback, and grading notes to the Journal Grade section and to the Grade Center.

6. The grade, feedback, or grading notes can be edited by clicking the Edit Grade function again at any time. The changes appear in the Journal Grade section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the Grade History tab on the student’s Grade Details page.

**Note:** If a rubric will be used to grade blog or journal entries, it must be created and added in advance.

### How to Delete a Gradable Blog or Journal

If a gradable blog or journal is no longer needed, it can be deleted. It is permanently deleted and the action cannot be undone. On the blogs or journals listing page, select Delete from the contextual menu for the item and the Delete Confirmation page appears.

There are two options on the Delete Confirmation page:

- **Do not select check boxes:** The blog or journal will be deleted, but the Grade Center column and scores assigned are retained. For example, all student entries have been graded and you want to keep the Grade Center column for the final grade calculations. If the blog or journal is deleted, yet the Grade Center column is retained, the column can be deleted from the Grade Center at any time.

- **Select the check boxes:** The grade column in the Grade Center and the blog or journal are both deleted. For example, if you do not want to include the grade column for the blog or journal entries in the final grade, you can safely delete all.

Click Remove to complete the deletion.

### How to Grade a Blog or Journal for all Group Members

A group blog or journal is graded using the same steps as for individuals. When the entries are submitted, all group members’ names appear with the exclamation mark, the needs grading icon.

When a grade is assigned for a group blog or journal, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned the same grade, even if a member did not contribute, although this can be overridden (described in How to Change an Individual Member’s Group Grade).

You can read all the entries for the group blog or journal and add one grade on the blog or journal topic page.

Students can view their group blog or journal grades in the My Grades tool and on the group blog or journal topic page by selecting their names.

### How to Change an Individual Member’s Group Grade

An individual group member can be assigned a different grade than the group by selecting his or her name to access the Grade section. In the content frame, the individual member’s entries and comments appear. After assigning a new grade and feedback for the individual member, the new information appears in the side panel. The grade the individual member received and the grade the group received are both shown.

If a group member’s grade is changed, and a new group grade is given, the new group grade will not affect the individual’s new grade. The individual’s new grade will not appear to the other group members.
The group grade and the individual group member’s edited grade appear in the Grade Center in the column that was automatically created when the graded group blog or journal was enabled. Grayed out cells appear in the group blog or journal column for course members who are not part of the group.

A group or individual member’s grade can also be edited from the Grade Center.

**How to Revert a Member’s Edited Grade**

It is possible to revert a member’s edited grade to the original group grade, which all group members received.

1. From the Grade Center, access the member’s Grade Details page. (Alternatively, you can edit the grade that was changed on the group blog or journal page by selecting the student.)
2. After a member’s group grade has been edited, the Revert To Group Grade function appears. Click Revert To Group Grade.
3. Click OK. The member's grade is changed to the original group grade.
4. Click Return to Grade Center to return to the main Grade Center page and view the edited grade column. This grade change also appears on the group blog or journal page when the student’s name is selected.

**Deleting a Group**

If a group is no longer needed and Delete is selected from the contextual menu, a Delete Confirmation page appears. If grade columns exist in the Grade Center for the group, such as for a graded group blog or journal, the columns can be retained. On the Delete Confirmation page, do not select the check boxes for any columns that need to be preserved.

**Collaboration Tools**

**About Collaboration Tools**

Collaboration tools allow users to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. Examples of these sessions include real-time, online classroom discussions, guest speaker led sessions, teaching assistant sessions, and live question-and-answer sessions. Recordings of sessions can be created and made available for review.

**Installing the Required Java Plug-in**

The Java 2 Run Time Environment is required to use the Blackboard Learn collaboration tools. The plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when a user joins a collaboration session, or may be found at http://java.sun.com/products/plugin/index.html.

Take care to uninstall any existing Java plug-ins before installing a new version.

**How to Find the Collaboration Sessions Page**

Follow the steps below to open the Collaboration Sessions page.

1. Click Collaboration on the Course Menu or from the Control Panel.

The following table describes the available functions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To . . .</th>
<th>click . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| filter the sessions listed on the page | the arrow next to the drop-down list and select the type of session to display. Click **Filter**. The filters include:  
  - **Show All** – The default filter that displays all of the collaboration sessions.  
  - **Available Sessions** – Displays all of the sessions that are in use.  
  - **Sessions with Recordings** – Displays completed sessions that have an archive.  
  - **Future Sessions** – Displays sessions that are scheduled to take place in the future.  
| search for a session | the **Session Name**, **Start Date**, or **End Date** option and then enter a value in the field. Click **Search**.  
| enter a session | **Join** from the session’s contextual menu.  
| access the recording for a session | **Recording** from the contextual menu.  
| add a new collaboration session | **Create Collaboration Session** |

**Assigning User Roles**

There are two roles available for users in collaboration sessions, passive and active. The session administrator controls user access and functions during a collaboration session by assigning passive or active roles. For example, session administrators determine which users can chat, send private messages, or ask questions during a session by assigning specific access rights to the different roles. The student icon will appear in the **Role** column next to those students who are designated as active.

Student roles can change throughout the collaboration session. Those who are currently set to passive, but would like active rights can signal the session administrator by clicking the hand icon. The session administrator can then make that user active.

**About Browser Pop-up Blockers**

Be aware that for any browser supporting pop-up window blocking, it must be disabled or your institution's website made a trusted site for the collaboration tool to work properly.

**Using the Accessible Collaboration Tool**

An accessible version of the collaboration tool is available.

A link to this version appears when **Join** is selected on the **Collaboration Sessions** page. This link will open the accessible version of the collaboration tool. Links to items that appear in the Virtual Classroom, such as items in the Course Menu and group browser, will appear in this version. Documents created on the Whiteboard may be viewed if the session administrator takes a snapshot. A link will be created to the snapshot for users to view.

The sound of a door opening or closing is audible to all participants whenever a user enters or leaves a session through the accessible version.

**About Collaboration Sessions**

Collaboration sessions are real-time lessons and discussions. Two primary collaboration tools are available:
Course Tools > Collaboration Tools

- **Chat**: Chat is an exchange of text messages online.
- **Virtual Classroom**: Virtual Classroom is a shared online environment where users can view links, share desktops, exchange files, and chat. Both types of collaboration can be recorded and saved for future review.

The **Collaboration Session** page is used to manage the collaboration tools available in Blackboard Learn. From this page, you can access all of the collaboration sessions for the course, including those that have already taken place and are recorded and those that are scheduled for the future. You can also schedule new collaboration sessions and make changes to those already scheduled from this page.

**Default Collaboration Sessions**

Each course and organization begins with two default collaboration sessions. The **Lecture Hall** is the default Virtual Classroom, and **Office Hours** is the default Chat. These default sessions can be deleted.

*Note*: Deleting a session cannot be undone.

### Using Collaboration Session Functions

The following functions are available from the **Collaboration Sessions** page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To . . .</th>
<th>click . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>create a new collaboration session</td>
<td><a href="#">Create Collaboration Session</a>. The <a href="#">Create Collaboration Session</a> page appears. To learn more, see <a href="#">Creating and Editing Collaboration Sessions</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| filter the sessions listed on the page | [Filter](#). The filters include:  
  - **Show All**: The default filter that displays all of the collaboration sessions.  
  - **Available Sessions**: Displays all of the sessions that are currently being used.  
  - **Sessions with Recordings**: Displays completed sessions that have a recording.  
  - **Future Sessions**: Displays sessions that are scheduled to take place in the future. |
| search for a session | the **Session Name**, **Start Date** or **End Date** option and then enter a value in the field. Click **Search**. |
| enter a session   | select **Join** from the contextual menu for the session. The Virtual Classroom or Chat for that session opens. (To learn more, see [Virtual Classroom](#) and [Chat](#).) |
| access the Recordings for a session  | **Recordings** next to the session. The **Session Recordings** page appears. (To learn more, see [Recording Sessions](#).) |
| change the name, availability, or tools used during the session | select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the session. The **Edit Session Recordings** page appears. (To learn more, see [Recording Properties](#).) |
| delete a session | select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the session.  
  *Note*: This action cannot be undone. |

### Creating and Editing Collaboration Sessions

You can create new collaboration sessions selecting **Virtual Classroom** or **Chat** from the **Create Collaboration Session** page. You can schedule sessions for specific dates and times.
Both the Create Collaboration Session and Edit Collaboration Session pages function in a similar manner. The Create Collaboration Session page displays with empty fields while the Edit Collaboration Session page opens with the selected session’s current information and details already populated.

Creating or Editing Collaboration Sessions

Follow these steps to create or edit a collaboration session:

1. In the Course Tools area of the Control Panel, click Collaboration. The Collaboration Sessions page appears.
2. To create a new session, click Create Collaboration Session. Alternatively, to edit a collaboration, click the contextual menu for the session to be edited and select Edit.
3. Complete the fields as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session Name</td>
<td>Type the name of the new session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule Availability</td>
<td>Optionally, select the dates during which the collaboration session will be available, a start date and time and an ending date and time. Setting availability by date is not required. If these are not set then the session is always open and available for users, subject to the Available setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Select Yes to make the session available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Tool</td>
<td>Select Virtual Classroom or Chat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recording Sessions

About Recording Sessions

Session Recordings allow users to review collaboration sessions and are archived by date. A given session will not appear in the list of saved recordings until the session administrator has stopped recording.

Note: If you do not stop the recording and exit the collaboration session, the recording will not end and no information will be recorded in the recording duration column. Only when the session administrator stops recording or ends the session will the recording actually stop and the duration display. This is why it is important to remember when recording sessions always to end the recording or the session, and not simply exit from it.

How to Find the Recording Sessions Page

Follow these steps to access the Session Recordings page.

1. In the Course Tools area of the Control Panel, click Collaboration.
2. Using the contextual menu, click Recordings for the session to be accessed.
   The table below describes the functions available on this page.
To... | click...
---|---
search for a recording in the collaboration session | the **Recording Name** or creation date option in the **Search by** field. Type the name of the recording or the date it was created in the field and click **Search**.

open a recording | the recording name.

change the name or availability of a recording | **Edit** from the contextual menu. The **Recording Properties** page appears.

delete a recording | **Delete**.

**Note:** Exercise caution because deleting a recording session cannot be undone.

**Record Menu**

Virtual Classroom and Chat sessions are recorded and saved for future playback. You can start, stop, pause, and restart recordings during a session. A session can have more than one recording. If you select **End** to stop a session, then the recorder will automatically stop recording the session.

**Note:** It is important to remember to stop a session recording, or to allow the session to stop it automatically by ending the session. If you simply exit the session, the recording will not stop nor will it be archived.

**Using the Recording Controls**

The following table details the buttons that appear on the **Record** menu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start</strong></td>
<td>Click <strong>Start</strong> to begin recording a session. You are prompted to name the recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pause</strong></td>
<td>Click <strong>Pause</strong> to pause a recording once it has started. Click this button again to restart the recording. Both the pause and restart will be marked and time stamped in the recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stop</strong></td>
<td>Click <strong>Stop</strong> to end recording the session. When <strong>Stop</strong> is selected the recording is completed and a stop marker and time/date stamp will be included at the end of the recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bookmark</strong></td>
<td>Click <strong>Bookmark</strong> to insert a bookmark anywhere in the recording of the session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recording the Whiteboard**

The **Snapshot** button (shaped like a camera) on the Whiteboard toolbar is used to capture the current state of the Whiteboard and save it with the recording.

Click the **Snapshot** button to capture an image of the Whiteboard. When replaying the session recording, the Whiteboard image shown will update according to the time when the snapshot was captured.

**Note:** The **Snapshot** button cannot be activated unless the session is being recorded.

**Controlling Session Recording Availability**

By default, session recordings are available to all session participants, including students. If you want, you can restrict availability and deny participants permission to access a session recording. To learn more, see
Recording Properties

Recording Properties

The **Recording Properties** page allows you to change the name and availability of a recording session.

*Note:* Recordings are available to students and other participants by default.

How to Find the Recording Properties Page

Follow the steps below to open the **Recording Properties** page.

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the Control Panel, click **Collaboration**.
2. Click **Recordings** from the contextual menu of a session.
3. Click **Edit** from the contextual menu for a recording.
4. Complete the fields as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edit Recording Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Name</td>
<td>Type or edit the name of the recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability to Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permit Participants to View Recording</td>
<td>To enable viewing access for participants, select <strong>Yes</strong> (default). To make a session recording unavailable to participants, select <strong>No</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Virtual Classroom

About Virtual Classroom

The Virtual Classroom environment includes a shared White Board, a group browser, a question and answer box, and a map that can be used to navigate to places in the course. The session administrator establishes which tools in the Virtual Classroom users can access.

How to Open the Virtual Classroom

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the Control Panel, click **Collaboration**.
2. Click **Join** from the contextual menu of a Virtual Classroom session.

Using the Virtual Classroom Areas

The following table details the areas of the Virtual Classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Menu Bar</td>
<td>Allows the session administrator to control the Virtual Classroom. This includes managing participation, monitoring breakout sessions, and ending the session. To learn more, see <a href="#">Menu Bar for Virtual Classroom</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom tool box</td>
<td>Includes all of the tools used during the Virtual Classroom session. This includes searching for websites, asking and answering questions, using the Whiteboard, and accessing the Course Menu. To learn more, see <a href="#">About the Virtual Classroom Tool Box</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Tools  >  Collaboration Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Allows participants to compose messages, raise their hands (by clicking the hand icon) to ask questions, and send private messages. To learn more, see Chat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Menu Bar for Virtual Classroom

The Virtual Classroom menu bar includes a number of functions for controlling access, setting personal message viewing options, creating breakout sessions, and more.

**Using the Virtual Classroom Menu Bar**

- **View**: Select *Show in-line* to view private messages within the chat area. Select *Show in separate frame* to view private messages in a separate window.
- **Controls**: Use the check boxes to grant access to tools for passive and active users. Uncheck to delete access to tools.
- **Clear**: Clears the currently visible chat display. If the session is being recorded, this has no effect on the recorded chat text.
- **End**: Ends the session and exits all users. This action cannot be undone.
- **Breakouts**: Select the check boxes for the users who will participate in the breakout session. Users may only join a breakout session if they are selected by the creator of the breakout session. Users who enter a breakout session are still active in the main Virtual Classroom session. If a breakout session is closed, users are still active in the main session. Breakout sessions default to the same settings as the main session.

About the Virtual Classroom Tool Box

If granted access to these tools by the Session Administrator, users can use the Whiteboard, access websites, and view the Course Menu.

The Classroom Tool box appears on the left side of the Virtual Classroom. To begin using items in the Tool box, click the name of the tool.
The following tools are available in the Classroom Tool box.

**Whiteboard**

The Whiteboard enables users in a Virtual Classroom to present different types of information as they would on a whiteboard in a classroom. The tools in the Whiteboard Tools palette allow users to draw images, type text, and present equations. The Session Administrator determines whether this function is made available to users.

The following table details the tools available for use on the Whiteboard.
To... | click ...
---|---
select an item | the Arrow tool. Then click an item for selection. The following may be performed on selected items:
  - **Enlarge**: Click of the small black boxes that surround the item and drag it to the desired size.
  - **Move**: Click the item and move it to the desired location.
  - **Cut**: Click the Whiteboard item. Then click the Cut icon.
  - **Copy**: Click the Whiteboard item. Then click the Copy icon.
  - **Paste**: Click the Whiteboard item. Then click the Paste icon.
  - **Delete**: Click the Whiteboard item. Click the selected object. Then click the Delete icon.
  - **Group items**: Click the Whiteboard items. Then click the Group icon.
  - **Ungroup**: Click a Whiteboard item in a group. Then click the Ungroup icon.
  - **Bring front**: Click the Whiteboard item. Click selected object. Then click the Bring to front icon.
  - **Bring back**: Click the Whiteboard item. Click selected object. Then click the Send to back icon.
  - **Select all figures on the Whiteboard**: Click the Selects all Figures icon.

draw free hand | the Pen tool. Choose the color of the pen in the Pen Color drop-down list. Next, select the line width.

text using the keyboard | enter text into the text tool (T) then the Whiteboard area. A Whiteboard Text Input box appears. Type the text in the box and click Insert. Use the options in the Tools palette to select color, font, and size.

draw a straight line | the Line tool.

draw a rectangle | the Rectangle tool. Choose the color of the square from the Fill Color drop-down list to draw a solid shape. To draw the outline of the shape, select None for the fill color. The outline of the shape will be the color of the pen tool and have the selected line width.

draw a oval | the Oval tool. Choose the color of the circle from the Fill Color drop-down list to draw a solid shape. To draw the outline of the shape, select None for the fill color. The outline of the shape will be the color of the pen tool and have the selected line width.

input an equation | the Math and Science Equation Editor icon. The Equation Editor will appear. Input the equation and click Insert Equation.

**Group Browser**

The Group Browser enables users to collaboratively browse the Internet. This tool opens a URL that is viewable by all users. URLs used in the session will be added to the recording if one is created. The Session Administrator determines whether this function is made available to users.

The table below details the available functions in the Group Browser.

To... | click ...
---|---
open a Web site | type the URL in the Type Address field.

choose where to display the Web site | Display To Users to display the window in the Whiteboard or click Preview in New Window to open the website in a new browser window. The preview window will only be displayed to the user that opened it.

**Map**

The Course Map enables users to browse the Course Menu while in a Virtual Classroom. By default, the
Session Administrator has access to operate the **Course Map**. Users must have Active privileges to use the **Course Map** in a Virtual Classroom.

The table below details the available functions in the **Course Map**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To . . .</th>
<th>click . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>display an element on the map to all users</td>
<td>the course area in the <strong>Course Map</strong> and select <strong>Display To Class</strong> in the drop-down list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>display an element on the map in a separate window</td>
<td>the course area in the <strong>Course Map</strong> and select <strong>Preview in New Window</strong> in the drop-down list. The new window is only visible to the user who opens it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refresh the map during a collaboration session</td>
<td><strong>Refresh Tree</strong> in the drop-down list. This will update the <strong>Course Map</strong> to match the Course Menu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ask Question**

Users are able to ask questions during the session. As users submit questions during the session, the Session Administrator can view and respond to them.

*Note:* Only users who have an Active role can ask questions.

To ask a question, select **Compose** in the **Ask Question** area. Type the question in the text box and click **Send**.

**Question Inbox**

Questions from users are sent to the **Question Inbox** during the Virtual Classroom session. The **Question Inbox** is used to manage and respond to questions during a collaboration session.

The following table details the functions available in the **Question Inbox** tool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To . . .</th>
<th>click . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>respond to a question</td>
<td>the username in the <strong>From</strong> list and click the <strong>Respond to Question</strong> icon. The <strong>Respond to Question</strong> pop-up window will appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delete a question</td>
<td>the username in the <strong>From</strong> list and click the <strong>Delete</strong> icon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>view only questions that have not been answered</td>
<td>the check box next to <strong>Show unanswered only</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table details the fields on the **Respond to Question** pop-up window.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Question that was submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Type the response to the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Select this check box to make the response to the question private. If marked private, the response will only be sent to the person who submitted the message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chat**

The **Chat** tool allows you to interact with other users using a text-based chat. Chat is part of the Virtual Classroom. It can also be accessed separately.

Use the **Chat** tool when real-time discussion is required. Most students will be familiar with using some form of chat and will be comfortable using this form of communication.
The Chat tool was designed to be ideal for low bandwidth situations, such as when your students are connecting to the course using a dial-up connection.

After joining a chat session, students can send messages. The message will appear in the chat display panel of all participants who are currently in the room.

**Accessing Chat**

You can access Chat in the collaboration tool from the Tools link on the Course Menu and from the Control Panel. You may also add a customized link to the Course Menu.

**Two Default Options**

- **Access collaboration using the Tools link on the Course Menu.** On the Tools page, select Collaboration.
- **OR-**
  - Alternatively, in the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Collaboration.

**How to Add a Collaboration Link to the Course Menu**

If you want students to access collaboration often, you can add a link to the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can customize the name of the link to fit your needs.
1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.

2. Select **Tool Link**.

3. Type a **Name** for the link.

4. From the **Type** drop-down list, select **Collaboration**.

5. Select the **Available to Users** check box.

6. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new tool link appears last in the Course Menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Click the link’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can rename, delete, or hide the link from students.

**How to Access Chat in a Content Area**

You can manually add links to Chat in Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders.
For example, you could set up a Content Area to include all the content and tools your students need for the week. After reading the weekly lecture, viewing the slide presentation, and completing two assignments, students could then access the Chat tool for the mandatory weekly session. Finally, they would complete the weekly test, accomplishing all of these tasks in the same Content Area. In this scenario, students do not need to navigate anywhere else in the course to complete all the required activities for the week.

**Adding a Chat Link in a Content Area**

You can follow the same steps for adding link to Learning Modules, lesson plans, and folders.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and access the course area where a Chat link will be added, for example, the Chapter 1 Content Area.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Tools** to access the drop-down list, and select **Chat**.
3. On the **Create Link: Chat** page, select the type of link: **Collaboration Sessions Page, Chat Session**. If linking to a **Chat Session**, select it from the list.
4. Click **Next**.
5. On the next **Create Link: Group** page, complete the **Link Information** to specify how it will appear in the Content Area. Select **Options**, if you want.

6. Click **Submit**.

---

**Create Link: Chat**

* Indicates a required field.

1. **Link Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link Name</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color of Name</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Link**
   
   Chat: Office Hours

   **Text**
   
   Click the link to be directed to the Chat window.

   **Path**: body

---

**Options**

**Available**: Yes

**Track Number of Views**: Yes

**Date Restrictions**: Display After

Accessing the Chat Link

Navigate to the Content Area, and click the **Chat** link. You will be directed to the Chat listing page. Click the **Session Name** to join the chat.
How to Create a Chat Session

You can create chat sessions for real-time communication, and are available:

- **For the duration of the course**: Students can schedule meetings and use the session at any time.
- **At a specific time**: Student attendance at these sessions may be mandatory.
- **To group members only**: Students in a group can schedule sessions to discuss projects, divide up tasks, and brainstorm.

1. On the Course Menu, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Collaboration**.
   - OR -
   On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Collaboration**.
2. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click **Create Collaboration Session** on the Action Bar.

![Collaboration Sessions Diagram](image)

3. On the **Create Collaboration Session** page, type a **Session Name**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Name</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture Hall</td>
<td>Virtual Classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Chat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Under **Schedule Availability**, select the start and end time for the session. You can use the **Date Selection Calendar** to select the date, and **Time Selection Menu** to select the time.

5. Next to **Available**, select the **Yes** option.

6. Under **Collaboration Tool**, select **Chat** from the drop-down list.

7. Click **Submit**.

---

### How to Join a Chat Session

1. On the **Course Menu**, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Collaboration**.

   - **OR**

   On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Collaboration**.
2. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name** next to a Chat session.
Result

A Launching Chat Tool page appears. Do not leave this page until you are done chatting. The chat session will open in a new browser window and may take a moment to load.

Note: Chat will not work if pop-up blockers are enabled. Either turn off your pop-up blocker or make your course site a trusted site.

A list of participants and their roles appear in the first column.

- The Chat session moderator is represented by a globe icon. The Moderator is typically the instructor. The Moderator can modify participant roles, grant passive users permission to participate, expel users, and record and end the session.
- Active users are represented by a full color icon. An active user is typically a student. By default, active users can send messages as often as they like during a chat session.
- Passive users are represented by a gray toned icon. A passive user also is typically a student, but could also be a guest or observer. Passive users can observe the chat exchange, but must raise their hands (click on the hand icon) to request permission to send messages. If more than one user raises their hands, numbers are assigned to the handraise icons to represent the order they raised their hands.

The title of the Chat room appears at the top of the chat display panel.

All messages are shown in the chat display panel.

Type your message in the Compose text box and click Send. Alternatively, you can click the compose icon to open a new window, allowing for a bigger area for typing.

How to Send a Chat Message

   - OR -
On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Collaboration**.

2. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name** next to a Chat session.

3. On the **Chat** pop-up window, type your message in the **Compose** text box.
4. Click **Send**.

Sending Private Message

You can send private messages to other users if the Blackboard administrator has enabled this feature in the session controls. Private messages are not recorded or archived.

Private messages can appear with all your other messages in the chat display panel or you can choose to display them in a separate panel. Private messages are always preceded by “Private Message from.” Click **View** on the Action Bar and select where private messages will appear.

**Note:** Only users who have an active role can send private messages.

1. On the **Participant** list, select the recipient or recipients of your private message.
   - To send a private message to a single participant, double-click the participant’s name.
   - To select multiple users in a row, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last names.
   - To select users out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each name needed.

2. Click **Private Message**.

3. On the **Compose Private Message** pop-up window, type your message.
4. Click **Send**.

How to Modify Participant Roles

By default, participants are designated as active users when they enter a chat session. At any time, you can change the role to passive. Passive users can view the chat exchange, but can only contribute if they raise their hands and are granted permission by the moderator.

You control chat sessions to a greater degree when users are passive. For example, if each student must first ask for permission to participate, you are less likely to have a whole series of questions to respond to at once. You can also make only certain users passive if you feel they are dominating the conversation or responding inappropriately.

1. On the **Participants** list, click the name of the user.
2. Click an icon to activate or deactivate a user’s permission to chat. The icon in the Participants list is updated.

How to Record Chat Sessions

You can create a transcript of a chat session by recording a session using the recording functions on the right side of the Action Bar.

Session recordings can be beneficial if student participation is graded. Students can use the recordings for review purposes, or if a chat session was missed.

You can type a name for the recording or use the default name of the start date and time of the recording. You can create single or multiple recordings for a session.

1. After joining a chat session, click the Begins recording function.

2. On the Name Recording pop-up window, type a name for the chat recording or use the default.
3. Click **OK**.

The following table explains the recording functions on the Action Bar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>Function on Action Bar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Button](image) | **Click Begin recording** to create the transcript. Information is recorded as participants exchange messages. You can create more than one recording per session.  
*Note:* Clicking the **Begins recording** function again when recording is already in progress will stop the recording. |
| ![Button](image) | **Click Pause recording** to temporarily stop the recording. The chat display panel and the transcript will indicate the recording has been paused. Click it again to resume recording. |
| ![Button](image) | **Click Stop recording** to end the recording. Once a chat session has been stopped, it is not possible to add to the recording.  
*Tip:* If you end a recording in error, simply click the **Begins recording** function to start another transcript. Title the next recording "Part Two" or "Continued." |
| ![Button](image) | **Click Bookmark** to add comments to the recording. For example, make a note that you are about to introduce a new topic. When adding bookmark comments, remember students can view recordings. Bookmarks will appear in a different color than the chat text. |
Managing Chat Sessions

You can use the functions on the Action Bar to manage the chat session.

- **View**: Click **View** to choose where to display private messages.
- **Controls**: Click **Controls** to select which features each role can use. By default, only active users can send messages and private messages.
- **Clear**: Click **Clear** to clear your chat panel or the chat panel of all session participants.
- **End**: Click **End** to stop a session. The session is ended and all users are exited. If you are recording the session, the recording is also ended and it is no longer possible to add bookmarks to the recording.

Discussion Board

About the Discussion Board

Building a sense of community among students is crucial for a successful online experience. With the discussion board tool, course members can replicate the robust discussions that take place in the traditional classroom. Discussions can serve a range of purposes, such as:

- An online meeting place for social interaction among peers.
- An additional medium for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- A medium to pose questions about homework assignments, readings, and course content.
- A way to demonstrate the understanding or application of course material.
- A record of discussion that members can review at a later point.
- A graded activity that demonstrates understanding or application of course material.

After you determine what you need, you can create forums and threads to organize discussions into units or topics relevant to your course.

The discussion board tool allows for asynchronous interactions occurring over extended periods of time. This allows for more flexibility, as well as reflective communication.

Asynchronous communication offers convenience and flexibility to all participants. Some benefits include:

- Participants do not need to be in the same location or time zone.
- Participants can carefully consider and reflect on the initial message before responding. Hopefully, more thoughtful conversations can occur.
- You can accommodate different learning styles. For example, students who are shy about speaking in class may feel more comfortable responding to discussion threads.

For smaller course groups, you can also offer the group discussion board tool, available only to the members of the group. To learn more, see [How to Enable the Group Discussion Board Tool](#).

**Note**: Your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status.
Accessing the Discussion Board

You can access the discussion board in several ways. You can add a customized link to the Course Menu and to a course area. When you provide a link to the discussion board in a course area, students can access the tool alongside other course content. To learn more, see How to Add a Link to the Discussion Board in a Course Area. A new Blackboard Learn course offers two default options for accessing the discussion board tool.

Two Default Options

Access the discussion board using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Discussion Board.

-OR-

On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Discussion Board. From this link, you can access the course discussion board and the group discussion boards for the groups in your course.

How to Include a Discussion Link on the Course Menu

If you want students to access the discussion board often, you can include a link on the Course Menu for one-click access to the tool. You can also customize the name of the link.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON and point to the plus sign above the course menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.
2. Select Tool Link.
3. Type a **Name** for the link.
4. From the **Type** drop-down list, select **Discussion Board**.
5. Select the **Available to Users** check box.
6. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new tool link appears last in the course menu list. Press and drag the arrows icon to move the link into a new position. Access the link’s contextual menu to rename, delete, or hide the link from students.

**Example:**

You do not intend to use the discussion board until week three. You can create all the forums you need at the beginning of the term and hide the link until you need it.

**Understanding Discussion Forums and Threads**
Just as it is critical to plan and structure your course content, you should also provide structure for online discussions. Forums allow you to group related discussions and help your students stay on task. Before anyone can start message threads, you need to create one or more forums.

The main discussion board page displays a list of forums. A forum is an area where participants discuss a topic or a group of related topics. Within each forum, participants can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and all replies to it.

**Forum: How can we reduce our reliance on oil?**

- **Nuclear Power**
  - Post A
  - Post B
  - Post C

- **Solar Power**
  - Post 1
  - Post 2
  - Post 3

- **Conserve Power**
  - Post X
  - Post Y
  - Post Z

**Viewing the Discussion Board Page**

The **Discussion Board** page contains all the forums you have created for your course.

On the Action Bar, you can create forums and use the search function to search for discussion board content. By default, the search field appears collapsed to save screen space.
Discussion Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Posts</th>
<th>Unread Posts</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oceans in the News</td>
<td>Each week please post a link to a relevant news article related to oceanography or marine biology. Add the week number to your title.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf’s Up: Wave Dynamics and Wind Waves</td>
<td>This forum will hold our discussions on wave terminology, relevant websites, and questions.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick an ocean....</td>
<td>Soon each of you will &quot;explore&quot; an ocean and share your research. This can be a partner activity if you choose. If you have an idea of which ocean (or which aspect of an ocean if you prefer a more specific topic) or who you want to work with, respond to this post by Friday. Deciding on a topic will become a graded discussion post at the end of the month.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A To sort a column, click the column heading or caret. For example, if you sort the Forum column, the items appear in alphabetical or reverse alphabetical order.

B To view the posts, click the forum title. Forums containing unread posts appear in bold type.

C For each forum, view the total number of posts, the number of unread posts, and the number of users who have participated in the forum.

D For one-click access to the forum’s unread messages, click the link in the Unread Posts column.

Viewing a Discussion Forum

When you access a forum, a list of threads appears. The following columns display information for each thread:

- **Date**: Displays the date the thread was created.
- **Author**: Displays the name of the user who created the thread.
- **Status**: Indicates whether the thread is published, hidden, locked, unavailable, or a draft.
- **Unread Posts**: Displays the number of posts not yet accessed.
- **Total Posts**: Displays the total number of posts, including both read and unread posts.

To sort a column, click the column heading or caret.
Forum Features

A. Use the breadcrumbs to navigate to a previous page. Do not use the browser navigation controls because page load errors may occur.

B. Use the Action Bar functions to perform various actions, including:

- **Create Thread**: Add a new thread to a forum.
- **Search**: Search for discussion board content. By default, the search field appears collapsed to save screen space.
- **Grade Forum**: Grade posts, if you have enabled grading for the forum.
- **Thread Actions**: Make a selection from the drop-down list. Edit the status of the selected threads and perform other actions, such as marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.
- **Delete**: Remove selected threads from a forum. You cannot restore deleted threads. Use the **Make Unavailable** function in the **Thread Actions** drop-down list to completely hide threads from users without actually deleting the threads.
- **Collect**: Gather selected threads onto one page where you can sort, filter, and print them.

C. Select multiple threads’ check boxes or select the check box in the header row to select all threads for an action, such as deleting.

D. Click a thread title to read the posts. Forum titles containing unread posts appear in bold type.

E. Click **Edit Paging** to determine the number of items to view per page. Type a number in the box and click **Go**. Click the **X** to close the pop-up box.

Using List View and Tree View in Discussions

After you click a forum title, a page loads displaying all forum threads. You can view the page in either list view
or tree view. This choice remains in effect until you change it, and you may change it at any time. Change the view on the forum page, in the upper-right corner.

**List View**

Click **List View** to present the threads in a table format. Threads containing any unread posts appear in bold type.

From the Action Bar, you can create threads, collect, or delete posts.

**Note:** Depending on the settings you made when creating the forum, different functions appear on the action bar. For example, if you allowed tagging, a **Tags** function appears. To learn more, see Managing Discussions.

To sort a column, click the column heading or caret.

Select the check box next to a thread and make a selection from the **Thread Actions** drop-down list. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads. The actions include:

- Marking threads read or unread.
- Setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.
- Editing the status of the selected threads.
- Subscribing or unsubscribing for email alerts to threads, if enabled. To learn more, see How to Allow Email Alerts for New Discussion Posts.

**Tree View**

Click **Tree View** to show the thread starter messages and their replies. From the action bar, you can create threads, collect, or delete posts.
Course Tools > Discussion Board

Forum: Wave Dynamics and Wind Waves

You can expand and collapse threads with the plus and minus icons next to the titles. If a thread starter message contains unread posts, the thread starter title appears in bold type. On the action bar, use the **Collapse All** and **Expand All** functions to hide or see all posts included in all threads.

Select the check box next to a thread and make a selection from the **Message Actions** drop-down list on the action bar. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads. Actions include marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.

Viewing a Discussion Thread

When you click a thread, the **Thread Detail** page appears. The page is divided into three sections:

**Section 1:**
The Action Bar contains functions that allow users to select, flag, mark read or unread, and **collect posts**.

**Section 2:**
The Message List contains a list of all the posts in a thread, beginning with the initial post. The selected post is highlighted. Use the plus and minus icons to expand and collapse the posts.

**Section 3:**
The selected Current Post contains the text of the selected post and information about the post.

**Note:** If you allowed email notifications for the thread, **Subscribe** appears on the action bar. To learn more, see [How to Allow Email Alerts for New Discussion Posts](#).
On the **Thread Detail** page, you can navigate from post to post, adjust your view of the page, view information about the selected post, and reply to others.
A On the Action Bar, access functions, such as **Subscribe**, **Unsubscribe**, and **Search**. When subscribed to a thread, users receive an email alert when a post is updated or a reply is posted. You must enable this function when creating a forum. By default, the search field appears hidden to save screen space.

B Select multiple threads’ check boxes and make a selection in the **Message Actions** drop-down list. Actions include marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention. You can also use the functions for collecting and selecting all posts. To learn more, see **How to Collect Discussion Posts**.

C Arrange your view using the icons on the action bar.

- **Swap Up** or **Down**: Moves the selected message up or down on the page.
- **Hide** or **Restore**: Collapses or displays the list of messages.
- **Maximize** or **Minimize**: Displays the entire list of messages or the just the top few.
Use the Move to previous message or Move to next message arrows for navigating between messages in the thread.

Click Parent Post to display or hide the parent message in the thread.

**Related Tutorials**
- Creating a Discussion Board Forum (Flash movie | 4m 21s)
- Grading a Discussion Board Forum (Flash movie | 2m 39s)
- Creating a Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 2m 4s)
- Replying to a Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 2m 3s)
- Searching the Discussion Board and Collecting Posts (Flash movie | 2m 15s)
- Tagging Discussion Board Posts (Flash movie | 2m 42s)
- Rating Discussion Board Threads (Flash movie | 2m 15s)
- Managing Discussion Board Roles (Flash movie | 3m 10s)
- Changing Discussion Board Forum Settings (Flash movie | 1m 51s)
- Moderating Discussion Board Forums (Flash movie | 2m 25s)

**Creating Forums in the Discussion Board**

A discussion board forum is an area where participants discuss a topic or a group of related topics. Within each forum, users can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and all replies to it. You can create forums and threads to organize discussions into units or topics relevant to your course. To distinguish between forums and threads, see Understanding Discussion Forums and Threads.

Forum settings allow you to use the discussion board in different ways. For example, to control a forum, an instructor creates all threads, moderates, and grades the posts. For a student-led discussion, you can allow students to create new threads with the option of posting anonymously.

**Note:** Grading and rating discussion posts is not available with a basic license.

As you create forums, select the appropriate settings based on the pedagogical goals for your course:

- Evaluate student performance by grading forums and threads. To learn more, see Grading Discussion Board Participation.
- Use the moderation queue and post rating features to ensure quality postings and to assist with the workload. To learn more, see How to Control Discussion Board Content (Moderating) and Participating in the Discussion Board.
- Allow anonymous posting and thread editing to encourage forthright discourse and increase student participation.

To help students stay connected with discussion board content, you can enable email alerts and add a discussion board link alongside content. To learn more, see How to Allow Email Alerts for New Discussion Posts.

If you created groups in your course, you can enable group discussion boards. Group members are allowed to create their own forums and threads, and apply the settings to fit their needs. To learn more, see Creating Group Discussions.

**How to Create Forums in the Discussion Board**

1. On the Course Menu, click the Tools link. On the Tools page, select Discussion Board.

   -OR-

   On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section, and select Discussion Board. On the Discussion Board page, click the link to the appropriate discussion board.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click **Create Forum** on the Action Bar.

3. On the **Create Forum** page, type a **Name**. Choose a descriptive and unique name because users click this name to access the forum.

4. Optionally, type instructions or a description in the **Description** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment. The **Description** appears below the forum name on the **Discussion Board** page.
5. In the **Forum Availability** section, select **Yes** to make the forum available to users.

   **Tip:** You can create forums ahead of time and set the availability to **No** until the discussion is ready to start.

6. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set forums to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times or type dates and times in the boxes. Display restrictions do not affect the forum availability, only when it appears.

7. Select the **Forum Settings** based on your specific needs. For example, if you are grading posts and want to retain the posts as they were at the time of grading, clear the check box for **Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts**. To learn more about how you can use forum settings to meet your requirements, see [Suggestions for Forum Settings in the Discussion Board](#).
8. Click **Submit**.

**Forum Settings**
- Allow Anonymous Posts
- Allow Author to Delete Own Posts
  - All posts
  - Only posts with no replies
- Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts
- Allow Post Tagging
- Allow Users to Reply with Quote
- Allow File Attachments
- Allow Members to Create New Threads

**Subscribe**
- Do not allow subscriptions
- Allow members to subscribe to threads
- Allow members to subscribe to forum
  - Include body of post in the email
  - Include link to post

- Allow Members to Rate Posts
- Force Moderation of Posts

**Grade**
- No Grading in Forum
- Grade Discussion Forum: Points possible: 50
- Grade Threads

- Show participants in "needs grading" status after every 1 Posts

**Associated Rubrics**
- Add Rubric

**Submit**

**Result**

On the **Discussion Board** page, the new forum appears at the bottom of the list. To learn how to change the order of forums, see [How to Reorder Discussion Forums](#).
Suggestions for Forum Settings in the Discussion Board

The following list includes some of the ways you can control the behavior of forums in a discussion board.

- If you want to create effective social forums, select the **Allow Anonymous Posts** and **No Grading in Forum** options. Allowing students to post anonymously is important at the beginning of a course when they are still becoming comfortable with discussions. If quality and behavior monitoring is a concern, assign a moderator to review each post before making it public. To learn about moderating the discussion board, see [How to Control Discussion Board Content (Moderating)].

- If you want to create forums where students have control of the discussion, allow them to edit, delete, and rate posts. To learn more about ratings, see [How to Rate Discussion Posts]. Also, you can allow students to create new threads and direct the discussion.

- If you want to have a tightly controlled forum and use it for evaluating student performance, select the **Force Moderation of Posts** and **Grade Forum** or **Grade Threads** options. To be sure students focus on the existing threads, do not allow the creation of new threads.

- When you want your students to focus on the existing threads, clear the check box for **Allow Members to Create New Threads**.

- If you allow authors to edit their published posts, consider locking the thread after grading. Users cannot change locked posts. To learn more, see [How to Change the Status of a Thread in a Discussion Forum]

- You cannot select some settings in combination. For example, if you are grading forums or threads, anonymous posts are not allowed. Also, if thread grading is enabled, members cannot create new threads.

- If you select **Grade Forum** or **Grade Threads**, you can choose the number of posts that will place the activity in needs grading status. To learn more, see [About the Grade Center]. You might want to grade students only when they have made a certain number of posts, rather than grading each time they make a single post.

- When the **Grade Forum** option is selected, you can associate rubrics with a forum. If the **Grade Threads** option is selected, you can associate rubrics when creating or editing a thread. To learn
When you enable email subscription, students can receive email alerts for new posts or replies. You can allow students to subscribe to an entire forum or to specific threads within a forum. To learn more, see How to Allow Email Alerts for New Discussion Posts.

When you first create a forum or when you edit the forum settings, you select the options for subscriptions to forums or threads.
1. Access the discussion board, and access a forum’s the contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.

3. On the **Edit Forum** page, in the **Forum Settings** section, select the **Subscribe** options.
   - **Allow members to subscribe to threads** allows users to select specific threads within the forum.
   - **Allow members to subscribe to forum** allows subscription to all threads within the forum.
   - **Include body of post in the email** displays the message text and a link to reply to the message in the email notification.
   - **Include link to post** displays a link to the message in the email notification.
How to Add a Link to the Discussion Board in a Course Area

You can incorporate the discussion board into course areas, allowing students to access the tool alongside content. For example, you can add links to the discussion board itself or specific discussion forums to any Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.

**Example:**

In a content area, you can add a forum link following lecture notes to gather questions on the material presented or after an assignment to gather students’ perceptions on how they did. You can add adaptive release rules or date availability restrictions to limit students’ access. This allows them to access content in a specified order, such as reading a PDF before adding posts to the discussion board. To learn about using adaptive release to control when content is released, see About Adaptive Release.

**Note:** You need to create forums before you can link to them in your course. To learn how to create forums, see How to Create Forums in the Discussion Board.

1. Access the content area, learning module, lesson plan, or folder where you want to link to the discussion board or forum. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Tools to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Discussion Board**.

4. On the **Create Link: Discussion Board** page, select the **Link to Discussion Board Page** option to link to the discussion board itself.

   - OR -

   Select the **Select a Discussion Board Forum** option and select a forum from the list.

   - OR -

   Click **Create New Forum** to add a link to a forum you create at this time. You select all forum settings at the time of creation. The newly created forum appears in the list of forums to choose from when adding the link in your course.
5. Click **Next**.

6. On the next **Create Link: Discussion Board** page, type a **Link Name**. The **Link Name** cannot exceed 50 characters. Students click the name to access the discussion board or forum.

7. Optionally, type instructions or a description in the **Text** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder.

8. For the **Available** option, select **Yes** to make the link available to users.

9. For the **Track Number of Views** option, select **Yes** or **No**. If you enable tracking, the number of times the link is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom is recorded. To learn about tracking, see How to Enable Statistics Tracking and View Statistics Reports.

10. For **Date Restrictions**, you can set the link to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect the availability of the discussion board or forum content, only when it appears.
11. Click Submit.

### Chapter 1

#### Required Reading

Read Chapter 1 in your textbook. All other assignments are listed in this Content Area. See your Syllabus for deadlines.

#### Oceans in the News

After reading Chapter 1 in your textbook, post to this Discussion Board forum. This is a required assignment and is worth 25 points. You may post more than once and please respond to your classmates' posts.

#### History of Ocean Exploration

Attached Files:  
- Ch1-Assignment_Instructions.doc (25.5 KB)  
- Ch1-QuestionsExercises.doc (24.5 KB)

After reading and reviewing all of the material in Chapter 1, please complete this assignment.

Student view of a forum link in a content area
Creating Threads in the Discussion Board

In a discussion board forum, you can start new threads to begin a conversation. A thread includes the initial post and all replies to it. When you create a forum, you can allow or not allow members to start threads. Generally, the purpose of the forum dictates whether or not members can start threads. A moderated, graded forum used to evaluate student performance is usually tightly controlled, and members cannot create threads. Other forums are designed for members to share opinions and thoughts on tangential or unrelated topics. In this case, you might allow members to create threads and spark discussions.

You can change the status of existing threads and determine which threads appear in a forum to help organize your view.

**Note:** Creating a thread as an instructor is the same as creating a thread as a student. If grading is enabled, you can also set the thread to be graded.

**Example:**
You create a forum that addresses a broad subject, such as "Addicted to Oil." Next, you create two threads containing the specific issues to be discussed, such as replacing oil usage with nuclear power, and the pros and cons of conservation. To ensure students post only to existing threads, consider disallowing thread creation in the forum settings.

![Diagram of forum threads](image)

**Example:**
You create a forum and ask a question or provide the instructions or details in the description, such as "How can we reduce our reliance on oil?" Then, students create threads for each solution to the problem of oil addiction. All members post to existing threads to comment on given answers or create new threads to present new solutions. In the forum settings, ensure you select the **Allow Members to Create New Threads** option.

**Note:** If you enabled thread grading, members cannot create new threads.
How to Create Threads in a Discussion Forum

In the following example, you create a graded thread.

1. Access a discussion board forum.
2. On the Action Bar, click **Create Thread**.
3. On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**.
4. Type instructions, a description, or a question in the **Message** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
5. Alternatively, in the **Attachments** section, attach a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

   **Note:** Files uploaded by students are not saved in the course repository.
6. If you chose to grade threads when you created the forum, you decide on a thread-by-thread basis whether to grade a thread. In the **Grading** section, select the check box for **Grade Thread** and type **Points possible**. You can choose to show participants in needs grading status after a certain
number of posts, rather than with each individual post. To learn more, see The Needs Grading Page. You can also associate a rubric to use for grading by pointing to Add Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.

7. Click Save Draft to store a draft of the post or click Submit to create the thread.

Result
The newly created thread appears in the forum.
If you enabled grading, two functions appear in the Grade column:

A Click Grade Thread to evaluate the posts.
B Click Grade to enable grading for a thread and assign a value.

How to Change the Status of a Thread in a Discussion Forum

You can change the status of a thread to keep students focused on relevant discussions and to help organize a forum containing many threads. When a user creates and submits a thread, it is assigned the Published status.

The following table describes which thread status to select to accomplish various objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Goal for Thread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publish</td>
<td>Make thread available to all users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide</td>
<td>Hide the thread from immediate view, but still allow users the option of reading the threads. Unneeded content is hidden from view, helping users find relevant content. Users cannot reply to or edit hidden threads even if editing is enabled for the thread. Users can view hidden threads using the Display drop-down list on the Action Bar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Unavailable</td>
<td>Hide thread from view of all users except forum managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock</td>
<td>Allow users to read the thread, but not edit or add to it. Locking a thread allows you to assign grades without users updating or changing posts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlock</td>
<td>Unlock a locked thread to select another status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the following steps to change the status of a thread or multiple threads at one time.

1. Access the forum and change to List View, if needed.
2. Select the check box next to each thread requiring a change of status. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads.
3. From the Thread Actions drop-down list, select a new status for the selected thread or threads.
Note: Alternatively, access a thread’s contextual menu and select a thread status.

Result
The status for each thread appears in the Status column. If you save a draft of a thread to edit in the future, Draft appears in the Status column.

How to Change Which Threads Appear in a Discussion Forum
If you have many threads in a forum and assign different statuses to the threads, you can choose which threads appear in a forum. For example, if you start several threads and save them as drafts, you can choose to show only those drafts and select the threads to edit and publish.

1. Access the forum and change to List View, if needed.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Display to access the drop-down list.
3. Select the type of threads to view in the forum.

Result

The forum page displays only those threads that have the status selected from the Display drop-down list.

Developing Successful Online Discussions

The most common form of interaction in an online course is through the discussion board using forums established by an instructor. Participation and interaction in the discussion board does not occur naturally, but must be intentionally designed into your courses. To encourage engaging, quality discussion, craft discussion questions carefully and create inquiry.

If you want to encourage participation, consider allowing students to post anonymously. Also, allow students to create new threads. This flexibility may encourage members to post their ideas and questions. You can also provide incentive by grading the discussion or adding exam questions based on discussion content.

You can help your students feel comfortable and provide them with guidelines as they begin to use the discussion board.

The following table lists four steps for developing successful online discussions to help build community and fulfill assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define participation</td>
<td>Students need to be aware of your expectations. Create a forum where students can read about etiquette and access grading rubrics. Model proper online interaction and reinforce appropriate behavior with public recognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft an effective</td>
<td>Avoid questions that students can answer with a yes or no. Instead, phrase the question so it provokes thought and research. Discussion questions need to be open-ended to promote critical thinking. A carefully worded starter question can be the most important factor for more productive discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
<td>Incorporate multimedia resources into your questions to reduce the monotony of purely text based interactions. With the popularity of services like YouTube™, you can ask students to view a clip and ask for responses. Use the Mashups feature to include images, videos, and slide presentations to your questions. If you add a mashup to a forum, it appears in the description on the Discussion Board page. Students can also add mashups to their replies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Creating Group Discussions

You can create formal groups of students to collaborate on course work, and provide each group with its own group area. You can include links to group tools to help students collaborate and communicate. For example, you can create a special group discussion board, available only to the members of a course group.

Group discussion boards are separate from the regular course discussion board, which is available to all course members. Members of a group can create and manage their own forums. To learn about creating course groups, see [Creating Groups](#).

**Example:**

You assign students to groups, providing each group with a problem or situation to explore and develop into a class presentation. The groups can use the chat tool and their group discussion boards to come to consensus about topic choices. They can also use their group discussion boards to post internet source links, and then members can post replies on their value. Also, they can use the group discussion board to divide up tasks and refine the outline. Members post portions of the presentation, and all members post replies regarding usefulness, grammar, flow, and for agreement on the final product.

**Note:** Your school controls whether this tool is available. If it is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status.

## How to Enable the Group Discussion Board Tool

When you create a course group, you can select the discussion board tool to help groups collaborate and communicate.

1. On the [Create Group](#) page, in the **Tool Availability** section, select the check box for [Discussion Board](#).
2. Click Submit.

Result

The **Group Discussion Board** tool appears in the **My Groups** section and on the group homepage. Students access their group discussion boards by expanding the **My Groups** section following the Course Menu or on the group homepage. Students click the right-pointing arrows in the **My Groups** section to access the group homepage.
How to Make a Group Discussion Board Unavailable

You cannot delete a group discussion board without deleting the group, but you can make the tool unavailable. Any existing posts are not removed—just made unavailable until you make the group discussion board available again.

**Note:** When you make a graded group discussion board unavailable, the grade column associated with that group discussion board remains in the Grade Center.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Users and Groups** section and select **Groups**.
2. Change Edit Mode to **ON**. On the **Groups** page, access the group's contextual menu.
3. Select **Edit**.
4. On the **Edit Group** page, in the **Tool Availability** section, clear the check box for **Discussion Board**.
5. Click **Submit**.
Result

When members access their group homepage or the My Groups section, the link to the group discussion board no longer appears. You may make the tool available again at any time.

How to Edit the Settings for a Group Discussion Board

Each new group discussion board contains a default forum titled with the group’s name. You and all assigned group member can edit the forum name and provide a description.

Note: If you want to grade participation in a group discussion board, you can edit a forum’s settings and enable grading in the forum or threads. You assign individual grades for group member contributions to the group discussion board.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section and select Discussion Board.

2. On the Discussion Board page, the course discussion board and all group discussion boards appear. Click a group discussion board link.

3. On the next Discussion Board page, access the forum’s contextual menu.
4. Select **Edit**.

5. On the **Edit Forum** page, change the **Name**, provide a **Description**, and edit the **Forum Availability** and **Forum Settings**. If you want to grade the group’s posts, you can enable grading for the forum or threads and type the **Points possible**.
2. **Forum Availability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enter Date and Time Restrictions</td>
<td>Display After</td>
<td>Display Until</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Forum Settings**

- Allow Anonymous Posts
- Allow Author to Delete Own Posts
  - All posts
  - Only posts with no replies
- Allow Author to Edit Own Published Posts
- Allow Post Tagging
- Allow Users to Reply with Quote
- Allow File Attachments
- Allow Members to Create New Threads

Subscribe
- Do not allow subscriptions
- Allow members to subscribe to threads
- Allow members to subscribe to forum
  - Include body of post in the email
  - Include link to post

- Allow Members to Rate Posts
- Force Moderation of Posts

Grade
- No Grading in Forum
- **Grade Forum:** Points possible: 50
- Grade Threads

4. **Submit**

Result

If you provided a description, it appears in the **Description** column on the group discussion board page. You or any group member can create more forums. To learn about creating forums, see [How to Create Forums in the Discussion Board](#).

**Participating in the Discussion Board**

In the discussion board, threads grow as users respond to the initial and subsequent posts. Replies build on one another to construct a conversation. As the number of posts grows, users can filter, sort, collect, and tag posts if tagging is enabled. To learn more about tagging, see [How to Tag Discussion Threads](#).
To help students understand your expectations, establish discussion etiquette immediately. You can model proper online interaction and reinforce appropriate behavior with public recognition. In addition, you can provide specific guidelines, such as:

- Use descriptive subject lines to make threads easy to follow and scan.
- Keep posts short and use uncomplicated language. Your audience is reading onscreen and may have several messages to read.
- Back up your statements when you agree or disagree with others.
- Use professional language, including proper grammar, in academic-related posts. No slang, emoticons, or chat acronyms allowed.
- Use attachments or links to websites for long, detailed information.
- Stay on topic. If you want to introduce a new tangent, find a suitable forum or start a new thread if it is allowed.
- Be respectful of others’ opinions and remember the golden rule—to treat others as you want to be treated.

For graded forums and threads, tell students specifically what you expect both in terms of quantity and quality of posts, and consider sharing some exemplary posts. You can also use rubrics to help students understand your objectives. By compiling your grading criteria in a rubric, you can provide students with clear performance standards and grade consistently. To learn more, see Rubrics.

How to Reply to Discussion Posts

**Note:** Users can reply to published threads, but cannot reply to locked or hidden threads. To learn more, see How to Change the Status of a Thread in a Discussion Forum.

1. Access a forum and select a thread.
2. On the Thread Detail page, click a post’s title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame. You can view the text of the post and information about the post, such as the author and posted date.
3. Click **Reply**. Alternatively, click **Quote** to include the post’s text as part of your reply.

4. On the **Reply to Post** page, click **View Original Post** on the Action Bar to include the original message on the page while replying. Click **Close Original Post** to hide the original post from view. If needed, edit the **Subject**.

5. Type a reply in the **Message** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

6. Alternatively, in the **Attachments** section, attach a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
○ If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
-OR-
○ If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

*Note:* Files uploaded by students are not saved to the course repository.

7. Click **Save Draft** to store a draft of the post or click **Submit** to publish your reply.

### Result

Your reply appears on the **Thread Detail** page, indented under the parent post. If you attached a file, a paper clip icon appears in the post’s row. Click the title to open the post in the current post portion of the content frame. Use the **Move to previous** and **Move to next** arrows to view another post or use the breadcrumbs to return to the forum or the **Discussion Board** page.
How to Rate Discussion Posts

You can use the discussion board for peer review. Students start threads and include their work in their initial posts. Other users review the work, assign a rating to the initial post, and include comments in a response. Rating posts also allows users to focus on messages considered especially informative or useful by others. If you enabled rating, users can rate posts using a five star system. You can also rate posts.

*Note:* To enable rating, select the **Allow Members to Rate Posts** option when creating or editing the forum. To learn more, see the **How to Edit Discussion Forums**.

1. Access the forum and select the thread.
2. On the **Thread Detail** page, click a post's title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame.
3. **For Your Rating**, select one to five stars. You can add and delete stars at any time.

Your rating is included in the **Overall Rating**, which is the combined rating of all users. Use the Move to previous and Move to next arrows to view another post or use the breadcrumbs to return to the forum or the Discussion Board page.

**How to Search Discussion Posts**

You can search for specific text—a phrase, word, or part of a word—in the discussion board. The results appear on a search results page.

1. Access the discussion board, a forum, or a thread.
2. On the Action Bar, click **Search**. The **Search** field expands.
3. Type a search criterion in the **Search** box.
4. In the drop-down list, select an area to search:
   - Current Discussion Board
   - All Forums in Course
- Current Forum
- Current Thread

**Note:** The options in the drop-down list depend on where your search began. All Forums in Course includes any group discussion boards in your course. Students do not see results from group discussion boards unless they are members of that group.

5. To further narrow your search results, select the **After** and **Before** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times.

6. Click **Go**.

---

**Results**

On the **Search Results** page, you can read and print the results. On the action bar, click **Print Preview** to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select
which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the Filter function and the Sort By and Order drop-down lists on the action bar. To learn more, see How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting and How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting.

On this page, you can also reply to posts and mark messages read or unread. Click the Quote function to include the post's text as part of your reply. To view the responses to a post, click the post's hyperlinked title to navigate to the Thread Detail page.

How to Collect Discussion Posts

On the Thread Detail page, you can read one post at a time. To read multiple posts from the same page, use the collect function. After collecting posts, you can filter, sort, print, and tag them. To learn about tagging posts, see How to Tag Discussion Threads.
The collect function is also available from the forum page where you can gather all the posts made to different threads. After collecting posts, filter and sort the messages to further organize them.

**Example:**
A student posts a question to request help and seven classmates reply. The student can collect the initial post and the replies on one collection page to read or print.

Follow these steps to collect some or all posts in a thread:

1. Access a forum and select a thread.
2. On the **Thread Detail** page, select the check boxes of the posts to collect. If a post has replies and you want them to appear on a collection page, click the plus sign to expand the post and select the check boxes for those messages.
   
   **Note:** To select all the posts in a thread, click **Select: All** above the Message List. All check boxes for all the posts are selected whether they are expanded or collapsed.

3. On the Action Bar, click **Collect**.

![Thread Detail](image)

**Result**
On the **Collection** page, you can read and print the results. On the action bar, click **Print Preview** to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the **Filter** function and the **Sort By** and **Order** drop-down lists on the action bar. To learn more, see How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting and How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting.

On this page, you can also reply to posts and mark messages read or unread. Click the **Quote** function to include the post's text as part of your reply. To view the responses to a post, click the post's hyperlinked title to navigate to the **Thread Detail** page.
How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting

To narrow your search results or sort a collection, you can use the filter function. If you print the posts after filtering, they print in the order they appear on the page.

**Note:** If the author or authors of some posts are no longer enrolled in your course, the posts may appear out of order.

1. On the **Search Results** or **Collection** page, click the **Filter** function on the Action Bar to expand the field. Select options from the following drop-down lists:
   - **Author:** Select All or select an author.
   - **Status:** Show All or select a status.
   - **Read Status:** Select Show All, Read, or Unread posts.
   - **Tags:** Show All tags or select a tag. To learn about tagging posts, see How to Tag Discussion Threads.
2. Click **Go** to apply the selections. You can further organize the results using the **Filter** function and the **Sort By** and **Order** drop-down lists on the action bar. To learn more, see How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting and How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting.

3. Click the **X** to close the **Filter** field.

### How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting

To narrow your search results or sort a collection, you can use the **Sort by** and **Order** drop-down lists. If you print the posts after sorting, the posts print in the order they appear on the page.

*Note:* If the author or authors of some posts are no longer enrolled in your course, the posts may appear out of order.

1. On the **Search Results** or **Collection** page, point to **Sort by** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

2. Select an option:
   - Author's Last Name
   - Author's First Name
   - Subject
   - Date of Last Post
   - Thread Order

   *Note:* If you enabled the rating of posts, you can also sort by **Overall Rating**.

3. On the action bar, point to **Order** to access the drop-down list.
4. Sort posts in ascending or descending order.

Related Tutorials

- Creating a Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 2m 4s)
- Replying to a Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 2m 3s)
- Searching the Discussion Board and Collecting Posts (Flash movie | 2m 15s)
- Tagging Discussion Board Posts (Flash movie | 2m 42s)

Managing Discussions

You can perform tasks to manage both the discussion board itself and the content within forums and threads. For example, to keep students focused as the term progresses, edit forum settings or organize forums and threads to attract attention again. You can also copy forums to other locations, edit content, and delete unneeded forums or threads.

You can assign forum roles to limit access to a forum or to help with forum administration. For example, to help control the discussion board content that is presented to your students, you can assign a responsible user the role of moderator. You can also enable tagging and attach tags to help students locate important posts. To learn more, see How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles.

Note: Your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status.

How to Edit Discussion Forums

As the discussion progresses, you can solve some discussion issues by editing forum settings. For example, if students are posting to the wrong topic, you can fine-tune the forum name or description to clarify the forum’s purpose.

Tip: You can create all forums at the beginning of the term and make them unavailable. When a forum is needed, edit the forum to make it available.
1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.

3. On the **Edit Forum** page, change the forum's name, description, availability, and settings.
4. Click **Submit**.

**How to Edit Discussion Threads**

You can edit posts in any thread. If a student added inappropriate or inaccurate content, you can edit the post. When you create or edit a forum, you determine whether students are allowed to edit their published posts.

1. Access a forum and select a thread.
2. On the **Thread Detail** page, click a post's title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame. You can view the text of the post and information about the post, such as the author and posted date.
3. Click **Edit**.

4. On the **Edit Post** page, make the edits.

5. Click **Submit**. Your edits appear in the post.

**How to Delete Discussion Forums and Threads**

When you delete a forum or thread, all content is permanently deleted. For a less permanent solution, you can make a forum unavailable.

When deleting graded discussion content, you determine if the Grade Center column and scores are also deleted.
1. Access the discussion board and access a forum or thread’s contextual menu.
2. Select **Delete** to permanently delete the forum or thread’s content.

3. Click **OK** in the pop-up window.
4. On the **Delete Confirmation** page, you have two options:
   - **Do not select check boxes**: The graded forum or thread will be deleted, but the Grade Center column and scores you assigned are retained. For example, you graded all students’ posts and want to keep the Grade Center column for the final grade calculations. If you delete the forum or thread, yet retain the Grade Center column, you can delete that column from the Grade Center at any time.
   - **Select the check boxes**: The grade column in the Grade Center and the forum or thread are deleted. For example, if you do not want to include the grade column for the discussion posts in the final grade, you can safely delete both.
5. Click **Remove**.

### How to Reorder Discussion Forums

You can help students focus on the most relevant content by reorganizing your discussion board. When you create a forum, it is added to the bottom of the list. You can move the current forum to the top or delete forums that are no longer relevant.

Reorder forums using the drag-and-drop function—a double-tipped arrow or handle—to move them into place. Alternatively, reorder forums using the keyboard accessible reordering tool on the Action Bar.

**Drag-and-Drop Function**

1. Access the discussion board and press the arrows next to a forum you want to move. The item is highlighted.
2. Drag the forum into a new location in the list.
3. Release the forum to place it in its new location.

Keyboard Accessible Reordering Tool

1. On the action bar, click the keyboard accessible reordering icon represented by two arrows.
2. In the Reorder box, select a forum title.
3. Below the Reorder box, use the up and down arrows to adjust the order.
4. Click Submit. A pop-up box states: Items have been reordered.
5. Click OK.

How to Copy Discussion Forums

You can copy discussion forums and add them to the current discussion board or to a group discussion board in
the same course. To learn more, see Creating Group Discussions. Copying does not delete the content from
the original location in a course. You have the option to copy a forum, the settings, and the posts, or to copy just
a forum’s settings.

**Note:** To copy discussion board forums to another course, use the copy course utility. To learn more, see
Copying Courses.

**Example: Copy the entire forum**
If two distinct topics emerge during a discussion, you can create separate forums for these topics. Copy the
forum and delete the off-topic posts from each forum.
When you copy content, all threads and replies appear in the new location, along with any file attachments.

**Example: Copy forum settings only**
You can base a new forum on the settings from another forum. If you want students to submit a second
research paper, copy the settings of the first research paper’s forum. The forum is added with no threads.

1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select Copy.
3. On the Copy Forum page, type a Name.
4. Select the option to copy either: Entire forum or Forum settings only.
5. In the Location box, select a discussion board to copy to. To select the course’s discussion board,
   select the course ID.
6. Click Submit. On the Discussion Board page, the copied forum is added to the bottom of the list.

**How to Tag Discussion Threads**
Tags are text labels that act like bookmarks. You can tag posts to group similar messages together. For
example, if the subject of **scientific notation** is discussed often, tag each of the posts on this topic. Students
can read, filter, and search messages using these tags, but they cannot create tags.

**Note:** In a forum’s settings, you must enable Allow Post Tagging for tags to be created. To learn how to
change a forum’s settings, see How to Edit Discussion Forums.

**Tip:** For faster discussion board loading, you can disable post tagging when forum usage is heavy. When you
enable tagging again, all tags are restored.
1. Access the forum containing the threads to tag.
2. In List View, select the check boxes for the thread or threads to tag. You can select all the threads in a forum by selecting the check box in the header row.
3. On the Action Bar, click Collect.
4. On the Collection page, you can filter and sort your results.
5. Type a tag name in the Tag Text box.
6. Select the check boxes of the messages to assign the tag name to. To select all the messages, click Select: All above the list.
7. Click Add next to the Tag Text box.

Result

On the Collection Page

On the Collection page, the tag you provided appears below each message you selected. If you provide multiple tags, all appear. You can include more tags following the same steps. To delete a tag, click the red X next to it.
Alternatively, you can add a tag to an individual message. Below the message, type the tag in the Add Tag box and click OK or click Choose from Existing to choose a tag from a list of tags that appear on the Collection page.

On the Forum Page

On the forum page, all tags appear in the Tags column. The column is only visible in List View.
On the action bar, click Tags to access the drop-down list and select a tag or Show All Tags. After you make a selection, only those messages appear on the forum page.

To sort messages by tag, click a tag in the Tags column. The messages with that tag appear on a collection page.

How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles

In a forum, each user has a forum role and can have only one role per forum. By default, instructors have the role of manager and students have the role of participant. When you are logged in as an instructor, you cannot change your own forum role. To learn more about roles, see How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles.

Note: Your school determines which course roles are available.

You can assign forum roles to limit access to a forum or to help with forum administration. The following table describes the forum roles and their permissions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Permissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Managers have full control over a forum and can change forum settings, moderate posts, and assign roles and grades. Users with a course role of instructor or teaching assistant are granted this role by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builder</td>
<td>Course builders can edit, copy, and delete forums, but not grade or manage forums. Inside a forum, a course builder can perform the same actions on posts as an instructor, with the exception of grading threads. Course builders can also create new threads in a forum, and can enable grading for a thread and type a value. Users with a course role of course builder are granted this forum role by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>Moderators can delete, edit, and lock all posts in any forum, even if the forum does not use the moderation queue. If you use a moderation queue, the moderator approves or rejects posts in the queue before they are made available to all users. Users with a course role of instructor or course builder are granted this forum role by default.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Tools > Discussion Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Permissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grader</td>
<td>Graders can read, reply to, and grade posts. The grader role has some access to the Grade Center, but cannot assign grades to their own work. Users with a course role of grader are granted this forum role by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Participants can read and reply to posts. Users with a course role of student are granted this role by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader</td>
<td>Readers can read the contents of a forum, but cannot post responses or add threads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocked (Block user from forum)</td>
<td>Blocked users cannot access the forum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the following steps to assign a forum role.

1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select Manage.
3. On the Manage Forum Users page, a list of users appears. Access a user’s contextual menu.
   Tip: If you want to show only one role at a time, make a selection in the Display Forum Role drop-down list on the Action Bar and click Go.
4. Select a new forum role. The new role appears in the Forum Role column for the user.
5. Click OK to return to the discussion board. Alternatively, click the forum title in the breadcrumbs to return to the forum.

Tip: To change multiple roles at one time, select the users’ check boxes and, point to Edit Role on the action bar to access the drop-down list. Select the check box in the header row to select all users.

How to Control Discussion Board Content (Moderating)

As an online instructor, your role is to facilitate the conversation and exchange of ideas on the discussion
You need to ensure that students feel comfortable to share, while also monitoring responses and keeping everyone focused and on track. At the same time, you want to be careful not to dominate or impede the flow of the discussion.

Occasionally, students may introduce inappropriate material for the class discussion. Depending on the maturity and sensitivity of the students in your course, you may need to review student posts for inappropriate content before sharing posts with the rest of the class.

In a discussion forum, you can assign a user the role of moderator. A moderator reviews posts before they are added to a thread and appear in the discussion board. To learn more, see How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles.

When you create a moderated forum, all posts to the forum are added to a moderation queue. The moderator reviews each post and does one of the following:

- Publishes the post.
- Returns the post to the sender without a message.
- Returns the post to the sender with a message.

The moderator can delete, edit, and lock posts in a forum even if the forum does not use the moderation queue. To learn more, see How to Delete Discussion Forums and Threads, How to Edit Discussion Threads, and How to Change the Status of a Thread in a Discussion Forum.

You can choose to moderate a forum when creating it or by editing an existing forum. Only posts added after enabling forum moderation are available for review in the moderation queue. To learn more, see Creating Forums in the Discussion Board.

**Note:** If you do not assign a moderator, the manager must take responsibility for approving posts in a moderated forum.

Use the following steps to allow the moderation of posts in an existing forum.

1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select Edit.
3. On the Edit Forum page, in the Forum Settings section, select the Force Moderation of Posts check box and click Submit.

**Tip:** When choosing a moderated forum, do not allow students to edit or delete posts. This ensures that the post approved is the one viewed by users.
4. After posts are submitted, access the forum. In the moderator view, no posts appear because the messages are waiting approval. On the Action Bar, click **Moderate Forum**.

*Note:* The **Moderate Forum** function appears only to those users who have a forum role of manager or moderator. In the student view, the author can see the post in **Tree View** with a reminder it is in the moderation queue.

5. On the **Moderation Queue** page, the posts appear in alphabetical order by title. Click the column title or caret to sort by post title, author, or date. To review a post, click **Moderate**.
6. On the **Moderate Post** page, read the post and select the **Publish** or **Return** option. Published messages are immediately posted to the thread.

7. Optionally, type feedback in the text box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text, link to files in Course Files or the Content Collection, and include web links, multimedia, and Mashups.

   **Note:** Though feedback is optional, this is an opportunity to provide guidance, ask questions, redirect a student's focus, and explain why a post was returned.
8. Click **Submit**.

Result

Returned posts no longer appear in the moderation queue. Students see their returned posts in the forum. When returned posts are opened, students see an explanation, if feedback was included, and they can create new threads as needed.
Grading Discussion Board Participation

In a face-to-face classroom setting, students are expected to participate in class discussions and that participation is part of the equation when assessing performance. You may find that assessing this type of participation is ambiguous. How do you differentiate between a student who is active, but does not advance the discussion, from a student who speaks less frequently, but with greater impact?

Student interactions with the discussion board create a permanent record of participation, yet you also need to have reasonable expectations about what can be accomplished in an online discussion. Due to its asynchronous nature, more time may be needed for well-articulated points to emerge in the online environment. In addition to providing a practical number of course discussion opportunities, students need timely and constructive responses regarding the quality of their contributions. Evaluation not only lets them know how they performed, but shapes the improvement of future interactions.

You can assign discussion grades within a forum or thread. You can assign grades based on their participation, on the quality of their posts, or a combination of the two. You can create rubrics and refer to them while grading forums and threads, but you need to create and associate the rubrics in advance. To learn more, see Rubrics.

The following table details the four steps in the discussion grading process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>When you create a graded forum or thread, a column is created automatically in the Grade Center. The name of the forum or thread is used as the column title. You can edit the title in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate</td>
<td>Students participate in the discussion. As the discussion progresses, you can participate and provide feedback by replying to, rating, and moderating posts. To learn more, see Participating in the Discussion Board and How to Control Discussion Board Content (Moderating).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>You view students' posts and assign grades. You can lock threads after they are graded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Grade</td>
<td>The grades are saved in the discussion board and the Grade Center. Students can view their grades in My Grades.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to Enable Grading in the Discussion Board

When you create or edit a forum, you can enable grading options. After grading is enabled, a Grade Center column is created automatically.

The grade settings appear in the Forum Settings section of the Create Forum page and the Edit Forum page.

- Select Grade Discussion Forum and type a point value to evaluate participants on performance throughout a forum.
- Select Grade Threads to evaluate participants on performance in each thread.
- Optionally, select the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and the number of posts required to show participants in needs grading status. Applying this setting will show the needs grading icon (izarre) in the Grade Center. The posts are placed in the queue on the Needs Grading page after the specified number of posts are made by each user. If you select a grading option and do NOT select the check box, the needs grading icon does not appear in the Grade Center and posts do not appear on the Needs Grading page. To learn more, see About the Needs Grading Page.
**Note:** If you choose three posts from the drop-down list and a user submits two, the in progress icon (่ม) appears in the Grade Center cell and the discussion board until the specified number of posts is met.

- Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to Add Rubric. This option appears in the Forum Settings section when Grade Forum is selected, and in the Grading section of the Create Thread page when Grade Threads is selected. To learn more, see Rubrics.

**Enable Grading During Forum Creation**

1. Access the discussion board and click Create Forum on the Action Bar.
2. On the Create Forum page, provide the appropriate information. In the Forum Settings section, select Grade Discussion Forum or Grade Threads. If you chose to grade the forum, type the Points possible. Optionally, select the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and select the number of posts from the drop-down list.
3. Click Submit.
Enable Grading by Editing a Forum

1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select Edit.
3. On the Edit Forum page, in the Forum Settings section, select Grade Discussion Forum or Grade Threads. If you chose to grade the forum, type the Points possible. Optionally, select the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and select the number of posts from the drop-down list.
4. Click Submit.

Enable Thread Grading During Thread Creation

If you chose to grade threads when you created a forum, you decide on a thread-by-thread basis whether to grade a thread.

Note: If you select the Grade Threads option, users cannot create new threads.

1. On the Create Thread page, select the Grade Thread check box and type the Points possible. You can determine when posts go into needs grading status by selecting the check box for Show participants in needs grading status and selecting the number of posts from the drop-down list.
2. Click Submit.
3. In the forum, the **Grade Thread** function appears in the thread’s **Grade** column.

Enable Thread Grading After Thread Creation

When you select the **Grade Threads** option, you can enable thread grading directly from the thread list in a forum.
1. Click the **Grade** function in a thread's **Grade** column.

   ![Forum: Oil Discovery in our Oceans and the Potential of Polluting our Waters Further](image)

2. Type the **Points possible**.
3. Click **Submit**. The **Grade Thread** function appears in a thread's **Grade** column.

   **Reminder:** If you want to use a rubric to grade a forum or thread, you must create it and associate it in advance. To learn more, see [Rubrics](#).

### How to Grade User Participation in a Forum

You can assign discussion grades to evaluate participants on performance throughout a forum. When you create or edit a forum, you can enable forum grading options and a Grade Center column is created automatically. To learn about enabling forum grading, see [How to Enable Grading in the Discussion Board](#).

Only users with a role of manager or grader can assign grades for posts. However, a grader cannot view his or her own work. To learn more, see [How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles](#).

   **Reminder:** You can create rubrics and refer to them while grading forums, but you must create and associate the rubrics in advance. To learn more, see [Rubrics](#).

1. Access the discussion forum where you enabled forum grading and click **Grade Forum** on the Action Bar.

   ![Forum: Unit 2: Astrophotography/Imaging](image)

2. On the **Grade Discussion Forum Users** page, click **Grade** in a user's row with a number in the **Posts** column.
3. On the Grade Discussion Forum page, a collection of the student's posts made to the graded forum appears. Since you can assign a forum grade based on multiple threads, all messages posted by a student are included for review. On the action bar, click Print Preview to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the Filter function and the Sort By and Order drop-down lists on the action bar. To learn more, see How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting and How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting.

The side panel contains three sections:

- **Forum Statistics**: Includes information about the user's posts, such as Date of Last Post, Average Post Length, and Average Post Position.
- **Forum Grade**: Includes Grade, Grade Date, Feedback, and Grading Notes.
- **Contributors**: Users who have submitted the required number of posts appear with exclamation marks—the needs grading icon (❗) or, if they have not yet reached the required number, the in progress icon (👉). In this section, use the Previous User and Next User arrows to navigate among users to grade or click a user's name in the list. Click Show All to view all users in your course. Users who have not posted to the graded forum are included in the list. Click Show with Posts Only to return to the list of users who have posts to grade.

4. In the content frame, evaluate the currently selected user's posts. To assign a grade, click Edit Grade in the Forum Grade section.
Note: To collapse or expand a side panel section, click the double arrows icon next to the section title.

5. Type a numeric value in the Current Grade Value box. Assigning a score here removes any Grade Center override that may exist for this user for this forum grade.

Note: If you created and added a rubric for this graded forum, click View Rubric to reference it while grading. To learn more, see Rubrics.

6. Optionally, type Feedback for the user and Grading Notes, which appear to the forum manager or grader only. Optionally, use the Spell Check function in the bottom of each text box.

7. Optionally, click Text Editor to access the Content Editor in a pop-up window. Use the functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups to your feedback or notes.

8. Click Save Grade. The information appears in the Forum Grade section.

9. Click Edit Grade to make changes at any time. The changes appear in the Forum Grade section and in the Grade Center column. The changes are recorded in the Grade Center on the user’s Grade Details page on the Grade History tab.
When grading is complete, click **OK** to return to the **Grade Discussion Forum Users** page or use the breadcrumbs to return to the discussion board.

**Result**

Grades appear in the **Grade** column on the **Grade Discussion Forum Users** page and in the **Grade Center**.

**How to Grade User Participation in a Thread**

You can assign discussion grades to evaluate participants on performance in each thread. When you create or edit a forum, you can enable thread grading options and a Grade Center column is created automatically. To learn about enabling thread grading, see *How to Enable Grading in the Discussion Board*.

Only users with a role of manager or grader can assign grades for posts. However, a grader cannot view his or her own work. To learn more, see *How to Assign Discussion Forum Roles*.

**Note:** Students cannot create new threads in a forum where threads are graded.
**Reminder:** You can create rubrics and refer to them while grading threads, but you must create and associate the rubrics in advance. To learn more, see Rubrics.

1. Access the discussion forum containing a thread you want to grade.
2. On the thread listing page, in List View, click Grade Thread in the thread's row.
3. On the Grade Discussion Thread Users page, click Grade in a user's row with a number in the Posts column.

4. On the Grade Discussion Thread page, a collection of the student's posts made to the graded thread appears. Since you can assign a thread grade based on multiple messages, all messages posted by a student are included for review. On the Action Bar, click Print Preview to open the page in a new window in a printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the Filter function and the Sort By and Order drop-down lists on the action bar. To learn more, see How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting and How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting.

The side panel contains three sections:

- **Thread Statistics:** Includes information about the user's posts, such as Date of Last Post, Average Post Length, and Average Post Position.

- **Thread Grade:** Includes Grade, Grade Date, Feedback, and Grading Notes.

- **Contributors:** Users who have submitted the required number of posts appear with exclamation marks—the needs grading icon (👍) or, if they have not yet reached the required number, the in progress icon (👉). In this section, use the Previous User and Next User arrows to navigate among users to grade -OR- click a user's name in the list. Click Show All to view all users in your course. Users who have not posted to the graded thread are included in the list. Click Show with Posts Only to return to the list of users who have posts to grade.

5. In the content frame, evaluate the currently selected user's posts. To assign a grade, click Edit Grade in the Thread Grade section.
Note: To collapse or expand a side panel section, click the double arrows icon next to the section title.

6. Type a numeric value in the **Current Grade Value** box. Assigning a score here removes any Grade Center override that may exist for this user for this thread grade.

   Note: If you created and added a rubric for this graded thread, click **View Rubric** to reference it while grading. To learn more, see Rubrics.

7. Optionally, type **Feedback** for the user and **Grading Notes**, which appear to the forum Manager or Grader only. Optionally, use the **Spell Check** function in the bottom of each text box.

8. Optionally, click **Text Editor** to access the Content Editor in a pop-up window. Use the functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups to your feedback or notes.

9. Click **Save Grade**. The information appears in the **Thread Grade** section.

10. Click **Edit Grade** to make changes at any time. The changes appear in the **Thread Grade** section and in the Grade Center column. The changes are recorded in the Grade Center on the user’s **Grade Details** page on the **Grade History** tab.
11. When grading is complete, click OK to return to the Grade Discussion Thread Users page or use the breadcrumbs to return to the discussion board.

Result

Grades appear in the Grade column on the Grade Discussion Thread Users page and in the Grade Center.

How to Email Users While Grading Discussion Participation

While assigning grades, you can use the email tool in the discussion board to quickly contact students. For example, send a student a question prior to assigning a grade or send feedback after assigning a grade.

1. Navigate to a forum or thread to assign a grade.

2. On the Grade Discussion Thread Users page or the Grade Discussion Forum Users page, select one or multiple users’ check boxes, or select the check box in the header row to select all the users you want to email.

3. On the Action Bar, click Email.
4. On the **Email Forum User** page, edit the **Subject**, if needed.
5. Type a question or feedback in the **Message** box.
6. Click **Submit**.

---

**How to Disable Grading for a Discussion Forum or Thread**

Even if grades exist, you can disable grading for graded forums and threads.

1. Access the discussion board and access a forum’s contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Forum** page, in the **Forum Settings** section, change the grading option to **No Grading in Forum**.
4. Click **Submit**. If you already assigned grades for a forum or its threads, a warning message appears stating that disabling grading will delete all existing grades. This action is final.
5. Click **OK** to continue or click **Cancel** to preserve the Grade Center items.

As you decide whether to disable grading for a forum, the number in the **Points possible** box appears grayed out.
The Performance Dashboard is a valuable tool you can use to monitor student progress throughout your course. A summary of access and progress for each student appears in a table format. As the term progresses, you can quickly see if students are accessing your course regularly, reviewing course content, and contributing to the discussion board. This information can help you identify students who are outside the normal range of participation or who need help and encouragement. To learn more, see Using the Performance Dashboard.

**Note:** Your school controls whether the Performance Dashboard is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status. Your school can also disable the discussion board tool, which will affect the information appearing in the Performance Dashboard.

### How to View Discussion Board Statistics

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Evaluation section.
2. Select Performance Dashboard.
3. On the Performance Dashboard page, you can view how many forums a user posted in. In the Discussion Board column, click a numbered link to view details.
4. On the **Discussion Board** page, you can view the following information:
   - **Forum**: Lists all the forums a user has posted in.
   - **Total Posts**: Click the link to access a page displaying a user's posts in that forum.
   - **Date of Last Post**: View when a user last accessed the forum.
   - **Average Post Length**: Lists the average post length, in number of characters.
   - **Minimum Post Length**: Lists the minimum post length, in number of characters.
   - **Maximum Post Length**: Lists the maximum post length, in number of characters.
   - **Average Post Position**: View a representation of a user's participation within the threads.
   - **Grade**: Click the link in the column to access the Grade Center column (if a grade appears).

   **Note**: To sort a column, click the column heading or caret.

5. On the Action Bar, click **Email User** to contact a user. The system populates the **Email Forum User** page with the To and From information.

6. In the **Forum** column, click a forum title to access a collection page displaying all a user's posts in that forum. To learn more, see **How to Collect Discussion Posts**.
Journals

About Journals

The Journals tool offers students the opportunity to reflect on course content and communicate privately with you.

You can use the tool to gauge understanding and guide students in their knowledge acquisition. Your journal comments can help students refine their writing and ideas.

You create the journal topics for individual students to use. Then students submit journal entries in response to the topic and you can comment on the individual entries. As the journal topic is created, you determine if the journal entries will be graded. Students are allowed to create multiple entries for an individual journal topic, whether it is graded or not.

You can choose to make journal entries public, allowing all course members to view all entries. For example, you may choose to make a journal public when asking for opinions on how to improve the evaluation process. Students can read what other students wrote and build upon those ideas. Students cannot comment on other students’ entries; only the instructor can add comments.

The Group Journal tool functions differently, as it allows all members of a group to view all group journal entries. A group journal has no journal topics, but is instead created by the journal entries submitted by group members. A group journal can be edited to add instructions for the members. Both you and group members can add comments.

Related Tutorials

Creating a Journal (Flash movie | 3m 10s) | Creating and Editing Journal Entries (Flash movie | 2m 24s) | Commenting on a Journal Entry (Flash movie | 1m 27s)

Creating a Journal

Journals are a personal space for students to communicate privately with the instructor. Students can also use journals as a self-reflective tool to post their opinions, ideas, and concerns about the course, or discuss and analyze course related materials. Journal assignments can be broad and student-directed as the Students reflect on the learning process and document changes in their perceptions and attitudes. Students can describe problems faced and how they solved them. Instructor-directed journal entries can be more formal in nature and can narrow the focus by listing topics for discussion.
Journals are ideal for individual projects. For example, in a creative writing course, the owner of each journal creates entries and the instructor adds comments. In this manner, the student can refine a section of a writing assignment over a period of time, using the instructor’s guidance and suggestions. The student can also comment on his or her entries to continue the conversation with the instructor.

Journals can be used as a graded assignment or ungraded to gather opinions and information.

Instructors can create one or more journals for use by students in their courses. Journal topics must be created before students can add their entries.

**How to Create a Journal**

1. Access the course.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
4. Select Journals.
5. On the Journals listing page, click Create Journal on the Action Bar.
6. On the Create Journal page, type a Name for the journal.
7. Type optional Instructions for the journal. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
8. Under Journal Availability, select the Yes option to make it available to users.
9. Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to limit the availability of the journal. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.
10. Under Journal Settings, select Monthly or Weekly Index Entries.
11. Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries.
12. Optionally, select the check box to Allow Users to Delete Comments.
13. Optionally, select the check box to Permit Course Users to View Journal. If selected, the journal becomes public. All users can view all journal entries made to the journal topic.
14. Select No grading or the Grade option and type the number of Points possible. Points possible will apply to one or more entries made by the user to the journal topic. Once a journal is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the Grade Center. It is permanently gradable and cannot be set to No grading. To learn more, see Grade Center.
15. Optionally, select the box and the number of entries required to show participants in Needs Grading status. Applying this setting will show the Needs Grading icon ( ) in the Grade Center and place the entries in the queue on the Needs Grading page after the specified number of entries have been made.
16. Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to Add Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.
17. Click Submit.

The journal topics appear in alphabetical order on the Journals listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

You can also provide links to journals in course areas such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders. To learn more, see Linking to Tools in a Course Area.

**Creating Journal Entries**

Instructors and students can create journal entries. Only instructors can comment on students’ private entries.
Group members and the instructor can comment on group entries.

On the Journals listing page, information is provided about each journal. Students can see if their entries will be private—between the student and the instructor—or public.

How to Create a Journal Entry

1. On the Journals listing page, select a journal title.
2. On the journal's topic page, click Create Journal Entry on the Action Bar.
3. On the Create Journal Entry page, type a Title for the journal entry.
4. Type text in the Entry Message text box. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
5. Alternatively, under Journal Entry Files, browse for a file to attach to the journal entry.
6. Click Post Entry to submit the journal entry or click Save Entry as Draft to add the entry later.

How to View Drafts

To view drafts, click View Drafts on the Action Bar on the Journals listing page.

Commenting on a Journal

Journaling can be essential for interaction between you and your students, especially in a web-based course. Student entries and instructor comments can help build rapport and can create a healthy intellectual exchange. A student can make a comment after you comment on an entry to continue the conversation. Students cannot make comments on another student’s journal entry, even if the journal has been made public. Students can only comment on another student’s entry when they are members of a group. For group journals, you and all group members are allowed to make comments on individual entries.

How to Comment on a Journal Entry

1. On the Journals listing page, select a journal title.
2. On the journal's topic page, select the journal entry to view by selecting the user’s name in the side panel under More Journals. The journal entry opens in the content frame.
3. Click Comment following the user’s entry. The Comment text box appears.
4. Type a comment in the Comment text box.
5. Click Spell Check at the bottom of the Comment text box to check the spelling of the content before continuing.
6. Click Add. Click the Comments link below the entry to view the comment.

Related Tutorials

Creating a Journal (Flash movie | 3m 10s ) | Creating and Editing Journal Entries (Flash movie | 2m 24s ) | Commenting on a Journal Entry (Flash movie | 1m 27s )

Editing Journals

You can edit basic properties of a journal topic, including the name, instructions, availability, and some settings. Journal topics can be made public or private. You can also edit any user's journal entries and can delete journal topics and comments.
How to Edit a Journal

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Journals listing page, click a journal’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Edit.
5. Click Submit.

How to Delete a Journal

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Journals listing page, click a journal’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Delete.
4. Click OK in the confirmation window. All entries and comments are deleted.

Note: When a graded journal is selected for deletion, a Delete Confirmation page appears. Select the appropriate check box or boxes to delete the journal -OR- the journal and the Grade Center column.

How to Change the Availability of a Journal

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. On the Journals listing page, select the check box next to the appropriate journal.
3. Point to Availability on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Make Available or Make Unavailable.

Troubleshooting Journal Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If</th>
<th>Then</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a journal is deleted while users are posting</td>
<td>the journal and all comments are deleted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a journal is made unavailable while users are posting</td>
<td>the journal remains visible to the Instructor in Edit Mode but is not displayed to users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries setting is changed</td>
<td>entries remain, but users cannot edit them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Allow Users to Delete Comments setting is changed</td>
<td>comments remain and users cannot delete them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the journal is set to be graded</td>
<td>the setting cannot be changed. The journal needs to be deleted and the Grade Center column must be deleted from the Grade Center to remove it. The Grade Center column for the journal can also not be included in Grade Center calculations, if the journal entries are needed, but will not be graded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related Tutorials

- Creating a Journal (Flash movie | 3m10s)
- Creating and Editing Journal Entries (Flash movie | 2m24s)
- Commenting on a Journal Entry (Flash movie | 1m27s)
Grading Blogs and Journals

You can grade participation in blogs and journals for individuals and groups.

Once a blog or journal topic is set to be graded, a grade column is automatically created in the Grade Center. Then, individual student and group entries can be graded from the blog or journal topic page, where all entries and comments can be referenced, as the grade is determined. An assigned grade can also be edited from the blog or journal topic page and the Grade Center is updated.

Students can view their blog or journal grades in the My Grades tool.

About Grading Blogs and Journals

You can grade the quality of the discussion, as well as the number of entries and comments that are made by an individual or a course group.

Grades for blogs and journals are changed, deleted, reverted, and overridden just like other grades in the Grade Center.

You can determine whether or not students can view their own grades and feedback by editing the column information in the Grade Center. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

Changing a Topic from Graded to Ungraded

A graded blog or journal topic cannot be changed to ungraded. The only way to change from graded to ungraded is to delete the graded blog or journal topic from the blogs or journals listing page and the Grade Center, and create a new ungraded topic.

Alternatively, to retain entries, set the blog or journal Grade Center column to not be included in calculations. In essence, the blog or journal continues to be considered a graded one by the Grade Center, but any results or grades assigned are ignored.

Understanding Graded Blog and Journal Topic Pages

The blog topic page contains a side panel where entries are graded for individuals and course groups. The side panel consists of three sections which expand to four when grading begins:

- **About this Blog**: Shows the type, number of entries, and number of comments.
- **View Entries by**: Students who have submitted one or more entries appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Click a student’s name to access the Blog Grade section, where grades, feedback and grading notes are added. Use the Previous User and Next User arrows in this section to navigate among students to grade or click a student's name in the list. Click Show Members without Entries to see all students in the course; students who have not added entries are included in this list. Click Hide Members without Entries to return to the list of students who have entries needing a grade.
- **Index**: For a selected student or all course members, view a list of entry titles added during the index span—by month or by week.

The journal topic page contains a side panel where entries are graded for individuals and course groups. The side panel consists of three sections which expand to four when grading begins:

- **About this Journal**: Shows the author, number of entries, and number of comments.
- **More Journals**: Students who have submitted one or more entries appear with exclamation marks, the needs grading icon. Click a student’s name to access the Journal Grade section, where grades, feedback and grading notes are added. Use the Previous User and Next User arrows in this section...
to navigate among students to grade or click a student’s name in the list. Click Show Empty Journals to see all students in the course; students who have not added entries are included in this list. Click Hide Empty Journals to return to the list of students who have entries needing a grade.

- Index: For a selected student, view a list of entry titles added during the index span—by month or by week.

The grading process for blogs and journals can begin from the Grade Center, the Needs Grading page, the Course Tools area in the Control Panel, or the course location where the blog or journal has been deployed.

How to Grade Blog Entries for Individuals

1. Access the blog topic page and select the blog entry or entries to grade by selecting the student’s name in the side panel under View Entries by. The student’s blog entry or entries open in the content frame.
2. Under Blog Grade in the side panel, click Edit Grade.
3. Type a point total in the Current Grade Value text box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded blog, click View Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.
4. Optionally, type Feedback for the student and Grading Notes, which appear to the instructor and grader only. You can also use the Spell Check function in the bottom of each text box. Click Text Editor to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
5. Click Save Grade to add the grade, feedback, and grading notes to the Blog Grade section and to the Grade Center.
6. The grade, feedback, or grading notes can be edited by clicking the Edit Grade function again at any time. The changes appear in the Blog Grade section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the Grade History tab on the student’s Grade Details page.

How to Grade Journal Entries for Individuals

1. Access the journal topic page and select the journal entry or entries to grade by selecting the student’s name in the side panel under More Journals. The student’s journal entry or entries open in the content frame.
2. Under Journal Grade in the side panel, click Edit Grade.
3. Type a point total in the Current Grade Value text box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded journal, click View Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.
4. Optionally, type Feedback for the student and Grading Notes, which appear to the instructor and grader only. You can also use the Spell Check function in the bottom of each text box. Click Text Editor to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
5. Click Save Grade to add the grade, feedback, and grading notes to the Journal Grade section and to the Grade Center.
6. The grade, feedback, or grading notes can be edited by clicking the Edit Grade function again at any time. The changes appear in the Journal Grade section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the Grade History tab on the student’s Grade Details page.

**Note:** If a rubric will be used to grade blog or journal entries, it must be created and added in advance.
How to Delete a Gradable Blog or Journal

If a gradable blog or journal is no longer needed, it can be deleted. It is permanently deleted and the action cannot be undone. On the blogs or journals listing page, select Delete from the contextual menu for the item and the Delete Confirmation page appears.

There are two options on the Delete Confirmation page:

- **Do not select check boxes**: The blog or journal will be deleted, but the Grade Center column and scores assigned are retained. For example, all student entries have been graded and you want to keep the Grade Center column for the final grade calculations. If the blog or journal is deleted, yet the Grade Center column is retained, the column can be deleted from the Grade Center at any time.

- **Select the check boxes**: The grade column in the Grade Center and the blog or journal are both deleted. For example, if you do not want to include the grade column for the blog or journal entries in the final grade, you can safely delete all.

Click Remove to complete the deletion.

How to Grade a Blog or Journal for all Group Members

A group blog or journal is graded using the same steps as for individuals. When the entries are submitted, all group members’ names appear with the exclamation mark, the needs grading icon.

When a grade is added for a group blog or journal, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned the same grade, even if a member did not contribute, although this can be overridden (described in How to Change an Individual Member’s Group Grade).

You can read all the entries for the group blog or journal and add one grade on the blog or journal topic page. Students can view their group blog or journal grades in the My Grades tool and on the group blog or journal topic page by selecting their names.

How to Change an Individual Member’s Group Grade

An individual group member can be assigned a different grade than the group by selecting his or her name to access the Grade section. In the content frame, the individual member’s entries and comments appear. After assigning a new grade and feedback for the individual member, the new information appears in the side panel. The grade the individual member received and the grade the group received are both shown.

If a group member’s grade is changed, and a new group grade is given, the new group grade will not affect the individual’s new grade. The individual’s new grade will not appear to the other group members.

The group grade and the individual group member’s edited grade appear in the Grade Center in the column that was automatically created when the graded group blog or journal was enabled. Grayed out cells appear in the group blog or journal column for course members who are not part of the group.

A group or individual member’s grade can also be edited from the Grade Center.

How to Revert a Member’s Edited Grade

It is possible to revert a member’s edited grade to the original group grade, which all group members received.

1. From the Grade Center, access the member’s Grade Details page. (Alternatively, you can edit the grade that was changed on the group blog or journal page by selecting the student.)

2. After a member’s group grade has been edited, the Revert To Group Grade function appears. Click Revert To Group Grade.
3. Click **OK**. The member’s grade is changed to the original group grade.

4. Click **Return to Grade Center** to return to the main Grade Center page and view the edited grade column. This grade change also appears on the group blog or journal page when the student’s name is selected.

**Deleting a Group**

If a group is no longer needed and **Delete** is selected from the contextual menu, a **Delete Confirmation** page appears. If grade columns exist in the Grade Center for the group, such as for a graded group blog or journal, the columns can be retained. On the **Delete Confirmation** page, do not select the check boxes for any columns that need to be preserved.

**McGraw-Hill Connect and Create**

McGraw-Hill Connect and Create provides tools for instructors to build customized course materials and assessments from McGraw-Hill’s textbooks and resources.

The McGraw-Hill Connect and Create Building Block is bundled with Blackboard Learn, but must be configured by the Blackboard administrator at your school before it can be used. To learn more about using McGraw-Hill Connect and Create, see [McGraw-Hill Connect and Create Building Block Instructor Guide for Release 9.1](#).

**Wikis**

Wikis are essentially very simple online databases, collaborative collections of information that use interlinked pages to present and organize the data. One main benefit is they can be easily updated and expanded to include new content, or edited to correct errors.

Wikis allow multiple students to share and collaborate on one or more pages of content. Pages can be created and edited quickly, while tracking changes and additions. Instructors can create one or more wikis for all course members to contribute to and wikis for specific groups to use to collaborate. Wikis can also be used to record information and serve as a repository for course information and knowledge.

You can view all changes to all pages in the wiki. It is also possible to view changes at a high level and then drill down to retrieve information about the development and contributions for any individual.

You choose whether to assign grades to student contributions to a wiki. After a wiki is set to be graded, a grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center. Individual student and group contributions then can be graded inside the Wikis tool, where all pages and edits can be referenced as the grade is determined.

An assigned grade can also be edited from inside the Wikis tool and the Grade Center is updated. Grades for wikis are changed, deleted, reverted, and overridden just like other grades in the Grade Center. Students can view their wiki grades in the My Grades tool.

**About Course Wikis**

Course wikis are created by instructors. Any course member can add pages unless the instructor intends to be the sole author and use the wiki as course content.

**About Group Wikis**

Group wikis are enabled by instructors. Any course member can read the group wiki, but the user must be a member of the group to edit a page or make a comment on a group wiki page. Instructors can change the default setting to allow only group members to view a group wiki.
How to Create a Wiki

1. Access the course.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
4. Select Wikis.
5. On the Wikis listing page, click Create Wiki on the Action Bar.
6. On the Create Wiki page, type a Name.
7. Type optional Instructions. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
8. Select the Yes option to make the wiki available to users.
9. Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to limit availability of the wiki. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections. Display restrictions do not affect the content in the wiki, only the appearance of the wiki.
10. Select the Student Access option. Student access can be changed at any time.
   a. Closed to Editing: Select this option when the instructor will be the only one contributing pages or to disallow further page editing by users, such as when the wiki pages are set to be graded. Wikis can still be viewed when Closed to Editing is selected.
   b. Open to Editing: Allows users to modify any wiki page. In a group wiki, a user must be a member of the group to edit a wiki page.
11. Select No grading or the Grade option and type the number of Points possible. Points possible will apply to one or more pages added and all edits by the user. Once a wiki is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the Grade Center. It is permanentlygradable and cannot be set to No grading.
12. Optionally, select the box and the number of page saves required to show participants in Needs Grading status. Applying this setting will show the Needs Grading icon ( ![ ] ) in the Grade Center and place the entries in the queue on the Needs Grading page after the specified number of page saves have been made.
13. Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to Add Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.
14. Click Submit.

The wiki topics appear in alphabetical order on the Wikis listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

You can also provide links to wikis in course areas such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, lesson plans, and folders. To learn more, see Linking to Tools in a Course Area.

How to Create a Wiki Page

Each newly created course or group wiki requires a first page, which is the home page. You or any course or group member can create the home page. The home page cannot be deleted, but if the wiki is open to editing, it can be edited by any course or group member. The home page and all subsequent pages are created following the same steps.

2. On the wiki’s topic page, click Create Wiki Page on the Action Bar.
3. On the Create Wiki Page, type a Name.
4. Type text in the Content text box. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
5. Click Submit.

Note: You can delete an entire wiki or pages within a wiki, but you cannot delete the wiki home page by itself. Students do not have the ability to delete wiki pages.

How to Edit Wiki Content

Any course member can edit a course wiki page and any group member can edit a group wiki page, unless you have disabled this function. You might choose to disable editing when it is time to grade the wiki pages; however, you will still be able to edit student pages. All course members, including instructors, edit wikis the same way.

When a wiki page is being edited by one user, it is locked to prevent others from editing the same page. If a user tries to edit a page someone else is editing, he or she is informed that the page is currently being edited by another user.

1. Access the wiki. The wiki topic page appears.
2. Select the page to review and edit. The wiki page opens in the content frame.
3. In the side panel, click the page’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select Edit Properties.
   -OR-
   Click Edit Wiki Content next to the page’s title in the content frame.
4. On the Edit Wiki Page, changes can be made to the name and content of the page. Additional content can be added also. Use the functions in the Text Editor to format existing text or add links, images, multimedia, Mashups, attachments, and link to other wiki pages.
5. Click Submit.

Note: Select History from a page’s contextual menu to see how the page has been modified, view any version, and compare two versions side by side. The Page History page allows you to retrieve information about the development of any page and see who contributed content. The most recent version of the page appears first. You can delete one or more wiki page versions from the Page History page, but students cannot. You may wish to delete a page because of inaccurate, flawed, or offensive content. When a version is deleted, all participation history for that version is deleted. If the latest version is deleted, then the version next in line becomes the most current version and is the page viewed in the wiki.

How to Link to Other Wiki Pages

When wiki pages are created, users may need to reference another page in the wiki. If the wiki consists of many pages, it can be helpful to insert a link to that page right on the page currently being viewed. When creating or editing a wiki page, users can use the Link to Wiki page function in the Text Editor to link to another wiki page within the current wiki.

Links to other wiki pages can be created when at least two pages exist.

1. Access the wiki.
2. On the wiki topic page, click Create Wiki Page.
3. On the Create Wiki Page, type a Wiki Name and Content.
4. In the Content text box, position the mouse pointer where a link will be added to another wiki page.
5. Click the **Link to Wiki page** function in the Text Editor, represented by several sheets of paper. If there is only one page in the wiki, this function is disabled.

6. In the pop-up window, select the wiki page to link to from the drop-down list.

7. Optionally, type a name for the link in the **Rename Wiki Page Link** text box. If the link is not renamed, the original page title is used as the link.

8. Click **Submit**. The link appears in the Text Editor.

9. Click **Submit**. The new page with the link to the other page is added to the wiki.

**How to Add a Comment to a Wiki Page**

Any course member can add a comment to a course wiki page rather than add to or edit a page. Comments provide a way for you and your students to offer feedback and suggestions. Comments can be viewed by all course members. By default, group wikis can be read by all course members, but a user must be a member of the group to make a comment on a group wiki page. You can change the default setting to allow only group members to view a group wiki.

1. Access the wiki.

2. On the wiki topic page, select the page to view in the side panel. The wiki page opens in the content frame.

3. Click **Comment** following the user's contribution. The **Comment** text box appears.

4. Type a comment in the **Comment** text box.

5. Click **Spell Check** at the bottom of the **Comment** text box to check the spelling of the content before continuing.

6. Click **Add**. Click the **Comments** link below the contribution to view the comment.

**How to View the Participation Summary**

On the **Participation Summary** page, you can view a list of all student participation for the current wiki being viewed. The information provided can help you understand how students contributed to the overall wiki content. This information can be especially useful when determining individual grades for gradable wikis.

1. Access the wiki.

2. On the wiki topic page’s Action Bar, click **Participation and Grading** for graded wikis or **Participation Summary** for wikis with no grading.

3. On the **Participation Summary** page, view participation for the students who have contributed to the wiki.

4. In the side panel, view information about the wiki and select a user to view his or her **Participant's Contribution** page.

   - **Page Versions**: The **Page Version** column displays all pages created and edited by the user. This allows you to see precisely how and what content the user contributed and edited. If many pages appear, narrow what is shown using the **Display Pages** drop-down list on the Action Bar. A new version is created each time a page is edited. When versions are compared, the difference between any version and its previous version are shown on the **Page Comparison** page. Click the **Legend** tab to understand the differences in how one version was changed in comparison to the other version. The **Legend** tab provides an explanation of the formatting used to communicate version differences.

   - **Words Modified**: Tally of any words added, deleted, or edited in all pages and each page's version of the wiki.
How to Grade a Course Wiki

After a wiki is set to be graded, a column is automatically created in the Grade Center. Then, individual student contributions can be accessed from the wiki’s Participation Summary page. A user’s name can be selected and all the pages the student authored and edited can be viewed to determine the grade. The Participation Summary page allows you to start at a high level summary and drill down to the changes that an individual student made. The grade applies to the wiki, not an individual wiki page.

A graded wiki cannot be set to ungraded. The only way to revert to an ungraded wiki is to delete the graded wiki from the Wikis listing page and the Grade Center, and create a new ungraded wiki. Alternatively, you could avoid including the graded wiki column in Grade Center calculations, if the wiki pages need to be retained.

The grading process for wikis can begin from the Grade Center, the Needs Grading page, the Course Tools area, or the course location where the wiki has been deployed.

1. Access the wiki to be graded.
2. On the wiki topic page, click Participation and Grading on the Action Bar.
3. On the Participation Summary page, select a student’s name in the View Contributions section. Students with contributions ready for grading appear with the exclamation mark, the needs grading icon.
4. On the Participant’s Contribution page, a list of the student’s pages and page versions open in the content frame. You can also view information about the contributions. In the Page Version column, click a page’s title to review it.
5. When ready to grade, in the Grade section in the side panel, click Edit Grade. The grading field appears in the side panel.
6. Type a numeric grade in the Current Grade Value text box, or if a rubric has been created for this graded wiki, click View Rubric. To learn more, see Rubrics.
7. Optionally, type Feedback for the student and Grading Notes, which appear to you and Graders only. Optionally, use the Spell Check function in the bottom of each text box. Click Text Editor to access all the Text Editor functions for formatting text and adding URLs, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia.
8. Click Save Grade to add the grade, feedback, and grading notes to the Grade section and to the Grade Center.
9. The grade, feedback, or grading notes can be edited by clicking the Edit Grade function again at any time. The changes appear in the Grade section and in the Grade Center. The changes are documented in the Grade Center in the Grade History tab on the student’s Grade Details page.

Use the Previous User and Next User arrows in the View Contributions section to quickly access other students’ contributions to grade.

Note: If a rubric will be used to grade wiki contributions, it must be created and added to the wiki in advance.

How to Delete a Gradable Wiki

If a gradable wiki is no longer needed, it can be deleted. On the Wikis listing page, select Delete from the contextual menu for the item and the Delete Confirmation page appears.

Note: Deleting a wiki is permanent and cannot be undone.

There are two options on the Delete Confirmation page:
Course Tools

- Do not select check boxes: The wiki will be deleted, but the Grade Center column and scores assigned are retained. For example, all student contributions have been graded and you want to keep the Grade Center column for the final grade calculations. If the wiki is deleted, yet the Grade Center column is retained, the column can be deleted from the Grade Center at any time.

- Select the check boxes: The grade column in the Grade Center AND the wiki are deleted. For example, if you do not want to include the grade column for the wiki contributions in the final grade, you can safely delete all.

Click Remove to complete the deletion.

How to Grade Group Wikis

On the Participation Summary page, the Needs Grading icon ( ), appears in the View Contributions section for group members when a group wiki needs grading. When a grade is added for a group wiki on the Participation Summary page, the grade is automatically given to all the members of the group and is populated in the corresponding column in the Grade Center for each group member. All members are assigned a grade, regardless if a member did not contribute. Students can view their group wiki grades in the My Grades tool and on their My Contribution pages.

An individual group member can be assigned a different grade than the group by editing the grade for the member. If a group member’s grade is changed, and a new group grade is given, the new group grade will not affect the individual’s new grade. The grade the individual member received and the grade the group received are both shown. The individual’s new grade will not appear to the other group members.

On the Participation Summary page, select the group member from the View Contributions section. The Participant's Contribution page displays the group member’s contributions and the group grade for this member can be changed in the side panel by clicking Edit Grade.

The group grade and the individual group member’s edited grade appear in the Grade Center in the column that was created automatically when the graded group wiki was enabled. Grayed out cells appear in the group wiki column for course members who are not part of the group. A grade can also be edited from the Grade Center.

How to Revert a Member’s Edited Grade

It is possible to revert a member’s edited grade to the original group grade, which all group members received. Alternatively, edit the grade that was changed on the group wiki page by selecting the user.

1. From the Grade Center, access the member’s Grade Details page.
2. After a member’s group grade has been edited, the Revert To Group Grade function appears. Click Revert To Group Grade.
3. Click OK. The member’s grade is changed to the original group grade.
4. Click Return to Grade Center to return to the main Grade Center page and view the edited grade column. This grade change also appears on the group wiki page when the user’s name is selected.

How to Delete a Group

If a group is no longer needed and Delete is selected from the contextual menu, a Delete Confirmation page appears. If grade columns exist in the Grade Center for the group, such as for a graded group wiki, the columns can be retained. On the Delete Confirmation page, do not select the check boxes for any columns that need to be preserved.
Related Tutorials  
- Creating a Wiki (Flash movie | 2m 46s)  
- Adding Rich Content to a Wiki (Flash movie | 4m 10s)  
- Editing a Wiki Page (Flash movie | 1m 36s)  
- Linking Wiki Pages (Flash movie | 1m 43s)  
- Viewing a Wiki Page History (Flash movie | 2m 37s)  
- Grading a Wiki (Flash movie | 1m 43s)
Creating Course Areas for Content

You can create course areas to serve as containers for your course material. Course areas enable you to present various types of content in an organized and engaging way.

- The top-level course areas are called Content Areas, which are created, linked, and managed on the Course Menu. Typically, courses contain multiple Content Areas.
- The next level of course areas includes folders, Learning Modules, and Lesson Plans. You create these course areas within an existing Content Area or other course area.

Once you create a course area, you can create content items within it to present your course material. You can include content such as text, file attachments, links to websites, tests, assignments, and multimedia.

For example, you can create a Content Area called Units that contains Learning Modules for Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, and so on. Each of the Learning Modules contains reading materials, assignments, tests, and links to tools to help student accomplish the learning objectives for each unit.

**A Content Areas** are the top-level course areas that provide your course structure. They are linked and created on the Course Menu only. They contain other course areas and content items.

**B Folders** are containers for content.

**C Learning Modules** are containers for content, can include a Table of Contents, and can require sequential viewing of its content.

**D Lesson Plans** are containers for content, and present objectives and other details directly above its list of content items.

**Create content within course areas by pointing to Build Content, Assessments, and Tools on the Action Bar. To learn more, see Creating Content in a Course Area, Creating Assessments in a Course Area, and Linking to Tools in a Course Area.**
How to Create a Content Area

Content Areas are the top-level course areas. They are created and managed on the Course Menu.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON, and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The Add Menu Item drop-down list appears.

2. Select Content Area.

3. Type a Name for the new Content Area.

4. Select the Available to Users check box. You can create Content Areas ahead of time, make them unavailable to users, and then make them available at the appropriate time.

5. Click Submit. A link to the new Content Area appears on the Course Menu.

Result

A newly created Content Area is an empty container. Click the link to the Content Area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.

Plan Your Content Areas

Links to the Content Areas you create appear in the Course Menu and provide the overall structure of your course. Plan how you will organize the entire course and envision how your Course Menu will look and function.
Three common organizational approaches are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronologically</th>
<th>By Content Type</th>
<th>By Subject Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Introduction to Alternative Energy" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Introduction to Alternative Energy" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Introduction to Alternative Energy" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Solar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Web Discovery</td>
<td>Biofuels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Content Area contains a week’s worth of readings, assignments, lecture notes, and discussion forums.

Similar content types are grouped together in a Content Area, such as all the lectures for the entire course.

Each Content Area contains lecture material and readings on a specific subject, along with assignments, discussion forums, and tests.

Some questions to consider:

- What is the best way to divide the course material into manageable sections?
- Do you want course materials presented in chronological order, by textbook chapter, or by subject area?
- Do you want each unit to follow a predictable pattern? For example, you can include reading materials followed by a quiz and a Discussion Board wrap-up.
- Do you want students to move through your course material sequentially, non-sequentially, or a mixture of both?

How to Manage Content Area Links

You can organize and rename the Content Area links on the Course Menu to make them easier for students to use.

Use the drag-and-drop function to reorder Content Area links on the Course Menu.

Alternatively, use the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool to reorder the links.
Click a link’s Action Link and select **Rename** to change its title. Select **Hide Link** to make it unavailable to students. Click **Show Link** to make it available to students. If you **Delete** the Content Area, all content items within it are also permanently deleted. This action is final and cannot be undone.

With Edit Mode set to **ON**, an unavailable link title appears with a square with a diagonal line through it. Students do not see the link on the Course Menu.

### How to Create a Content Folder

Folders are a type of course area used to organize content. They are created in existing course areas, such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, or in other folders. After you create a folder, you can add content and additional subfolders to it. For example, you can create folders for each week of the course in a Content Area.

Use folders to organize content to make materials easier to find and reduce the amount of scrolling in a course area. You want to limit the number of nested folders used so students can access content with as few clicks as possible.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Content Folder**.

5. On the **Create** page, type a **Name** for the folder.
6. Select the options.
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
c. For **Select Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set folders to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect folder availability, only when it appears.

7. Click **Submit**. A link to the new folder appears in the course area.

**Tip:** To create a subfolder, first create a parent folder. Click the name of the parent folder to open it, then point to **Build Content** on the Action Bar of the parent folder and select **Content Folder**.

**Result**

A newly created folder is an empty container. Click the link to the folder in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.

After creating content in the folder, you can set the sequence of items with the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. For instructions on reordering and editing content items see **Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content**.

**How to Create a Learning Module**

Learning Modules are course areas that allow you to organize related course materials in a Table of Contents to provide a rich and interactive learning experience. Students typically access Learning Modules in Content Areas.

**Student view of Learning Module**
The **Table of Contents** displays the items you added to the Learning Module. You can move it to the bottom, expand, collapse, or remove it from view using the icons. You can hide the Table of Contents by editing Learning Module settings.

Content displays in the content frame.

Click the arrows to scroll through the items in the Learning Module sequentially.

You can set a structured path through the Table of Contents by enforcing sequential viewing or allowing users to explore the content in any order. For example, a Learning Module presents the concept of magnetic fields before describing how speakers and microphones work. Understanding the first concept is required for understanding the second concept. Alternatively, you can allow students to explore a Learning Module in any order for subjects where no particular arrangement is required for understanding the larger concept.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Learning Module**.

5. On the **Create Learning Module** page, type a **Name**. Students access the Learning Module by clicking the name.

6. Optionally, type a description in the **Text** box. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. The description appears below the Learning Module Name in the course area.
7. Select the options for **Availability**, **View**, and **Table of Contents**.

8. Click **Submit**. A link to the new Learning Module appears in the course area.

**Learning Module Options**

The Learning Module options you select determine how users view the Learning Module as well as its availability.
### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Availability**              | **Permit Users to View this Content:** Select No to make the Learning Module unavailable to users. Select Yes to make the Learning Module available to users.  
**Select Date and Time Restrictions:** You can set Learning Modules to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect the Learning Module’s availability, only when it appears. |
| **View**                      | **Enforce Sequential Viewing of the Learning Module:** Select Yes to force students to view the pages in order you have determined. Students cannot advance to the next link in the Table of Contents without viewing the previous link. Although the Table of Contents displays a list of all the content items and folders in the Learning Module, links only appear for the content items that a user can access. After the links are viewed sequentially, users can review it in any order. If users navigate away from the Learning Module and return to it, they are required to view it sequentially again.  
**Open in New Window:** Select Yes if you want the Learning Module to be viewed in a separate window instead of in the content frame. This enables students to keep the Learning Module open in the separate window while navigating to other course areas.  
**Track Number of Views:** Select Yes to turn on Statistics Tracking and record the number of times the Learning Module is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom. |
| **Table of Contents**         | **Show Table of Contents to Users:** Select Yes to display a Table of Contents to students when they access the Learning Module. Even when sequential viewing is enforced, it is still beneficial for students to see the Table of Contents to gain perspective on the overall concepts being taught. If the Table of Contents is hidden, students use the navigation arrows to move between pages, but cannot see the list of items in the Learning Module.  
**Hierarchy Display:** Select the way items in the Learning Module are labeled to denote their relative position in the Table of Contents. You can select numbers, letters, Roman numerals, or mixed. If None is selected, the items are not labeled. |

### Result

A newly created Learning Module is an empty container. Click the link to the Learning Module in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.

After creating content in your Learning Module, you can organize the content in folders to provide a hierarchical structure in the Table of Contents. You can set the sequence of Learning Module items by using the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. After reordering, click **Refresh** in the Table of Contents. For instructions on reordering and editing content items see Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content.

Change **Edit Mode** to OFF to view the Learning Module as students see it. To learn more, see **Edit Mode**.
How to Create a Lesson Plan

A Lesson Plan is a container for content items, similar to a Content Area, Learning Module, or folder. You can use Lesson Plans to help students understand the intended result of their learning and prepare them for the content ahead.

Student view of Lesson Plan

A The lesson profile and instructional objectives appear in the top portion of the page.
B Content appears in the lower portion of the page.

You create Lesson Plans in two steps based on the two tabs appearing on the Create Lesson Plan page:

- **Content Information**: This tab contains general information, such as Instructor, Objectives, and Subject Area. This information appears at the top of the Lesson Plan in a gray box when students access the Lesson Plan or when you view it with Edit Mode turned OFF.

- **Curriculum Resources**: This tab contains the Lesson Plan’s content items. You can create all content types in a Lesson Plan just as you can in a Content Area, Learning Module, or folder.

You can make Lessons Plans available to students or use them solely as a planning tool. The Lesson Plan tool is turned on by default, but the Blackboard administrator at your school can disable the tool.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Lesson Plan**.

5. On the **Create Lesson Plan** page, the **Content Information** tab appears first by default. This tab enables you to display general information for users at the top of the Lesson Plan in a gray box.

6. Type a **Name** for the Lesson Plan. This is a required field and appears as the link to the Lesson Plan in the course area.

7. Type an optional **Description**. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups. The **Description** follows the **Name** in the course area.

8. Type information for the default elements: **Instructional Level**, **Instructor**, **Objectives**, and **Subject Area**. You can edit a default element’s title by clicking the existing title to access the **Edit Element Name** text box. Delete an element by clicking the **X**.
9. Select the check box next to **Share with students** for each element that you want to appear in the Lesson Plan when students view it. If information is not added to a default element, it does not appear in the Lesson Plan and does not require deletion. Clear the check box next to **Share with students** for any information that is only for you.

   **Note:** Change **Edit Mode** to OFF to ensure that you reveal only the information you intend to show to users.

10. To add new elements, point to **Add Lesson Plan Section** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

11. Select an element. The new element is added to the bottom of the list on the **Create Lesson Plan** page, where you can edit its title and use its Text Editor, if available.

   **Note:** Select **Section Headings** to organize the elements. After adding a section heading, click the title to edit the name.

12. Select options for the Lesson Plan.

   a. Select **Yes** for **Permit Users to View this Content** to make it available to students.

   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.

   c. For **Select Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set Lesson Plans to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the
Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect Lesson Plan availability, only when it appears.

13. Click Save and Exit to save the Lesson Plan shell and return to the course area. You can edit the Lesson Plan later to create content items.

-OR-

Click Save and Continue to display the Curriculum Resources tab and create content now.

Result

A newly created Lesson Plan is an empty container. Click the link to the Lesson Plan in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.

After creating content in the course area, you can set the sequence of items with the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. For instructions on reordering and editing content items see Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content.

Change Edit Mode to OFF to view the Lesson Plan as students see it. It is substantially different than the view with Edit Mode set to ON.
How to Link a Folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module on the Course Menu

You cannot create a folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module directly on the Course Menu. However, you can create a Course Link on the Course Menu for an existing folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.

2. Select **Course Link**.

3. **Browse** for the location of the course area you want to link.

4. Type a **Name** for the Course Link.

5. Select the **Available to Users** check box to allow students to access it.

6. Click **Submit**. A link to the course area appears on the Course Menu.

How to See the Student View of a Course Area

You must change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to see course content as students see it. This is especially important for Lesson Plans and Learning Modules. To learn more, see **Edit Mode**.

Viewing from the student perspective ensures you reveal only the information you intend to show to users.

**Related Tutorials**  
- Building a Learning Module (Flash movie | 3m 00s | 1,445 KB)  
- Creating a Lesson Plan (Flash movie | 4m 51s | 2,403 KB)  
- Your Course Environment (Flash movie | 3m 46s | 2,485 KB)

To learn how to turn options on for course areas and change settings, availability, and content order, see **Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content**.

Creating Content in a Course Area

After you create a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder, you create content in it by pointing to its Action Bar to reveal menus for selecting content items, tests, and links to tools.

You can make content relevant and interactive by including several different types of learning materials and experiences. For example, you can provide online lectures, multimedia, and surveys.
As you create content, you can set its options, such as availability. This enables you to create content and make it unavailable to users until you are ready for them to view it.

About Content Types

You can create many different content types in your course areas. Advance planning of the items to include in course areas can save you time and create a more organized final product. Consider your course goals, objectives, and audience demographics. Review your existing materials to determine what you can use online. Consider outlining or storyboarding a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder before creating content to create a logical organization. To learn more, see Plan Your Content Areas.

The following table describes the different content types available in the Build Content drop-down list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>A general piece of content, such as a file, image, text, or link which a description and other items can be attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File</td>
<td>An HTML file that you can use in your course. These files can be viewed as a page within your course or as a separate piece of content in a separate browser window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>Upload files from your computer and incorporate them in a course area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web link</td>
<td>Link to an outside website or resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning module</td>
<td>A set of content that includes a structured path for progressing through the items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson plan</td>
<td>A special content type that combines information about the lesson itself with the curriculum resources used to teach it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Content

#### Content Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>Enables you to attach an existing syllabus file or build a course syllabus by walking through a series of steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course link</td>
<td>A shortcut to an item, tool, or area in a course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content folder</td>
<td>A course area that contains content items. Folders allow content to be structured with a hierarchy or categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank page</td>
<td>The blank page tool allows you to include files, images, and text as a link in a course area. Blank pages present content in a different way than items do. There is no description that appears below the title of the page. Users see your content only after clicking the link.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module page</td>
<td>A page containing dynamic personalized content modules that help users keep track of tasks, tests, assignments, and new content created in the course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mashups      | Mashups allow you to include content in a course that is from an external website. Three types of Mashups are available:  
  - Flickr Photo: Link to a site for viewing and sharing photographic images  
  - SlideShare: Link to a site for viewing and sharing PowerPoint presentations, Word documents, or Adobe PDF Portfolios  
  - YouTube: Link to a site for viewing and sharing online videos |

### How to Create an Item

You can use content items to present a variety of course material.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Item**.
5. On the **Create Item** page, type a **Name** for the item.

6. Optionally, in the **Text** box, type instructions or a description. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment. In the **Attachments** section, you can attach additional files. Optionally, type names for the attached files. If you do not provide link names, the file names are used.

7. Alternatively, in the **Attachments** section, attach a file using one of the following options. These files appear in the item before any Content Editor content.
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.

-OR-

If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

**Note:** To email a link to a file you are including in a content item, you must first submit the content item so the file can be assigned a permanent URL. In the Content Collection or Course Files, click the file's Action Link and select 360° View. Copy the permanent URL address and paste it in an email.

8. Select **Options** for the item.
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect item availability, only when it appears.

9. Click **Submit**.

How to Create a File and Upload Single Files or Zipped Packages

You can use the file content type to create a simple link to a file in a course area. No description appears with the link. You can choose whether users view it as a page within the course or in a separate browser window.

You can upload a single file or a single zipped package. For example, uploading a zipped package would be an effective way to provide students a group of images needed for a lab project.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **File**.
5. On the **Create File** page, attach a file using one of the following options.
   
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
6. After you have selected a file, you can click Select a Different File to delete the file you linked and replace it with another.

7. Type a Name for the file. You can overwrite the file name that automatically appears in the box. This name appears in the course area as a link. You can also select the font color.

8. Select Yes for Open in New Window to display the content in a new browser window outside of the course's content frame.

9. Select Options for the item.
   a. Select Yes to Permit Users to View this Content.
   b. Select Yes to Track Number of Views.
   c. For Select Date and Time Restrictions, you can set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect item availability, only when it appears.

10. Click Submit.

Zipped Content Packages

If you have worked offline to create a lesson with several interrelated HTML pages with navigation, images, web links, and cascading style sheets (CSS), the best method for presenting the package to users is for you to unzip the package in Course Files or the Content Collection and provide students a link to the start page. This
enables students to view the lesson contents in order with all links intact. The start page will open in a new window or tab and can be closed to return to the course area.

1. Create a package of content offline on your computer.
2. Access Course Files or the Content Collection. Select **Upload Package** so that the package is unzipped automatically.
3. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder where you will provide the link to your lesson.
4. Point to **Build Content** and select **File**.
5. On the **Create File** page, click **Browse Course** or **Browse Content Collection** to select the file that is the start page for your content package. This is the first page users see and should contain navigation to the other pages in your package.
6. Set options for the file link in the course area.
7. Click **Submit**.

If you want the packaged file to remain zipped, simply attach the zipped file in a content item by using the **Attach** options or the Content Editor. When a zipped package remains intact, students click the link for the zipped package in the course area and download the zipped package to their computers where it can be unzipped. This method is useful if you want to provide students several files to work with or edit on their computers.

**Linking to HTML Files**

You can use the file content type to embed HTML files for a website you have created. After uploading your HTML files to Course Files or the Content Collection, you select which file is the starting point, such as `index.html` or `page_1.html`. The file name appears in the **Name** box. Edit the name to help users access the content. For example, change the name to "Start Here" or "View Lesson 1."

When an HTML file is selected, the **Manage Access** section appears so you can define the access users are granted. You have three options:

- **Give users access to all files and folders in the folder:** Choose this option to give users access to all files and sub-folders within the parent folder of the file being linked. This option is appropriate for users who are linking to a website with a typical hierarchical structure with sub-folders for CSS, Javascript, and images contained in the parent folder.

- **Give users access to this file only:** Choose this option when you are linking to one HTML file that has all the formatting within the page itself and does not reference other files or images.

- **Give users access to selected files in folder:** Choose this option if you want to embed a website with a more complicated structure. If some of the content exists outside of the parent folder in other folders in Course Files or the Content Collection, you need to browse for and manually select the parent folder and the additional files and folders. This ensures users have access to all the content in your website.

**Next Steps**

To learn more, see [Adding Files to Course Files](#).

**How to Create Audio, Image, and Video Links**

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Audio, Image, or Video. The Create page appears and is similar for all three content types.

5. Find a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click Browse My Computer.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click Browse Course.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click Browse Content Collection.
   - If the Browse Mashups function is available, you can browse for and link to content available on the internet, such as YouTube and Flickr.

6. After you have uploaded a file, you can click Select a Different File to delete the file you linked.

7. Type a Name for the file. You can overwrite the file name that automatically appears in the box. This name appears in the course area as a link. You can also select the font color.
8. Set the **Options**. Audio, video, and image files each have unique options for displaying their content. These are listed later in this section.

9. Select **Standard Options** for the item.
   a. Select **Yes** to *Permit Users to View this Content*.
   b. Select **Yes** to *Track Number of Views*.
   c. For **Select Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect item availability, only when it appears.

10. **Preview** the content and click **Submit** when you are finished.

### Audio Files

An audio file appears as a player in the course. The player has options for play, pause, forward, and rewind. Blackboard Learn supports the following file types: `.aiff`, `.mp3`, `.mid`, `.mp`, `.wav`, `.wma`.

Options for audio files in a course include:

- **Include Transcript**: Including a text transcript is a standard web practice and allows users that cannot hear the audio to get the same information. **Browse** your computer to attach your own transcript file. It will appear with the audio file in the course area.
- **Autostart**: The file will begin playing when the user opens the course area that includes the audio file.
- **Loop**: The file will play again from the beginning until stopped by the user.

### Image Files

Blackboard Learn supports the following image file types: `.gif`, `.jif`, `.jpg`, `.jpeg`, `.png`, `.tiff`, and `.wmf`.

Options for image files in a course include:

- **Alt Text**: Providing an alternate text phrase that explains the image and its purpose is a standard web practice and will allow users that cannot see the image to obtain similar information.
- **Long Description**: Provides a similar function to alt text, but the text description is longer and more detailed.
- **Dimensions**: For images, the height and width in pixels should match the original image. If you need to resize the image, customize the dimensions, but keep the same ratio between height and width. For example, an image of 640 x 800 pixels can be resized to 320 x 400 pixels. Changing the ratio of the dimensions will make the image appear stretched.
- **Border**: Include a solid black line, from one to four pixels in width, around the picture.
- **Target URL**: You can make the image a link by providing a target URL. When a user clicks on the image, a new browser window will open to the URL you provided.
- **Open Target in New Window**: Display the content in a new browser window outside of the course's content frame.

### Video Files

Higher quality videos provide better the resolution, but are much bigger files and can take a long time to load before playing. Consider the balance between resolution and load time and test it to find the right settings for the video.

Compatible multimedia formats include:
MPEG/AVI: MPEG (Moving Picture Expert Groups) files are audio-visual files in a digital compressed format. AVI (Audio Video Interleave) is Microsoft’s file format for storing audio and video data. These files have the following extensions: .avi, .mpg, and .mpeg.

QuickTime: QuickTime is a video and animation system that supports most formats, including JPG and MPEG. Users with a PC will require a QuickTime driver to view QuickTime files. Macintosh users do not require this driver. These files have the following extensions: .mov, .moov, and .qt.

Flash/Shockwave: Adobe Flash and Shockwave files support audio, animation, and video. They are browser independent. These files have the following extensions: .swa and .swf.

Microsoft formats: ASF (Advanced Systems Format) is Microsoft’s proprietary digital audio and video container which is especially suited for streaming media. WMF (Windows Media Video) is a video compression format. These files have the following extensions: .asf and .wmv.

Options for video files in a course include:

- **Dimensions**: For video files, the height and width in pixels should match the original settings. If the size of the video picture is too big, customize the dimensions, but keep the same ratio between height and width. For example, and image at 640 x 800 pixels could be resized to 320 x 400. Changing the ratio of the dimensions will make the picture appear stretched.

- **Transcript**: Including a text transcript is standard web practice and allows users that cannot hear the audio to get the information. Browse your computer to attach your own transcript file. It will appear with the video file in the course area. If the video file is an MPEG file, you can use the Include Transcript field to attach a SAMI transcript file.

- **Autostart**: The file will begin playing when the user opens the course area that includes the video file.

- **Loop**: The file will play again from the beginning until stopped by the user.

### How to Create a Web Link

Create a website link in a course area to provide quick access to a resource on the Internet.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Web Link**.
5. On the **Create Web Link** page, type a **Name** for the link that will display in the course area.

6. Type a **URL**. You must use the `http://` protocol, such as `http://www.myschool.edu/`.  
   **Tip:** Copy the URL from your browser and paste it into this page.

7. Optionally, attach a file using one of the following options.
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - **OR**-
If your school licenses content management, click Browse Content Collection.

After you have uploaded a file, you can click Select a Different File to delete the file you linked.

8. Set the Options:
   a. Select Yes to Permit Users to View this Content.
   b. Select Yes for Open in New Window to display the content in a new browser window outside of the course’s content frame.
   c. Select Yes to Track Number of Views.
   d. For Enter Date and Time Restrictions, you can set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect item availability, only when it appears.

9. Click Submit.

How to Create a Web Link to a Tool Provider

A Tool Provider is a third party tool that implements the LTI protocol. Learning Tools Interoperability is an initiative managed by the IMS Global Learning Consortium to seamlessly integrate externally hosted web-based learning tools into courses. If you use external resources that require logins for activities, such as virtual science experiments, interactive demonstrations, or assessments, you can specify a web link as a Link to a Tool Provider. Depending on configuration, this can then pass user information to the Tool Provider, creating a seamless experience for students.

Note: Your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to Build Content to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Web Link.
5. On the Create Web Link page, type a Name.
6. Select the This link is to a Tool Provider check box.
7. If your school has already set up the Tool Provider, type the web address for the Tool Provider in the URL box. If not, and you have been given an XML tool descriptor by the Tool Provider, paste it in the Tool Provider Configuration XML box.

How to Create Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and Content Folders

Within a course area, you can create containers to further organize your course materials. For example, within a single Content Area you can create ten folders—one folder for each unit in your textbook.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to Build Content to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or Content Folder.
5. On the Create page, type a Name. Specify the settings and options.
To learn more about Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders, including specific instructions for creating them, see Creating Course Areas for Content.

How to Create a Syllabus

You can create a syllabus in two ways. You can upload an existing file or use the Blackboard Learn syllabus builder. For both options, you create the syllabus in a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.

Using an Existing Syllabus File

Uploading an existing file for your syllabus minimizes vertical scrolling because it takes up less space in the course area. If you have an existing syllabus file or files, this method is the most efficient way to create your syllabus.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to Build Content to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Syllabus.
5. On the Add Syllabus page, type a Syllabus Name.

6. Select the Use Existing File option.
7. Attach a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click Browse My Computer.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click Browse Course.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click Browse Content Collection.

   **Tip:** You can attach additional files on the next page that appears after submitting. If you want to remove the file you attached, click the Do not attach link.
8. Click **Submit**.

9. On the **Edit Item** page, you can select a color for the **Syllabus Name**.

10. Optionally, in the **Text** box, type instructions or a description. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment. In the **Attachments** section, you can attach additional files. Optionally, type names for the attached files. If you do not provide link names, the file names are used.

11. Select **Options**:
   a. Select **Yes** for **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** for **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the syllabus to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect syllabus availability, only when it appears.

12. Click **Submit**.

You can change the syllabus content at any time. From the course area where you created the syllabus, access its contextual menu.

**Using the Syllabus Builder**

You can use the syllabus builder tool to create a syllabus in a modular format. The syllabus provides three sections by default: **Description**, **Learning Objectives**, and **Required Materials**. You can edit these section headings. Further customize the syllabus by adding lessons and specifying the design.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Syllabus**.
5. On the **Add Syllabus** page, type a **Syllabus Name**.

6. Select the **Create New Syllabus** option.
7. Click **Submit**.
8. On the **Syllabus Builder** page, type instructions or a description in the default body text boxes. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

![Syllabus Builder: Syllabus](image)

9. In the **Syllabus Design** section, select the styles and colors for the syllabus.

10. In the **Build Lessons** section, select the **Create Specified Number of Lesson Shells** option and type a number. You provide lesson information in later steps. Alternatively, you can select the **Do Not Create Lesson Shells** option.

11. Select **Options:**
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the syllabus to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect syllabus availability, only when it appears.
12. Click **Submit**.

13. If you did not create lesson shells, your syllabus is complete. Click **OK** to return to the course area and view the syllabus.

   - **OR**-

   If you need to provide details for lessons, continue with the subsequent steps.

14. Access the lesson’s contextual menu and select **Edit**.

15. On the **Edit Lesson** page, type the lesson title. Optionally, select a date and time when the lesson will appear in the syllabus.

16. Type a **Lesson Description**. You can use the functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

17. Click **Submit**.

18. Click **OK** to return to the course area and view the syllabus. Change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to view the syllabus as users see it.

You can change the syllabus content at any time. From the course area where the syllabus was created, access its contextual menu.

**How to Create a Course Link**

A course link is a shortcut to an existing area, tool, or item in a course. You can add course links to a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, folder, the Course Menu, and within some tools. For example, if you have created all assignments in their own Content Area, you can create course links to individual assignments in other areas of the course, such as in a unit folder or Learning Module.

If you create a course link to a tool that is not turned on, users accessing the course link see a message that the tool is not turned on. The same is true of a course link to a content item that has adaptive release applied to it.
Users who are not permitted to access the content because of a rule receive a message informing them that access to the content is not permitted.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Course Link**.
5. On the **Create Course Link** page click **Browse** to find the course item you want to link to.

6. In the pop-up **Course Map**, select the item.
7. The **Name** and **Location** text boxes are populated automatically on the **Create Course Link** page.
8. Optionally, edit the **Name** and select the color of the link. The name appears as a link in the course area.
9. Optionally, type instructions or a description in the **Description** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
10. Select **Options**:
    a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
    b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the Course Link to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect Course Link availability, only when it appears.

11. Click **Submit**.

**How to Create a Blank Page**

The blank page tool allows you to include files, images, and text as a link in a course area. Blank pages present content in a different way than items do. No description appears below the title of the page. Users see your content only after clicking the link. This reduces the amount of scrolling and streamlines the appearance of the course area. Blank pages can include Mashups, links to course content, and file attachments.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Blank Page**.
5. On the **Blank Page** display, replace the "New Page" title with a descriptive name for the page. This becomes the link in the course area. No description appears with the link title.
6. Type your content for the page in the **Content** box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment. Files attached in the Content Editor are visible to students only after they click the blank page link.

7. Attach a file using one of the following options. File attachments appear as links with the blank page link in the course area.
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
8. Select **Options**: 
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the blank page to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect blank page availability, only when it appears.

9. Click **Submit**.

When **Edit Mode** is **ON** and you click the link to a blank page, you see the **Edit** page. To see the blank page as users do, change **Edit Mode** to **OFF**.

**Note:** A blank page can also be created directly on the Course Menu. Include blank pages on the Course Menu for critical information. Remove blank pages from the Course Menu as soon as the information is no longer needed.

### How to Create a Module Page

Module pages contain course modules that you select from a list. A course module can be a tool, such as a calculator, or it can display dynamic information such as grades, alerts, and announcements. You can add course modules to module pages only. Many instructors will create a module page called "Homepage" that contains the modules that you and your students find most useful.

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. Access a **Content Area**, **Learning Module**, **Lesson Plan**, or folder.
3. On the **Action Bar**, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Module Page**.
5. On the **Create Module Page**, type a **Name** for the page. This becomes the link in the course area. Optionally, type a **Description** that will appear with the link in the course area. It does not appear on the module page.
6. Select **Permit Users to Personalize the Page** to allow users to change the color theme, reorder modules, and add modules to their personal view of the page. Users' customizations affect their view only.

7. Select **Options**:
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the module page to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and
Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect module page availability, only when it appears.

8. ClickSubmit.

Note: You can also create module pages on the Course Menu. To learn more, see The Course Menu.

Customize Module Page Banner

You edit a module page’s settings and title just as you do any other content item. Access its contextual menu and selectEdit. However, changing a module page’s banner differs.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder where the module page is located.
3. Click the link to the module page.
4. On the module page, access the title’s contextual menu.

5. Select Page Banner.
6. Type the Page Banner Content in the text box. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
7. Click Use Custom Page Banner display your banner to users. WhenEdit Mode is ON, the custom page banner will appear above the default banner. Users see only the custom page banner.
8. ClickSubmit.

Note: A recommended size for banners is approximately 480 by 80 pixels. Keep in mind that users can resize their browser windows, expand and collapse the Course Menu, and use monitors of varying sizes and screen resolutions. After uploading a banner, view it under those varying conditions to ensure that it looks as you intended.

Adding Course Modules

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access the module page.
3. ClickAdd Course Module.
4. On the Add Module page, select a module by clicking itsAdd function. Alternatively, click itsRemove function to delete a module from the module page.
5. Click OK.

Managing Modules

- Use the drag-and-drop function to reorder course modules.
- Alternatively, use the keyboard accessible reordering tool to reorder the modules.
- Collapse to display only the header area.
- Remove a module by clicking Close—represented by the X.
- Change the display of a module by clicking Personalize. For example, you can select how many days of announcements will appear in a module.
How to Create Mashups

You can use Mashups to easily integrate content that resides on an external website. For example, you can encourage discussion about a classic play by creating a Mashup that links to a YouTube video of a scene from the play and a link to a newspaper review of that production.

There are three default Mashups included in the system. You can add other Mashup sources as building blocks.

- **Flickr**: This site is for viewing and sharing photographic images.
- **SlideShare**: This site is for viewing and sharing slide presentations, documents, or Adobe PDF Portfolios.
- **YouTube™**: This site is for viewing and sharing online videos.

You can create Mashups as standalone content items in a course area. You can also create them in other places such as test questions, discussion board forums, blogs, or assignments by using the Content Editor.

*Note:* Your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your school to discuss its status. Mashups are often disabled to comply with institutional rules that govern online teaching and learning.

*Tip:* If a Mashup stops appearing or generates an error, it is possible that the URL changed or the item was deleted from Flickr, Slideshare, or YouTube.

Creating a Mashup Item as a Content Item

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select one of the available Mashups, **Flickr Photo**, **SlideShare Presentation**, or **YouTube Video**.
5. On the **Search** or **Search Results** page, select a type from the **Search** drop-down list, type **Keywords**, and select how the keywords should be used in the search. Click **More Options** to further narrow your search.
6. Click Go.

7. In the Search Results, click Select for an item. You have the option to Preview it before selecting it.

8. On the Create Mashup Item page, type a Name for the link if you do not want to use the title that automatically appears in the box.
9. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
10. Set the **Mashup Options**. Options vary depending on the type of Mashup.
   a. **View**: Select **Embed** to display the Mashup directly on the page when a user opens the item or thumbnail to display a small picture of the Mashup on the page with controls to launch it. **Text Link with Player** displays a link to the Mashup that users click to launch it.
   b. **Size**: Select the appropriate size.
   c. **Show URL**: Display the source URL.
   d. **Show Information**: Display the information about the content from the external website.

11. Optionally, in the **Attachments** section, attach a file using one of the following options.
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

12. Set the **Options**:
   a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
   b. Select **Yes** for **Open in New Window** to display the content in a new browser window outside of the course’s content frame.
   c. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   d. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set Mashups to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect Mashup availability, only when it appears.

13. Click **Submit**.

**Creating a Mashup Using the Content Editor**

You can create a Mashup in most places where the Content Editor is available. This means that you can put Mashups in areas such as content descriptions, test questions, discussion posts, and blogs.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder and create a content item or edit an existing one.
3. In the Content Editor, click **Insert Mashup**.
4. Select **Flickr Photo**, **Slideshare Presentation**, or **YouTube Video**.
5. In the pop-up **Search** page, select from the **Search** drop-down list, type in **Keywords**, and select how the keywords should be used in the search. Click **More Options** to further narrow your search.
6. Click **Go**.
7. In the **Search Results** click **Select** for an item. You have the option to **Preview** it before selecting it.
8. On the **Create Mashup Item** page, type a **Name** for the link if you do not want to use the title that automatically appears in the box.
9. Set the **Mashup Options**.
10. Click **Submit**.

**How to Add Content Packages to Use the Content Player**

One type of web-based learning content you can use in your course is called an SCO, or Shareable Content Object. These SCOs are gathered together into a compressed, zipped file called a content package, which can be unpackaged and played through a content player. Although you can design and build content packages yourself, often the individual components or entire packages will be provided to you by schools, private companies, or other sources for you to use in your course.

Blackboard Learn currently has two content players: The SCORM (Shareable Content Object Reference Model) Engine and the Open Standards Content Player.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Player</th>
<th>Content Types Supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCORM Engine</td>
<td>SCORM 1.2, SCORM 2004 (up to 4th Edition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Standards Content Player</td>
<td>SCORM 1.2, SCORM 2004 (up to 3rd Edition), IMS, NLN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If enabled by your school, the SCORM Engine becomes the default content player for all newly uploaded content packages, as well as any existing content package that is reuploaded, even if the Open Standards Content Player is also enabled.

**Note:** Your school controls whether the SCORM Engine, the Open Standards Content Player, or both are enabled. If neither of these tools is available, you can contact your school to discuss the status. To see if they are available in Content Areas, go to the Control Panel, expand **Customization**, and select **Tool Availability**.

**Note:** The Open Standards Content Player will be removed in a future release of Blackboard Learn, but remains available at present so that existing course content can continue to function normally. For this reason, it is important for administrators and instructors to plan for the timely migration, reuploading, and testing of existing content to use the SCORM Engine instead. Existing IMS and NLN content will need to be converted to be SCORM compliant.

**SCORM Content**

The SCORM Engine and Open Standards Content Player Building Blocks support content that conforms to the SCORM 1.2 standard and the SCORM 2004 standard. You do not need to determine ahead of time whether the content is designed as 1.2 or 2004 compliant, as both types can be played.

**Note:** The SCORM Engine supports SCORM 2004 up to the 4th edition, while the Open Standards Content Player supports up to the 3rd edition.

To learn more about SCORM content, go to [http://www.adlnet.org](http://www.adlnet.org).

**IMS Content**

The Open Standards Content Player building block supports content that conforms to the IMS Content and Packaging 1.1.2 standard with the web content attribute. When including this content type in a course, it is useful to note that most of these types of packages do not track user attempt details. Otherwise, you will see no major differences.

To learn more about IMS content, go to [http://www.imsproject.org](http://www.imsproject.org).

**NLN Content**

The Open Standards Content Player building block supports NLN content, which conforms to SCORM and IMS standards. The United Kingdom NLN Materials Team is responsible for commissioning and developing e-
learning materials for the NLN, and offers advice on best practices in integrating the NLN materials into teaching and learning schemes.

To learn more about NLN content, go to http://www.nln.ac.uk.

**How to Add a Content Package to Use the SCORM Engine**

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Content Package (SCORM)**.
5. On the **Add Content Package** page, attach a file that conforms to the required standards using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-  
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
6. To upload the selected file, click **Submit**.

After the file has been uploaded and checked, a second **Add Content Package** page displays where you can set the content package details.

1. On the second **Add Content Package** page, in the **SCORM Information** section, type a **Title**.
2. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
3. Select the **SCORM Availability** options. The choices enable you to determine whether the content player is available to the student, control the number of attempts, and set course content.
availability.
   a. Select Yes to Make SCORM Available.
   b. For Number of Attempts, you can select Allow single attempts, Allow unlimited attempts, or enter a number for Number of attempts allowed.
   c. For Limit Availability, you can set content packages to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect content package availability, only when it appears.
   d. Select Yes to Track Number of Views.
4. Select the Grading options. The choices allow you to determine whether and how the student is graded.
   a. For Grade SCORM, you can select No Grading or type a number for Grade: Points Possible, based on either the SCORM Score, SCORM Completion, or SCORM Satisfaction.
   b. Select Yes to Grade SCOS, and then select the individual items to grade.
How to View SCORM Attempt Details

When a SCORM package has been set for grading, you can view attempt details related to the users’ interactions with the content. The details may include the total time the user has viewed the content, the completion status, responses to any questions contained in the package, and whether the responses were correct. The attempt data helps you determine a score for the Grade Center item.
Note: Not all packages are designed to track all data. If the package does not provide the information to Blackboard Learn, the data will show as N/A. If you have questions about missing data, contact the creator of the package to determine which data was designed to be tracked.

Follow these steps to view individual attempts:
1. On the Control Panel, access the Full Grade Center.
2. Locate the column for the course content item.
3. Click the user attempt.
4. On the Edit Grade page click View. The Attempt Details page displays.

Follow these steps to run a report to view the details on all attempts:
2. Click SCORM Reports.
3. On the SCORM Reports page, access an item's contextual menu and select Run.

How to Edit the SCORM Player Advanced Options

Most of the time, you should not need to access or change the SCORM player Advanced Options since the default settings are set for maximum compatibility and performance. The content package should already have the intended navigation, flow, and behavior, and the default settings are most likely to display it correctly and consistently. If you feel that you do need to change them, you should first contact your school for assistance and guidance.

To access the SCORM player Advanced Options, you must edit an existing SCORM content package.
1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder where the SCORM content package has already been uploaded.
3. Access the SCORM content package's contextual menu and select Edit.
4. To access the otherwise hidden SCORM player Advanced Options, set Edit SCORM Player Behavior to Yes. The SCORM engine Advanced Options will display in two or three columns. The left column allows you to select the category of advanced options controls, while the right columns list the choices and settings associated with the category selected. The categories are:
   - Navigational Controls
   - Launch Behavior
   - Rudimentary Sequencing
   - Rudimentary Rollup
   - Compatibility Settings
   - Communication Settings
   - Debugger Options
   - History Options
   - Other Behavioral Options

Note: Of these, the Navigational Controls and Launch Behavior are likely to be the most useful for instructors with a basic level of understanding of how SCORM content works, while Debugger Options and History Options can help in troubleshooting content packages that are not working properly.
5. When you are satisfied with the settings, click Submit. If you do not want to commit any changes you have made, click Cancel.

Navigational Controls

The **Navigational Controls** allow you to include buttons, bars, and other navigational aids the student will see and be able to use when accessing the course content using the SCORM player.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show Navigation Bar</td>
<td>Determine whether the SCORM player will display a navigation bar to the student. The navigation bar must be enabled for any of the following settings to take effect:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show Finish Button</strong>: Display an Exit Course button on the navigation bar. Pressing this attempts to finish the current content and go back to the main lesson, regardless of the current state of completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show Close SCO Button</strong>: Display a Close SCO button on the navigation bar. Pressing this closes the current SCO. This option should remain off because it is not useful for most students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Enable Previous/Next</strong>: Include Previous and Next controls on the navigation bar, enabling the student to move forward or backward in the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show Progress Bar</strong>: Show a progress bar for the content, so students can gauge their progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Use Measure For Progress Bar</strong>: If set, the player uses the Progress Measure Rollup values to calculate progress. Otherwise, the current content object completion is used. This is applicable only in SCORM 2004 4th edition and later content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show Help</strong>: Display a Help button to the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Title Bar</td>
<td>Determine whether the SCORM player displays a title bar to the student. The <strong>Show Navigation Bar</strong> option must be enabled for this setting to take effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent Right Click</td>
<td>Prevents the student from right-clicking in the SCORM player windows. If the right mouse button is clicked, nothing happens. This can be useful in high-stakes assessments or where you do not want the student to be able to see the internal structure or content in the player. This setting only affects the SCORM player windows, including the course structure and the navigation bar (if present), and does not affect any other content, browser windows, or computer desktop functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Course Structure</td>
<td>Determines if the SCORM player should display the course structure. If selected, the course structure displays to the left of the content, in an outline format. This can be useful for courses containing multiple content objects. This option must be enabled for any of the following settings to take effect:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Course Structure Starts Open</strong>: Determines whether SCORM player should begin with the course structure shown or hidden. The student can show or hide the structure in any case as long as the <strong>Show Course Structure</strong> and <strong>Show Navigation Bar</strong> are enabled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Enable Choice Navigation</strong>: Determines whether the SCORM player will allow the student to navigate within the course structure by selecting links in the outline. Otherwise, the course structure display is for information and reference only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Course Structure Width</strong>: Sets the width of the course structure window, in pixels. The default, zero (0), sets it to automatic width.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Structure Status Display</strong>: Defines how icons are presented to the student to indicate success and completion status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Success Only</strong>: Course success status only (passed/failed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Completion Only</strong>: Completion status only (complete/incomplete).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Separate</strong>: Both success and completion status are presented separately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Combined</strong>: Success and completion are presented as a combined metric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>None</strong>: No SCO-level status is shown to the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Invalid Menu Item Action</strong>: Determines how the SCORM player handles menu item option selections which are invalid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show and Enable Links</strong>: Invalid menu item links are visible, but clicking on them will display an invalid action message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Hide</strong>: Invalid menu item links are not shown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Show but Disable Links</strong>: Invalid menu item links are visible, but clicking on them does nothing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Launch Behavior**

The **Launch Behavior** options control the initial appearance of the content when first launched by the student.
## Option Function

**SCO Launch Type**  
These settings determine how each SCO will be launched. Selected by a drop-down list, possible values are:

- **Frameset**: Launch the SCO in-line, in a browser frame, rather than opening it in a new window.
- **New Window**: Launch the SCO in a new browser window.
- **New Window After Click**: Launch the SCO in a new browser window after requiring the student to click a link. This setting can be useful when dealing with browser pop-up blockers, since clicking a link will usually override the blocker.
- **New Window Without Browser Toolbar**: Launch the SCO in a new browser window without a toolbar.
- **New Window Without Browser Toolbar After Click**: Launch the SCO in a browser window without a toolbar, after requiring the student to click on a link.

**Player Launch Type**  
These settings determine how the SCORM player will be launched. Selected by a drop-down list, possible values are:

- **Frameset**: Launch the SCORM player in-line, in a browser frame, rather than opening it in a new window.
- **New Window**: Launch the player in a new browser window.
- **New Window After Click**: Launch the player in a new browser window after requiring the student to click a link. This setting can be useful when dealing with pop-up blockers, since clicking a link will usually override the blocker.
- **New Window Without Browser Toolbar**: Launch the player in a new browser window without a toolbar.
- **New Window Without Browser Toolbar After Click**: Launch the player in a browser window without a toolbar, after requiring the student to click on a link.

**New Window Options**  
These settings determine the dimensions of either the content player when launched in a new window. These settings have no effect unless a new window option has been selected as SCO Launch Type or Player Launch Type.

- **User Value Defaults**: Launch the new window using the client browser's default dimensions.
- **Full Screen**: Launch the new window in full screen mode. If this option is selected, you must provide some means for the student to exit the content, such as an exit or close button or link.
- **Specify New Window Dimensions**: Set the new window dimensions explicitly.
  - **Width for content**: The width of new windows in pixels.
  - **Height for content**: The height of new windows in pixels.
- **REQUIRED**: Above dimensions are required for the course to function properly: If selected and the client browser cannot support the specified dimensions, a warning message is displayed to the student.

**Prevent Window Resize**  
Determines whether to prevent the content player windows from being resized by the student.

## Rudimentary Sequencing

The **Rudimentary Sequencing** options enable you to control what should happen next, under both normal and error conditions, when a student either completes or leaves a SCORM Content Package before completion. Based on these settings, the SCORM player determines what should happen next.

Several factors are key in determining what action to take:
Whether the SCO is the first (and possibly only) one, a middle SCO, or the last one
The status of the SCO, both individually and as part of the complete Content Package course
The exit status of the SCO that has been completed or aborted

Note: These settings are applicable only to SCORM 1.2 Content Packages, and provide a means of emulating the advanced sequencing built into the SCORM 2004 standards. In SCORM 2004 (all editions), Simple Sequencing allows the content to determine how SCO sequencing is to be handled.

### Option | Function
--- | ---
**Intermediate SCO**
These are the settings that apply to Shareable Content Objects (SCOs) that are at the beginning or in the middle of a course sequence consisting of multiple SCOs, that is, every SCO except for the last one. Whether Course Satisfied or Course Not Satisfied applies, you can control what happens next for each of the possible conditions:
- **Normal**: The student has exited the content in the current SCO using the correct navigation methods.
- **Suspend**: The student has suspended the current session, such as when skipping between SCOs in a course consisting of multiple SCOs.
- **Timeout**: The course session has experienced a timeout due to the student not completing the SCO in the time allotted or caused by a communication failure between the computer and the server.
- **Logout**: The student has logged out of the current session, with the SCO is still active.

The available choices for each exit and course satisfaction condition are:
- **Exit course after confirmation**: Ask the student to confirm exit, and if so, to return to the main lesson. If confirmation is not given, an appropriate message is displayed.
- **Exit course**: Simply close the SCORM player and return to the main lesson.
- **Go to next SCO**: Take the student to the next SCO in the sequence.
- **Display message**: Display a message page. The SCORM player determines what message to display depending on the current status of the player.
- **Do nothing**: The SCORM player will take no action.

**Final SCO**
These are the settings that apply to the last SCO in a course. If a course consists of a single SCO, it is treated as if it is the final SCO. Whether Course Satisfied or Course Not Satisfied applies, you can control what happens next for each of the possible conditions:
- **Normal**: The student has finished the content in the current SCO.
- **Suspend**: The student has suspended the current session.
- **Timeout**: The session has experienced a timeout due to the student not completing the SCO in the time allotted or caused by a communication failure between the computer and the server.
- **Logout**: The student has logged out of the current session.

The available choices for each exit and course satisfaction condition are:
- **Exit course after confirmation**: Ask the student to confirm exit, and if so, to return to the main lesson. If confirmation is not given, an appropriate message is displayed.
- **Exit course**: Simply close the SCORM player and return to the main lesson.
- **Go to next SCO**: Displays a message page, since this is already the last SCO in the sequence.
- **Display message**: Display a message page. The SCORM player determines what message to display depending on the current status of the player.
- **Do nothing**: The SCORM player will take no action.
Rudimentary Rollup

The **Rudimentary Rollup** options allow you to determine how you want to evaluate the SCO scores and status for a given student. The term "rollup" refers to the process of collecting individual SCO scores and completion status, and using that data to calculate and assign a cumulative final grade and overall completion status for the SCORM Content Package course. There are several different ways to select criteria, average test scores, and calculate both a grade and completion status.

**Note:** These settings are applicable only to SCORM 1.2 content, and provide a way to emulate the score and status rollup behavior built into the SCORM 2004 standard. They are not applicable to SCORM 2004 content since SCORM 2004 Simple Sequencing allows the content to determine how rollups are to be handled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Score Rollup Mode</strong></td>
<td>Determines the way in which the SCORM player will collect individual SCO scores, analyze them and report an overall calculated score. Possible values are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Score Provided by Course</strong>: Useful mainly for Content Packages consisting of a single SCO, this setting simply reports the score provided by the first SCO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Average Score of All Units</strong>: Adds up all the scores provided, and divides that number by the total number of SCOs in the course, regardless how many have reported a score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Fixed Average</strong>: Adds up all the scores provided and divides by the number specified in <strong>Number of Scoring Objects</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Average Score of All Units with Non-Zero Scores</strong>: Adds up all the scores and divides that number by the total number of SCOs reporting a score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Last SCO Score</strong>: Simply reports the last SCO score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Scoring Objects</strong>: Indicates how many SCOs should be reporting a score. This value is only relevant if <strong>Score Rollup Mode</strong> is set to <strong>Fixed Average</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status Rollup Mode</strong></td>
<td>Determines how overall completion status is determined. Possible values are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Status Provided by Course</strong>: Useful mainly for Content Packages consisting of a single SCO, this setting simply reports the completion status provided by the first SCO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Complete When All Units Complete</strong>: The course is considered complete when all the SCOs in the Content Package are complete, regardless whether the result is failed, completed, or passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Complete When All Units are Complete and Not Failed</strong>: The course is considered complete when all the SCOs in the Content Package are complete, with a status of either completed or passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Complete When Threshold Score is Met</strong>: The course is considered complete with its score (as determined by the <strong>Score Rollup Mode</strong>) meets or exceeds the threshold set in <strong>Threshold Score for Completion</strong>. In this instance, not all SCO units need to have been completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Complete When All Units are Complete and Threshold Score is Met</strong>: The course is considered complete when all the SCOs in the Content Package are complete and the score (as determined by the <strong>Score Rollup Mode</strong>) meets or exceeds the threshold set in <strong>Threshold Score for Completion</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Complete When All Units are Passed</strong>: The course is considered complete when all of the SCOs in the Content Package are complete and passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threshold Score for Completion</strong>: 0.0-1.0: Determines the threshold for course completion, and is applicable only if the <strong>Status Rollup Mode</strong> has been set to <strong>Complete When Threshold Score is Met</strong> or <strong>Complete When All Units are Complete and Threshold Score is Met</strong>. The value is a decimal number between 0.0 and 1.0. (For an equivalent percentage value, multiply by 100; for example, if set to 0.8, this means the required threshold score is 80%.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply Rollup Status to Success Status</td>
<td>Selecting this option causes the <strong>Status Rollup Mode</strong> to be applied to the success status, instead of just the completion status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First SCO is Pretest</td>
<td>Enabling this option indicates that if the first SCO in a lesson sequence achieves a status of passed, the rest of the SCOs in the SCORM Content Package will be marked complete. This makes it possible for you to design a set of courses that allow students to bypass topics for which they are able to demonstrate mastery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Compatibility Settings**

Although usually there is no need to change these settings from the defaults, the **Compatibility Settings** can help in troubleshooting course content packages which encounter errors, fail to launch, or have other problems.

**Note:** As with all the advanced settings, but especially here, if you do feel there is a need to adjust the **Compatibility Settings**, you should first contact your school’s Blackboard administrator for assistance and guidance.

**Note:** When re-uploading course content that previously had been using the Open Standards content player, if there are problems or errors, these are the settings that may need changing, especially for older and possibly non-standard content. To aid in determining exactly where the problem lies, it is recommended to enable the detailed **Debugger Options**, and review the resulting message logs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finish Causes Immediate Commit</td>
<td>This setting is provided to deal with single SCO courses where there is difficulty in capturing exit status. You may want to try enabling this option if a single SCO course is failing to record completions accurately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap SCO Window with API</td>
<td>When an SCO is launched in a new window, some non-standard or poorly coded content may not be able to find and communicate properly with the SCORM Engine. Enabling this setting puts a kind of wrapper—an API, or application program interface—around the player, and this API automatically knows how to talk to the SCORM Engine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always Flow to First SCO</td>
<td>If enabled, the SCORM player always loads the first course in an SCO, regardless whether the sequencing rules dictate this behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery Score Overrides Lesson Status</td>
<td>When enabled, if the mastery score indicates the SCO is complete or not complete, this overrides whatever the actual lesson status may be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow Complete Lesson Status To Change</td>
<td>Applicable to SCORM 1.2, this setting determines whether a lesson marked as complete can be changed at a later date to something other than complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rollup Empty Set to Unknown</td>
<td>For SCORM 2004 courses, this setting determines the rollup status when there are no activities providing information to set the status. If selected, both course completion and satisfaction status are set to unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disable Root Activity</td>
<td>Prevents a student from creating a new attempt by forcing the course navigation tree and any other links which could restart the course or an SCO within it to be disabled and not to respond to clicks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rollup at SCO Unload</td>
<td>Forces score rollup when the SCO unloads, to handle those SCOs which fail to explicitly call for a rollup to be performed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Override Objective and Completion Set by Content to True</td>
<td>The default for SCORM 2004 and the default for the SCORM 1.2 player can sometimes lead to an SCO being marked as completed and satisfied if the SCO fails to report the correct runtime status data. This setting overrides the default behavior for courses that do not set the appropriate default sequencing rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Student Preferences Global to Course</td>
<td>Causes any student preferences set in a given SCO to apply to all SCOs in a given SCORM Content Package course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch Completed Registrations as No-Credit</td>
<td>Determines whether completed course registrations are launched subsequently as normal or as no-credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Status of Failed Success Status</td>
<td>Set an override value for the completion status of an SCO that a student has failed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lookahead Sequencer Mode</td>
<td>Lookahead processing enables the SCORM Engine to dynamically update the course navigation structure that is visible and available depending on the state of the current SCO. By default, this setting should be enabled. For very large courses, this may cause noticeable slowing in web browsers and if deemed unacceptable, you can set this to disabled. Available settings are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Disabled: Disable the SCORM lookahead sequencer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Enabled: Enable the SCORM lookahead sequencer (default)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Real-time: Enable the SCORM real-time lookahead sequencer, which runs after certain runtime values change, immediately updating the visible course navigation structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Content > Content Creation

**Option** | **Function**
--- | ---
**Reset Runtime Data Timing** | Determines when the SCORM player will reset the CMI (computer managed instruction) data timing. The choices are:
- **Never**: The SCORM player will never reset runtime status
- **When Exit is Not Suspend**: The SCORM player only preserves runtime data when the exit status is not Suspend
- **On Each New Sequencing Attempt**: The SCORM player will reset the runtime data every time the system rules dictate that a new attempt should begin

**Return to LMS Action** | Because the SCORM 2004 4th Edition requires learning content to provide an interface allowing students to choose an exit type when leaving a course, the SCORM player can display a prompt when the student clicks *Exit Course*. Since it is possible to turn this prompt on and off, this option allows you to select the action to take automatically when the prompt is off. The setting determines whether the course suspends and saves the current state or ends the course entirely upon exit. The available choices are:
- **Legacy**: Use the SCORM 3rd Edition behavior, returning to the main course while saving the current state of the attempt
- **Suspend All**: Save the current state of all current attempt, including all open SCOs (SCORM 4th Edition only)
- **Exit All**: End the attempt (SCORM 4th Edition only)
- **Selectable**: Allow the student to choose between *Suspend All* or *Exit All* (SCORM 4th Edition only)

**Communication Settings**
The Communication Settings determine how the Content Player interacts with the server. These settings may need to be adjusted if there are reported timeouts or communication failures between the students' computers and the server, but should only be changed by an administrator or experienced SCORM developer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Failed Attempts</td>
<td>Sets the maximum number of attempts to attempt a runtime data update to the server before declaring failure. If this number is exceeded, an error message is displayed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commit Frequency</td>
<td>Determines how often, in milliseconds, the runtime data is updated to the server. <strong>Note</strong>: Some events, such as completing a course, force an update.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Debugger Options**
The Debugger Options determine whether and how much logging information will be recorded within the various SCORM subsystems.

**Note**: When encountering problems or errors with course content playback or presentation, enabling the Debugger Options so you, your administrator, or an expert SCORM support person can review the message logs is often an essential step in troubleshooting and resolving the issue. Using the History Options to record routine (non-error) status details can also provide useful information.
### Course Content > Content Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Debugger Options</strong></td>
<td>Determines the level of logging to be performed within each of the associated SCORM subsystems: <strong>Control</strong> (overall system functions), <strong>Runtime</strong> (the launching and operation of SCOs), or <strong>Sequencing</strong> (what happens outside of and between SCOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off</td>
<td>No debug log messages are recorded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>Basic debug log messages are recorded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed</td>
<td>Audit-level log messages are recorded, along with additional detail messages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Include Timestamps | Determines whether timestamps will be recorded with the events in the debugger log files.                                                                                                                   |

#### History Options

The **History Options** control whether and how much routine (non-error) status information about the SCORM Content Package course content is logged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capture History</td>
<td>Determines whether the Content Package should send back information about each attempt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture Detailed History</td>
<td>Determines whether the Content Package should send back detailed information about each attempt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other Behavioral Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Limit</strong></td>
<td>The total time, in minutes, the student is permitted to spend in the Content Package. If the time specified expires, the student will be automatically exited, with scores and status calculated from the current state of completion. If this value is set to zero (0), there is no time limit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### How to Add a Content Package to Use the Open Standards Content Player

**Note**: These instructions apply to instances of Blackboard Learn where the SCORM engine building block has not been enabled. If the SCORM engine building block is enabled, new and reuploaded content will be required to use it instead. However, you will still be able to access and edit the options associated with existing content uploaded with the Open Standards content player.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Content Package (SCORM)**, **Content Package (IMS)** or **Content Package (NLN)**.
5. On the **Add Content Package** page, type a **Title**.
6. Attach a file that conforms to the SCORM, IMS, or NLN standards using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

---

7. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top-level folder. Attachments you upload using the Content Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

8. Select the **Interaction Option**. Choice enables the viewer can use a left navigation menu to select content to view. **Flow** hides the left navigation menu and the viewer must use the **Next** and **Previous** buttons to view content sequentially.

9. For Grade Center options:
   a. Select **Yes** for **Add Grade Center Item** to add a Grade Center column. The column name will be the name of the package. You can edit and manage this from the Grade Center.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Attempt Details** to collect user interaction with the content, such as total viewing time and question responses. You view the details from the Grade Center.
   c. If **Yes** is selected for **First Attempt Only**, attempt details will only display for the first time the user accesses the content. If the user does not go through the whole package, subsequent attempts will not be tracked. Leaving this value as **No** will always show the last attempt data. This setting is for tracking data only. It does not restrict how often the content is viewed by the user.

10. Set the **Content Options**:
    a. Select **Yes** to **Make Content Visible**.
    b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
    c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set content packages to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect content package availability, only when it appears.

11. Click **Submit**.
How to See Content From the Student View

It is a good practice to always check your content in the student view. To do this, change Edit Mode to **OFF**. Viewing from the student perspective ensures you reveal only the information you intend to show and that it displays correctly.
Creating Assessments in a Course Area

You can provide tests, surveys, and assignments in Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, or folders. You can create a new test, survey, or assignment or link to an existing one.

You create assessments by pointing to **Create Assessment** in the course area’s Action Bar to select the type of assessment.

You can provide relevant assessments with your teaching materials. For example, include a pre-test at the beginning of a Learning Module and a post-test at the end. Or take a survey of students’ background knowledge in the subject in your course orientation folder.

**About Assessment Types**

You can create many different types of assessments in your course areas. Include assessments alongside your other course materials to create a cohesive learning experience for students. You can create assessments in advance, making them available only as they are needed.
### Assessment Type | Description
--- | ---
**Test** | You can create tests to assess student knowledge. Numerous question types are available, including multiple choice, true/false, matching, calculated, and essay. You assign point values to the questions as you create them. The majority of questions are auto-graded, so after students submit their answers for grading, the results are recorded in the Grade Center. Students can find out their score immediately after completing it if all questions are auto-graded and you release this information. To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).

**Survey** | Surveys are ungraded tests. You can use surveys to poll student opinion and conduct class evaluations. Survey results are anonymous, but you can see whether a student has completed a survey and view aggregate results for each survey question. Survey creation and deployment is almost identical to test creation, except for:
- Survey creation settings do not include options for assigning scoring defaults because survey questions are not graded.
- When questions are added, you do not specify which answers are correct.
- Random blocks of questions cannot be added to surveys.

To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).

**Assignment** | You can use assignments to present a variety of learning activities to students which they can view and submit from one location. Assignments can be submitted as:
- Text students include on the [Upload Assignment](#) page
- Attached files
- A combination of both text and attached files rubrics and examples may be provided as part of the assignment to let students know how they will be evaluated.

To learn more, see [Assignments](#).

**Self and Peer Assessment** | The Self and Peer Assessment Building Block is designed to enhance the reflective learning skills of students. Students receive constructive feedback from their peers as well as provide it. To learn more, see [Self and Peer Assessment](#).

**Safe Assignment** | The SafeAssign building block enables comparison of submitted assignments against a database of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. You can use SafeAssign to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students properly cite sources. SafeAssign is effective as both a deterrent to plagiarism and an educational tool. SafeAssignments and regular assignments are created and graded in similar ways. However, they are completely separate tools and you cannot change an existing assignment into a SafeAssignment.

To learn more, see [SafeAssign](#).

*Note:* Self and Peer Assignments and SafeAssignments are not available with a Basic License.

### How to Create a Test or Survey in a Course Area
You can link to an existing test or survey or create a new one in a course area.

**Link to an Existing Test or Survey**
1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Create Assessment** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Test** or **Survey**.
5. On the **Create Test** or **Create Survey** page select an existing test or survey from the list.

6. On the **Test Options** or **Survey Options** page, you can change the name and set the options.

7. The test is unavailable by default, but you can deploy the test to students by selecting **Yes** for **Make the Link Available**.

8. Click **Submit**. A link to the test or survey appears in the course area.

### Create a New Test or Survey

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Create Assessment** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Test** or **Survey**.
5. On the **Create Test** or **Create Survey** page, click **Create** to build a new test or survey.
6. On the **Test Information** or **Survey Information** page, provide a name.

7. Optionally, type **Instructions** and a **Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files uploaded from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top level folder. Attachments uploaded using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

8. Click **Submit**.
9. On the Test Canvas or Survey Canvas page, create questions.

10. Click OK.

11. On the Create Test or Create Survey page, select your newly created test or survey from the list.

12. Click Submit.

13. On the Test Options or Survey Options page, you can change the Name and provide a Description. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files.

14. The test is unavailable by default, but you can deploy the test to students by selecting Yes for Make the Link Available.

15. Set other test and survey options as needed.

16. Click Submit. A link to the test or survey appears in the course area.

Result

When you select an existing test or survey, a link to it is created in the course area. The original test or survey remains in the Test tool. When you create a new test or survey, it is added to the Test tool and the link is created in the course area.

If you delete a link to a test in a course area, the test remains in the Test tool and can be linked again in another course area.

Be sure to make sure the test is deployed to students by selecting Yes for Make the Link Available on the Test Options page. To do this after the test creation process, access the test link in the course area. The link indicates if it is not available. Click the test’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select Edit the Test Options.

Note: Alternatively, you can create tests and surveys by accessing the Control Panel, expanding Course Tools, and selecting Test, Surveys, and Pools. When tests and surveys are created here, you must create a link to your test in a course area to deploy it to students as described in this section.

Next Steps

To learn about creating tests and surveys from the Control Panel as well as question types, options, settings, and grading, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.
How to Create an Assignment in a Course Area

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to Create Assessment to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Assignment.
5. On the Create Assignment page, type a Name.
Create Assignment

1. Assignment Information
   - Name and Color: Assignment #2 Black
   - Instructions:
     How are pulsars and pulsating stars different? Attach your assignment file and submit it.

2. Assignment Files
   - Attach File: Browse My Computer
   - Attached files:
     - File Name: assignment2_bw.docx
     - Link Title: assignment2_bw.docx
     - Do not attach

3. Grading
   - Points Possible: 25

4. Availability
   - Make the Assignment Available
   - Number of Attempts:
     - Allow single attempt
     - Allow unlimited attempts
     - Number of attempts: 
   - Limit Availability:
     - Display After
     - Display Until
   - Track Number of Views

5. Due Dates
   - Due Date: 03/25/2012

6. Recipients
   - Recipients:
     - All Students Individually
     - Groups of Students
6. Type **Instructions**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files uploaded from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top level folder. Attachments uploaded using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.

7. You can add files in the **Assignment Files** section. To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**. The attached file will display with the assignment link in the course area.

8. Type the **Points Possible**.

9. The assignment is available by default, but you can make it unavailable by clearing the check box for **Make the Assignment Available**. Select the number of attempts allowed.

10. Set the **Due Date**.

11. Select **Recipients**. Selecting **All Students Individually** requires each student to submit the assignment. Selecting **Groups of Students** enables you to select a group to receive one assignment that they will submit for one collective grade.

12. Click **Submit**. The assignment appears in the course area.

**Result**

When you create a new assignment, it resides only in the course area where you created it. If you delete an assignment from a course area, it is permanently removed from the system.

**Next Steps**

This section provided basic information on assignment creation. To learn more about assignment options, settings, and grading, see **Assignments**.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Creating a Test](#) (Flash movie | 3m 50s | 2,960 KB)  
[Getting Started with Assignments](#) (PDF file | 19.7 MB)

**Linking to Tools in a Course Area**

Links to individual tools or a specific area of a tool, such as a particular Discussion Board forum, can be placed in a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. You may also link to the entire Tools Area, which provides a list of links to all available tools.

Point to **Tools** in the course area’s Action Bar to create links to tools or the Tools Area. You can show or hide additional tools by clicking **More Tools**.
Providing the relevant tools for a lesson within a course area creates a seamless experience for users. For example, Discussion Board forums and journals can exist in the same Content Area with multimedia, files, and tests.

When you include a tool in a course area, you can describe what it is used for, provide instructions for the tool, and attach necessary files. For example, you can link to a blog, attach a file to read, and explain that users need to post to the blog next week.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls which tools are available. If a tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status. Instructors have the ability to disable tools in a course by expanding the **Customization** section of the Control Panel and selecting **Tool Availability**.

### About Tool Types

Learn about the types of tools available and choose the ones that help students meet your learning objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>The Discussion Board is an asynchronous tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class materials. The Discussion Board is made up of Forums that may appear anywhere in the course but are also all centrally located in the Discussion Board tool. To learn more, see Discussion Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>A blog is a personal online journal that is frequently updated and intended for public viewing. Each blog entry can include any combination of text, images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments. To learn more, see Blogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Journals provide a personal space for students to communicate privately with you, the instructor. Students can also use journals as a self-reflective tool to post their opinions, ideas, and concerns about the course, or discuss and analyze course materials. To learn more, see Journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikis</td>
<td>A wiki is a collaborative tool that enables multiple writers to collaboratively contribute and modify one or more pages of content. Pages can be created and edited quickly, while tracking changes and additions. To learn more, see Wikis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>You can link to the <strong>Groups</strong> tool for links to all groups, or link to a specific group page. To learn more, see Course Groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tool Type Description

**Chat**
Chat allows users to interact with each other using a text-based messaging tool in real time. To learn more, see Chat.

**Virtual Classroom**
The Virtual Classroom includes a shared whiteboard, chat, group browser, and a map that can be used to navigate to places in the course. To learn more, see Managing Virtual Classroom.

**Tools Area**
The Tools Area provides a list of links to all tools that are available to students.

**More Tools**
Click More Tools to expand the drop-down list to include additional tools. Click it again to hide the additional tools.

### How to Add Links to Tools in a Course Area

You can link to an entire tool, such as the main Blogs page, or an area of the tool, such as a specific blog. You can also create a new blog while working in the course area.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Tools** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select one of the tools, such as **Journal**. The following steps refer to creating a journal link. The steps are similar for other tools.
5. On the Create Link: Journal page:
   - Select **Link to Journal Page** to link to the full Journal tool.
   - OR-
   - Select **Link to a Journal** and select a specific journal from the list.
   - OR-
   - Click **Create New Journal** to add a link to a journal you create at this time. On the Create Journal page, type a **Name** and select settings for the new journal. After clicking **Submit**, the newly created journal appears in the list of journals to choose from when adding a link in your course.
6. Click **Next**.
7. On the **Create Link** page, type a **Link Name**.
8. Optionally, type a description in the box. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files uploaded from your computer are saved in Course Files or the Content Collection in the top level folder. Attachments uploaded using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and can include alternate text to describe the attachment.
9. Select **Options**.
   a. Select **Yes** for **Available** to make the link visible to users.
   b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
   c. For **Date Restrictions**, you can set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect item availability, only when it appears.
10. Click **Submit**.

**How to Create a Link to the Tools Area**
Instead of linking to a specific tool, you can provide a link to the Tools Area that lists all available tools.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Tools** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Tools Area**.
5. On the **Create Link: Tools** page, type a **Link Name**.

![Create Link: Tools](image)

6. Optionally, type a description in the box.
7. Select **Options**:
   a. Select **Yes** to Permit Users to View this Content.
   b. Select **Yes** to Track Number of Views.
   c. For **Enter Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set the tool link to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect the tool link’s availability, only when it appears.

8. Click **Submit**.

**Related Tutorials**  
- Creating a Journal (Flash movie | 3m 25s | 1,840 KB)  
- Creating a Blog (Flash movie | 2m 19s | 1,175 KB)  
- Creating a Wiki (Flash movie | 2m 01s | 1,044 KB)  
- Creating a Tool Link (Flash movie | 2m 01s | 1,044 KB)

### Providing Textbook Information in a Course Area

Information about the textbooks used in your course can be included in a course area. When you use the **Assign Textbook** tool, the textbook information is also included in the Course Catalog where prospective students can access this information prior to enrollment. The Course Catalog is accessed on the logon page or on the **Courses** tab after logging in.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

### How to Assign a Textbook

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Assign Textbook** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Search for Textbook**.

5. On the **Search for Textbook** page, select a Search category from the drop-down list: **ISBN**, **Title**, **Author**, or **Subject**.
6. Type **Keywords**, such as an author’s name or title.

7. To further narrow the search, select the **Type** of book: Digital, Print, or All. You can also select a **Currency**.

8. Click **Go** when you have provided all necessary information.

9. From the list of search results, click **Select** for a textbook to assign it to your course.

10. On the **Create Textbook** page, select **Required** or **Recommended** for the textbook.

11. Optionally, provide a **Description**.

12. In the **Options** section:
   a. Select **Yes** for **Permit Users to View this Content** so that students can see it.
   b. Select **Yes** for **Track Number of Views** to record the number of times the item is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom.
   c. **Select Date and Time Restrictions** to display the textbook on a specific date and time and to stop displaying it on a specific date and time.

13. Click **Submit** to add the textbook information as a content item to the course area.

If your search does not return the needed result, point to **Assign Textbook** on the Action Bar and select **Manual Entry Textbook** from the drop-down list.

**Related Tutorials**

Adding Textbook Information to Your Course (Flash movie | 2m 21s | 1,381 KB)

**Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content**

After you build course areas, such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders, you create content within them. All of the items and course areas, except Content Areas, are edited and managed in the
same way. By clicking a content item’s Action Link and accessing the contextual menu, you can change settings, modify availability, create metadata, and turn on options such as review status, adaptive release, and statistics tracking. You can also copy, move, and delete content. You can drag content to new positions in the page and hide content details to save screen space.

Note: To learn how to reorder, rename, delete, and change the availability of Content Area links in the Course Menu, see How to Manage Content Area Links.

![Image of content creation interface]

A. Click an item’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. You can change settings, modify availability, create metadata, and turn on options such as review status, adaptive release, and statistics tracking. You can also copy, move, and delete content.

B. Use the drag-and-drop function to reorder links in the course area.

C. Alternatively, use the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool in the Action Bar to reorder the links.

D. Click Hide Details to collapse the description and save screen space.

E. Click Show Details to expand the item’s description.

How to Reorder Content

Content appears in the course area in the order it was added, but you can rearrange items for logical presentation.

Reorder items using the drag-and-drop function—a double-tipped arrow or handle—to move them into place. Alternatively, reorder items using the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar.

Drag-and-Drop Function

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder and press the arrows next to an item you want to move. The item is highlighted.
3. Drag the item to a new location in the list.
4. Release the item to place it in its new location.

**Keyboard Accessible Reordering Tool**

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. On the Action Bar, click the **Keyboard Accessible Reordering** icon represented by two arrows.
3. In the **Items** box, select an item title.
4. Click the up and down arrows to change the order.
5. Click **Submit**. A pop-up window states: **Items have been reordered**.
6. Click **OK**.

**How to Hide Details to Limit Scrolling**

In a course area with several items and descriptions, you have to scroll to see the entire page. Each assignment, test, folder, and content item can have a text description and attached files which make the page longer. You can use the **Hide Details** function to collapse the descriptions and save screen space. A collapsed description remains collapsed even after logging out and logging in again.

The student view of the course area is not affected. Students do not have the ability to collapse descriptions.

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. Click the **Hide Details** icon for an item. The item’s description is collapsed.
4. Click **Show Details** to expand the description.

**How to Edit Course Areas and Content Items**

To change the name, description, appearance, options, or availability for a folder, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or content item, you need to edit the item. Most course areas and items are edited in the same way.

*Note:* Content Areas are edited with a different method. See [How to Manage Content Area Links](#).

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. Access the course area that contains the Learning Module, Lesson Plan, folder, or content item that you want to edit.
3. Click an item’s Action Link to access its contextual menu.
4. Select **Edit**.
5. On the **Edit** page, make changes to the title, description, file attachments, options, or settings. For example, to make an item unavailable to students, select **No** for **Permit Users to View this Content**. Options vary depending on the item type.
6. Click **Submit**.

Alternatively, while viewing a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder, you can click the Action Link next to the title at the top of the page to access the contextual menu.
How to Make Content Unavailable

You can edit an item’s settings to make it unavailable to students or to apply Date and Time Restrictions to control when it appears. You can also apply Adaptive Release to an item to control which users can access it and when they can access it.

Availability of items is set on an item-by-item basis. Entire course areas can also be made unavailable. For example, if you edit a Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder and select No for Permit Users to View this Content, the course area is no longer visible to users. This means that all items within the unavailable course area are also unavailable to users, regardless of their individual availability settings. Therefore, the display of an item to users is contingent upon the availability of its parent folder.

Items in an unavailable course area are not visible to users in that location. However, users are able to access those items if additional links to them exist in different course areas. For example, if you have an available URL in course area A that you copied to course area B, the link exists in both locations. If you make course area A unavailable, users can still access the URL in course area B. Links to tools behave in the same way. If you link to a Discussion Board forum in course area A and make course area A unavailable, users can still access the Discussion forum by going directly to the Discussion Board by using a link in a different course area or the Course Menu.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. Click an item’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select Edit and change the setting for Permit Users to View this Content to No to make the item unavailable. Alternatively, Select Date and Time Restrictions to set items to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time.

-OR-

Select Adaptive Release and set criteria that must be met for the item to be released to users. To learn more, see Adaptive Release.

5. Click Submit.

Note: Content Areas are made unavailable with a different method. See How to Manage Content Area Links.

How to Copy and Move Course Areas

You can copy and move course areas such as folders, Learning Modules, and Lesson Plans from one area or course to another area or course. If copying or moving between courses, the instructor must be enrolled in both courses.

- Copying a course area does not remove it from the original location in the course.
- Moving a course area removes it from its original location in the course.

Note: Content Areas are copied with a different method. To learn how to copy Content Areas materials into a new or existing course, see Copying Courses.
1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access the course area containing the Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder to copy.
3. For the course area you want to copy or move, click its Action Link to access the contextual menu.

![Image of course units and action links]

4. Select **Copy** or **Move**.
5. On the **Copy** page or **Move** page, select the **Destination Course** from the drop-down list. The default setting is the current course. Only courses where the instructor has a role permitting content copying appear in the list.
6. Click **Browse** to select the **Destination Folder**. For copying only, select **Yes** or **No** for **Create links for items which cannot be copied**.
   - If a course area contains items that cannot be copied, such as a test, survey, or assignment, a link is created to it instead. After the Copy action is complete, a message appears: "Some items copied. The following items were created as links." The specific items are listed.
   - If a course area contains items that cannot be moved to another course, such as a test, a message appears: "The move operation has completed but the following items could not be successfully moved." The specific items are listed.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

A copied course area is not removed from the original location in the course. A moved course area is removed it from its original location.

**How to Copy and Move Content Items**

You can copy and move content to organize and rearrange your course material. For example, if your course area contains a large number of items, organize them with folders to help users navigate your content. If you create folders after the items, you can move items to the new folders.
**Note:** See the preceding section for information about copying and moving Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and folders.

Some content items have copy and move restrictions. For example, Course Links can only be copied or moved to another area within the same course. Assignments, tests, and surveys cannot be copied, but can be moved within the same course.

- Copying content does not delete it from the original location in the course.
- Moving content removes it from its original location in the course.

For items that cannot be copied, such as a test, survey, or assignment, the **Copy** option does not appear in the item’s contextual menu.

If a course area contains items that cannot be moved to another course, such as a test, the option to move it to another course does not appear on the **Move** page.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item to copy or move.
3. For the item you want to copy or move, click its Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Copy** or **Move**. If **Copy** or **Move** is not available for the item, it will not appear in the contextual menu.
5. On the **Copy** page or **Move** page, select the **Destination Course** from the drop-down list. The default setting is the current course. Only courses where the instructor has a role permitting content copying appear in the list. For items that cannot be moved out of the current course, **Destination Course** is already listed as the current course and the drop-down list does not appear.

6. Click **Browse** to select the **Destination Folder**.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

A copied content item is not removed from the original location in the course. A moved content item is removed from its original location.

**How to Delete Course Areas and Content Items**

Folders, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, and content items are deleted in the same way. Be aware that
sometimes this means the content is permanently removed from the system.

**Note:** To delete a Content Area, see [How to Manage Content Area Links](#).

**WARNING!** Deleting a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder permanently removes that container. For example, deleting a Learning Module permanently removes the Learning Module container as well as its Table of Contents. Items within the container may not be permanently deleted, depending on the item type:

- Files that have been added to a course area from Course Files remain in Course Files and are not deleted from the system.
- Any files uploaded from your computer to the course area are automatically stored in Course Files and can be linked again.
- Items created within the course area by pointing to Build Content are permanently deleted.
- Test or survey links are deleted but the test or survey remains available in the Test tool and can be added to a course area again.
- An assignment created in a course area and all of its submissions are permanently deleted. The assignment grades are not removed from the Grade Center.
- Links to tools, such as the Discussion Board, blogs, or journals are deleted, but the tools themselves are not deleted.
- Links to assigned textbooks are permanently deleted.
  1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
  2. Access the course area containing the Learning Module, Lesson Plan, folder, or content item to delete.
  3. Click its Action Link to access the contextual menu.
  4. Select Delete.
5. Click **OK** to confirm the deletion. This action is final and cannot be undone.

**Tip:** You can make a course area or item unavailable instead of deleting it. If there are items in a course area that will be permanently deleted that you want to retain, consider moving them to a different course area that is not available to students before deleting the course area.

### How to Create Metadata for Content

Metadata stores information about a content item, including bibliographic, lifecycle, and copyright information. Metadata allows content to be imported from and exported to other applications that use IMS (Instructional Management Systems) standards, creating interoperability for learning content.

The information provided in metadata cannot be tracked or reported on. It can only be viewed on the **Content Metadata** page as reference information for the content item. You can view and edit metadata for a content item.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

There are four types of metadata that can be added to an item:

- **General Information**: Includes the title, catalog entry, source, entry, language, and a description of the item.
- **Lifecycle Information**: Includes the creation date and time, contributors, name and role of author or editor, organization, and date of latest changes or updates.
- **Technical Information**: Includes the format of the content item and its location.
- **Rights Management Information**: Displays copyright restrictions and a description of any conditions on item usage.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item to delete.
3. Click the Action Link for the item to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Metadata**.
5. On the **Course Item Metadata** page, type a **New Catalog Entry**.
   - Type a **Source**: The name of the catalog or source of the content.
   - Type an **Entry**: The number or version of the catalog.
   - Click **Add Catalog Entry** to implement your changes.
   - Click **Mark for Removal** to delete the catalog entry.
6. Select a Language from the drop-down list to indicate the language used in the content item.
7. Type a Description.
8. Type information for a New Contributor. List the name, role, organization, and date a person contributed to this content item. Click Add Contributor. The contributor information is now listed. Click Mark for Removal to remove a contributor when you submit the page.

9. Select the Resource Format from the drop-down list.

10. Under Rights Management Information click Yes for Free Resource to indicate that the content was free. For Copyright/Restriction, indicate whether or not the content is copyrighted or has restrictions for use. Use the Description box to comment on conditions for use of this item.

11. Click Submit.

Note: When instructors attach items from the Content Collection to a course, they can select associated metadata from the Content Collection to display with the linked item in the Content Area. The Content Collection metadata cannot be modified.

How to Enable Statistics Tracking and View Statistics Reports

Item statistics provide you detailed usage information about your content, such as how many times the item was viewed and when it was accessed. Statistics Tracking can be enabled at any time, and will begin collecting data from the moment it is enabled. If users access an item before Statistics Tracking is turned on, their access is not recorded.

Note: If users are unenrolled, their data will be deleted from all course statistics. To retain their statistics, change their availability to No rather than unenrolling them.

Statistics Tracking is a type of Course Report for individual content items. To obtain Course Reports on overall user activity as well as activity in Content Areas, forums, and groups, go to the Control Panel, expand Evaluation, and select Course Reports.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item.
3. Click the Action Link for the item to access the contextual menu.
4. Select Statistics Tracking.
5. Select On to enable Statistics Tracking for the item.
6. Click Submit. In the course area, Enabled: Statistics Tracking appears below the item name.

Viewing Statistics Reports

The report displays three sections of data:

- Access by Date
- Access by Hour of the Day
- Access by Day of the Week.

The Access by Date section displays information for all enrolled users. Access information for system guests and unenrolled users (previously enrolled users who were deleted from the course) is displayed under the guest user. Observer access to content items is not tracked.

1. Change Edit Mode to ON.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item.
3. Click the Action Link for the item to access the contextual menu.
4. Select View Statistics Report. This link is not displayed if Statistics Tracking is not enabled for the content item.
5. On the Course Reports page, click the Action Link for Content Usage Statistics and select Run from the contextual menu.
6. On the Run Reports page, select a format for the generated report from the drop-down list.

![Run Reports page](image)

7. Type dates in the Select a Start Date and Select an End Date boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar to select dates.

8. If you do not select users, the report will automatically run the report with all users. Alternatively, you can specify users in the Select Users list. Press and hold CTRL to select more than one user from the list; for Mac systems, use the COMMAND key.

9. Click Submit to run the report.

10. On the Successful Run: Content Usage Statistics page, click Download Report to view the results. Depending on the format you selected, you may be prompted by your browser to open or save the file. Use your browser’s print function to print the report. Alternatively, click Run a New Report to change the parameters for the report and run it again.

How to Enable Review Status

When Review Status is enabled for an item, there are benefits for you and your students. You can check who has reviewed the item, and you can use Review Status as Adaptive Release criteria. Students can use Review Status to keep track of their progress, especially if students review content in a non-linear fashion.

A Mark Reviewed button appears on the item when users access the course area. After reviewing the item, users select this button to mark it Reviewed. You can check the item’s Review Status on the User Progress page.

If the Review Status tool is disabled by you or an administrator, the Mark Reviewed buttons on the items are no longer shown. If Review Status is enabled again, the Mark Reviewed buttons reappear and any data associated with Review Status, such as an individual’s progress, is restored.
**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item.
3. Click the Action Link for the item to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Set Review Status**.
5. On the **Review Status** page, select **Enable**. To turn off Review Status, select **Disable**.

6. Click **Submit**. **Enabled: Review** appears under the content item’s title.

**Note:** Review Status settings and information are included during a full course copy with users and during archive and restore operations. Review Status settings and information are not saved during a copy of course materials into a new course or existing course or for exporting and importing.

### How to Check User Progress

You can check whether students can access your content items. If you have made a content item unavailable, the **User Progress** page indicates that the item is not visible to users. The **User Progress** page also lists Adaptive Release rules that affect the visibility of an item. If Review Status is enabled for an item, you can check which students have reviewed it and when they reviewed it.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether the Adaptive Release and Review Status tools are available. If these tools are not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss the tools’ status.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder containing the item.
3. Click the Action Link for the item to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **User Progress**.
5. The **User Progress** page displays. You can sort a column by clicking its title. For example, you can sort the reviewed column to see which students have not yet reviewed the item.
6. When you have finished the review, use the breadcrumbs to navigate to a previous page.
The User Progress Page

An open eye icon in the Visibility column indicates the item is visible to users. An eye with a slash icon indicates the item is not visible to users because of an Adaptive Release rule or the item’s availability settings.

The existing Adaptive Release rule that affects visibility of the item is listed under the page title. They type of rule is listed in parentheses. Click the rule name to edit it. To learn about rules, see About Adaptive Release.

A check mark in the Reviewed column indicates the item has been reviewed and the student has clicked the item’s Mark Reviewed link. An unselected circle indicates the item has not been reviewed.

The date and time of the review are listed in the Date Reviewed column.

How to Check User Progress from the Performance Dashboard

Review Status is also available in the Performance Dashboard. To learn more, see Using the Performance Dashboard.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Evaluation section and select Performance Dashboard.
2. For any user, click the number in the Review Status column. The Review Status page displays.
3. Alternatively, click the Adaptive Release icon for any user to open a course map that shows which course content is available to that user as well as which items have been reviewed.

Related Tutorials

Turning On Statistics Tracking for an Item (Flash movie | 1m 43s | 1,368 KB)

Align Content to Goals

This section includes the following topics:

About Goals

Schools can demonstrate that their programs and curriculum are effective by aligning course content and activities with Goals in Blackboard Learn. The process is:
1. The Blackboard administrator at your school turns on the Goals tool and imports or creates goals. Instructors cannot create goals.

2. Instructors align course content to one or multiple goals. Many types of content items can be aligned with goals including Discussion Board topics and threads, Learning Modules, lesson plans, folders, blogs, journals, tests, individual test questions, assignments, and Grade Center columns can be aligned to goals.

3. Instructors and administrators run course reports to examine how course content matches up with the school’s goals and how students are performing against goals.

**Instructors Align Content to Goals**

After goals are created by your school’s Blackboard administrator and are activated in the system, instructors can easily align any content item with a goal by clicking an item’s Action Link and selecting **Add Alignments** from its contextual menu. Next, instructors browse or search for goals that are available in the system and choose which ones to align with the content item.

**Viewing Reports on Goals Coverage**

After content is aligned to goals, reports are run to show how a course’s content covers the goals and where gaps exist. **Instructors** can run two different reports about goals in a single course by accessing the **Control Panel**, expanding **Evaluation**, and selecting **Course Reports**.

- The **Course Coverage Report** presents data on how a course’s content covers goals and where gaps exist.

- The **Course Performance Report** allows you to set acceptable performance target values and ranges for goals. The report shows how students’ work that is aligned to those goals measures up to the target value. To learn more, see **Generating Course Reports**.

**Blackboard administrators** can run reports on goal coverage across all courses in the system.

**Goals for Schools With Outcomes Assessment**

Schools that license Outcomes Assessment can use goals on an even broader level by collecting evidence of student performance toward goals. For example, schools can collect evidence from courses to support accreditation activities, assess the success of a program, or to find areas where a program needs to improve.
Goals for K12 Schools
For K12 schools in the United States, learning goals from the 50 states and Washington, D.C. can be imported into the system by the Blackboard administrator at a school. Course content is aligned to these goals and then course reports are run to show where course content does not cover the goals so that adjustments to curriculum can be made.

Aligning Content to Goals
Aligning course content to goals enables you to produce Course Coverage Reports and Course Performance Reports that present data on how a course covers goals, where there are gaps in goals coverage, and how course performance measures up to target values you set.

How to Align a Content Item to Goals
Goals can be aligned to the entire container or to one or more content items inside. The same steps are used to align goals to course containers, such as Learning Modules, lesson plans, and folders.

1. Within a course, select a content item and access its contextual menu.
2. Select Add Alignments. The Discover Goals window appears.
3. Locate specific goals by selecting from the Browse Criteria options in the left side panel:
   - Source: Only one source can appear at a time.
   - Goal Set Type: The name of the goal set.
   - Goal Set Name: The branch of learning or subject of the goal.
   - Grades: The learning level.
   - Goals Type: The classification of the goal, such as Benchmark or Content Goal.
   Alternatively, type keywords in the Search box and click Go.
4. Goals that fit the criteria appear. Select the check boxes for the goals to align to the content item.
5. View the selected goals only by expanding the Selected Goals area at the bottom of the Discover Goals window. Selected goals can be removed by clicking the X icon.
6. Click Submit.
7. The selected goals appear under the content item, where they can be made visible to students by clicking the Student Visibility icon. Goals can be removed by clicking the X icon.

How to Align Files and Folders to Goals
Files and folders can be aligned to goals. Depending on your institution's license, you may be able to do this in Course Files or in the Content Collection.

1. In the Control Panel, expand Files or Content Collection. Click a folder to access your files.
2. Access the contextual menu for a folder.
3. Select Alignments.
5. In the Discover Goals window, use the Browse Criteria to find the appropriate goals.
6. Select the boxes for the goals you want to align to the file or folder.
7. Click Submit.
How to Align Discussion Board Forums or Threads to Goals

In the discussion board, you can add alignments to goals for a forum or a thread. The options for aligning are dependent on the grade option chosen when the forum is created.

Go to the discussion board and access the Create or Edit Forum page. Under Forum Settings, select the grade and alignments options.

- If No Grading in Forum is selected for the Grade option, you can choose to align either forums or threads.
- If Grade Forum is selected for the Grade option, the Alignments option is automatically set to Forum alignments and cannot be changed. The alignments options are grayed out.
- If Grade Threads is selected for the Grade option, the Alignments option is automatically set to Thread alignments and cannot be changed. The alignments options are grayed out.

Your next step is to go to the forum or thread and add alignments to goals.

How to Add Alignments to Discussion Board Forums or Threads

You can add alignments to existing discussion board forums or threads that you have previously set the appropriate grading options for.

1. Access the forum or thread.
2. Select Alignments on the Action Bar.
3. Click Add Alignments to open the Goals Discovery window. If goals from more than one source or learning level have been associated with the course, you need to select which set appears first.
4. Locate specific goals using the Browse Criteria options in the left side panel. Also, you can type key words in the top text box.
5. Goals that fit the criteria appear. Select the goals to align to the forum or thread using the associated check boxes.
6. View the selected goals by expanding the Selected Goals area at the bottom of the Goals Discovery window. Selected goals can be removed by clicking the X icon.
7. Click Submit. The selected goals appear. They can be made visible to students by clicking the Student Visibility icon. Standards can be removed by clicking the X icon.
8. Click Alignments on the Action Bar to view the selected standards at any time. Students also view standards that are visible by clicking Alignments on the Action Bar.
9. Click the X to close the Alignments table.

How to Align a Grade Center Column to Goals

You can align an entire Grade Center column to goals.

1. In the Grade Center, access a column's contextual menu.
3. Click Add Alignments to open the Goals Discovery window. If goals from more than one source or learning level have been associated with the course, you need to select which set appears first.
4. Locate specific goals using the Browse Criteria options in the left side panel. Also, you can type key words in the top text box.
5. Goals that fit the criteria appear. Select the goals to align to the column using their associated check boxes.
6. View the selected goals by expanding the Selected Goals area at the bottom of the Goals Discovery window. Selected goals can be removed by clicking the X icon.

7. Click Submit.

8. To view the selected alignments, select View and Add Alignments from the column's contextual menu. The selected goals appear in a table, where they can be made visible in the course to students by clicking the Student Visibility icon. Goals can be removed by clicking the X icon.

How to View a Test Question’s Alignment to Goals from the Grade Center

The goals aligned to individual test questions can be viewed from the Grade Center.

1. In the Grade Center, access the test column's contextual menu.
2. Select Attempts Statistics.
3. On the Test Statistics page, the goal or goals aligned to each test question appear in the Active Goals section following each test question.

How to Run and Save a Goals Report

Goals must be created and aligned to content in your course before running these reports to see how your course and students are performing. You can run two different reports about goals in a single course:

- The Course Coverage Report presents data on how a course’s content covers goals and where gaps exist.
- The Course Performance Report allows you to set acceptable performance target values and ranges for goals. The report shows how students’ work that is aligned to those goals measures up to the target value.

To run and save a report:

1. From the Control Panel, expand Evaluation.
2. Click Course Reports.
3. Access the contextual menu for Course Coverage Report or Course Performance and click Run.
4. Set the Report Specifications by selecting a Goal Set to include in the report.
5. Click Submit. A new window displays the report in HTML format.
6. Click Report Options to print the report from a PDF file or download it in Microsoft® Excel®.
7. Save reports by downloading to your computer. You can save it to the Content Collection, if available.

Reading Goals Reports

All goals reports default to HTML and open in a new window. Reports contain clickable areas that drill down into the supporting data, and then drill back up. In the Course Coverage Details Report the following areas can be used to access addition data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Area</th>
<th>Supporting Data Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals Comparison Bars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Used</td>
<td>A list of goals that are not used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covered</td>
<td>A list of goals that are covered, and aligned content types</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Content Reuse

Copying Courses

You can copy courses and use them as a convenient way to reuse and adapt existing course structures, materials, and content.

Selecting a Course Copy Option

You can copy courses using any of the following course copy options:

- **Copy Course Materials into a New Course**: Copying course materials into a new course creates a course in the system and populates it with content from a course already on the system. The Course Menu specified in the source course will replace the default menu in the new course.

- **Copy Course Materials into an Existing Course**: Copying course materials into an existing course will add content to a course, but it will not remove existing content. You can only copy materials into a course if you have the role of instructor, teaching assistant (TA), or course builder. To learn more about roles, see Course Roles.

- **Copy Course with Users (Exact Copy)**: This is the only copy option that copies user records, such as grades and discussion board posts, to the new course. This option copies everything in the course to the new course exactly as it appears in the existing course, and is useful if a course is split into multiple sections. You can perform an exact copy and then unenroll specific students to create two sections of the same course.

How to Copy a Course

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and click Course Copy.
2. Select the appropriate option:
   - Copy Course Materials into a New Course
   - Copy Course Materials into an Existing Course
   - Copy Course with Users (Exact Copy)
3. In the **Destination Course ID** field, type a course ID for the new course that will be created and populated with content from the current course. Make sure that the new course ID matches the naming convention used at your school. Also, the course ID cannot include spaces or characters other than numbers and letters (A-Z), dash (-), underscore (_), and period (.). The course ID must be unique and remain static. After you create the copied course, you cannot edit the course ID.

4. If you selected **Copy Course Materials into a New Course** or **Copy Materials into an Existing Course**, select the course materials that you want to copy over to the new or existing course.

   **Note:** A course copy operation cannot be completed if you do not select at least one of the following areas: **Content**, **Contacts**, or **Settings**. If you do not select one of these options, a warning appears and Blackboard Learn cannot create a new course.

5. In the **File Attachments** section, select the option to copy links to:
   - **Copy Links to Course Files**: No copies of linked files are included in the copy. The copied course will have the same set of links and those links will point back to the original location of the link defined in the origin course.
   - **Copy links and copies of the content** (New to SP 10) This will make copies of linked files, but ONLY those files that are linked. Files within the course’s home folder that are not linked to any content within the course are not included in the copy.
   - **Copy links and copies of the content (include entire course home folder)**: This will make copies of ALL files in the course’s home folder whether those files are linked to course content or not.

   **Note:** Previously when users chose to include copies of course files, the entire course files directory was included in the package. With this new option, users can choose to take the entire folder of files or only those files that are actually linked to course content. Your school determines what options are available when linking to course files for copying courses.

6. Select the **Folder for Content Collection Files**, if applicable.

7. Select **Enrollments** to copy the list of users in the course. User records, such as discussion board posts, grades, and assessment attempts will not be copied. User records are only copied if you select the **Copy Course with Users (Exact Copy)** option.

8. Click **Submit**.

### Understanding the Behavior of Copied Materials

When copying course materials, certain things occur:

- **Content**: Course materials, including uploaded files, Learning Modules, and links are copied. Course information, course documents, assignments and URLs are optional.

  **Note**: Assignments created inside Lesson Plans will not copy properly. Be sure to copy your assignments separately to ensure that everything is correct.

- **Announcements**: All announcements are copied.

- **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**: All tests and surveys, including questions and options for deploying them are copied. All pools are copied.

- **Calendar**: All calendar items are copied to the new course.

- **Discussion Board**: Discussion board forums, including the initial message in the forum, are copied.
- **Grade Center Items and Settings**: Items in the Grade Center and their settings such as type, categories, and display options are copied.

- **Group Settings**: Settings include the names of the groups, the settings for tool availability, and the discussion board forum names.

- **Contacts**: All contacts are copied.

- **Course Settings**: If selected, the following settings are copied:
  - Course Name
  - Course Description
  - Course Entry Point
  - Course Design
  - Course Banner
  - Blackboard Tools
  - Building Block Tools
  - Content Tools
  - Course ID
  - Course Availability
  - Guest Access
  - Observer Access
  - Course Duration
  - Enrollment Options

  **Note**: While copying, the course availability of the source course is applied to the destination course. If the destination course’s availability is set to unavailable, but the original course is available, the destination course’s availability is changed.

- **Links**: Links to parts of a course that are not included in the copy will break when the links appear in the destination course. For example, if a link to a test appears in a course area and you choose not to copy tests, the link to the test will break.

- **Course Cartridge Materials**: The course cartridge materials option is only successful if the source course includes copy-protected cartridge content and the destination course does not have a cartridge ID.

- **Content Areas**: Content from Content Areas appearing on the Course Menu that have the same name in each course will be added in the same content area. Nothing is removed from the destination course and replaced with content from the source course.

- **Enrollments**: If selected, the list of users in the course is copied. User records, such as discussion board posts, grades, and assessment attempts are not copied.

  **Note**: User records are only copied if you select the **Copy Course with Users (Exact Copy)** option.

---

### Resolving Copied Course Items

When copying content and tools from one course to an existing course, the Course Menu must resolve itself in the destination course. The following table describes how course menu items are resolved.
### Course Content - Content Reuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If...</th>
<th>Then...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A course area in the source course does not exist in the destination course.</td>
<td>The area will be added to the course menu in the destination course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course area in the source course and the course area in the destination course have the same name and are of the same type, for example, Web Links, Course Documents, or Content.</td>
<td>The content from the source course will be added, but will not replace, the content in the area within the destination course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course area in the source course and the course area in the destination course have the same name but are of different types.</td>
<td>The course area from the source course will be added to the destination course under a different name. The new name will append an incremental numeral to the name. For example, Course Materials will become Course Materials1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Copying Course Cartridge Content

Copy-protected cartridge content is only copied if the **Course Cartridge Materials** option is selected. This option only appears if there is copy-protected cartridge content in the course. The destination course maintains the availability settings for the source course.

If the destination course already has a cartridge ID (meaning it already includes copy-protected cartridge content), neither the cartridge content nor the cartridge ID may be copied from the source course to the destination course. If the **Course Cartridge Materials** option is selected, the copy operation will be successful, but a note in the receipt states that the course cartridge materials will not be copied.

If the source course and the destination course have the same cartridge ID, the content may be copied successfully.

### Exporting and Archiving Courses

The **Export/Archive Course** page organizes all export and archive packages that you create from a course. When you export or archive a course, a link to the package appears on this page. You can download the package to your computer, and then use it in the future for import or restore operations.

When you export or archive a package, it does not appear on this page immediately. An email is sent to you as soon as the system has created the package. Then, open this page to find the package and download it.

**Note:** Blackboard recommends that you delete packages from this page after you download them. Each package counts against the course quota so keeping packages may result in limited space to add additional content to the course.

### Export/Archive Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Export Package</th>
<th>Archive Course</th>
<th>Export Common Cartridge Package</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>File Name</strong></td>
<td><strong>Date Created</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExportFile_astronomy_sec1_20120913123433.zip</td>
<td>9/13/12 12:34 PM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Displaying 1 to 1 of 1 items Show All Edit Paging...

Your school determines what options are available when linking to course files for exporting, archiving, and copying courses.
How to Export a Course

The export course feature creates a package of the course content that you can import and use to teach another course with the same content. Unlike the archive course feature, the export course feature does not include any user interactions with the course—it only includes the content and the tools.

**Note:** Files within Course Files that are not used in the course or not linked in the course are not included when exporting.

Export packages are downloaded as compressed ZIP files and are imported in the same format. Do not unzip an export package or delete files from the package, otherwise the package will not be imported correctly.

To access the Export/Archive Course page:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and click Export/Archive Course.
2. On the Export/Archive Course page, click Export Package on the Action Bar.
3. On the Export Course page, select whether to include only the links to course files or to include the links and copies of the course files content.
   - If you select **Copy links and include copies of the content**, click Calculate Size to ensure that the package size does not exceed the displayed Allowed package size. To remove files and folders from the package, click Manage Package Contents.
4. In the Select Course Materials section, select the check boxes for each course area and tool to export.
5. Click **Submit**.

### How to Export a Course in Common Cartridge Format

Common cartridge is an initiative, led by the [IMS Global Learning Consortium](https://www.imsglobal.org), to support course packages you can use across learning management systems (LMS) such as Blackboard Learn.

You can export course packages from Blackboard Learn common cartridge 1.0, 1.1, and 1.2 formats. To enable reuse in a broad number of LMSes, the package is limited to widely available features. Types of content not supported by common cartridge will not be included when a course is exported in common cartridge format.

- Files, items, discussion forums, web links (URLs), and assessments are exported, but certain components may be excluded. For example, topics in discussion forums are exported, but grading, which is not supported by other LMSes, is not.
The IMS common cartridge standards do not currently support all assessment question types or attributes, so exported tests and pools will not include incompatible questions.

Common cartridge exports a course into a single folder of content. Each Content Area is then exported as a sub-folder inside the main course folder. As an example, if a common cartridge package were exported from a Blackboard Learn course and then re-imported, the result is a course with a single content area containing a folder for each original content area, and a web links content area containing all the web links.

Please consult your school or computing help desk for detailed information on common cartridge specifications.

How to Export a Course in Common Cartridge Format

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and click Export/Archive Course.
2. Click Export Common Cartridge.
   
   Note: To export the package in common cartridge 1.1 or 1.2 formats, select the appropriate check box. If you do not select a check box, the course will export in common cartridge 1.0 format. The preferred version depends on whether the system where the package will be imported supports version 1.1 or 1.2.
3. Click Submit.

How to Archive a Course

The archive course feature creates a permanent record of a course including all the content and user interactions. Archived courses are saved as ZIP files. Archiving a course does not delete it from the system.

Note: All files within the course are included in the archive, even if a file was not linked in the course.

To access the Export/Archive Course page:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and click Export/Archive Course.
2. On the Export/Archive Course page, click Archive Course on the Action Bar.
3. On the Archive Course page, to Include the Grade Center History, select the check box following the course ID. Selecting this option increases file size and processing time.
4. In the File Attachments section, select whether to include only the links to course files or to include the links and copies of the course files content.
   
   If you select Copy links and include copies of the content, click Calculate Size to ensure that the package size does not exceed the displayed Allowed package size. To remove files and folders from the package, click Manage Package Contents.
How to Download the Course Package

When you submit the Archive Course page or the Export Course page, the system begins to create the course package. When the package is complete, you will receive an email from the system. After you receive the email, you can download the course package.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and select Export/Archive Course.
2. Click the link for the package that you want to download.
3. Save the file to the appropriate location.

You can view the basic or detailed log from the contextual menu of an archived course.

For steps to import the package, see Importing Course Packages.

Importing Course Packages

A course import package is a .zip file of exported course content. Importing a course package into an existing course copies the content of the package into the existing course. Import packages do not include user enrollments or records, such as discussion board posts and assessment attempts.

Note: Never upload an exported course package that has been edited since it was created and downloaded. Opening the .zip file and changing any of the files in the exported course package will result in unstable and unpredictable behavior when the course is imported.

How to Import a Course Package

1. From the Control Panel, under Packages and Utilities, click Import Package / View Logs.
2. Click Import Package.
3. Provide the path to the course package or click Browse to search for the package.
4. Select the course materials to include.
5. Click Submit.

About Content Areas
Content from menu content areas that have the same name in the package as in the existing course will be added in the same content area. Nothing will be removed from the course and replaced with content from the package. Imported content is appended to existing content in the same content area.

About Discussion Board Forums
Discussion board forums are copied, but only the initial thread in each forum is included.

About Course Links
Links to parts of a course that are not imported will break when the links appear in the destination course. For example, if there is a link to a test in a content area and assessments are not imported, the link to the test is broken.

How to View Import Logs
1. From the Control Panel, under Packages and Utilities, click Import Package / View Logs.
2. In the Import Log Name column, click the package link.

Options to email and download the log are available. You can also expand each log detail to view more information.

Importing Common Cartridge Packages
Blackboard supports the IMS Global Learning Consortium's Common Cartridge project to encourage the sharing of content across learning management systems (LMS) such as Blackboard Learn.

Course packages in Common Cartridge 1.0 and 1.1 format can be imported into Blackboard Learn in the same way as other course packages. To enable re-use in a broad number of LMS, the package is limited to widely available features. Types of content not supported by Common Cartridge will not be included when a course is exported and imported in Common Cartridge format.

- Files, items, discussion forums, web links (URLs), and assessments will be included, but certain components may be excluded (for instance, topics in discussion forums are exported, but grading, which is not supported by other LMS, is not).
- The IMS Common Cartridge standards do not currently support all assessment question types or attributes, so exported tests and pools will not include incompatible questions.

Common Cartridge imports a course into a single folder of content. Each content area is then imported as a sub-folder inside the main course folder. As an example, if a Common Cartridge package was exported from a Blackboard Learn course and then re-imported, the result would be a course with a single content area containing a folder for each original content area, and a WebLinks content area containing all the web links.

Please consult the Blackboard administrator at your school or computing help desk for detailed information on Common Cartridge specifications.
Importing Course Cartridges

Course Cartridges are premade materials produced by professional authors, editors, and publishers that you can download and add to a course.

They offer complete sets of teaching tools provided by academic publishers. In one central location, you can find relevant, publisher-created materials. After the materials are downloaded to a course, you are free to customize the content by adding and deleting materials to correlate with specific topics covered in the classroom.

Course Cartridges can serve as supplements to existing online courses or provide an excellent start for faculty who are just beginning to develop online teaching strategies. You can benefit greatly from the ease of use, variety, and professional quality of the materials available on Course Cartridges.

To use Course Cartridges in a course, download them from the site listed in the download instructions below and install using a download key obtained from the publisher.

Note: Without a download key, you cannot add Course Cartridge content.

About Copy Protected Cartridges

Cartridges may be designated as copy-protected or open access.

Content in copy-protected cartridges is not included when exporting or copying a course. Only one copy-protected cartridge may exist in a course.

Multiple open access cartridges may be added to a course, including a course that already contains a copy-protected cartridge.

You can freely copy, export, and import open access cartridge content added to a course.

About Cartridge Functionality

No restrictions exist for open access cartridge content during import, export, archive, restore or copy operations. This content is treated like any other content in a course.

Copy-protected cartridge content has the following limitations when being archived, restored, exported, imported, or copied:

- **Archive**: When a course is archived, all cartridge content in the course is saved with the archive.
- **Restore**: When an archived course is restored by the Blackboard administrator at your school, the cartridge content is included in the restored course.
- **Export**: When a course is exported, cartridge content is not included.
- **Import**: The only time cartridge content is included during a course import is if the package was created as an archive. Cartridge content is not included in exported packages.
- **Copy**: Cartridge content is always included in a Course Copy with Users (exact copy) operation. You have the option to include cartridge content as part of a Copy Course Materials into a New Course operation or a Copy Course Materials into an Existing Course operation.

Note: Content from only one copy-protected cartridge may be copied into a course.

How to Import a Course Cartridge

1. Obtain the instructor download key from the textbook publisher.
2. On the Control Panel, expand the Packages and Utilities section and select Import Course Cartridge.
3. Type the Course Cartridge Download Key in the text box.  
   **Note:** Without a download key, you cannot import course cartridge content.
4. Click **Submit**. The Course Cartridge content is added to the course materials.

### How to Download a Course Cartridge

1. Select a textbook with a companion Course Cartridge by browsing the Course Cartridge list, which is located at [http://www.blackboard.com/Partnerships/Extensions.aspx](http://www.blackboard.com/Partnerships/Extensions.aspx). On the Extensions page, in the Filter By drop-down list, select **Course Cartridge**.
2. Obtain the instructor download key from the textbook publisher.  
   **Note:** Without a download key, you cannot download course cartridge content.
3. Begin the course creation process.
4. During the course creation process, provide the instructor download key obtained in Step 2.
5. Click **Submit** to create the course.
6. An email arrives when the Course Cartridge has finished loading into your new course.

### How Students Access Course Cartridges

1. Enroll students in your course.
2. Instruct students to purchase required textbook or other publisher provided materials that contain the access key.
3. When first accessing the course content, students are required to provide an access key. Once validated, students no longer need the access key.

### Troubleshooting Student Course Cartridges

If you are unable to help a student with a Course Cartridge question, ask the student to contact the cartridge publisher directly. The campus bookstore or department in charge of ordering textbooks at your school may be able to help the student contact the publisher.

### Managing Chalk Titles

Chalk Titles are course cartridges that are integrated with external applications and content from publishers. Chalk Titles include both content and tools. Tools included in a Chalk Title connect to an outside source to run each tool.

Important features in Chalk Titles include:

- **Integration with the Course:** Chalk Titles link courses to applications running on the publisher’s servers. These applications are often popular tools that are familiar to Instructors. Please contact the publisher to learn more about the applications included with a Chalk Title.
- **Single Sign-on:** Users that are logged into the course are logged into the publisher applications linked to the course. Users pass between the course and the publisher application seamlessly.
- **Roster synchronization:** Users enrolled in the course are automatically enrolled in the publisher application.
- **Grade passing:** Grades from the publisher application are passed to the course.

### Prerequisites for Using Chalk Titles
The Chalk Titles tool must be made available by your administrator. By default, you can use Chalk Title tools in courses.

Chalk Title tools appear in the **Tools** area of the Control Panel after a Chalk Title is added to a course. You can restrict availability to Chalk Title tools in the same way that you can restrict availability to other tools.

**Installing Chalk Titles**

Chalk Titles are installed in the same way as other Course Cartridges. Like other course cartridges, Chalk Titles require a download key and student access keys.

**Using Chalk Titles with the Grade Center**

Chalk Title tools can synch with the Grade Center in a course to report student performance. Note that student attempts are stored on the server that runs the tool, not within the course. Therefore, student attempts are not included when the course is archived. The reported grade is the only recorded information about a student attempt.

**Troubleshooting Chalk Titles**

It is important to remember when reporting problems with a Chalk Title that its tools and content are linked to outside servers hosted by publishers. In many cases, the problem may be with the publisher server. Make sure to let the Blackboard administrator at your school know that a problem is related to Chalk Title tool.

Chalk Title tools will not work if a course that contains Chalk Title tools is exported or archived and later added to system that does not support Chalk Titles.

**Configuring Browser Privacy Settings**

To fully use links added to a course by a Chalk Title, browser settings must be set to **Accept All Cookies** or at least to be set to accept cookies from Chalk provider’s server.

If the browser privacy settings are set on Medium or High, cookies from third party content, including Chalk Title applications, are silently blocked. Users will receive an error message when attempting to access some of the links for a Chalk Title.

If the user specifically sets the browser to accept cookies from the Chalk provider’s server, the browser privacy settings can be maintained at Medium or High. Contact the Chalk Title publisher for additional information.

**Maintaining User Privacy**

It is important to consider user privacy when making a Chalk Title available to students. Outside servers use personal information, such as name and email address to provide the tool and link the tool with the Grade Center.

You will receive a privacy notice when first accessing a Chalk Title. This message is set to display each time you access a Chalk Title. It is a good idea to display this message each time if more than one user is responsible for teaching a course.

You can require students to fill out an authorization form before accessing a Chalk Title.

**How to Manage Chalk Titles**

1. From the Control Panel, under **Packages and Utilities**, click **Manage Chalk Title**.
2. Complete the following fields.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Authorization</strong></td>
<td>Does each Student need to provide online authorization before that Student's personal information can be displayed to the Publisher? Select Yes to require authorization from students to release their personal information to the publisher's server.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor Notice</strong></td>
<td>Show privacy notice to Instructors each time they request a Publisher Resource? Select Yes to display the privacy notice each time an instructor accesses a Chalk Title tool.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments

Creating and Editing Assignments

Assignments allow you to create coursework and manage the grades and feedback for each student separately. In an assignment, you can include a description, point value, and file attachments. You can create assignments in several courses areas, such as in a Content Area or in a Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. Students access the assignment, type a submission, attach files, and submit it. You can respond to each student separately with comments and attached files.

You can distribute assignments to course groups. To learn more, see Creating Group Assignments.

Note: You access submitted assignments in the Grade Center. To learn about grading assignments, see Grading Assignments.

How to Create an Assignment

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and access the course area where you want to create the assignment.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Assessments** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Assignment**.
4. On the **Create Assignment** page, type a Name. Students click this name in the course area to access the assignment.
5. In the **Assignment Information** box, type instructions for the assignment. Format the text and include images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Content Editor, if needed. Attachments added using the content editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
6. Optionally, in the **Assignment Files** section, attach a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If the course files are in the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
7. Type **Points Possible**.
8. Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to **Add Rubric** to access the drop-down list. Rubrics are a way to create criteria for evaluating student performance on assignments. To learn more, see Rubrics.
9. Select the check box to **Make the Assignment Available**.
10. Select the appropriate option for **Number of Attempts**. You can allow students to submit and resubmit work for an assignment more than once, and receive comments and a grade for each submission.
11. For **Limit Availability**, you can set the assignment to display on a specific date and time and stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect availability, only when the assignment appears.
12. Optionally, select a **Due Date**. Due dates are used to organize and assign gradable items to grading periods in the Grade Center.

13. In the **Recipients** section, select the **All Students Individually** option.

14. Click **Submit**.

If multiple attempts are allowed for the assignment when you created it, the most recent graded attempt's score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the assignment's column header, access the contextual menu. Select **Edit Column Information** and select from the options in the **Score Attempts Using** drop-down list.

### How to Edit an Assignment in a Course Area

1. Navigate to the course area containing the assignment.
2. Click the Action Link to the right of an assignment’s name to access the contextual menu and select **Edit**.
3. On the **Edit Assignment** page, make the desired changes.
4. When you are satisfied with the changes to the assignment, click **Submit**.

### How to Delete an Assignment in a Course Area

You can delete an assignment at any time. If students have submitted work, deleting the assignment will also delete the submissions. You can choose whether or not to keep the associated grades.

1. Navigate to the course area containing the assignment.
2. Click the Action Link to the right of an assignment’s name to access the contextual menu and select **Delete**.
3. Click **OK** to continue.
4. On the Delete Assignment page, choose to:
   - **Preserve scores in the Grade Center for this Assignment, but delete the assignment and all its submissions.**
   - **Delete this Assignment, the Grade Center item for this Assignment, all grades for this Assignment, and all submissions for this Assignment.**
5. Click **Remove** to delete the assignment or **Cancel** to keep it.

Remember that even if you keep the scores in the Grade Center, you will not be able to access the assignment submissions again.

### Downloading Assignments

You can download assignment submissions to review them offline instead of reviewing them online in the Grade Center. Choose to download all or only selected submissions as a single .zip file. Unzip (expand) the file to view the contents, where each submission is saved as a separate file.

**Note:** Both Windows and Apple computers have built-in capabilities to view and extract compressed ZIP file packages. To learn more, see the help available for your computer’s operating system.

To learn more about grading assignments, see [Grading Assignments](#).
How to Download Assignments

1. In the Grade Center, locate the column for the assignment you want to download.
2. Click the assignment column's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. On the Download Assignment page, select the student submissions to download, or select the check box in the header bar to choose all available submissions.
5. Click Submit.
6. On the next Download Assignment page, click the Download assignments now link. A pop-up window displays to prompt you for instructions on what to do with the file.
7. In the pop-up window, select Save File and click OK.
8. Browse to the location where you want to download the file, and then click Save.
9. To return to the Grade Center, click OK on the Download Assignment page.

When using the Assignment File Download function, user names are included automatically in the file names for easy identification. However, files downloaded one by one from the Grade Assignment page will not include the user names. To avoid confusion, you should specify that students use a detailed file name that includes their last name or their user name when submitting assignments.

If a student has added an attachment, the downloaded .zip file may contain two files for each student: the attached file as well as a file produced by the Grade Center that contains information about the submission and any information that the student provided in the Text Editor or comment areas of the assignment. Both files will have the student's user name included in the file name for easy identification.

Note: The Assignment File Cleanup function allows you to select students and delete files associated with their submissions. This function is available from the assignment column's contextual menu, which you access by clicking the column's Action Link.

Grading Downloaded Assignments

After reviewing submissions offline and determining grades, you can provide grades and comments in the Grade Center. Click the assignment cell's Action Link to access the contextual menu, and then select View Grade Details. On the Grade Details page, click Edit Grade. If you want to attach files or add comments, click View Attempt instead of Edit Grade.

Alternatively, grades can be typed directly into the Grade Center cells. A grade entered this way is referred to as an override grade. To learn more, see Overriding Grades.

For general information about working and grading offline, see Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline.

Related Tutorials  Downloading Assignments (Flash movie | 1m 35s )

Grading Assignments

When an assignment is created, a column is added automatically to the Grade Center. An assignment that has been submitted, but not graded, is indicated with an exclamation mark—the needs grading icon.

You can access assignments that have been submitted by students and need grading from:

- Needs Grading page
- OR-
• Grade Center

Note: You have the option to grade assignments anonymously.

How to Access Submitted Assignments From the Needs Grading Page

For courses with many enrolled students and gradable items, the Needs Grading page can help you determine which assignments need grading first. For example, you can sort by the date submitted to provide feedback to the earliest submitters first.

To access the Needs Grading page:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section.
2. Select Needs Grading. The total number of items to grade appears on the Needs Grading page.

To filter and sort attempts:

1. Use the Filter drop-down lists to narrow the list of items to grade by Category, Item, User, and Date Submitted. For example, make selections in both the Category and User drop-down lists to display assignments submitted by a particular user.
2. Click Go. The filtered items appear on the Needs Grading page.
3. Click any column heading or the caret to sort the assignments. For example, sort the assignments by Item Name.
4. Click Grade All on the Action Bar to begin grading the assignment attempts.
5. The filtered assignment attempts appear on the Grade Assignment page in the order they were sorted and filtered on the Needs Grading page.

To learn more, see About the Needs Grading Page.

How to Access Submitted Assignments From the Grade Center

The Grade Center shows all gradable items. The number of items may influence how you organize your time for grading tasks. You may also find it beneficial to view a student's previous grades as items are graded.

To access the Grade Center:

1. In the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section.
2. Select Full Grade Center or the Assignments smart view to access assignment attempts.

To grade a single assignment attempt:

1. Locate the cell for a student's assignment containing an exclamation mark.
2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to see the Action Link.
3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.

To grade all submissions for an assignment:

1. In the assignment's column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Grade Attempts. The Grade Assignment page appears.

About the Grade Assignment Page

The Grade Assignment page is accessed from the Needs Grading page or the Grade Center. You can navigate among users and attempts, view rubrics, grade anonymously, and view information about an assignment.
On the Action Bar, the following actions can be performed:

- Click **Hide User Names** to grade attempts anonymously, if needed. Click **Show User Names** to display user information.
- Click **View Rubric** to view the rubrics that are associated with an assignment's column in the Grade Center. To learn more, see Rubrics.
- Click **Jump to** and select another attempt to view or grade.

Expand the **Assignment Information** link to view the following information:

- **Instructions**
- **Due Date**
- **Submitted Date**
- **Status**: Needs Grading, In Progress, Completed

**Note**: If an assignment is listed as **In Progress**, you must submit the assignment to grade it.

### How to Grade Assignments From the Grade Assignment Page

The **Grade Assignment** page is accessed from the **Needs Grading** page or the Grade Center.

1. On the **Grade Assignment** page, view the submission text, attached files, and comments.
2. Type a **Grade** for the assignment, or if a gradable rubric has been associated, click **View Rubric** to use the rubric for grading. To learn more about rubrics, see Rubrics.
3. Optionally, type comments in **Feedback to User** box and attach a file. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups.
4. Optionally, type comments in the **Instructor Notes** box. This text is not seen by students.
5. Click **Save and Exit** to return to the **Full Grade Center**, the **Needs Grading** page, or the **Grade Details** page, depending on where grading began.

-OR-

Click **Save and Next** to display the next user, when available.

-OR-

Click **View Previous** to display the previous user, when available.

**Note**: If a student has attached a file containing a potential security risk, you will see a warning. You can continue opening the original file, or if you have security concerns, contact the computing help desk on campus for assistance.

**Note**: If multiple attempts were allowed for the assignment when you created it, the most recent graded attempt's score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the assignment's column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu. Select **Edit Column Information** and select from the options in the **Score Attempts Using** drop-down list.

### How to Grade Assignments Anonymously

You can choose to grade assignments anonymously to ensure impartial evaluation of student work. For example, an opinion-based assignment that is graded anonymously may offer students a higher level of comfort when expressing themselves.

In anonymous grading, all identifying information is hidden and attempts appear in random order. Each student is assigned a number, such as Student 8.
To grade anonymously from the Needs Grading page:

1. Click an assignment attempt’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Grade Anonymously. The Grade Assignment page appears.

To grade anonymously from the Grade Center:

1. Click an assignment's Action Link in the column header to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Grade Anonymously. The Grade Assignment page appears.

To grade anonymously from the Grade Assignment page:

1. On the Action Bar, click Hide User Names.
2. Click OK in the pop-up window to verify the action. If grading was in progress, any unsaved changes to the open attempt are lost. The Grade Assignment page refreshes and all identifying information is hidden.

How to Allow Additional Attempts

If a student has submitted the maximum number of attempts for an assignment but you want to give them another opportunity, you can invite them to submit again.

To allow an additional attempt:

1. In the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section.
2. Select Full Grade Center or the Assignments smart view to access assignment attempts.
3. Locate the cell for a student's assignment containing an exclamation mark.
4. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to see the Action Link.
5. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
6. Select View Grade Details. The Grade Details page appears.
7. Click Allow Additional Attempt, and then confirm.

Note: The Allow Additional Attempt button will only appear if the student has already submitted the maximum number of attempts allowed for that assignment. You can continue to offer opportunities to resubmit attempts each time the student reaches that maximum number. Previous attempts do not have to be graded to allow the student to submit again.

Note: You can allow multiple attempts for all students on an assignment, rather than permit one at a time, by setting the number of attempts allowed when creating an assignment. If you want to change the number of attempts allowed after assignment creation, go to the course area where the assignment is deployed. Click the assignment’s Action Link and select Edit. Type a new number for Number of Attempts and click Submit.

Related Tutorials Clean Out Graded Assignment Files (Flash movie | 1m 47s)

SafeAssign

About SafeAssign

SafeAssign compares submitted assignments against a set of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. Safe Assign is used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. SafeAssign is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool.
How SafeAssignments Work

SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm capable of detecting exact and inexact matching between a paper and source material. SafeAssignments are compared against several different databases, including:

- **Internet**: Comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform database**: More than 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access)
- **Institutional document archives**: Contains all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions
- **Global Reference Database**: Contains papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism

Global Reference Database

Blackboard’s Global Reference Database is a separate database where students voluntarily donate copies of their papers to help prevent plagiarism. It is separated from each institution’s internal database, where all papers are stored by each corresponding institution, and students are free to select the option to check their papers without submitting them to the Global Reference Database. Students submit their papers to the database voluntarily and agree not to delete papers in the future. Submissions to the Global Reference Database are extra copies that are given voluntarily for the purpose of helping with plagiarism prevention. Blackboard does not claim ownership of submitted papers.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

After a paper has been processed, a report will be available detailing the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources. It also shows the suspected sources of each section of the submitted paper that returns a match. Instructors can delete matching sources from the report and process it again. This may be useful if the paper is a continuation of a previously submitted work by the same student.

Because SafeAssign identifies all matching blocks of text, it is important to read the report carefully and investigate whether or not the block of text is properly attributed.

Interpreting SafeAssign Scores

Sentence matching scores represent the percentage probability that two phrases have the same meaning. This number can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90 percent means that there is a 90 percent probability that these two phrases are the same and a 10 percent probability that they are similar by chance and not because the submitted paper includes content from the existing source (whether or not it is appropriately attributed).

Overall score is an indicator of what percentage of the submitted paper matches existing sources. This score is a warning indicator only and papers should be reviewed to see if the matches are properly attributed.

- **Scores below 15 percent**: These papers typical include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other documents. These papers typically do not require further analysis, as there is no evidence of the possibility of plagiarism in these papers.
- **Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent**: These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism. These papers should be reviewed to determine if the matching content is properly attributed.
• **Scores over 40 percent:** There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and should be reviewed for plagiarism.

**Grade Center Integration**

SafeAssignments are created with associated Grade Center items. The score is then recorded in the Grade Center.

**How to Submit a SafeAssignment**

**Note:** You can only submit a SafeAssignment once. If you would like to edit, delete, or resubmit a SafeAssignment, contact your instructor and request that they clear your first submission.

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the SafeAssignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. On the **Assignments** page, look for the SafeAssignment and click **View/Complete**.

3. On the **Upload SafeAssignment** page, optionally, type your comment in the **Comment** box.
4. Click **Browse** to select a file to attach as your submission.
5. Optionally, select the **Global Reference Database** check box to upload your paper to the Global Reference Database.
   **Note:** Submitting to the SafeAssign Global Reference Database allows papers from other institutions to be checked against your paper to protect the originality of your work across institutions.
6. Click **Submit**.
**Note:** After you submit SafeAssignments, there is a slight delay between the upload and the availability of the SafeAssign report. Results are normally available within 10-15 minutes.

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### How to View SafeAssignment Submissions

Your submissions and the SafeAssign reports associated with submissions are viewable by accessing the SafeAssignment after submitting your paper.

**Note:** This option is only available if allowed by your instructor.

**Viewing a SafeAssign Submission**

1. Return to the assignment link in the Content Area that holds the SafeAssignment, for example, the Assignments Content Area.
2. On the Assignments page, look for the SafeAssignment and click **View/Complete**. The View SafeAssignment page appears. This page includes:
   - **Assignment Information**: This section displays the name of the SafeAssignment and its description.
   - **Submitted Work**: This section provides links to the following:
     - **Text**: Select this option to view your paper and comments.
     - **File**: Select this option to download the submission.
Assignments

- **Matching**: The percentage listed is the percentage of your paper that matches other sources. Read the full report to determine if the matching is properly attributed.
- **SA Report**: Select this option to view the full SafeAssign report.
  - **View Grade**: This section lists the grade given by your instructor.
  - **Instructor’s Feedback**: This section lists any feedback, and provides links to open or download any files attached by your instructor.

**Viewing a SafeAssign Report**

SafeAssign Report provides detailed information about the matches found between your submitted paper and existing sources. The SafeAssign Report identifies all matching blocks of text. It is your and your instructor’s responsibility to investigate whether the matching text is properly referenced or not. Detailing every match prevents detection errors due to differences in citing standards.
1. Return to the **View SafeAssignment** page.

2. On the **View SafeAssignment** page, click the green check mark link under **SA Report**. The **SA Report** provides extensive information to help you determine whether you are appropriately citing your works. This page includes:

   - **Paper Information**: This section lists data about the paper, such as the author, percent matching, and when it was submitted. This section also includes options for downloading the report, emailing the report, or viewing a printable version. Note that the printable version may be the most effective view of the report for those users that rely on assistive technologies to access Blackboard Learn.

   - **Suspected Sources**: This section lists the original sources that match sections of the submitted paper.
     - To display the original work, click on the source title.
     - To display the related phrase within your paper, click the magnifying glass.

   - **Paper Text**: This section shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified and numbered. Click a phrase to display the Source Comparison Window which provides a direct comparison between your paper’s phrase and the source document it matches.
This is a book review of the book entitled *The Atmospheric Environment Effects of Human Activity* written by Michael B. McElroy.

This comprehensive introduction to the physics and chemistry of Earth's atmosphere explains the science behind some of the most critical and intensely debated environmental controversies of our day. In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate.

1. URL: http://www.shopping.com/earth-day-activities/products
   - Matching: 100%

2. Uploaded Manuscript: In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate.

3. Internet Source: In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate.
**Interpreting the Overall SafeAssign Score**

The overall SafeAssign score indicates the percentage of the submitted paper that matches existing sources.

### Paper Text

This is a book review of the book entitled *The Atmospheric Environment Effects of Human Activity* written by Michael B. McElroy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URL:</th>
<th><a href="http://www.shopping.com/earth-day-activities/products">http://www.shopping.com/earth-day-activities/products</a> Matching:100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upload Manuscript:</td>
<td>In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Source:</td>
<td>In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Scores below 15 percent**: These papers typically include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text matching other documents.
- **Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent**: These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism.
- **Scores over 40 percent**: There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess.

### Creating SafeAssignments

SafeAssignments appear in courses as a new content type and are added to any course content area. Please note that SafeAssignments are different from Assignments and there is no connection between the content types. It is not possible to make an existing Assignment a SafeAssignment without starting from the beginning. Like regular Assignments, however, SafeAssignments are integrated with the Grade Center.

When students access a SafeAssignment, they can view instructions, type comments in a text box, and attach a file, just as they do with regular assignments. Students can submit papers in Word (DOC, DOCX, ODT), Plain Text (TXT), Rich Text Format (RTF), PDF, and HTML formats.

### How to Create a SafeAssignment

1. From a content area within a course, point to **Assessments** on the Action Bar and select **SafeAssignment**. The Add SafeAssignment page appears.
2. Complete the page using the following table as a guide and click **Submit**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Type a title for the SafeAssignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>Type the points possible for the SafeAssignment. This value will be shared with the Grade Center Item created for the Safe Assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Type instructions for completing the SafeAssignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Select whether or not the SafeAssignment should be visible to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability Dates</td>
<td>Use these controls to set the date range when students can interact with the SafeAssignment. It is possible to set only a start date or only an end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafts</td>
<td>Allows students to validate their paper without submitting it to the institutional database. Useful as an instructive tool to help students learn how to attribute papers properly. You will be able to see the draft submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Viewable</td>
<td>Determines whether or not students can see the report generated when their papers are submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Checking</td>
<td>Sets papers to a high priority in the queue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Announcement</td>
<td>Create Select Yes to create an announcement about the SafeAssignment. Subject Type a subject for the announcement. Message Type a message for the announcement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Using DirectSubmit**

DirectSubmit generates SafeAssign reports on papers submitted outside of a SafeAssignment and it may also be used to add papers to the institutional database. Because DirectSubmit is not integrated with the Grade Center, Instructors should use SafeAssignments to collect submissions whenever possible.

DirectSubmit allows Instructors to submit papers one at a time or several at once by including them in a .ZIP file. Note that .ZIP packages should contain no more than 100 papers and submitting more than 300 papers in a session is not recommended. Papers that are more than 10 MB in size cannot be submitted.

**How to Submit Papers through DirectSubmit**

1. From the Control Panel, under **Course Tools**, click **SafeAssign**.
2. Click **DirectSubmit**. A list of folders and papers will appear. This list includes papers already uploaded through DirectSubmit. Blackboard recommends that files not be deleted from DirectSubmit as this will delete them from the institutional database of existing materials.
3. Navigate to a folder where the paper or papers will be uploaded.
4. Click **Submit Papers**.
5. Select **Upload File** and browse for the file. Individual papers as well as papers that are grouped in a .ZIP package are accepted. Alternatively, select **Copy/Paste Document** and add the document text in the field.
6. Select the upload options:
   - **Submit as Draft**: A SafeAssign report will be generated however the paper will not be added to the institutional database and will not be used to check other papers.
- **Skip Plagiarism Checking**: Adds the papers to the institutional database without checking for content copied from other sources. This is useful if an Instructor wants to upload papers from an earlier course to ensure that current students are not reusing work.

7. Click **Submit**.

**Shared Folders and Private Folders**

Direct Submit Shared Folders are viewable by anyone with access to the Direct Submit tool through the course. Multiple Instructors and Teaching Assistants can view submissions related to a course in Shared Folders. Private folders can be used to manage papers for an individual instructor. These folders follow the instructor and are available in any course where that user has Instructor level privileges.

**Supported File Types**

Direct Submit supports the following file types:

- Microsoft Word document (.doc)
- Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- HTML (.htm or .html)
- Text (.txt)
- Zip-compressed multiple files (.ZIP)

**Managing Submissions**

Student submissions and the Safe Assign reports associated with submissions are viewed from the SafeAssign link on the Control Panel, found under the Course Tools heading. The SafeAssign area lists the SafeAssignments in the course. Click a SafeAssignment to view and grade submissions.

**How to View Submissions**

1. From the Control Panel, under **Course Tools**, click **SafeAssign**.
2. Locate the specific SafeAssignment in the list and click **View**. A list of Student submissions will appear with the following columns appear for each SafeAssignment:

   - **Text**: Select this option to view the Student’s paper and any comments from the Student.
   - **File**: Select this option to download the Student Submission.
   - **Matching**: The percentage listed is the percentage of the paper that matches other sources. Please read the full report to determine if the matching is properly attributed.
   - **SA Report**: Select this option to view the full Safe Assignment report.
   - **Clear Attempt**: Select this option to delete the submission from the database, for example, if the Student uploaded the wrong file.

**Grading a Submission**

SafeAssignments are integrated into the Grade Center and may be accessed and graded directly from the Grade Center like other Assignments. SafeAssignments are not automatically graded; like existing manually graded Assignments they will display with a ‘!’ indicating action required by the instructor.
Running SafeAssign Originality Reports

SafeAssign Originality Reports provide detailed information about the matches found between a submitted paper and existing sources. The SafeAssign report identifies all matching blocks of text. It is the responsibility of the instructor and student to investigate whether the matching text is properly referenced or not. Detailing every match prevents detection errors due to differences in citing standards.

Report Layout

SafeAssign reports are divided into three sections:

- **Report Information**: This section lists data about the paper, such as the author, percent Matching, and when it was submitted. This section also includes options for downloading the report, emailing the report, or viewing a printable version. Note that the printable version may be the most effective view of the report for those users that rely on assistive technologies to access Blackboard Learn.

- **Suspected Sources**: This section lists the sources that have text that matches the text of the submitted paper. Users may select sources, exclude them from the review, and process the paper again. This is useful if a source is a previous work from the same student for the same assignment, or if there is some reason that lengthy sections of a particular source appear in the paper. Processing the paper again will generate a new value for the percent matching without using the excluded sources.

- **Manuscript Text**: This section shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified. Clicking a matching block of text will display information about the original source and the probability that the block or sentence was copied from the source.

Self and Peer Assessment

About the Self and Peer Assessment Building Block

The Self and Peer Assessment building block allows you to create an exercise composed of one or more questions, each with one or more criteria, to be presented to your students for completion and evaluation. These tests, along with their questions and criteria, are exported and then imported for later use.

Questions provide structure and content to the assessment. They are simple ("What is 2 plus 2?") or complex ("Describe the main reason for the fall of the Roman Empire.").

The criteria accompanying each question provide the means to evaluate the responses to those questions. The number or criteria can also range from one ("Did the answer = 4?") to many:

- Does the response place the issue within the broader context of the subject?
- Is the response well organized and clearly laid out?
- Was the response proofread carefully? Was it free of significant grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors?

The Self and Peer Assessment building block is a tool designed to facilitate the objective, analytical, and learning comprehension skills of students. Reviewing the work of fellow students through criteria-based reference evaluation allows constructive feedback. The constructive feedback that students give to and receive from their peers can enhance their comprehension of the subject material and provide valuable insights into their own efforts.

Features and Functions
Large classes can benefit from the Self and Peer Assessment building block by distributing the administrative workload; quality feedback is provided from several different individuals, instead of relying upon a single instructor.

Tests are precisely scheduled to allow the proper time for the submission and evaluation process to be completed; including the time to access any content items associated with the assessment.

You have the option of using both self and anonymous evaluations. These options may provide a comfort level that can result in more candid tests and evaluations. However, they can also impact the integrity of the assessment process, and so it is recommended care be exercised in their use.

Enabling the Self and Peer Assessment Building Block

The Self and Peer Assessment building block is included in Blackboard Learn. By default, it is turned on and available for use immediately. If it is not available, see your school’s Blackboard administrator.

Creating a New Self and Peer Assessment

The Self and Peer Assessment process begins by creating a new assessment. Tests are created from any of the content areas within a course.

*Note:* Use the Instructions field to provide clear instructions and other information that may be helpful in completing the assessment.

Specifying Assessment Date Ranges

Three date ranges are necessary to the successful creation and deployment of an assessment: **Display After/Until**, **Submission Start/End** and **Evaluation Start/End**. The following table describes these ranges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display After/Until</td>
<td>The date range which the assessment is available to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission Start/End</td>
<td>The date range which students can submit answers to an assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Start/End</td>
<td>The date range which students can submit evaluations of their peers’ work on the assessment as well as their own (if self evaluations are enabled).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to Create a New Self and Peer Assessment
1. Click Control Panel within a course.
2. Click any of the links within the Content Areas section.
3. Select Self and Peer from the Select drop-down list.
4. Click Go.
5. Type a name for the assessment in the Name field.
   - **Note:** At this point, a new column in the Grade Center is created with the same name.
6. Type instructions for the assessment in the Instructions Text Editor.
   - **Note:** In the Text Editor there is an option to save these Instructions as a Reusable Object. If selected, these instructions will be available to Content Collection Users. The Content Collection must be available to use this option.
7. (Optional) Use the Text Editor to reference any Content Collection files.
8. Set the Submission Start Date and Submission End Date by using the date and time fields.
9. Set the Start Date and End Date for the peer evaluations by using the date and time fields.
10. Allow Anonymous Evaluations by clicking the Yes radio button. Click No to disallow.
11. Allow Self Evaluations by clicking the Yes radio button. Click No to disallow.
12. Allow submitters to view their own evaluation results by clicking the Yes radio button next to Show Evaluation Results to Submitter. Click No to disallow.
13. In the Number of Submissions to Evaluate field, define how many of their peers's tests each student is expected to evaluate.
   - **Note:** The number entered in the Number of Submissions to Evaluate field does not include the creator of the assessment. Type zero (0) in this field if self evaluations are the only kind desired for an assessment.
14. Make the assessment available by selecting Yes. Select No to make it unavailable.
15. Track the number of views by selecting Yes. Select No to disable tracking.
16. Select Display After and/or Display Until to control when the content is available.
17. Set the date and time restrictions for the attached content by using the date and time fields under Display After or Display Until.
18. Click Submit.

**Exporting and Importing an Assessment**

Assessments can be saved outside Blackboard Learn by exporting them. Exported assessments can then be imported for later use.

Assessments can be imported from a variety of locations: Course documents, the Content Collection, or from a local hard drive.

- **Note:** If the start date of the imported assessment is in the past, the system resets it to 24 hours from the time it is imported. All other dates are adjusted forward in time while maintaining the same relationships that were established in the original assessment. So for example if you were to import an assessment with due date four weeks after the start date, the new default start date would be tomorrow and the due date would be four weeks plus one day.

**How to Import an Assessment**

1. Click Control Panel within a Course.
2. Click any of the links within the content areas section.
3. Select Self and Peer from the Select drop-down list.
4. Click Go.
Assignments

5. Click the **Import** radio button.
6. Click **Go**.
7. Click **Browse** to locate the **Assessment File**.
8. Type a **Name** for the imported assessment. If this field is left blank, the imported assessment name is used.
9. Click **Submit**.

Exporting an Assessment

Assessments are exported to a network or local drive so they can be imported at a later time. The assessment file is packaged in a compressed .zip file so it is easily accessed by Blackboard Learn. Only the assessment (with its questions and criteria) is exported. Previous submissions for the assessment are not exported.

**How to Export an Assessment**

1. Click **Edit** next to the assessment to be exported.
2. Click **Export Assessment**.
3. Click **Save** and select the location to export the assessment.
4. Click **OK**.

Adding a Question to an Assessment

Questions are the basic component of any assessment. Questions provide both the structure and content of the assessment. Questions are simple or complex:

- What year did Queen Elizabeth I die?
- What is the square root of 144?
- Explain why Napoleon's armies were defeated at the battle of Waterloo.

There are two important options that must be considered when creating questions:

- **Content Management** items are added by using their permanent URLs.
- **A Model Response**, an example of a correct response to a question, is provided. The Model Response allows evaluators to compare submitted answers to an example. It is not displayed to students taking the assessment, only to the evaluators after the assessment has been submitted.

**Note:** Beneath the **Question** and **Model Response** Text Editors there is an option to save this question or Model Response as a **Reusable Object**. If selected, the question or answer will be available to Content Collection users. The Content Collection must be available to use this option.

**How to Add a Question to an Assessment**

1. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Click **Add Question**.
4. Type the question in the **Question** Text Editor.
5. Type a **Model Response** in the Text Editor.
6. Click **Yes** to make the Model Response **Available**.
7. Click **Submit**.
Adding a Default Question

Adding a default question is a quick and easy way to construct an effective assessment. The Self and Peer Assessment Building Block comes with a set of default questions you can use to build your tests.

How Add a Default Question

1. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Type search text in the **Search for Question** field and click **Go**. Or leave the field blank and click **Go** to display a list of all default questions.
4. Click **Expand** next to the appropriate question to view all the details.
5. Click the check box next to the questions to add.
6. Click **OK**.

Adding a Question from the Library

Questions and criteria are stored and reused in other tests. Adding questions from the library is a quick and easy way to construct an effective assessment. Reusing questions and criteria also insures consistency across courses and departments. Once an assessment has been created, questions and criteria are added from a central location.

How to Add a Question from the Library

1. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Type search text in the **Search for Question** field and click **Go**. This field is left blank to display a list of all stored Questions.
4. Click **Expand** next to the appropriate question to view all the details.
5. Click the check box next to the question to add.
6. Click **OK**.

Adding Criteria to a Question

The criteria that accompany each question provide the means to evaluate the responses to those questions. The number or criteria can also range from one (“Did the answer =4”) to many:

- Does the response place the issue within the broader context of the subject?
- Is the response well organized and clearly laid out?
- Was the response proofread carefully? Was it free of significant grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors?

In general, essay questions may require many criteria per question while shorter questions may only require one or two criteria.

How to Add Criteria to a Question

1. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Click **Criteria** next to the appropriate question.
4. Click **Add Criteria**.
5. Type criteria text in the **Criteria** Text Editor.

   **Note:** Beneath the Text Editor there is an option to save this criterion as a Reusable Object. If selected, the criterion will be available to Content Collection users. The Content Collection must be available to use this option.

6. Type the number of points possible for this question in the **Points Possible** field.
7. Click **All or Nothing** or **Partial Credit** to decide how to **Assign Points**.
8. Click **Yes** or **No** to decide whether or not to **Allow Feedback to User**.
9. Click **Submit**.

### How to Add Word Count Criteria

If you want to evaluate the length of an answer, it is possible to add a word count criteria to a question. You may specify that an answer should be around 200 words. The word count criteria enables points to be awarded based on the length of an answer (for example, points awarded if the answer is within 20 words of the 200 word maximum).

1. Select **Edit** next to the created Self and Peer Assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Click **Criteria** next to the desired question.
4. Click **Add Word Count Criteria**.
5. Type the number of **Points Possible**.
6. Type the **Maximum Word Count**.
7. Type the **Allowed Variation**.
8. Click **Submit**.

### Adding Default Criteria

Adding default criteria is a quick and easy way to construct an effective assessment. The Self and Peer Assessment Building Block comes with a set of default criteria you can use to build your tests.

### How to Add Default Criteria

1. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate assessment.
2. Click **Assessment Canvas**.
3. Click **Criteria** next to the appropriate question.
4. Type search text in the **Search for Criteria** field and click **Go**. This field is left blank to display a list of all stored criteria.
5. Click **Expand** next to the appropriate criteria to view all the details.
6. Click the check box next to the criteria to add.
7. Click **OK**.

### Previewing the Assessment

There are two ways to preview an assessment once it has been created:
Assignments > Self and Peer Assessment

- Submission Preview
- Evaluation Preview.

These options provide with a way to see the tests exactly as your students will. You can also use these preview options to fine-tune the assessment.

The Preview option is available from the Assessment Canvas page for the appropriate assessment. Select either Submission or Evaluation from the drop-down list and click Go.

Viewing the Submission Preview Page

The Submissions Preview page offers a complete view of the assessment. To preview each question in turn, click its name.

*Note:* Preview pages are read-only and cannot be edited or modified.

Using the Evaluation Preview Page

The Evaluations Preview page offers a view of all of the evaluations, regardless of their status. The features of this page are described in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator links</td>
<td>Click the evaluator user name to display their Evaluation page. Each question is displayed in a grouping of tabs. Navigate through the tabs to display the submitted response for that question. For questions that contain a model response and which has been made available, click Model Response to display the model response for that question in a separate window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Displays the status of the evaluation. In preview mode the status is always Not Started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Allocated</td>
<td>Displays the number of points given out of how many points are possible. In preview mode it is displayed as 0 / xxx.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completing an Assessment

Completing an assessment allows the student to interact with you by providing answers to a series of questions. These answers are evaluated by their fellow students. Their feedback can assist in their overall comprehension of the material.

Students who have an assessment assigned to them can access them in appropriate course Content Area. The Submission and Evaluation date ranges are visible under the Assessment listing. In addition to submitting answers directly on the question page, students can also submit a local file or copy an item from the Content Collection to support their answer.

How to Complete an Assessment

1. Click the View/Complete Assessment link to begin the assessment.
2. Click a question link.
3. Type a response in the Response Text Editor.
**Note:** In the Text Editor there is an option to save this response as a **Reusable Object**. If selected, the response will be available to Content Collection users. The Content Collection must be available to use this option.

4. Click **Browse** to **Attach local file**.
   -or-
   Click **Browse** to **Copy file from Content Collection**.

**Note:** Only one file is attached to an assessment. If a second file is attached the first one is deleted. To attach multiple files, use the Text Editor.

5. Type a **Name of Link to File** to give a name to the attachment link.
6. Click **Submit**.
7. Click **Next**.
8. Repeat the preceding steps as necessary until all of the questions have been answered.
9. Click **OK** when the assessment is complete.

### Evaluating a Self and Peer Assessment

Allowing your students to evaluate their peers’ assessments allows them to provide valuable feedback on submitted answers. This feedback can provide improved comprehension of the material for both the assessed peer and the student providing the evaluation.

Students can access the assessment using the same link they used to complete it and begin the evaluation. The **Evaluation Overview** page lists the number of submissions the student needs to evaluate (including their own), with the evaluator’s own name at the top of the list.

If anonymous evaluations are enabled, the evaluator does not see the name of the student whose assessment they are evaluating.

**Note:** Do not enroll or un-enroll students after the evaluation start date, because doing so can negatively affect the results already gathered.

**Note:** Tests can only be evaluated during the evaluation period designated during the assessment creation.

### How to Evaluate an Assessment

1. Click the **View/Complete Assessment** link to begin the evaluation.
2. Click the appropriate **Evaluator name** link.
3. Review the text in the **Submission** field.
4. Type the number of points to award that submission in the **Points possible** field.
5. Type text in the **Feedback** field (if requested).
6. Click the **Allocate Points** check box.
7. Click **Save and Next** to move to the next criteria.
8. Click **OK**.

### Managing an Assessment

The Self and Peer Assessment building block provides many tools to assist the management of an assessment. These include three adaptive release options: Review status, statistics tracking and assessment metadata.
How to Manage an Assessment
To manage an assessment, click Manage next to the appropriate assessment.

How to Create Adaptive Release Rules for an Assessment
Use the Adaptive Release tool to create and edit basic adaptive release rules for this assessment.

1. Set the Display After and Display Until dates using the check boxes and Date and Time fields.
2. Type the user name of any specific user to assign membership to this assessment in the Username field.
3. Click Browse to select specific users.
4. Use the right and left arrow buttons to assign membership to specific Course Groups.
5. Use the Select a Grade Center Column drop-down list to assign a Grade Center column for this assessment.
6. Click one of the Select Condition radio buttons:
   - User has at least one attempt for this item.
   - Choose between Score Less than or equal to, Greater than or equal to, or Equal to and then enter a number in the field.
   - Define a scoring range by entering numbers in the fields after Score Between.
7. Click Browse and select the assessment to enable Review Status. Click the Clear button to delete the previous entry.
8. Click Submit.

About Adaptive Release: Advanced
Use the Adaptive Release: Advanced tool to create and edit rules that determine the visibility of this assessment to users. To learn more about the use of advanced adaptive release rules, see About Adaptive Release.

How to Review Status
Use the Review Status tool to provide users the ability to mark the assessment as reviewed.

1. Click the Enable radio button.
2. Click Submit.

How to View the Availability and Review Status of an Assessment
Use the User Progress tool to view the availability and review status of this assessment for all users.

2. View the information described in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>Click the Rule link to display the criteria information for the adaptive release rule that governs this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Displays the last name of the user.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments > Self and Peer Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Displays the first name of the user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Username</td>
<td>Displays the username.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Role</td>
<td>Displays the course role of the user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td>Displays an icon indicating whether or not the assessment is visible to the user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation Links</td>
<td>Click the number links, <strong>Next</strong>, or <strong>Previous</strong> to navigate through the user information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Click **OK** when finished.

**How to Enable or Disable Statistics Tracking**

Use the **Statistics Tracking** tool to enable or disable tracking and to view system tracking information for this assessment.

1. Click **Enable/Disable Tracking**.
2. Click the **Enable** or **Disable** radio button.
3. Click **Submit**.

**How to View System Tracking Statistics**

1. Click **View Statistics**.
2. Use the **Start Date** and **End Date** check boxes and the **date** and **time** fields to define the **Time Period** for the statistics report.
3. Click the **All Users** radio button to include the statistics for all users.
   -or-
4. Click the **Selected Users** radio button and select the statistics of a specific student, or select multiple students by using holding down the **CTRL** key and clicking on each user name.
5. Click **Submit**.

**How to View and Apply Metadata to this Assessment**

Use the **Metadata** tool to apply metadata information for this assessment. To learn more, see Adding Question **Metadata**.

1. Click **Metadata**.
2. Click **Edit** next to the appropriate metadata.
3. Type the appropriate information in the appropriate fields.
4. Click **Submit**.

**Rules for Editing Assessments**

Once an assessment has been created, it is edited in a number of ways. However, there are specific rules that govern what is edited and when that modification can take place.

These rules are presented to help prevent problems such as setting the dates incorrectly and rendering the assessment unusable. This occurs when the assessment is saved with the **Submission End Date** in the past or the **Submission Start** and **Submission End** dates matching each other. In this case, the only remedy is to
export the assessment, import it, fix the dates, and then delete the original assessment. All submissions for the original are lost in this process.

Understanding the Assessment Timeline

An assessment is defined by the following timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline Period</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create &amp; Deploy</td>
<td>Before any participant has submitted anything, even after the submission start date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit</td>
<td>After the submission start date and something has been submitted and before the submission end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>After the submission end date but before the evaluation start date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>After the evaluation start date and before the evaluation end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>After the evaluation end date.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Rules

The rules that govern the modification of assessment elements are defined in the following table. These changes are made without system warnings, except when noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline Period</th>
<th>What Can be Edited (System Warning)</th>
<th>What Cannot Be Edited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create &amp; Deploy</td>
<td>Any element can be changed with no restrictions or warnings.</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit</td>
<td>• Name</td>
<td>• Delete questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructions—students who have already submitted this assessment might not come back to see instructions changes</td>
<td>• Order of questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Submission end date</td>
<td>• Submission start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluation start/end date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anonymous evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Availability flag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tracking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Date restrictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Added questions—students who have already submitted this assessment might not come back to see question changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add/edit/delete/re-order criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Edited question text—students who have already submitted this assessment might not come back to see question changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Edited model response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline Period</td>
<td>What Can be Edited (System Warning)</td>
<td>What Cannot Be Edited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Add/edit/delete/re-order questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions—the submission process for this assessment has ended</td>
<td>Submission start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation start/end date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anonymous evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability flag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date restrictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Add/edit/delete/re-order criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edited model response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Number of peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions—the submission process for this assessment has ended</td>
<td>Add/edit/delete/re-order questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation end date</td>
<td>Anonymous evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability flag</td>
<td>Delete/re-order Criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td>Edit criteria points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date restrictions</td>
<td>Possible points, assigned points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Added criteria—users who have already completed the evaluation might not come back to see criteria changes</td>
<td>Evaluation start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edited criteria text—users who have already completed the evaluation might not come back to see criteria changes</td>
<td>Self evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edited criteria to allow feedback to user—users who have already completed the evaluation might not come back to see criteria changes</td>
<td>Submission end date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edited model response—users who have already completed the evaluation might not come back to see criteria changes</td>
<td>Submission start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Number of peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions—the submission process for this assessment has ended</td>
<td>Add criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation end date</td>
<td>Allow feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability flag</td>
<td>Anonymous evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td>Delete/re-order criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date restrictions</td>
<td>Edit criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edit criteria points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possible points, assigned points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edit criteria text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edit model response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add/edit/delete/re-order questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Submission end date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Submission start date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments > Self and Peer Assessment

Editing an Assessment

From the Edit Assessment page, you can access the Assessment Canvas to change questions or criteria, change the properties of an assessment or export it for later use. For detailed information about what can and cannot be edited, see Rules for Editing Assessments.

How to Edit an Assessment

1. Click Edit next to the appropriate assessment.
2. To add questions and criteria, or to reorder them, use the Assessment Canvas. To learn more about adding questions or criteria, see Adding a Question to an Assessment.
   a. To reorder questions, click the number dropdown list next to the appropriate question and select a new number for that question. The questions are reordered automatically.
   b. To change the criteria order, click Criteria next to the appropriate question, then click the number dropdown list next to the appropriate criteria and select a new number for the criteria. The criteria are reordered automatically.
3. Click OK when finished.

Setting Assessment Properties

Clicking the Properties link displays the Properties page for the assessment. For details on the fields and functions, see Creating a New Self and Peer Assessment.

Note: Fields that cannot be edited are grayed out.

Note: The Update Grade Center Column Name check box appears beside the assessment name if you have permission to update the Grade Center. If this is checked and a change is made to the assessment name then the name of the Grade Center column is also changed. If this is not checked, or if you do not have Grade Center permissions, then the name of the assessment can still be changed but the change is not reflected in the Grade Center.

Monitoring Assessment Submissions

Assessment submissions are monitored and reviewed during the assessment process. Submissions are downloaded as a collection or on an individual basis so they can be reviewed later. The submissions are bundled in a .zip file that contains an HTML file for each submission. The submissions can be opened and read in any web browser.

How to Monitor the Submissions for an Assessment

1. On the Control Panel within the course, under Course Tools, click the Self and Peer Assessment link.
2. Click the name of the appropriate Assessment.
3. Click Submissions.

Using the Submissions Page

The Submissions page contains the following features and functions:
### Displaying the View Submission Page

The **View Submission** page is displayed by clicking **View** next to a submission on the **Submissions** page. The page contains the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Name</strong></td>
<td>Displays the name of the assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
<td>Displays the number of questions in this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructions</strong></td>
<td>Displays the instructions for this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluations to Complete</strong></td>
<td>Displays the number of evaluations that need to be completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submission End Date</strong></td>
<td>Displays the submission end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Last Submitted Date</strong></td>
<td>Displays the date that the last submission was received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 1</strong></td>
<td>Displays the question text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submission</strong></td>
<td>Displays the submission text for the question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monitoring the Evaluations

Assessment evaluations are monitored and reviewed during the assessment process. Evaluations are downloaded as a collection or on an individual basis so they can be reviewed later. The evaluations are bundled in a .zip file that contains an HTML file for each evaluation. The evaluations can be opened and read in any web browser.

### How to Monitor Assessment Evaluations

1. On the Control Panel within the course, under **Course Tools**, click the **Self and Peer Assessment** link.
2. Click the name of the appropriate assessment.
3. Click **Evaluations**.

### The Evaluations Page

The **Evaluations** page contains the following features and functions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Displays the name of the assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission Dates</td>
<td>Displays the submission date range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Dates</td>
<td>Displays the evaluation date range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download All</td>
<td>Click to download all evaluations as a comma separated values file (.csv).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filter by:</td>
<td>Select an option to filter the submission list and click <strong>Go</strong> to apply the filter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Displays an icon showing whether or not an evaluation is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>Displays the name of the evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator Username</td>
<td>Displays the username of the evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submissions Evaluated</td>
<td>Displays the names of students whose submissions have been assigned to this evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>Displays the points given to this student in a percentage format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>Displays the points allocated by a specific evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Displays the average of all the percentages that have been submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluated Self</td>
<td>Displays an icon showing whether or not a self-evaluation has been submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation View</td>
<td>Click to view a specific evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download</td>
<td>Click to download a specific evaluation as a .zip file.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How to Display the View Evaluation Page

The **View Evaluation** page is displayed by clicking **View** next to an evaluation on the **Evaluations** page. The page contains the following features:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Name</td>
<td>Displays the name of the assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Displays the number of questions for this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>Displays the Instructions for this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluations to Complete</td>
<td>Displays the number of evaluations that need to be completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation End Date</td>
<td>Displays the evaluation end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Time</td>
<td>Displays the time this page was accessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator Header</td>
<td>Displays the name of the evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission</td>
<td>Displays the name of a submitter (appears in parentheses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Displays the question text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Viewing the Assessment Results

Assessment results are monitored and reviewed once the submission phase has ended. Results can be downloaded as a collection or on an individual basis.

**How to Monitor the Results for an Assessment**

1. On the Control Panel within the course, under *Course Tools*, click the *Self and Peer Assessment* link.
2. Click the name of the appropriate assessment.
3. Click *Results*.

### Using the Assessment Results Page

The *Assessment Results* page contains the following features and functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Displays the name of the assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission End Date</td>
<td>Displays the submission end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation End Date</td>
<td>Displays the evaluation end date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download</td>
<td>Click to download all evaluations as a tab-delimited file (.CSV).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update column total in Grade Center when updating grades</td>
<td>Check this box to update the Grade Center with the results from this assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to Grade Center</td>
<td>Click to send the results to the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluated</td>
<td>Displays an icon showing whether or not a user has completed an evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Displays the name of the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Username</td>
<td>Displays the username of the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Percentage</td>
<td>Displays the average of all points the evaluators of this student gave for the student's submission as a percentage of total points possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Score</td>
<td>Displays the average of all points the evaluators of this student gave for the student's submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Sent</td>
<td>Indicates whether or not the results for this student have been sent to the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluated Self</td>
<td>Displays an icon showing whether or not a self-evaluation has been submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Markers</td>
<td>Displays how many peers have completed the evaluation of this student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View</td>
<td>Click to view a specific submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download</td>
<td>Click to download a specific submission as a .zip file.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Digital Dropbox

The Digital Dropbox has been replaced by the Assignments tool in Blackboard Learn, Release 9.1.

If your instructor has asked you to submit something to the Digital Dropbox, please contact them for alternative instructions.

The Assignments tool has many improvements over the Digital Dropbox, including the ability to download all student submissions in a single file, associate the assignment with a Grade Center column, manage multiple files at once, and determine the number of attempts a student can make. To learn more, see Assignments.

Other alternatives for student file sharing include Blogs, Journals, the Discussion Board, and Wikis.
About Creating Tests and Surveys

Tests and surveys are used to measure student knowledge, gauge progress, and gather information from students. You can create tests and surveys and then deploy them in a course area. The difference between tests and surveys is test questions have points assigned to them for grading evaluation, whereas surveys do not.

Before You Begin

When creating a test there are a number of things you should consider:

- Is this to be a test or survey?
- Are special instructions needed?
- How many questions?
- What type of questions?
- If creating a test, what is the point value associated with each question?
- Will partial credit be acceptable for some or all test questions?
- Are some test questions very difficult and may count as extra credit?

Creating Tests and Surveys

Tests and surveys are used to measure a student’s understanding of the course, and are deployed to students in the course by adding them to a Content Area. Once added to a Content Area, test and survey properties such as availability and presentation options are managed there. To learn more, see Creating Tests and Surveys.

After a test or survey is added to a Content Area, the Test Options or Survey Options page appears. To learn more, see Deploying Tests and Surveys.

Note: You can view and grade tests submitted by students in the Grade Center. Tests and surveys submitted by students may not be viewed or graded from the Content Area where they are posted.

Specifying Question Settings

Before you begin adding questions, you may want to change the test or survey’s question settings. Question settings include options to change default point values for a test, add images, files, or web links to questions and answers, and designate questions as extra credit.

To learn more, see Changing Question Settings.

Deleting a Deployed Test or Survey From a Content Area Before Attempts Are Made

When a test or survey is deleted from a Content Area, the assessment itself is not deleted. It is still available on the Tests or Surveys page and can be edited, redeployed, or deleted from the system.

If students have not attempted to take the assessment, it may be safely deleted from the Content Area without any loss of data.
If the assessment is deployed again, it is presented as a new assessment. There is no connection or shared data between the first and second deployments and the Grade Center will treat each deployment as separate Grade Center Items.

Deleting a Deployed Test or Survey From a Content Area After Attempts Have Been Made

If any students have already taken an assessment be cautious and consider the consequences before deleting the assessment. It is recommended that an assessment first be made unavailable before considering the more drastic step of deleting it.

If one or more users have attempted the assessment, deleting it from the Content Area has consequences. A warning will appear with options to consider.

- **Preserve scores in the Grade Center for this test, but all attempts for this test will be deleted.** This option deletes the assessment from the Content Area. Any grades in the Grade Center related to this assessment will remain but the attempt itself will be deleted. In this instance, the grade stays but the assessment and any attempts are deleted. It will not be possible to view any of the student’s responses to questions. This can have serious consequences, for example, if an essay question still needs to be graded, it will not be possible to do so after deleting the assessment because the details of the attempt were deleted.

- **Remove this content item, the Grade Center item for this test, all grades for this test, and all attempts for this test.** This option deletes the assessment from the Content Area and erases any record of the assessment from the Grade Center. This will destroy all record of student performance on the assessment.

Use the following steps to delete an assessment from a Content Area:

1. Open the Content Area where the assessment is located.
2. Change Edit Mode to ON.
3. Select Delete from the contextual menu for the assessment.
4. Click OK on the dialog box.
5. Select **Preserve scores in the Grade Center for this test, but delete all attempts for this test or Remove this content item, the Grade Center item for this test, all grades for this test, and all attempts for this test.** (See above for definitions.)
6. Click Submit.

Deleting an Assessment From the Tests or Surveys Pages

Tests are deleted by selecting the Delete option from the contextual menu for the assessment located on the Tests or Surveys pages.

If a Remove function does not appear for an assessment in the test or survey manager, follow the instructions for deleting a deployed assessment before trying to delete the assessment from the test or survey manager.

Removing an assessment deletes the assessment, but does not have any impact on the Grade Center.

**Related Tutorials**

- **Creating a Test** (Flash movie | 3m 50s)
- **Getting Started with Building a Test** (PDF file | 22.6 MB)
Creating Tests and Surveys

Once a test or survey is built, questions are created or added from existing questions in tests, surveys, and pools.

About Question Settings

On the Test Canvas, click Question Settings on the Action Bar to change settings for different aspects of a test or survey. Question settings include options for the following:

- Enabling the feedback option for questions
- Adding images, files, or web links to questions and answers
- Adding metadata to questions
- Determining default point values for questions in tests
- Designating questions as extra credit, and enabling negative and partial credit scoring
- Specifying display options, such as numbering options for answers

To learn more, see Changing Question Settings.

How to Build a Test or Survey and Add New Questions

Follow these steps to create a test and begin adding questions to it:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
5. On the Test Information page, type a name, and optional description and instructions.
6. Click Submit.
7. On the Test Canvas, point to Create Question on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
8. Select a question type.
9. On the Create/Edit page, provide the necessary information to create a question.
10. Click Submit.
11. On the Test Canvas, you can change a question’s point value.
   a. Click a question’s current point value.
   b. In the Update Points pop-up, edit the points.
   c. Click Submit.
12. Repeat Step 7 through Step 11 to add more questions.
13. Click OK. The test is added to the list on the Tests page and is ready to deploy in a course area.

Surveys are created the same way, except that points are not assigned to survey questions:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
5. On the **Survey Information** page, type a name, and optional description and instructions.
6. Click **Submit**.
7. On the **Survey Canvas**, point to **Create Question** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
8. Select a question type.
9. On the **Create/Edit** page, provide the necessary information to create a survey question.
10. Click **Submit**.
11. Repeat Step 7 through Step 10 to add more questions.
12. Click **OK**. The survey is added to the list on the **Surveys** page and is ready to deploy in a course area.

**How to Reorder Questions**

By default, when new questions are created, they are added to the end of the test. Reorder items using the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool.

*Note:* Changing question order only affects new test attempts, assuming the test is not set to display questions in random order. Attempts already submitted retain the order as originally viewed when the test was taken.

Questions are numbered automatically in the order they are added, and the question numbers update when items are reordered or randomized. Therefore, use caution when referring to specific question numbers in the questions’ text.

**Related Tutorials**

- ![Creating a Test](Flash movie | 3m 50s)
- **Getting Started with Building a Test** (PDF file | 22.6 MB)

**Editing Tests and Questions**

On the **Test Canvas**, you can add, edit, and delete questions in a test. You can also add question sets or random blocks, reorder questions, and edit a test’s information before students submit attempts.

Access the **Test Canvas** from the Grade Center, the **Course Tools** section in the Control Panel, and by accessing a deployed test in a course area, such as a Content Area or Learning Module.

After students submit attempts, the ability to modify a test is limited. Once a test has attempts associated with it, you cannot add a question, modify the number of questions in a question set, or change a random block definition or options. However, you can edit, delete, reorder, and change the point values of existing questions. Deleting questions or changing the point values affect all previously submitted test attempts. All affected submissions are regraded.

*Note:* If a test has one or more attempts in progress, you cannot delete questions.

**How to Edit Tests From the Grade Center**

1. In the Control Panel, expand the **Grade Center** section.
2. Select **Full Grade Center** or the **Tests** Smart View, if available, to access the tests.
3. Locate the column for the test and click the Action Link in the column heading to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Edit Test**. The **Test Canvas** appears.
How to Edit Tests From the Course Tools Section

1. In the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
4. On the Tests page, click the Action Link to the right of a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
5. Select Edit. The Test Canvas appears.

How to Edit Tests From a Course Area

You can edit a test that is deployed in a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. In this example, a test is edited from a Content Area.

1. In a Content Area, click the Action Link to the right of a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Edit the Test. The Test Canvas appears.

How to Edit Test Questions

1. On the Test Canvas, click the Action Link to the right of a question’s title to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Edit. The question’s Create/Edit page appears.

How to Change Point Values

You can change possible points awarded for answering questions correctly.

1. On the Test Canvas, select the check box for each question requiring a change.
2. On the Action Bar, type a number in the Points box.
3. Click Update or Update and Regrade to make your changes.

-OR-

1. On the Test Canvas, click a question’s current point value.
2. In the Update Points pop-up, edit the points, set the question as Extra Credit, or give Full Credit.
3. Click Submit or Submit and Regrade to make your changes.

In both cases, new grades are recalculated for all previously submitted tests. To remove a question’s Extra Credit or Full Credit designation, click the question’s current point value and clear the appropriate check box.

How to Delete Test Questions

After a test is deployed and students submit attempts, you can delete questions. All affected submissions are regraded. If a test has one or more attempts in progress, you cannot delete questions.

1. On the Test Canvas, select the check box for each question to delete.
2. On the Action Bar, click Delete and Regrade.

The question numbers update after one or more questions are deleted. New grades are recalculated for all previously submitted tests.

How to Reorder Questions Once Submissions Exist

By default, when new questions are created, they are added to the end of the test. Reorder items using the
drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool.

**Note:** Changing question order only affects new test attempts, assuming the test is not set to display questions in random order. Attempts already submitted retain the order as originally viewed when the test was taken.

Questions are automatically numbered in the order they are added, and the question numbers update when items are reordered or randomized. Therefore, use caution when referring to specific question numbers in the questions' text.

## Test and Survey Options

Test and survey options allow you to edit the name and description of a test or survey. Options control the availability, presentation, and feedback for an assessment. These options are available only after an assessment is added to a Content Area. Tests added to a Content Area are said to be "deployed"

To edit options for a deployed test or survey, click the Action Link to the right of a test or survey's name to access the contextual menu and select **Edit the Test Options** or **Edit the Survey Options**

### Editing Test or Survey Availability

Test and survey availability is set after the assessment is added to a Content Area. Availability is managed on the **Options** page. When an assessment is unavailable, it is deployed to a Content Area but a link does not appear to students. Unavailable tests can be seen by instructors and course builders when **Edit Mode** is **ON**.

To learn more, see **Edit Mode**.

The following are descriptions of the test and survey availability options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make the Link Available</td>
<td>Select Yes to make a link to the assessment appear to students. If this option is set to No, it will not appear to students. You can set this to available, and then use the Display After and Display Until fields to limit the amount of time the link to the assessment appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a New Announcement for this Test/Survey</td>
<td>Select Yes to create an announcement for the test or survey. The announcement will include the date and state, &quot;An assessment has been made available in [Course area that includes the link to the Assessment].&quot; This announcement will appear in the course announcements as well as the My Course and My Announcements modules. If an announcement has previously been posted using this feature, the date and time of the most recent announcement will be displayed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Attempts</td>
<td>This option allows students to take the assessment multiple times. The status of multiple attempts is displayed to students at the top of the assessment. Select Allow Unlimited Attempts for students to take the assessment as many times as they wish. Select Number of Attempts and enter a numeral to indicate a specific number of attempts that is allowed. If multiple attempts are allowed for a test, the most recent graded attempt's score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the test's column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu. Select Edit Column Information and select from the options in the Score Attempts Using drop-down list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force Completion</td>
<td>Students must complete the assessment the first time it is launched if Force Completion is selected. Students may not exit the assessment and continue working on it at a later date. The Save button is available for students to save the assessment as they work through it, but they may not exit and re-enter the assessment. If the Force Completion option is enabled, it is noted and explained to students at the top of the assessment. If Force Completion is not enabled, students may save their progress and complete the assessment at another time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Set Timer          | Select this check box to set a time limit for finishing the assessment. If this option is selected, enter the amount of time to allow for the test or survey in the hours and minutes boxes. The time elapsed is displayed to the student during the assessment. A one-minute warning is also displayed as students approach the time limit. Selecting this option also records completion time, available under Test Information when the attempt is complete.  
  
  **Note:** If a student saves and exits the assessment the timer continues. For example, if they begin the test on Tuesday, save and exit it, then complete it on Thursday the student's completion time will be 48 hours.  
  
  If a timer is set, turning Auto-Submit on will save and submit the assessment automatically when time expires. Leaving it off will give students the option to continue after time expires. |
| Display After      | Select the date and time when the test or survey will become available to students. This field is optional. You can control availability through the Make the Link Available option without setting specific dates. |
| Display Until      | Select the date and time the test will be made unavailable to students. This field may be left blank.                                                                                                             |
| Password           | Select this check box to require a password for students to access the assessment. If this check box is selected, enter a password in the field below. Passwords cannot be longer than 15 characters and are case sensitive. |

**About Unavailable Tests and Surveys**

There is a difference between unavailable and deleted assessments.

- Deleted assessments have been deleted from the course. Deleting an assessment cannot be undone.
- Unavailable assessments are deployed to a Content Area but a link does not appear to students. You can access the assessment through the Control Panel under Course Tools > Tests, Surveys, and Pools when Edit Mode is ON. To learn more, see Edit Mode.

Assessment availability is managed on the Test Options or Survey Options page. Assessment availability is limited to a specific time period by setting the Display After and Display Until fields. The availability can also be open ended by setting only a start date or only an end date. If the link to an assessment is available, but neither date is set, the assessment is immediately and always available.

**Using the Self-Assessment Options**

By default, a deployed test is included in Grade Center calculations. However, sometimes you may want to allow students to take assessments for review or practice without impacting Grade Center calculations.

You can turn the test into a self-assessment by hiding students’ scores in the Grade Center. This allows students to take tests to reinforce learning without feeling pressure about a score affecting their total grade. Select all of the options under Test Feedback so students are able to see how they did. If all options are selected, students will see the answers they selected and which ones are correct.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include this Test in Grade Center Score Calculations</td>
<td>Select this option to include this test in Grade Center calculations. If the test is not included, the score does not affect any Grade Center calculations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide Results for this Test Completely from Instructor and the Grade Center</td>
<td>Select this option to hide this test score from you and exclude it from Grade Center calculations. The display in the Grade Center will read Complete/Incomplete and N/A or zero appears on the Grade Details page. You cannot see the student's answers to questions. Students are still able to view their own scores. Selecting this option makes Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations and Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades unavailable when editing column information in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Editing Test Feedback**

When a test is deployed, four options for test feedback appear on the Test Options page. The feedback options determine the type of results users receive after a test is submitted. One or more options may be selected. If you are using the test as a self-assessment, selecting all of the feedback options will give students the most information to help them improve.

Select all of the options under Test Feedback so students are able to see how they did. If all options are selected, students will see the answers they selected and which ones are correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Mode</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Present the final score to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted Answers</td>
<td>Present the student's answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct answers</td>
<td>Present the correct answers to the questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Present the question feedback to the student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If students are taking the test at different times, you can choose to make a limited amount of feedback available until all students have completed the test.

For example, you can choose to present only the Score when you first deploy the test, and when all students have taken the test, edit the test options to show Submitted Answers, Correct Answers, and Feedback. You can create an announcement to notify students that additional feedback is available, and students can return to the test to view the additional feedback.

**Editing Survey Feedback**

When a survey is deployed, two feedback options appear on the Survey Options page. The survey feedback options determine the type of results students receive after a survey is submitted. One or both options may be selected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Mode</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Students see whether the survey is complete or incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted Answers</td>
<td>Students see the answers they submitted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Editing Test Presentation**

The following table describes the options for presenting questions on tests and surveys.
### Option | Description
--- | ---
**All at Once** | Present the entire assessment on one screen. Students scroll through all the questions and can move up and down from question to question. If this is selected, **Prohibit Backtracking** cannot be selected.

**One at a Time** | Displays one question at a time. The screen includes navigation tools to move between questions. The **Submit** button will only appear on the last page of the assessment. **Prohibit Backtracking** may be selected. **Randomize Questions** may also be selected.

**Prohibit Backtracking** | Prevents students from going back to questions they have already answered. If backtracking is prohibited, questions will be presented one at a time and the <<, <, and >> buttons will not appear to users during the test or survey.

**Randomize Questions** | Display questions in a random order each time the assessment is taken. If questions are written to include references to the question numbers as displayed on the **Test Canvas**, do not use this option because the random order changes question numbering.

### Related Tutorials
- Setting Test Options [Flash movie | 2m 35s]

### Using the Test and Survey Canvas
A test or survey's canvas page allows you to edit the name and instructions, create and edit questions, and change question settings. You can use the check boxes to select any or all questions and then delete them or change their point values.

After a test or survey is deployed and students have submitted results, you can edit, delete, and reorder existing questions. For tests, you can also change the point values of existing questions even after students submit attempts. Any submissions affected by test changes are regraded.

### Performing Tasks on Canvas Page
These are the tasks that are performed on the canvas page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To ...</th>
<th>Click ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>change the test or survey's name, description, or instructions</td>
<td>...the Action Link next to the <strong>Canvas</strong> title at the top of the page and select <strong>Edit</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create a new question</td>
<td>... <strong>Create Question</strong> and select a type of question from the drop-down list. <strong>Note:</strong> This option is not available for tests and surveys with submissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the order of the questions</td>
<td>...the double arrow to the left of the question title and drag the question to a new position. The question numbers update when items are reordered or randomized. For this reason, use caution when referring to specific question numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the settings for the questions</td>
<td>... <strong>Question Settings</strong> to adjust the default point value and options for scoring, question feedback, the inclusion of images, question display, and metadata. To learn more, see Changing Question Settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the default point value for all questions in the test</td>
<td>... <strong>Question Settings</strong> and enter a number in the <strong>Default point value</strong> box. <strong>Note:</strong> This option is not available for surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To . . .</td>
<td>Click . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the point value for an individual</td>
<td>...the <strong>Points</strong> box next to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
<td>title and enter a new value in the **Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>date Points** box. Click <strong>Submit</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the test has submissions, select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Submit and Regrade</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the point value for several</td>
<td>...the check boxes to select questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions at once</td>
<td>and type a new value in the <strong>Points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>box at the top of the question list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Click <strong>Update</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the test has submissions, select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Update and Regrade</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copy a question</td>
<td>...the <strong>Action Link</strong> next to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>title and select <strong>Copy</strong>. The **Create/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edit Question** page appears, and you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>can modify the copied question. Copied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions retain all of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>settings of the original question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> This option is not available for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tests and surveys with submissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edit a question</td>
<td>...the <strong>Action Link</strong> next to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>title and select <strong>Edit</strong>. Changes made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to linked questions are reflected in all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tests or surveys that contain a link to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that question. Tests that are in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>do not display changes to a linked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>question. To learn more, see **Reusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions**.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associate or manage a rubric</td>
<td>...the <strong>Action Link</strong> next to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>title and select <strong>Edit</strong>. Rubrics can be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>associated with <strong>Essay Questions</strong>, **File</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response Questions**, or **Short Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions** questions. To learn more, see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rubrics</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delete a question</td>
<td>...the <strong>Action Link</strong> next to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>title and select <strong>Delete</strong>. A confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>box appears. Deleting a question is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>irreversible. You cannot delete a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>question for a test that is in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the test has submissions, select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Delete and Regrade</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reuse a question from another test or survey</td>
<td>...<strong>Reuse Question</strong> and select **Find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questions** from the drop-down list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> This option is not available for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tests and surveys with submissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn more, see <strong>Finding Questions</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create a random block</td>
<td>...<strong>Reuse Question</strong> and select **Create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Random Block** from the drop-down list. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Random Block is a group of questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>retrieved from a Question Pool. You select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how many questions are drawn from the pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and displayed in the test. <strong>Note:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Random blocks are not available in surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>. This option is not available for tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with submissions. To learn more, see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Creating and Editing a Random Block</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show or hide the questions within the</td>
<td>...**Preview questions that match selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>random block</td>
<td>criteria** to view the list of questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Click the preview button next to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>question you want to view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create a question set</td>
<td>...<strong>Reuse Question</strong> and select **Create</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question Set** from the drop-down list. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question Set is a group of explicitly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chosen questions that can be presented in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a random fashion determined by the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>instructor. <strong>Note:</strong> This option is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>available for tests and surveys with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>submissions. To learn more, see **Creating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question Sets**.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upload questions</td>
<td>...<strong>Upload Questions</strong> and <strong>Browse</strong> for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a file containing specially formatted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions to import. <strong>Note:</strong> This option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is not available for tests and surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with submissions. To learn more, see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Uploading Questions</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deploying Tests and Surveys

After a test or a survey is created, the next step is to deploy it to users in a course. This is a two-step process: adding the test or survey to a course area and then making it available.

About Unavailable Tests

There is a difference between unavailable tests or surveys and those you delete:

- Unavailable tests or surveys are added to a Content Area but a link does not appear to students.
- Deleted tests or surveys are removed from the course.

You can access tests through the Control Panel in the Course Tools section Tests, Surveys, and Pools. If this is not visible, change Edit Mode to ON.

Assessment availability is managed on the Test Options or Survey Options page. Assessment availability is limited to a specific time period by setting the Display After and Display Until fields. The availability can also be open ended by setting only a start date or only an end date. If the link to an assessment is available, but neither date is set, the assessment is immediately and always available.

Before You Begin

Before you can deploy a test or survey, you need to create it and create new questions, or use the Find Questions feature to copy or link existing questions to it.

To learn more, see Creating Tests and Surveys and Finding Questions.

How to Add a Test or Survey to a Content Area

1. Navigate to the course area where you add a test or survey.
2. Point to the Create Assessment drop-down list and select Test or Survey.
3. Select a test or survey from the Add Test or Add Survey list.
4. Click Submit. The Test Options page appears.

How to Make a Test or Survey Available

Test and survey availability is set after the assessment is added to a course area. Availability is managed on the Test Options page.

1. On the Test Options or Survey Options page, click Yes to Make the Link Available to users. If this option is set to No, it will not appear to students. You may make the link available, and then use the Display After and Display Until fields to limit the amount of time the link appears.
2. Set the following options for the test or survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add a New Announcement for this Test or Survey</td>
<td>The announcement will include the date and state &quot;an Assessment has been made available in [Course Area that includes the link to the assessment]&quot;. This announcement will appear in the course announcements as well as the My Course and My Announcements modules. If an announcement was previously posted using this feature, the date and time of the most recent announcement appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Multiple Attempts               | Select the check box and choose an option:  
  - Select Allow Unlimited Attempts to permit students take the assessment as many times as they wish.  
  - Select Number of Attempts and type a number to indicate a specific number of attempts allowed. |
| Force Completion                | Select the Force Completion check box to force students to complete the test or survey once it has been launched. Students may not exit the assessment and continue working on it at a later date. The Save function is available for students to save the assessment as they work through it, but they may not exit and re-enter the assessment. |
| Set Timer                       | Select this check box to set a time limit for finishing the assessment. If this option is selected, enter the amount of time to allow for the test or survey in the hours and minutes boxes. The time elapsed is displayed to students during the assessment. A one-minute warning is also displayed as students approach the time limit.  
  Selecting this option also records completion time, available under Test Information when the attempt is complete.  
  If a timer is set, turning Auto-Submit on will save and submit the assessment automatically when time expires. Leaving it off will give students the option to continue after time expires. |
| Display After and Display Until | Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to define the availability of the test or survey. Select both the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. |
| Password                        | Select the Password check box to require a password to access the test or survey. |

3. Click Submit.

How to Control the Presentation of a Test or Survey

Additional options are available to control the presentation and feedback for an assessment. To learn more about these options, see Test and Survey Options.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include this Test in Grade Center Score Calculations</td>
<td>Test results can be used in Grade Center calculations by selecting this option. Test scores do not need to be revealed to students to be used in Grade Center calculation. Self-assessment tests are generally not included in Grade Center calculations. If the test is not included, the score will not affect any Grade Center calculations. This test is also excluded from weighting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide Results for this Test Completely from Instructor and Grade Center</td>
<td>This option is available only for tests, and if selected, a test can be made to behave like a survey, even if points are assigned to the test questions. The display in the Grade Center will read Complete/Incomplete, and N/A (not applicable) or zero appears on the Grade Details page. You will not be able to see any student grades, view answers, aggregate results, or download result details for this test. To protect student privacy, this choice cannot be reversed later without deleting all attempts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Test or Survey Feedback                                              | Determine the kind of feedback that is appears upon completion:  
  - **Score**: Presents the final score to students. This is only available for tests.  
  - **Status**: Presents the completion status to students.  
  - **Submitted Answers**: Presents the student's answers.  
  - **Correct Answers**: Presents the correct answers to the questions. This is only available for tests.  
  - **Feedback**: Presents the question feedback to the student. This is only available for tests. |
| Presentation Mode                                                     | **All at Once**: Present the entire assessment on one screen. Students scroll through all the questions and can move up and down from question to question. If this is selected, **Prohibit Backtracking** cannot be selected.  
  **One at a Time**: Displays one question at a time. The screen includes navigation tools to move between questions. The Submit button appears only on the last page of the assessment. Prohibit Backtracking and Randomize Questions may be selected. |
| Prohibit Backtracking                                                 | Select this check box to prevent users from going back to questions that they have already answered. If backtracking is prohibited, questions will be presented one at a time and the <<, <, and >> buttons will not appear to users during the test or survey. |
| Randomize Questions                                                   | Click to display questions in a random order each time the test or survey is taken. If questions have been written to include references to the question numbers as displayed on the Test Canvas, do not use this option because the random order will change question numbering. |

**Test and Survey Status**

The Test/Survey Status indicator is a tool to provide students with a quick up-to-date view of their progress (complete or incomplete questions) in an assessment at all times.

**Using the Test/Survey Status Indicator**

The **Save Answer** button next to each question provides a visual reminder to students to save their work...
periodically.

The completion status of assessment questions is displayed at the top of the page whenever a student is taking an assessment. The status of which questions have been answered is displayed at the top of the page, just below the Instructions box. The Test/Survey Status indicator remains at the top of the page even as the student scrolls down through the assessment.

When the student answers a question and moves on to the next question in a question-by-question assessment, the status box is updated to show that the previous question was answered. If the student does not answer a question and moves on to the next question, the status box shows that the previous question was not answered.

The student can navigate between questions by clicking on the question number in the status indicator. This is applicable only to tests deployed all at once or question by question where backtracking is permitted.

While taking an all-at-once assessment, students can use a Save button to the right of each question to save this specific question without scrolling to the bottom of the page to save.

Saving either a single question or all of the questions that have been answered (with the Save button at the bottom of the page) changes the status indicator to show which questions have been completed.

**How to View Test or Survey Results**

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section.
2. Select Full Grade Center.
3. On the Grade Center: Full Grade Center page, navigate to the test or survey's column.
4. Click the test or survey column's Action Link to access the contextual menu.

*Note:* Because surveys are anonymous, the results are delivered only as statistics, and it is not possible to view individual answers. If an open-ended essay question was included in the survey, all responses will be listed.

**Test and Survey Results**

**How to View Test or Survey Results**

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2. Select Full Grade Center.
3. On the Grade Center: Full Grade Center page, navigate to the test or survey’s column.
4. Click the test or survey column's Action Link to access the contextual menu.

*Note:* Because surveys are anonymous, the results are delivered only as statistics, and it is not possible to view individual answers. If an open-ended essay question was included in the survey, all responses will be listed.

**Changing Question Settings**

The Question Settings page allows you to adjust question settings for a test, survey, or pool. Question settings include:
Tests, Surveys, and Pools > Changing Question Settings

- Enabling feedback options for questions
- Determining default point values for questions in tests
- Adding metadata to questions
- Adding images, files, or web links to questions and answers

How to Change Question Settings

In this example, a test is accessed. Use the same steps to access surveys and pools.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Course Tools section.
4. On the Tests page, click the Action Link next to a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
5. Select Edit.
6. On the Test Canvas, click Question Settings on the Action Bar.
7. On the Test Question Settings page, make your desired changes to the following fields.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide feedback for individual answers</td>
<td>Select this option to allow response feedback boxes for individual answers rather than just one set of feedback boxes for correct or incorrect answers. You cannot provide individual feedback for answers to true/false, ordering, and matching questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add images, files, and web links to questions</td>
<td>Select this option to allow adding images, files, and web links to questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add images, files, and web links to answers</td>
<td>Select this option to allow adding images, files, and web link to answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add categories, topics, levels of difficulty, keywords and instructor notes to questions</td>
<td>Select this option to allow adding categories, topics, levels of difficulty, and keywords to questions. When searching for questions from a pool or other tests and surveys, you may search for questions by these criteria. To learn more, see Adding Question Metadata.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specify default points when creating questions</td>
<td>Select this option to automatically assign all questions in the test the same default point value. Type the value in the Default point value box. To be effective, you must set the default point value before creating questions. If the default point value is changed, only new questions will have the new value. Questions created before the modification have the old point value. <strong>Note:</strong> You cannot specify a default point value for questions in pools or surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specify partial credit options for answers</td>
<td>Select this option to make partial credit available for questions included in the test. If selected, an option to give partial credit appears when questions are created or edited. <strong>Note:</strong> The partial credit option does not appear for pools or surveys.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Changing Question Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Specify negative points options for answers| Select this option to make negative points available for questions included in the test. The partial credit option must be enabled before the negative points option will appear. Negative points, used to penalize wrong answers or guesses, are typed as a negative percentage value in the partial credit box for each incorrect answer. If selected, an option to allow for negative scoring for answers appears when questions are created or edited.  
**Note:** The negative points option does not appear for pools or surveys. |
| Provide option to assign questions as extra credit | Select this option to make extra credit available for questions included in the test. If selected, extra credit is assigned for each question individually after it is created.  
**Note:** The extra credit option does not appear for pools or surveys. |
| Specify random ordering of answers         | Select this option to allow answers to appear in a random order. If selected, the option appears when each question is created or edited.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Specify the horizontal or vertical display of answers | Select this option to be able to select whether answers appear vertically or horizontally. If selected, the option appears when each question is created or edited.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Specify numbering options for answers      | Select this option to determine the answer numbering, such as 1 2, 3 or A, B, C. If selected, the option appears when each question is created or edited.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

8. Click **Submit**.

### How to Assign Partial Credit

When partial credit is enabled, a portion of the total points for a question is awarded when an answer is not entirely correct. You can enable partial credit during question creation or when editing a question.

Partial credit is available for the following question types:
- Calculated formula
- Fill in multiple blanks
- Jumbled sentence
- Matching
- Multiple answer
- Multiple choice
- Opinion scale/Likert question
- Ordering
- Quiz Bowl

For example, suppose you include the following multiple choice question with four answers: "What is on a beach?" If the correct answer, "sand," is awarded 5 points, but another choice is "the ocean," you can set partial credit to 40%, awarding 2 points for that answer. If partial credit is enabled but negative points is not, valid percentage values for a question are 0.0 to 100.0.

**Note:** The partial credit option does not appear for pools or surveys.

Use the following steps to enable the partial credit option and use it for individual questions.
1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section.
2. Select **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
3. On the **Tests, Surveys, and Pools** page, select **Tests**.
4. On the **Tests** page, click the Action Link to the right of a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
5. Select **Edit**.
6. On the **Test Canvas**, click **Question Settings** on the Action Bar.
7. On the **Test Question Settings** page, select **Specify partial credit options for answers**.
8. Click **Submit**.
9. For each appropriate question, select the check box for **Allow Partial Credit**.
10. For each incorrect answer, type a percentage in the **Partial Credit %** box.
11. Click **Submit**.

After students submit attempts, you may not disable the partial credit option on the **Test Question Settings** page. To remove the partial credit option from an individual question in a test with attempts, clear the question’s check box for **Allow Partial Credit**. Click **Submit and Update Attempts** and then **OK**. All test attempt scores are recalculated.

**Tip:** If partial credit is available, mention this in the test instructions to encourage a greater degree of test participation.

### How to Use Negative Points

You can penalize students’ incorrect answers with negative points. This feature is most often used in multiple choice tests to discourage guessing. You can enable the negative points option during question creation or when editing a question.

Negative points for incorrect answers is available for the following question types:

- Matching
- Multiple answer
- Multiple choice

For example, if a multiple choice question awards 5 points for a correct answer and 0 points for skipping it, you can set -20% (or -1 point) for each of the incorrect answers. Valid negative point percentage values for a question are -100.0 to -0.0.

**Note:** The negative points option does not appear for pools or surveys.

Use the following steps to enable the negative points option and use it for individual questions.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section.
2. Select **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
3. On the **Tests, Surveys, and Pools** page, select **Tests**.
4. On the **Tests** page, click the Action Link to the right of a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
5. Select **Edit**.
6. On the **Test Canvas**, click **Question Settings** on the Action Bar.
7. On the **Test Question Settings** page, select **Specify negative points options for answers**.
   
   **Note:** The negative points option appears only if the **Specify partial credit options for answers** option is enabled.
8. Click **Submit**.
9. For each appropriate question, select the check boxes for **Allow Partial Credit** and **Allow Negative Scores for Incorrect Answers**.

10. For each incorrect answer, type a negative percentage in the **Partial Credit %** box.

11. Click **Submit**.

After students submit attempts, you may not disable the negative points option on the **Test Question Settings** page. To remove the negative points option from an individual question in a test with attempts, clear the question’s check box for **Allow Partial Credit**, which also disables negative scoring. Click **Submit and Update Attempts** and then **OK**. All test attempt scores are recalculated.

**Tip:** If using negative points as a guessing deterrent, mention this in the test instructions.

### How to Award Extra Credit

When extra credit is enabled and applied to an individual question, a correct answer results in adding the points listed in the question's **Points** box to the points earned for the test. An incorrect answer does not result in a point deduction. Questions designated as extra credit are removed from the total points calculation for the purpose of grading. If a student answers all questions correctly on a test with an extra credit question, he or she is awarded a score greater than 100% on the test. Extra credit is enabled after questions are created.

**Note:** The extra credit option does not appear for pools or surveys.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Course Tools** section.
2. Select **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
3. On the **Tests, Surveys, and Pools** page, select **Tests**.
4. On the **Tests** page, click the Action Link to the right of a test’s title to access the contextual menu.
5. Select **Edit**.
6. On the **Test Canvas**, click **Question Settings** on the Action Bar.
7. On the **Test Question Settings** page, select **Provide option to assign questions as extra credit**.
8. Click **Submit**.
9. For each appropriate question, click the **Points** box.
10. In the pop-up, select the check box for **Extra Credit**.
11. Click **Submit**.

To remove extra credit for an individual question, click the **Points** box. In the pop-up, clear the **Extra Credit** check box. You may disable extra credit for the entire test on the **Test Question Settings** page.

**Tip:** If extra credit is available, mention it in the question or in the test instructions.

### Adding Question Metadata

You can create metadata values for questions to help organize them for future use. The metadata values created in one question can be used when creating other questions in the same course. These metadata values are used to help search for questions to reuse on the **Find Questions** page. (To learn more about searching for questions using metadata, see **Finding Questions**.)

Questions can have the following metadata values added to them:

- Categories
- Topics
Before You Begin

The question metadata options are only available if **Add categories, topics, levels of difficulty, and keywords to questions** are selected in **Question Settings**.

Example Question Using Metadata

An instructor creates the following True/False question: *The capital of Slovenia is Ljubljana.*

The following metadata can be applied to the question:

- **Category**: Geography
- **Topic**: Former Yugoslavia
- **Levels of Difficulty**: Low
- **Keywords**: World Capitals

This question appears in the active filter on the **Find Questions** page when Geography, Former Yugoslavia, or Low is selected. To learn more, see **Finding Questions**.

How to Add Metadata to a Question

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the Control Panel, click **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
2. Create a new test, survey, or pool, or select **Edit** from the contextual menu for an existing test, survey, or pool.
3. Create a new question by using the **Create Question** drop-down list or select **Edit** next to an existing question.
4. The **Categories and Keywords** section appears in different places depending on the type of question, but always just before **Instructor Notes**. To add a category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword, click **Add**.

   **Note**: If the question **Categories and Keywords** section does not appear on the create/edit pages for a question, this usually means **Add categories, topics, levels of difficulty, and keywords to questions** has not been selected in **Question Settings** for the assessment.

5. Type a new category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword in the field and click **OK**. You can also type multiple items at once, separating each with a comma.
6. Click **Choose from Existing** to select an existing category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword. If there are no existing choices, this option will not be displayed.
7. Click **Submit** when finished.

How to Manage Question Metadata

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the Control Panel, click **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
2. Create a new assessment (test, survey, or pool) or select **Edit** from the contextual menu for an existing assessment.
3. Select a new question from the **Create Question** drop-down list, or select **Edit** from the contextual menu for an existing question.
4. To delete a category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword, click the **X** icon next to the metadata element.
5. To add another category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword, click Add. Type a new category, topic, level of difficulty, or keyword in the field and click OK.

6. Click Submit when finished.

Question Types

Calculated Formula Questions

A calculated formula question contains a formula, the variables of which are set to change for each user. The variable range is created by specifying a minimum value and a maximum value for each variable. Answer sets are randomly generated. The correct answer is a specific value or a range of values. Partial credit may be granted for answers falling within a range.

How to Create the Question and Formula

The question is the information presented to students. The formula is the mathematical expression used to find the answer. Remember to enclose variables in square brackets.

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Calculated Formula from the drop-down list.
3. Type the information that will display to students in the Question Text box. Surround any variables with square brackets, for example, [x]. The value for this variable will be populated based on the formula. In the example [x] + [y] = z, [x] and [y] will be replaced by values when shown to students. Students would be asked to define z. Variables should be composed of alphabetic characters, digits (0-9), periods (.), underscores (_) and hyphens (-). All other occurrences of the
opening rectangular brace ("[") character should be preceded by the back-slash ("\") character. Variable names must be unique and cannot be reused.

4. Define the formula used to answer the question in the Answer Formula box. For example, \( x + y \). Operations are chosen from the buttons across the top of the Answer Formula box.

5. Set the Answer Range. This defines which submitted answers will be marked correct. If the exact value must be entered, enter 0 and select Numeric from the drop-down list. If the answer can vary, enter a value and select Numeric or Percent. Numeric will mark every answer as correct that falls within a range of plus or minus the Answer Range from the exact answer. Percent will mark every answer as correct that falls within a percentage of plus or minus the Answer Range from the exact answer.

6. Click the Allow Partial Credit check box to allow partial credit for answers that fall outside the correct Answer Range.

7. Set the range for partial credit by entering a value and selecting Numeric or Percent for the Partial Credit Range. Answers falling within this range will receive a portion of the total points possible for the question equal to the Partial Credit Points Percentage.

8. Type a value for the Partial Credit Points Percentage.

9. Click the Units Required check box to require that correct answers must include the correct unit of measurement, for example, seconds, meters, or grams.

10. Type the correct unit of measurement in the Answer Units field.

11. Click the Units Case Sensitive check box to require that correct answers are case sensitive. The answer may still receive partial credit if the unit of measurement is not correct.

12. Type a percentage in Unit Points Percentage. The unit of measurement will account for that percentage of the total credit.

13. When finished with the question, click Next to proceed.

How to Define the Variables

The next page in the three step process defines the variables in the formula.

1. Type a Minimum Value and a Maximum Value for each variable.
2. Select a decimal place using the Decimal Places drop-down list.
3. Under Answer Set Options, select the Decimal Places for Answer from the drop-down list. Students must provide the correct answer to this decimal place.
4. Type the Number of Answer Sets. The answer sets will be randomized so that different students will be presented with a different set of variables.
5. Click Calculate to reset the variables after making a change or click Go Back to return to the previous page.

How to Confirm the Variables and Answers

The last step in the process displays the answer sets in a table. Advanced features for questions, such as Feedback and Categories and Keywords are defined by the creation settings for the test.

1. Edit or delete any unwanted answer sets and click Calculate.
2. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer. If partial credit is allowed, answers that are partially correct will receive the feedback for an incorrect answer.
3. Add Question Metadata in the Categories and Keywords section.
4. Click Submit to add the question to the test.

Example

If a small glass contains 8 ounces of water, and a large glass contains 12 ounces of water, what is the total number of ounces in 4 large and 3 small glasses of water?

Related Tutorials: Creating a Calculated Formula Question (Flash movie | 2m 30s)

Calculated Numeric Answer Questions

A calculated numeric question asks the student to submit a numeric answer to a question. It resembles a fill-in-the-blank question where the correct answer is a number. The correct answer is a specific number or within a range of numbers.

Note: Calculated numeric answers must be numeric, not alphanumeric (for example, 42, not forty-two).

How to Create a Calculated Numeric Response Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Calculated Numeric from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. Type the Correct Answer. This value must be a number.
5. Type the Answer Range. If the answer must be exact for students to receive credit, enter 0. Any value that is less than or more than the Correct Answer by less than the Answer Range value will be marked as correct.
6. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
7. Click Submit.

Example

If the average human body temperature under normal conditions ranges between 36.5 and 37.5 degrees Celsius, what is the average human body temperature in degrees Fahrenheit?

Related Tutorials: Creating a Calculated Numeric Question (Flash movie | 2m 30s)
Either/Or Questions

In either/or questions, students are presented with a statement and asked to respond using a selection of pre-defined two-choice answers, such as:

- Yes/No
- Agree/Disagree
- Right/Wrong

This question type is very useful in surveys to gauge user's opinions. It is a slight variation on the true/false question type, except more descriptive and meaningful answers may be used.

How to Create an Either/Or Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Either/Or from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. Select a pair of Answer Choices from the drop-down list.
5. Select the Correct Answer.
6. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
7. Click Submit.

Example

Hamlet's famous monologue, "To be or not to be...," is a meditation on suicide.
Agree/Disagree

Essay Questions

Essay questions require you to provide students with a question or statement to which they can respond in detail. Students are given the opportunity to type an answer into a text field. Sample answers are typically added for users or graders to use as a reference.

These types of questions must be graded manually in the Grade Center.

Note: Essay questions can use the math and equation editor. To learn more, see Using the Math Editor.
Alternatives to Essay Questions

Short Answer Questions allow you to limit the length of the response. Like essay questions, short answer questions are manually graded.

Other question types that allow student input are:

- File Response Questions
- Fill in the Blank Questions
- Fill in Multiple Blanks Questions

How to Create an Essay Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Essay from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text and assign a Point Value.
4. Type a sample Answer for users to view with the question.
5. Optionally, associate a rubric by clicking Add Rubric. See Rubrics for more information on associating and managing rubrics.
6. Click Submit.

Example

Explain what a "tombolo" is and where you might find one.

Related Tutorials Creating an Essay Question (Flash movie | 2m 0s)

File Response Questions

File response questions require students to upload a file from their local drive or from the Content Collection as the answer to the question. This type of question is graded manually, and it enables students to work on something before a test and submit it with a test, particularly if it requires a large amount of text.

Submitting the answer this way also allows you to download, review, and assess the submission without an active Internet connection, although you will still need to access the Grade Center to assign a grade.

Note: File response questions cannot be added to surveys.
Alternatives to File Response Questions

Essay Questions can also be used for questions that may require a shorter answer from a student, and Short Answer Questions allow you to limit the length of the response.

Other question types that allow student input are:

- Fill in the Blank Questions
- Fill in Multiple Blanks Questions

How to Create a File Response Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select File Response from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
5. Optionally, associate a rubric by clicking Add Rubric. (See Rubrics for more information on associating and managing rubrics.)
6. Click Submit.

Example

Create a diagram of a simple relational database. Upload this file in .jpg/jpeg format.

Fill in Multiple Blanks Questions

Fill in Multiple Blanks questions use variables to identify multiple blank spaces in the text for students to type missing values. Separate sets of answers are defined for each blank. For questions with a single blank, use Fill in the Blank Questions.

Note: In restored courses, case sensitivity is turned off for all existing Fill in Multiple Blanks questions. Edit those questions and select Case Sensitive, if needed.
How to Create a Fill in Multiple Blanks Question

Fill in Multiple Blanks questions have two parts: the question and the set of answers. Phrase the question so that it is apparent where the answer goes. Variables must be unique and placed within square brackets [ ]. Separate sets of answers are defined for each variable. Bracketed variables appear as text boxes to students.

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Fill in Multiple Blanks from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text. Type each blank as a variable surrounded by square brackets. For example, William [blank_1] wrote Romeo and [blank_2].
   Variables must be composed of letters, digits (0-9), periods (.), underscores (_) and hyphens (-). No spaces are allowed in the variable name. Up to 10 variables can be included in the question. If the left square bracket ( [ ) character appears in the variable but is not used to identify a variable, it must be preceded by a back slash to prevent the system from reading the text following it as a variable. Variable names must be unique and cannot be reused within the question.
4. Select Allow Partial Credit to award a percentage of the total points when students provide correct answers for some of the blanks. The amount of partial credit will be assigned automatically, depending on the question's possible points and the number of answers. This option appears only if you have selected it in the question settings. To learn more, see Changing Question Settings.
5. Click Next.
6. To add more than one answer for a variable, select from the Number of Answers drop-down list. To delete an answer, click Remove.
7. Type each answer and select Contains, Exact Match, or Pattern Match to specify how the answer is evaluated against the student's answer. For Contains and Exact Match, check the box if the answer is Case Sensitive.
8. Click Next.
9. Optionally, type Feedback for correct and incorrect responses, add Categories and Keywords, or type Instructor Notes. See Adding Question Metadata for more information on categories and keywords.
10. Click Submit.

Answer Sets for Each Variable

As many as 20 different answers can be added for each variable in the question. Keep the answers simple and limited to as few words as possible. Limit answers to one word to avoid extra spaces between words or the order of the words causing a student answer to be scored as incorrect.

- Select Contains from the drop-down list in the answer to allow for abbreviations or partial answers. This option counts the student's answer as correct if it includes the word or words you specify. For example, set up a single answer that contains Franklin so that Benjamin Franklin, Franklin, B Franklin, B. Franklin, and Ben Franklin are all counted as correct answers. This eliminates the need for you to list all acceptable possibilities for the answer Benjamin Franklin.
- Provide additional answers that allow for common spelling errors or select Pattern Match from the drop-down list in the answer to create a regular expression that allows for spelling variations.

Pattern Match

Pattern Match is an advanced technique that enables you to use regular expressions when specifying correct answers to allow for some variability in the answers that will be counted as correct. They enable you to count
Tests, Surveys, and Pools > Question Types

Certain patterns as correct, rather than an exact text match. For example, regular expressions enable grading of the wide range of possible answers that are typical of scientific data.

In a regular expression, most characters in the string match only themselves and are called literals. Some characters have special meaning and are called metacharacters. You can conduct an internet search on regular expressions for a complete list. Here are a few examples:

- A dot (.) matches any single character except newline characters.
- Brackets [ ] match anything inside the square brackets for one character.
- A dash (-) inside square brackets allows you to define a range. For example, [0123456789] could be rewritten as [0-9].
- A question mark (?) makes the preceding item in the regular expression optional. For example, Dec(ember)? will match Dec and December.

Simple string examples:

- b.t - matches with bat, bet, but, bit, b9t because any character can take the place of the dot (.)
- b[aeui]t matches bat, bet, but, bit
- b[a-z]t would accept any three-letter combination that begins with b and ends with t. A number would not be accepted as the second character.
- [A-Z] matches any uppercase letter
- [12] matches the target character to 1 or 2
- [0-9] matches the target character to any number in the range 0 to 9

When you select Pattern Match for an answer, you can click Check Pattern to open a new window where you test your pattern to be sure it will produce the results you want. After testing and editing the pattern, click Save & Exit to save your modified pattern as the answer.

Type feedback for students when they give a correct or an incorrect answer. Feedback is optional. When partial credit is awarded, students receive the feedback message for correct answers.

Example

In first aid, the mnemonic ABC stands for _____, _____, and _____.
The three colors in the Italian flag are _____, _____, and _____.

Related Tutorials  Creating a Fill in Multiple Blanks Question (Flash movie | 3m23s )

Fill in the Blank Questions

Fill in the blank questions consist of a phrase, sentence, or paragraph with a blank space indicating where the student should provide the missing word or words. Use Fill in Multiple Blanks Questions to create a question with multiple answers.

Answers are scored based on whether the student answer matches the correct answers you provide. You can require student answers to match exactly, contain part of the correct answer, or match a pattern that you specify. You choose whether or not the answer is case sensitive.
How to Create a Fill in the Blank Question

Fill in the Blank questions have two parts: the question and the set of answers. Phrase the question so that it is apparent where the answer goes in the context of the question and so that there is only one answer. A text box appears below the question for students to type text.

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Fill in the Blank from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. To add more than one answer, select from the Number of Answers drop-down list. To delete an answer, click Remove.
5. Type each answer and select Contains, Exact Match, or Pattern Match to specify how the answer is evaluated against the student’s answer. For Contains and Exact Match, check the box if the answer is Case Sensitive.
6. Optionally, type Feedback for correct and incorrect responses, add Categories and Keywords, or type Instructor Notes. See Adding Question Metadata for more information on categories and keywords.
7. Click Submit.

About Creating Answers

Keep the answers simple and limited to as few words as possible. Limit answers to one word to avoid extra spaces between words or the order of the words causing a student answer to be scored as incorrect.

- Select Contains from the drop-down list in the answer to allow for abbreviations or partial answers. This option counts the student’s answer as correct if it includes the word or words you specify. For example, set up a single answer that contains Franklin so that Benjamin Franklin, Franklin, B Franklin, B. Franklin, and Ben Franklin are all counted as correct answers. This eliminates the need for you to list all acceptable possibilities for the answer Benjamin Franklin.
- Provide additional answers that allow for common spelling errors or select Pattern Match from the drop-down list in the answer to create a regular expression that allows for spelling variations.

Pattern Match

Pattern Match is an advanced technique that enables you to use regular expressions when specifying correct
answers to allow for some variability in the answers that will be counted as correct. They enable you to count certain patterns as correct, rather than an exact text match. For example, regular expressions enable grading of the wide range of possible answers that are typical of scientific data.

In a regular expression, most characters in the string match only themselves and are called literals. Some characters have special meaning and are called metacharacters. You can conduct an internet search on regular expressions for a complete list. Here are a few examples:

- A dot (.) matches any single character except newline characters.
- Brackets [ ] match anything inside the square brackets for one character.
- A dash (-) inside square brackets allows you to define a range. For example, [0123456789] could be rewritten as [0-9].
- A question mark (?) makes the preceding item in the regular expression optional. For example, Dec(ember)? will match Dec and December.

Simple string examples:

- b.t matches with bat, bet, but, bit, b9tb because any character can take the place of the dot (.)
- b[aeul]t matches bat, bet, but, bit
- b[a-z]t would accept any three-letter combination that begins with b and ends with t. A number would not be accepted as the second character.
- [A-Z] matches any uppercase letter
- [12] matches the target character to 1 or 2
- [0-9] matches the target character to any number in the range 0 to 9

When you select Pattern Match for an answer, you can click Check Pattern to open a new window where you test your pattern to be sure it will produce the results you want. After testing and editing the pattern, click Save & Exit to save your modified pattern as the answer.

Type feedback for students when they give a correct or an incorrect answer. Feedback is optional. When partial credit is awarded, students receive the feedback message for correct answers.

Example

______ is the silicate mineral with the lowest melting temperature and the greatest resistance to weathering, and as a result, it makes up the great bulk of sand-sized particles.

Related Tutorials Creating a Fill in the Blank Question (Flash movie | 2m 56s)

Hot Spot Questions

In hot spot questions, students indicate the answer by marking a specific point on an image. A range of pixel coordinates is used to define the correct answer. The term "hot spot" refers to the area of an image that, when selected, yields a correct answer.

The following are some examples of uses for this type of question:

- Anatomy: To locate different parts of the body.
- Geography: To locate areas on a map.
- Foreign Language: To select different articles of clothing.
How to Create a Hot Spot Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Hot Spot from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. In the Upload Image section, locate the appropriate image file (.gif, .jif, .jpg, jpeg, .png, .tiff, and .wmf are supported) using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click Browse My Computer.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course’s storage repository, click Browse Course.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click Browse Content Collection.
5. Make sure to upload the image in the correct field. Remember that Creation Settings allows uploading a file as part of the Question Text.
6. Click Next. The uploaded image appears.
7. Click the mouse and drag it to create a rectangle over the correct answer. When students select a point within the rectangle, they receive credit for a correct answer. The area of the hot spot is defined by pixels.
8. Click Clear to delete the hot spot and define a new hot spot.
9. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
10. Click Submit.

Example

Click the esophagus on the image.
Jumbled Sentence Questions

In jumbled sentence questions, students are shown a sentence with parts of the sentence as variables. The student then selects the proper answer for each variable from drop-down lists to assemble the sentence. Only one set of answers is used for all of the drop-down lists. For example, this type of question may be useful when teaching about proper grammatical order in a sentence, such as the location of a noun, verb, or adjective.

How to Create a Jumbled Sentence Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Jumbled Sentence from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text. Type each blank as a variable surrounded by square brackets. Variables should be composed of alphabets, digits (0-9), periods (.), underscores (_) and hyphens (-). All other occurrences of the opening rectangular brace ("[" ) character should be preceded by the back-slash ("\") character. Variable names must be unique and cannot be reused.
4. Select the Number of Answers and enter a value for each. These values will appear in a drop-down list for each variable when users view the question. Type the answers in the order they should display to students in the drop-down.
5. Click **Next**.

6. The question will appear with the drop-down lists in place of the variables. Select the correct answers.

7. Type the **Correct Response Feedback** that appears in response to a correct answer and the **Incorrect Response Feedback** for an incorrect answer.

8. Click **Submit**.

**Example**

An essential tenet of first aid, is that when you find an unconscious person, you first _____, then _____, and finally _____.

- make them aware of your presence by shaking their hand
- ensure their airway is clear
- check their breathing
- move the person so that their head is sitting on their knees
- check their circulation
- check for awareness by asking their name and today’s date

**Specifying Partial Credit**

You can specify partial credit for Jumbled Sentence questions, giving a portion of the question’s possible points to students whose order of answers is partially correct.

**Note:** You must enable the options to specify partial or negative credit on the Changing Question Settings page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial credit on Jumbled Sentence questions.

1. On the **Test Canvas** page, create or edit a Jumbled Sentence question.
2. Under **Options**, select the **Allow Partial Credit** check box. The amount of partial credit will be assigned automatically, depending on the question’s possible points and the number of answers.
3. Click **Submit**.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Creating a Jumbled Question](Flash movie | 3m 52s)

**Matching Questions**

Matching questions allow students to pair items in one column to items in another column. You may include a different numbers of questions and answers in a matching question. For example, the question may include a list of animals and a list of food they eat (herbivore, carnivore, omnivore). Students would match each animal with their diet.

Students are granted partial credit for matching questions if they answer part of the question correctly. For example, if the question is worth eight points and a student gives the correct answers for half of the matches, they will receive four points.
3. **Matching:** Match the terms to the correct description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Match the terms to the correct description.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>Match Question Items Answer Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>a. Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Meows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b. Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Barks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>c. Bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Stitches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>d. Snake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Chirps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How to Create a Matching Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Matching from the drop-down list.
3. Type the **Question Text**.
4. Select options for question layout and partial credit.
5. Select the **Number of Questions** and type the text for each question. The number of questions and answers may be uneven. For example, you could include extra answers to make a question more challenging.
6. Select the **Number of Answers** and type the text for each answer.

   **Note:** Questions and answers are numbered according to the order that they are in. Question 1 is not matched to Answer 1. You need to match each question with the correct answer in the next step.
7. Click **Next**.
8. Match each **Question** with the correct **Answer**.
9. Type the **Correct Response Feedback** that appears in response to a correct answer and the **Incorrect Response Feedback** for an incorrect answer.
10. If desired, add question metadata in the Categories and Keywords section. This can include categories, topics, levels of difficulty, and keywords. To learn more, see Adding Question Metadata.
11. Click **Submit**.

### Example

Match each term with its definition.

- Deposition
- Erosion
- Lithification
- Weathering
  - a. The chemical alteration and breakdown of rock
  - b. The conversion of sediment to rock
  - c. The dropping of sediment into a long-term reservoir
  - d. The picking up and carrying away of sediment

### Specifying Partial or Negative Credit

You can specify partial or negative credit for Matching questions. Partial credit rewards students whose answer
demonstrates incomplete mastery of the material. Negative credit is used to discourage guessing.

**Note:** You must enable the options to specify partial or negative credit on the Changing Question Settings page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial or negative credit on Matching questions.

1. On the **Test Canvas** page, create or edit a Multiple Answer question.
2. Under **Options**, select the **Allow Partial Credit** check box.
3. Optionally, select the **Allow Negative Scores for Incorrect Answers** check box to assign penalties for incorrect answers.
4. Optionally, select the **Allow Negative Overall Score for the Question** check box to allow a negative total for the question. Selecting this option means that the student could earn a score below zero for the question.
   **Note:** The option to allow negative scores will not appear unless the option to allow partial credit is selected.
5. Partial credit is automatically distributed to equal 100%. To change the distribution, type a number in the **Partial Credit %** text box below each question/answer pair. This number is read as a percent. For instance, typing **25** will give the student 25% of the question’s possible points for selecting that match. Zero is an acceptable value, but the total partial credit percentages must add up to 100. Clicking **Update Partial Credit %** will redistribute the values evenly.
6. To assign negative credit to an answer, type a negative number in the **Negative Credit %** text box. For instance, typing **-25** will subtract 25% of the question’s possible points from a student’s total grade for selecting that match. Zero is an acceptable value.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Related Tutorials** 韪 **Creating a Matching Question** (Flash movie | 3m 27s)

To learn about scoring options, such as enabling negative points, extra credit, or partial credit, see Changing Question Settings.

**Multiple Answer Questions**

Multiple answer questions allow students to choose more than one answer. This type of question may be used when more than one answer is correct. For example, in the medical field, this type of question could be used to select symptoms associated with a medical condition.
How to Create a Multiple Answer Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Multiple Answer from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. The default number of answers is four. If you want to increase this, select the Number of Answers from the drop-down list. To reduce the number of answers, click Remove next to the answer boxes to delete them. A multiple answer question cannot have fewer than two answers, or more than twenty.
5. Complete the Answer box for each answer.
6. Select the correct answers by clicking the Correct check box for each answer.
7. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
8. Click Submit.

Example

Which of the following are viable methods for traveling from London to Paris?

1. air
2. ferry
3. walk
4. rail
Specifying Partial or Negative Credit

You can specify partial or negative credit for Multiple Answer questions. Partial credit rewards students whose answer demonstrates incomplete mastery of the material. Negative credit is used to discourage guessing.

**Note:** You must enable the options to specify partial or negative credit on the Changing Question Settings page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial or negative credit on Multiple Answer questions.

1. On the Test Canvas page, create or edit a Multiple Answer question.
2. Under Options, select the Allow Partial Credit checkbox.
3. Optionally, select the Allow Negative Scores for Incorrect Answers checkbox.

   **Note:** The option to allow negative scores will not appear unless the option to allow partial credit is selected.

4. In the Partial Credit % text box below each incorrect answer, type a value for partial credit. This number is read as a percent. For instance, typing 50 will give the student 50% of the question’s possible points for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.

5. To assign negative credit to an answer, type a negative number in the Partial Credit % text box. For instance, typing -50 will subtract 50% of the question’s possible points from a student’s total grade for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.

6. Click Submit.

**Related Tutorials**

 Creating a Multiple Answer Question (Flash movie | 3m 35s)

To learn about scoring options, such as enabling negative points, extra credit, or partial credit, see Changing Question Settings.

Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple choice questions allow students several choices with only one correct answer. In multiple choice questions, students indicate the correct answer by selecting a radio button.

**Note:** Use the Multiple Answer question type to create multiple choice questions with more than one answer.

How to Create a Multiple Choice Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Create Question** and select **Multiple Choice** from the drop-down list.

3. Type the **Question Text**.

4. The default number of choices is four. If you want to increase this, select the **Number of Answers** from the drop-down list. To reduce the number of answers, click **Remove** next to the answer boxes to delete them. A multiple choice question cannot have fewer than two answers, or more than twenty.

5. Type an **Answer** in each box.

6. Select the **Correct** answer by clicking the appropriate option. Only one correct answer is selected.

7. Type the **Correct Response Feedback** that appears in response to a correct answer and the **Incorrect Response Feedback** for an incorrect answer. If partial credit is allowed, answers that are partially correct will receive the feedback for an incorrect answer.

8. Click **Submit**.

**Example**

Which ocean basin is a remnant of the universal ocean Panthalassa?

1. Arctic
2. Atlantic
3. Indian
4. Pacific

**Specifying Partial or Negative Credit**

You can specify partial or negative credit for Multiple Choice questions. Partial credit rewards students whose answer demonstrates incomplete mastery of the material. Negative credit is used to discourage guessing.

**Note:** You must enable the options to specify partial or negative credit on the **Changing Question Settings** page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial or negative credit on Multiple Choice questions.

1. On the **Test Canvas** page, create or edit a Multiple Choice question.
2. Under **Options**, select the **Allow Partial Credit** check box.
3. Optionally, select the **Allow Negative Scores for Incorrect Answers** check box.
   
   **Note:** The option to allow negative scores will not appear unless the option to allow partial credit is selected.

4. In the **Partial Credit %** text box below each incorrect answer, type a value for partial credit. This number is read as a percent. For instance, typing **50** will give the student 50% of the question's possible points for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.

5. To assign negative credit to an answer, type a negative number in the **Partial Credit %** text box. For instance, typing **-50** will subtract 50% of the question's possible points from a student's total grade for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.

6. Click **Submit**.

**Related Tutorials**

[Creating a Multiple Choice Question](#) (Flash movie | 2m 54s )

To learn about scoring options, such as enabling negative points, extra credit, or partial credit, see **Changing Question Settings**.
Opinion Scale/Likert Questions

Opinion scale or Likert questions are based on a rating scale designed to measure attitudes or reactions. It is popular to use in surveys to elicit a comparable scale of opinion. Students indicate the multiple choice answer that represents their attitude or reaction. When you create an opinion scale question, six answer fields are pre-populated with the following answers, which can be modified:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Not Applicable

How to Create an Opinion Scale/Likert Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Opinion Scale/Likert from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. The default number of choices is six, and the answer fields are populated with the six values on a standard Likert scale. If you want to increase this, select the Number of Answers from the drop-down list. To reduce the number of answers, click Remove next to the answer boxes to delete them. An opinion scale/Likert question cannot have fewer than two answers, or more than twenty.
5. To change the default answers, or to add answers if you have increased the number of possible answers, type an Answer in each field.
6. Select a Correct answer by clicking the appropriate radio button. (If the question really is an opinion survey where there is no actual correct answer, this setting can be ignored.)
7. Type the **Correct Response Feedback** that appears in response to a correct answer and the **Incorrect Response Feedback** for an incorrect answer. If partial credit is allowed, answers that are partially correct will receive the feedback for an incorrect answer. In a Survey, the correct answer is ignored.

8. Click **Submit**.

**Example**

How concerned are you about the need for first aid on the water?

1. Very Concerned
2. Concerned
3. Neither Concerned or Unconcerned
4. Not really concerned
5. Not concerned at all
6. Not applicable

**Specifying Partial Credit**

You can specify partial credit for Opinion Scale/Likert questions. Partial credit rewards students whose answer demonstrates incomplete mastery of the material.

*Note:* You must enable the options to specify partial credit on the **Changing Question Settings** page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial credit on Opinion Scale/Likert questions.

1. On the **Test Canvas** page, create or edit an Opinion Scale/Likert question.
2. Under **Options**, select the **Allow Partial Credit** check box.
3. Type a number in the **Partial Credit %** text box below each question/answer pair. This number is read as a percent. For instance, typing **25** will give the student 25% of the question’s possible points for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.
4. Click **Submit**.

**Related Tutorials** ✪ **Creating a Likert Question** (Flash movie | 3m18s )

**Ordering Questions**

Ordering questions require students to provide an answer by selecting the correct order of a series of items. For example, you can give students a list of historical events and ask them to place these events in chronological order.

Students are granted partial credit for ordering questions if they answer part of the question correctly. For example, if the question is worth eight points and the student gives the correct order for half of the items, they will receive four points.
6. **Ordering**: Order these submersibles by the amount of ocean floor they can explore, from the least to the greatest amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Order these submersibles by the amount of ocean floor they can explore, from the least to the greatest amount.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Answer   | Display Order  
1. *Shinkai 6500*  
2. *Trieste*  
3. *Sea Cliff II*  
4. *Alvin* |
| Correct Feedback | That is correct! *Alvin* can explore about 44% of the ocean floor with its maximum operating depth of 4000 m. *Sea Cliff II* has an operations limit of 6000 m. The *Shinkai 6500*, the world's deepest-diving manned research submarine that is presently operational, can explore 57% of the ocean floor. It's maximum operational depth is 6500 m. The 1960 dive of the *Trieste* to a depth of 10,915 m demonstrated it's capability to explore any part of the deep ocean. However, its immobility made it impractical for deep-sea exploration and it is no longer in operation. |
| Incorrect Feedback | That is incorrect. *Alvin* can explore about 44% of the ocean floor with its maximum operating depth of 4000 m. *Sea Cliff II* has an operations limit of 6000 m. The *Shinkai 6500*, the world's deepest-diving manned research submarine that is presently operational, can explore 57% of the ocean floor. It's maximum operational depth is 6500 m. The 1960 dive of the *Trieste* to a depth of 10,915 m demonstrated it's capability to explore any part of the deep ocean. However, its immobility made it impractical for deep-sea exploration and it is no longer in operation. |

**How to Create an Ordering Question**

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Ordering from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. The default number of answers is four. If you want to increase this, select the Number of Answers from the drop-down list. To reduce the number of answers, click Remove to the right of one or more answer boxes to delete them. An ordering question cannot have fewer than two answers, or more than twenty.
5. Type an Answer in each field.
6. Click Next.
7. Drag and drop the answers in the Display Order column to determine how they are displayed.
8. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer.
9. Click Submit.

**Example**

Order the four oceans in size, with the largest first.

Pacific

Indian

Atlantic

Arctic
Specifying Partial Credit

You can specify partial credit for Ordering questions, giving a portion of the question’s possible points to students whose order of answers is partially correct.

Note: You must enable the options to specify partial or negative credit on the Changing Question Settings page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial credit on Ordering questions.

1. On the Test Canvas page, create or edit an Ordering question.
2. Under Options, select the Allow Partial Credit check box. The amount of partial credit will be assigned automatically, depending on the question’s possible points and the number of answers.
3. Click Submit.

Related Tutorials  Creating an Ordering Question (Flash movie | 3m 12s)

Quiz Bowl Questions

Quiz Bowl questions are a way to add fun and creativity to tests, such as self-assessments or in-class contests. The student is shown the answer and responds by entering the correct question into a text box. An answer must include a phrase and a question word, such as whom, what, or where, to be marked as correct.

For example, the question may be "The person who invented the cotton gin", with the answer being "Who is Eli Whitney?" Partial credit may be given if the question word (in this case, "who") is not included in the answer.

6. Quiz Bowl: The powdered drink mix made popular by NASA.

How to Create a Quiz Bowl Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Quiz Bowl from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. Select the Number of Interrogatives.
5. Type each acceptable Interrogative word. Interrogatives are words such as what, who, where, when, why, or how. One of these words must appear in the response for the student to receive full credit. The default choices are who, what, when, and where. To delete an interrogative, click Remove next to it.
6. Select the Number of Answer Phrases.
7. Type each Answer Phrase. One of these phrases must appear in the response for the student to receive any credit. It is best to keep these phrases as simple and generic as possible to maximize the chances of matching on a correct response.
8. Type the Correct Response Feedback that appears in response to a correct answer and the Incorrect Response Feedback for an incorrect answer. If partial credit is allowed, answers that are partially correct will receive the feedback for an incorrect answer.
9. Click Submit.
Example

It is the only country that is a continent.
Your answer must be in the form of a question, such as *What is _____?*
Use a question mark at the end of your question.

Specifying Partial Credit

You can specify partial credit for Quiz Bowl questions. Partial credit rewards students whose answer demonstrates incomplete mastery of the material.

*Note:* You must enable the options to specify partial credit on the Changing Question Settings page in order to use them on individual questions.

Follow these steps to specify partial credit on Quiz Bowl questions.

1. On the Test Canvas page, create or edit a Quiz Bowl question.
2. Under Options, select the Allow Partial Credit check box.
3. Type a number in the Partial Credit % text box below each question/answer pair. This number is read as a percent. For instance, typing 25 will give the student 25% of the question's possible points for selecting that answer. Zero is an acceptable value.
4. Click Submit.

Related Tutorials

Creating a Quiz Bowl Question (Flash movie | 3m 30s)

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions are similar to Essay Questions. Although the student taking the assessment is not limited in the length of the answer, the number of rows in the text box can help provide the student with a rough guideline as to instructor expectations. Both essay questions and short answer questions must be graded manually.

3. **Short Answer:** Baseball Opinion: In fifty words or less, describe what... Points: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>In fifty words or less, describe what you like best and least about watching baseball.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>What I like best:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What I like least:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to Create a Short Answer Question

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. On the Action Bar, point to Create Question and select Short Answer from the drop-down list.
3. Type the Question Text.
4. Determine the Number of Rows to Display in the Answer Field by selecting a number from the drop-down list. The number of rows is meant as a guideline when entering an answer, it does not impose an absolute limit on answer length.
5. Type an example of a correct answer in the Answer Text field.
6. Optionally, associate a rubric by clicking Add Rubric. See Rubrics for more information on associating and managing rubrics.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Example**

Explain briefly what CCD (carbonate compensation depth) is, and how it governs the distribution of calcium carbonate on the sea floor.

**Related Tutorials** [Creating a Short Answer Question](Flash movie | 2m 57s)

**True/False Questions**

True/False questions allow students to choose either true or false in response to a statement question. True and false answer options are limited to the words **True** and **False**.

**How to Create a True/False question**

1. Open the canvas page for a test, survey, or pool. (To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).)
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Create Question** and select **True/False** from the drop-down list.
3. Type the **Question Text**. This should be in the form of a statement that users will mark either true or false.
4. Select the correct **Answer** by clicking **True** or **False**.
5. Type the **Correct Response Feedback** that appears in response to a correct answer and the **Incorrect Response Feedback** for an incorrect answer.
6. Click **Submit**.

**Example**

Oceanic crust is made out of basalt and gabbro.

True

False

**Related Tutorials** [Creating a True or False Question](Flash movie | 2m 25s)

**Offering Partial Credit**

Partial credit rewards students who demonstrate emerging mastery of the material. For example, you can award some of the question's possible points for an answer that lists two of three correct answers.

Before you can use partial credit for answers, you must enable it in **Question Settings**. Partial credit is available for the following automatically graded question types:

- Calculated Formula
- Fill in Multiple Blanks
- Jumbled Sentence
- Matching
- Multiple Answer
- Multiple Choice
- Opinion Scale/Likert
- Ordering
- Quiz Bowl

Finding Questions

You can use the Find Questions page to filter and select questions when adding individual questions or a random block to a test. (To learn more about random blocks, see Creating and Editing a Random Block).

The Find Questions page consists of the active filter and the shopping list. The active filter is a dynamic list that changes automatically as criteria are selected or deselected. The shopping list displays all of the selected questions in one place, eliminating the need to scroll up and down long lists of questions.

How to Find Questions

1. On a test, survey, or pool canvas page, point to Reuse Question and select Find Questions. The Find Question pop-up window displays.
2. When finding questions, you have the option to **Copy selected questions** or to **Link to original questions**. Copying just takes the selected questions and makes copies of them in the test, survey, or pool canvas. Linking puts the questions in the assessment, but retains a link back to the original source. Linking means if the original question is edited or modified, all non-deployed assessments using that linked question will use the newly revised version instead. After an assessment has been deployed, any changes made to the original linked version do not affect the versions in the deployed assessment.

- **Benefits to copying questions**: Copying allows you to modify a question freely for any given test, survey, or pool. There is also a reduced risk of consistency issues should the original version of the question be modified.

- **Drawbacks to copying questions**: If the original question is corrected or changed, the copied version will no longer be the same as the original. If a global change is needed, every copied instance of the question has to be located and modified individually.

- **Benefits to linking questions**: Linking helps maintain uniformity, but only up until an assessment is deployed. If a global change to the question is desired, it might only need to be made in one place.

- **Drawbacks to linking questions**: You cannot modify a linked question for a non-deployed assessment, except by changing the original source question—which also means every other non-deployed assessment linking to the question is impacted as well.

3. Click the criteria links to display all the questions associated with that criteria. You can select between pools, tests, and question types. It is also possible to search by question categories, topics, levels of difficulty, and keywords—all of which are considered question metadata. (To learn more, see [Adding Question Metadata](#).)

4. Select questions from the selected criteria. You can also use the **Search current results** box to type a phrase, word, or part of a word to find matching questions.

5. Click **Submit**.

As criteria are selected from the **Browse Criteria** section, the relevant questions are displayed in the active filter list. The selected criteria are displayed above the active filter list as a reference. If there are no matching questions, the active filter list will be empty. The criteria categories for searching for questions include:

- **Pools**: These are instructor-created collections of questions, usually related to each other, which can be included as an entire group in a test, survey, or another larger pool.

- **Tests**: This includes both tests (which are graded) and surveys (which are not).

- **Question types**: This allows you to select one or more of the question types, including:
  - Calculated formula
  - Calculated numeric
  - Either/or
  - Essay
  - File response
  - Fill in multiple blanks
  - Fill in the blank
  - Hot spot
  - Jumbled sentence
  - Matching
  - Multiple answer
  - Multiple choice
Tests, Surveys, and Pools > Reusing Questions

- Opinion scale/Likert
- Ordering
- Quiz Bowl
- Short answer
- True/false

- **Categories**: Selects among the assigned categories of questions.
- **Topics**: Selects among the assigned topics of questions.
- **Levels of Difficulty**: Selects among the levels of difficulty assigned to questions.
- **Keywords**: Selects by assigned question keywords.

**Note**: The questions you can find may be limited according to your specific access permissions. Questions selected through this process are displayed in the shopping list at the bottom of the page.

- Click **Show List** to view all the questions that have been selected.
- Click **Hide List** to minimize the list.
- Questions are removed from the shopping list by clicking the red X link next to the question. This action does not delete the actual question, it just unselects them.

**Related Tutorials**  
Tour the Question Finder Feature (Flash movie | 4m33s)

### Reusing Questions

You can reuse questions by using the **Find Questions** page, which contains every question from all existing tests, surveys, and pools in the course. To learn more, see Finding Questions.

### Copying and Linking to Questions

When using the **Find Questions** page, you can choose to **Copy a Question** from an existing test to a new test, or **Link to the original question** in the new test. The difference is that if a linked question is changed, those changes are reflected everywhere a link to that question occurs. Questions that are linked display an icon that indicates they are used in other tests. Alternatively, when the question is copied, changes made to one instance of the question are not reflected in the other instances. Copy is the default selection.

### Selecting Questions

Questions that are selected through this process are displayed at the bottom of the page. Click **Show List** to view all the questions that have been selected. Click **Hide List** to minimize the **Selected Questions**. Questions are deleted from the selected questions list by clicking the red X link next to the question. This action does not delete the question.

### How to Find Existing Questions and Add them to a Test or Survey

1. On a test or survey canvas page, on the Action Bar, point to **Reuse Question** and select **Find Questions**. The **Find Questions** pop-up window appears.
2. Choose a method for adding questions, **Copying** or **Linking**. The difference between the two is that if a linked question is changed, those changes are reflected in every test and survey where that question appears. Once you have selected a question, you can change this option before adding the question to a test or survey.
Note: The option to change the method is located above the table of questions. Select the correct option before you add the questions to the test.

3. Expand the criteria selections to view and find questions that match the criteria you select.

4. Use the Search Current Results field to narrow the search.

5. Select the questions to add using the check boxes.

6. Click Submit. The question will be added to your test or survey as a copy or a link.

Creating and Editing a Random Block

Random blocks are groups of questions that can be presented in a random fashion determined by the instructor. Random blocks are created by finding and selecting questions, deciding on the number of points per question, and then determining the number of questions to display to the user.

Questions that are selected through this process are displayed in the shopping list at the bottom of the window. Click Show List to view all the questions that have been selected. Click Hide List to minimize the shopping list. Questions can be removed from the shopping list by clicking the red X link next to the question. This action does not delete the question.

Before You Begin

Here are some things to keep in mind when creating a random block:

- If the number of questions to display is less than the total number of questions (for example, three questions out of fifty total), the questions are randomly distributed, so each student may be looking at different sets questions.
- You can choose to have the same number of questions to display as there are selected, in which case the students all view the same questions, but in random order for each student.
- It is not possible to add a random block of questions from another test or survey.
- Random blocks cannot be included in a survey or a pool.

How to Create a Random Block of Questions for a Test

1. On a Test Canvas page, on the Action Bar, point to Reuse Question and select Create Random Block.

2. Expand the criteria selections to view and find questions that match the criteria you select.

3. Use the Search Current Results field to narrow the search.

4. Select the questions to add using the check boxes.

5. Click Submit.

How to Edit a Random Block of Questions

Random Blocks are edited from the Test Canvas once they have been added to a test.
### Creating Question Sets

A question set is a collection of questions retrieved from selected tests and pools. From this set, you specify how many questions to display. The specific questions displayed are randomly chosen each time the test is taken.

For each question set, you can specify:

- The pools and tests from which it will be drawn
- The type of questions to be drawn
- The number of questions to be drawn

If the number of questions to be displayed is less than the list of questions (example: 3 out of 50), then the questions are randomly distributed so that each user may be viewing a different set of three questions. You can choose to display the same questions to all users by selecting all the questions listed.

### How to Create Question Sets

1. Open the canvas page for a test. (To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).)
2. On the Test Canvas page, on the Action Bar, point to Reuse Question.
3. Select Create Question Set. The Create Question Set pop-up window displays.
4. Search for questions using the Browse Criteria.
5. Select the questions to include in the test. You can also select the check box in the header row to select all the currently displayed questions.
6. Review your selected questions.
7. Click Submit.

### How to Add or Delete Questions in a Question Set

To add or delete questions in a question set:
1. Open the canvas page for a test. (To learn more, see [Tests, Surveys, and Pools.](#))
2. On the **Test Canvas** page, locate the question set, and click **Questions in the Set** to expand it.
3. To add questions to the set, click **Add Questions.** The **Create Question Set** pop-up window displays. (There is no need to re-select the questions already in the question set. This procedure merely adds questions to what is already present.) Use the criteria to find and select the questions to add to the question set. Review your selected questions and click **Submit.**
4. To delete questions from the set, select the questions to be removed and click **Remove Question.** This action does not delete the original linked source for the question.

**Using Question Sets in Tests**

When added to a test, a question set shows the total number of questions in the set, and the currently set number of questions to display to a student taking the test (the default is one).

You can type a different value in the **Number of Questions to display** box. To ensure students are presented with a question set each time, enter a number less than the total number of questions.

Note that the points assigned are a point value per question, and typed in the **Points per question** box. For example, if you set it to 10, and the question set presents two out of five questions, this means the question set has a total of 20 points that can be awarded for correct answers. It is not possible to assign separate point values for individual questions in the same question set.

Due to the randomized format of question sets, use caution when referring to specific question content or numbering, as the questions displayed will change with each attempt.

**Note:** When you add questions to a test using the question set feature, each question is linked to its original source. The questions are not copied into the test. Therefore, until the test is deployed, if you change an original question, the revised version of the question will be displayed. After a test with linked questions is deployed, the questions will no longer reflect revisions made to the original.

**Uploading Questions**

Questions can be written offline in a specially formatted text file and uploaded into tests, surveys, and question pools. Once uploaded, questions can be edited and used exactly like questions that have been created from inside Blackboard Learn.

**Before You Begin**

The following information is important to note when uploading questions:

- The uploaded file must meet the **file format guidelines** detailed in this topic.
- The questions in the uploaded file must meet the **question format guidelines** detailed in this topic.
- Questions that contain an error will fail to upload. Questions without errors will upload successfully.
- The system does not check for duplicate questions. It is up to you to manage this.
- Uploaded questions automatically default to the point value that they are assigned when uploaded. If a default value was not set, questions will automatically have a point value of ‘0’ and you must then enter a point value for each question.
- Once uploaded, questions are used just like other questions created within tests, surveys, or pools.

**How to Upload Questions**

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 - Help for Instructors - Page 597
1. Create or edit or edit an existing assessment. (To learn more, see Tests, Surveys, and Pools.)
2. From the test, survey, or pool canvas page, on the Action Bar, click Upload Questions.
3. Click Browse to locate the file.
4. (Optional) Type a number in the Points per question field to set a default value for all questions. If it is left blank, all questions will be set to a value of zero, but individual question values can be edited can be edited at any time after the upload is complete.
5. Click Submit and then click OK. The questions appear on the assessment canvas page. You can edit and reorder the questions as necessary.

File Format Guidelines

Each file containing questions to be uploaded must conform to the following guidelines.

- Each file must be a tab-delimited .txt file. You can edit this file in Excel or in a text editor.
- Blackboard recommends that each batch file not exceed 500 records because of time-out restrictions associated with most browsers.
- Do not include a header row in the file.
- Do not include blank lines between records. The blank line will be processed and return an error.
- Include only one question per row.
- The first field in every row defines the type of question.
- Separate each field in a row using a TAB.
- correct, incorrect, true, false and other words that identify answers must be in English.

Question Format Guidelines

To be uploaded successfully, the questions in the text file to be uploaded must conform to the guidelines detailed in the following table.

**Note:** Questions that contain an error will fail to upload. Questions without errors will upload successfully.

**Note:** When uploaded to a survey, the correct|incorrect answer designation is ignored, but the file must follow the same format as described for tests and pools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Multiple Choice | MC TAB question text (TAB answer text TAB correct|incorrect)  
Text within () may be repeated for each of the answers that are part of the Multiple Choice question.  
The maximum number of answers is 20. |
| Multiple Answer | MA TAB question text (TAB answer text TAB correct|incorrect)  
Text within () may be repeated for each of the answers that are part of the Multiple Answer question.  
The maximum number of answers is 20. |
| True/False | TF TAB question text TAB true|false |
| Essay | ESS TAB question text TAB [example]  
Text within [] is optional. The instructor may choose to add a sample essay question or leave this blank. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ordering</strong></td>
<td>ORD TAB <em>question text</em> (TAB <em>answer text</em>)&lt;br&gt;Text within ( ) may be repeated for each of the answers that are part of the Ordering question. The maximum number of answers is 20. The order entered in the file is the correct order. The system will randomly order the answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matching</strong></td>
<td>MAT TAB <em>question text</em> (TAB <em>answer text</em> TAB <em>matching text</em>)&lt;br&gt;Text within ( ) may be repeated for each of the answers that are part of the Matching question. The maximum number of answers is 20. The system will randomly order the answers and their question. When uploading a matching question, there must be a one-to-one relationship between questions and answers. If not, correct answers may be marked incorrect if more than one answer has the same value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fill in the Blank</strong></td>
<td>FIB TAB <em>question text</em> (TAB <em>answer text</em>)&lt;br&gt;Text within ( ) may be repeated for each of the answers that are part of the Fill in the Blank question. The maximum number of answers is 20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>File Response</strong></td>
<td>FIL TAB <em>question text</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeric Response</strong></td>
<td>NUM TAB <em>question text</em> TAB <em>answer</em> TAB [optional] <em>tolerance</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Response</strong></td>
<td>SR TAB <em>question text</em> TAB <em>sample answer</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opinion/Likert Scale</strong></td>
<td>OP TAB <em>question text</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Fill-in-the-Blank</strong></td>
<td>FIB_PLUS TAB <em>question text</em> TAB <em>variable1</em> TAB <em>answer1</em> TAB <em>answer2</em> TAB <em>variable2</em> TAB <em>answer3</em>&lt;br&gt;The format consists of a list of variable-answers where each variable-answer is composed of the variable name and a list of correct answers for that variable. Variable-answers are delimited by an empty field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jumbled Sentence</strong></td>
<td>JUMBLED_SENTENCE TAB <em>question text</em> TAB <em>choice1</em> TAB <em>variable1</em> TAB <em>choice2</em> TAB <em>variable2</em>&lt;br&gt;The format consists of a list of choices-answers where each choice-answer consists of the choice followed by the list of variables for which that choice is the correct answer. An empty field indicates the end of a choice answer. A choice immediately followed by an empty field indicates that choice is not the correct answer for any variable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quiz Bowl</strong></td>
<td>QUIZ_BOWL TAB <em>question text</em> TAB <em>question_word1</em> TAB <em>question_word2</em> TAB <em>phrase1</em> TAB <em>phrase2</em>&lt;br&gt;The format consists of a list of valid question words followed by an empty field and a list of valid answer phrases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example: File Structure in Excel**

![Excel file structure example](image)

**Related Tutorials**  [Uploading Test Questions from Microsoft Excel](Flash movie | 3m 25s | 2,240 KB)
Using the Pool Canvas

The **Pool Canvas** page presents an inventory of questions. You can edit the pool name and instructions, create or edit questions, and upload questions. You can use the check boxes to select any or all questions and then delete them or change the point values.

When you are creating pool questions that are intended for use in surveys, correct answers must be added during question creation. These answers will be ignored once the question is added to a survey. This function enables the questions to be used in tests as well as surveys at a later time.

How to Use the Pool Canvas Page

Following are the tasks that are performed on the **Pool Canvas** page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To ...</th>
<th>click ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>create a new question</td>
<td>the <strong>Create Question</strong> drop-down list in the and select a type of question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the default point value for questions in the pool</td>
<td>the appropriate field in the <strong>Default Points</strong> column and type a new point value. Press TYPE or click the check mark icon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the name, description, or instructions for the pool</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong> from the contextual menu next to the first header.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the order of the questions</td>
<td>the double arrow in the upper left corner of the question and drag and drop the question to the appropriate position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change the settings for this pool</td>
<td><strong>Question Settings</strong>. Question Settings enable the Instructor to adjust the default point value, options for question feedback and the inclusion of images. To learn more, see Changing Question Settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copy a question</td>
<td><strong>Copy</strong> in the contextual menu of the question header. The Create/Edit Multiple Choice Question page is displayed, where changes are made to the copied question. Copied questions retain all of the settings of the original question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edit a question</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong> in the contextual menu of the question header. Instructors can edit linked questions from the Pool Canvas. Changes made to linked question are reflected everywhere there is a link to that question. Tests that are in progress will not display the changes to a linked question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associate or manage a rubric</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong> in the contextual menu of the question header. Rubrics can be associated with <strong>Essay, File Response</strong>, or <strong>Short Answer</strong> questions. See Rubrics for more information on associating and managing rubrics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preview a question</td>
<td><strong>Preview</strong> in the contextual menu of the question header. The question appears in a separate window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delete a question</td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong> in the contextual menu of the question header. A confirmation box appears. Removing a question is irreversible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reuse a question</td>
<td>Find Questions. To learn more, see Reusing Questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Creating and Editing Pools

Pools are collections and groups of questions that can be included in tests and surveys. For example, you might have a set of ten or twenty related questions you would like to reuse in several tests or surveys, or even
across multiple courses. The advantage of using a pool is you do not have to remember all those questions and manually add them to each test or survey.

The Pool Canvas page for a question pool presents an inventory of all the questions that can be managed and searched. You can edit the pool names and instructions, create or edit questions, and upload questions. You can also use the check boxes to select individual questions or all questions and then delete them or change the point values.

When pool questions are selected for a test, links are created between the test and the pool questions. Changes to linked questions produce a warning message that the changes take effect everywhere the question appears.

**About the Pool Warning Page**

A warning appears if you edit a question where students are in the process of taking a test or have already taken a test that includes questions from that pool. Certain areas of the questions will not be available for modification if the test has already been taken by students.

You should not make changes to pool questions that have been deployed in a test once students have begun taking the test. If you edit a pool question after a student has submitted a test it was included on, the student will view the new modified question when they view their grade and feedback. They will not view the original question.

**How to Build a Pool**

1. On the Control Panel, click Course Tools to expand it.
3. Click Build Pool.
4. Complete the Pool Information page and click Submit.
5. To add questions, you can Create Questions, Upload Questions, or Find Questions in other tests, surveys, and pools.

   **Note:** When you create pool questions that are intended for use in surveys (which are not graded), correct answers must be added during question creation anyway. This enables the questions to be used in tests as well as surveys. These answers will be ignored once the question is added to a survey.

6. Click OK to return to the Pools page.

**How to Edit Existing Pools**

1. On the Control Panel, click Course Tools to expand it.
3. Click the Action Link to the right of a pool's name to access the contextual menu and select Edit.
4. Add questions, delete questions, or change point values.
5. Click OK to return to the Pools page.

**How to Edit Questions in a Pool**

Linked questions are indicated by a globe icon. Changes to linked questions produce a warning message that the changes take effect everywhere the question appears.

If the question has attempts, changing it will require any submitted attempts to be regraded and may affect test scores. If this happens, affected instructors and students are notified.
1. On the Control Panel, click **Course Tools** to expand it.
2. Select **Tests, Surveys, and Pools** and click **Pools**.
3. On the **Pools** page, locate the pool that contains the questions to edit.
4. Click the Action Link to the right of a pool’s name to access the contextual menu and select **Edit**.
5. On the **Pool Canvas**, you can filter the list of questions by selecting from the list of **Browse Criteria**.
6. Click the Action Link to the right of a question name to access the contextual menu and select **Edit**.
7. Edit the question.
8. Click **Submit** to commit your changes in all tests where that question appears. Alternatively, you can **Save as New** to create a new question, which does not require regrading of existing attempts.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Building a Pool](Flash movie | 2m 39s)

**Importing Tests, Surveys, and Pools**

You can export tests, surveys, and pools as .zip file packages which can be imported to other courses by you or another instructor. This is an effective way to share them with other instructors and to save them for later use.

You can also import test banks and question pools made available by your textbook publisher. Check your specific publisher’s website for instructions on how to export and save the questions in a format that is compatible with importing to Blackboard Learn.

**How to Import a Test, Survey, or Pool**

1. From the Control Panel, in the **Course Tools** area, click **Tests, Surveys, and Pools**.
2. Click **Tests, Surveys**, or **Pools**.
3. Click **Import**.
4. Locate the appropriate file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from a local drive, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course’s storage repository:
     - If course file is in the course’s storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
     - OR-
     - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
5. Click **Submit**.

For information on exporting tests, surveys, or pools, see [Exporting Tests, Surveys, and Pools](#).

**Troubleshooting**

Only test, survey, and pool packages exported from Blackboard Learn may be imported.

Tests and surveys created by others, at other institutions, or created with older versions of Blackboard Learn can imported only they are in the proper format.
Tests, Surveys, and Pools

For information about formatting the different types of questions that make up tests, surveys, and pools, see Uploading Questions.

Related Tutorials
- Exporting and Importing a Test or Survey (Flash movie | 2m12s)
- Uploading Test Questions from Microsoft Excel (Flash movie | 3m25s)

Exporting Tests, Surveys, and Pools

You can export tests, surveys, and pools. This is an effective way to share them with other instructors, as well as to save and archive tests, surveys, and pools for later use.

Tests, surveys, and pools are exported by Blackboard Learn as .zip file packages, and then can be imported by you or another instructor for use in other courses.

How to Export a Test, Survey, or Pool

1. From the Control Panel, in the Course Tools area, click Tests, Surveys, and Pools.
2. Click Tests, Surveys, or Pools.
3. From the contextual menu next to a test, survey, or pool name, click Export.
4. Click OK in the pop-up window to save the file.

Note: If your school licenses content management, two export options will appear in the contextual menu. To save the file to a local drive, choose Export to Local Computer. To save the file within content management, choose Export to Content Collection.

To learn more about importing tests, surveys, or pools, see Importing Tests, Surveys, and Pools.

Related Tutorials
- Exporting and Importing a Test or Survey (Flash movie | 2m12s)

Grading Tests

A Grade Center column is created automatically for each test created and linked in the course. A test that has been submitted, but not graded, is indicated with an exclamation mark—the needs grading icon. Although Blackboard Learn scores many question types, some questions need to be graded manually, such as essays, short answer questions, and file response questions.

Tests that need grading can be accessed from the Needs Grading page or from the Grade Center. To learn more, see About the Grade Center and About the Needs Grading Page.

You have the option to grade tests anonymously, to grade all responses to a specific question, or to give full credit for all responses to a question. It is also possible to delete questions from a test, or to clear a test attempt to allow a student to retake a test.

How to Access Test Attempts From the Needs Grading Page

For courses with many enrolled students and gradable items, the Needs Grading page can help you determine which tests need grading first. For example, you can sort by the due date to ensure your final tests are graded before your school's deadline.

If you have a designated turnaround schedule set for all gradable items, the Needs Grading page allows you to customize the view of items with a needs grading status. You can sort and filter the list so the most urgent tests can be graded first.
To access the **Needs Grading** page:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Grade Center** section.
2. Select **Needs Grading**. The total number of items to grade appears on the **Needs Grading** page.

To filter and sort attempts:

1. Use the **Filter** drop-down lists to narrow the list of items to grade by **Category**, **Item**, **User**, and **Date Submitted**. For example, make selections in both the **Category** and **User** drop-down lists to display tests submitted by a particular user.
2. Click **Go**. The filtered items appear on the **Needs Grading** page.
3. Click any column heading or the caret to sort the tests. For example, sort the tests by **Item Name**.
4. Click **Grade All** on the Action Bar to begin grading test attempts.
5. The filtered test attempts are placed in a queue for easy navigation among items. Test attempts appear on the **Grade Test** page in the order they were sorted and filtered on the **Needs Grading** page.

### How to Access Test Attempts From the Grade Center

The Grade Center shows all gradable items. The number of items may influence how you organize your time for grading tasks. You may also find it beneficial to view a student's previous grades as items are graded.

To access the Grade Center:

1. On the Control Panel, expand the **Grade Center** section.
2. Select **Full Grade Center** or the **Tests** Smart View, if available, to access test attempts.

To grade a single test:

1. Locate the cell for a student’s test containing an exclamation mark.
2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to see the Action Link.
3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Attempt**. The **Grade Test** page appears.

To grade all attempts for a particular test:

1. In the test’s column heading, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Grade Attempts**. The **Grade Test** page appears.

### About the Grade Test Page

The **Grade Test** page is accessed from the **Needs Grading** page or the Grade Center. You can navigate among users and attempts, view rubrics, grade anonymously, and view information about a test.

On the Action Bar, you can perform the following actions:

- Click **Hide User Names** to grade attempts anonymously, if needed. Click **Show User Names** to display user information.
- Click **View Rubric** to view the rubrics that are associated with a test’s column in the Grade Center. To learn more, see Rubrics.
- Click **Jump to** and select another attempt to view or grade.

Expand the **Test Information** link to view the following information:
• **Status**: Shows the status of the test—**Needs Grading**, **In Progress**, or **Completed**.

• **Score**: The score awarded for the test. If the test has not yet been graded, this number is blank.

• **Time Elapsed**: If the option to **Set Timer** was chosen, the time spent is recorded and appears here.

• **Started Date**: The date when the student began attempting the test.

• **Submitted Date**: The date when the student submitted the test for grading.

• **Instructions**: Any instructions associated with the test.

• **Clear Attempt**: Clears the current test attempt. This can be useful when you want to give students another chance to start over on a test, especially if they were taking a test that forced completion and they encountered some difficulty or technical issue that prevented them from finishing.

• **Submit Attempt**: This function overrides an **In Progress** test attempt and submits it for grading.

**Note**: If a test is listed as in progress, either you or the student taking it must submit the test for you to be able to grade it.

### How to Grade Tests From the Grade Test Page

The **Grade Test** page is accessed from the **Needs Grading** page or the Grade Center.

1. On the **Grade Test** page, type a score for each question. Scores for questions graded automatically can be overridden.

2. Optionally, if a rubric has been associated with **Essay Questions**, **Short Answer Questions**, or **File Response Questions**, click **View Rubric** to grade the question using the rubric. To learn more, see **Rubrics**.

3. Optionally, add **Response Feedback** specific to the individual question. The **Response Feedback** box only appears for certain question types, such as essays.

4. Optionally, type comments in the **Feedback to User** box. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups.

5. Optionally, type comments in the **Grading Notes** box. This text is not seen by students.

6. Click **Save and Exit** to return to the **Full Grade Center**, the **Needs Grading** page, or the **Grade Details** page, depending on where grading began.

   - OR -

   Click **Save and Next** to display the next user, when available.

   - OR -

   Click **View Previous** to display the previous user, when available.

**Note**: If multiple attempts for a test have been allowed, a student’s grade is not released until all of the attempts have been graded.

### How to Grade Tests Anonymously

You can choose to grade tests anonymously to ensure an impartial evaluation of student work. Grading anonymously allows you to remain objective and not unduly influenced by a student’s behavior or previous performance. This practice can also contribute to the student-instructor relationship because students are assured that grading was unbiased.

When grading anonymously, all identifying information is hidden and assessment attempts appear in random order. Each student is assigned a number, such as Student 8.

To grade anonymously from the **Needs Grading** page:
1. Click a test attempt’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Grade Anonymously**. The **Grade Test** page appears.

To grade anonymously from the Grade Center:

1. In the test’s column heading, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Grade Anonymously**. The **Grade Test** page appears.

To grade anonymously from the **Grade Test** page:

1. On the Action Bar, click **Hide User Names**.
2. Click **OK**. If grading was in progress, any unsaved changes to the open attempt are lost. The **Grade Test** page refreshes and all identifying information is hidden.

---

### How to Grade Tests by Question

For each test, you can choose to grade all responses to a specific question. This allows you to move from test to test, viewing and scoring the same question for each student. Grading this way can save time as you concentrate only on the answers for a single question. You can see how all students responded, providing immediate feedback about how the group performed on that particular question. Also, grading by question is useful when you want to revisit a question that requires a score adjustment for all or many students.

At the same time, questions can be graded anonymously. All test attempts remain in needs grading status until all of the responses for all questions have been graded.

1. In the Grade Center, click a test’s Action Link in the column heading to access the contextual menu and select **Grade Questions**.
   - OR -
   On the **Needs Grading** page, click a test’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **Grade by Question**.
2. On the **Grade Questions** page, you can filter the questions by status: **Graded**, **Needs Grading**, or **In Progress**. You may also select the check box for **Grade Responses Anonymously**, if needed.
3. For each question, click the number in the **Responses** column.
4. On the **Grade Responses** page, expand the **Question Information** link to view the question. If anonymous grading was not previously selected, click **Hide User Names** on the Action Bar. Click **OK** in the pop-up window to verify the action.
5. Click **Edit** next to the score for a user.
6. Type a grade in the **Score** box. Optionally, add **Response Feedback** specific to the individual question. The Response Feedback box only appears for certain question types, such as essays. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups. Click **Submit**.
7. Optionally, if a rubric has been associated with **Essay Questions**, **Short Answer Questions**, or **File Response Questions**, click **View Rubric** to grade the question using the rubric. To learn more, see **Rubrics**.
8. Click **Back to Questions** to return to the **Grade Questions** page when all student responses are graded.

---

### How to Give or Remove Full Credit

You can **Give Full Credit** for all test submissions for the question you are viewing. Subsequent submissions are given full credit as well. After giving full credit, you can **Remove Full Credit** to revert to the automatic
grade or to a previously entered manual grade.

1. In the Grade Center, click a test’s Action Link in the column heading to access the contextual menu and select **Grade Questions**.

   –**OR**-

   On the Needs Grading page, click a test’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **Grade by Question**.

2. On the Grade Questions page, you can filter the questions by status: **Graded**, Needs Grading, or **In Progress**. You may also select the check box for **Grade Responses Anonymously**, if needed.

3. For each question, click the number in the Responses column.

4. On the Grade Responses page, expand the Question Information link to view the question.

5. Click **Give Full Credit** to assign full credit for the question.

6. If full credit has already been assigned and you want to remove it, click **Remove Full Credit**. The question reverts to the automatic grade or a previously entered manual grade.

7. Click **Back to Questions** to return to the Grade Questions page.

### How to Delete Questions

You can delete questions freely before a test is deployed or after it is deployed, but no students have taken the test. However, if there are test submissions, deleting a question removes it from the assessment, along with any possible points earned. Test attempts are regraded as if the question was not included in the assessment.

1. In the Grade Center, click a test’s Action Link in the column heading to access the contextual menu and select **Edit Test**.

   –**OR**-

   From Course Tools, click Tests, Surveys, and Pools, then click Tests. Click a test’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **Edit**.

2. On the Test Canvas, select one or more questions to be deleted and click **Delete and Regrade**.

   –**OR**-

   Click a test question’s Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **Delete and Regrade**.

3. Click **OK** to return to the previous page.

### Helping Students Resolve Issues With Tests

If a student experiences a technical problem while taking a test, or needs an additional attempt, you can help by submitting or clearing the test.

If a student was unable to submit a test, but had completed the work, you can submit the attempt.

1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing their attempt, which will display the **In Progress** icon.

2. Point at the cell to see the Action Link.

3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **View Grade Details**.

4. On the Grade Details page, click **View Attempt**.

5. Be sure the answers were saved. If multiple questions are marked with **No Answer**, you may wish instead to **Clear Attempt**.

6. Click **Test Information** to expand the section.
7. If satisfied with the student’s test attempt, click **Submit Attempt**.
8. Click **OK** to confirm the attempt submission.

If a student was unable to submit a test and needs to start over, or if you want to allow a student to take a test again for another reason, you can reset the test by clearing the attempt. When you clear an attempt, the grade is cleared from the Grade Center and the student can retake the test:

1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing their attempt, which will display the **In Progress** icon.
2. Point at the cell to see the Action Link.
3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu and select **View Grade Details**.
4. On the **Grade Details** page, click **Clear Attempt** on the **Edit** tab.
5. Click **OK** to confirm and remove the attempt.
6. On the **Grade History** tab, the action is recorded with "Attempt Grade Cleared." In the Grade Center, no grade or icon appears in the student’s test cell.

**Running Item Analysis on a Test**

Item analysis provides statistics on overall test performance and individual test questions. This data helps you recognize questions that might be poor discriminators of student performance. You can use this information to improve questions for future test administrations or to adjust credit on current attempts.

Roles with grading privileges (such as instructors, graders, and teaching assistants) access item analysis in three locations within the assessment workflow. It is available in the contextual menu for a:

- test deployed in a content area.
- deployed test listed on the **Tests** page.
- Grade Center column.
You can run item analyses on deployed tests with submitted attempts, but not on surveys. Access previously run item analyses under the **Available Analysis** heading or select a deployed test from the drop-down list and click **Run** to generate a new report. The new report’s link appears under the **Available Analysis** heading or in the status receipt at the top of the page.

For best results, run item analyses on single-attempt tests after all attempts have been submitted and all manually graded questions are scored. Interpret the item analysis data carefully and with the awareness that the statistics are influenced by the number of test attempts, the type of students taking the test, and chance errors.

*Note:* Item analysis is available for tests created in Blackboard Mobile Learn.

**How to Run an Item Analysis on a Test**

You can run item analyses on tests that include single or multiple attempts, question sets, random blocks, auto-graded question types, and questions that need manual grading. For tests with manually graded questions that have not yet been assigned scores, statistics are generated only for the scored questions. After you manually grade questions, run the item analysis again. Statistics for the manually graded questions are generated and the test summary statistics are updated.

1. Go to one of the following locations to access item analysis:
   - a test deployed in a content area.
   - a deployed test listed on the **Tests** page.
   - a Grade Center column for a test.
2. Access the test’s contextual menu.
3. Select **Item Analysis**.
4. In the **Select Test** drop-down list, select a test. Only deployed tests are listed.
5. Click **Run**.
6. View the item analysis by clicking the new report’s link under the **Available Analysis** heading or by clicking **View Analysis** in the status receipt at the top of the page.

**About the Test Summary on the Item Analysis Page**

The **Test Summary** is located at the top of the item analysis page and provides data on the test as a whole.

![Item Analysis: Chapter 3 Test](image)

**Edit Test** provides access to the Test Canvas.
The **Test Summary** provides statistics on the test, including:

- **Possible Points** - the total number of points for the test.
- **Possible Questions** - the total number of questions in the test.
- **In Progress Attempts** - the number of students currently taking the test that have not yet submitted it.
- **Completed Attempts** - the number of submitted tests.
- **Average Score** - scores denoted with an * indicate that some attempts are not graded and that the average score might change after all attempts are graded. The score displayed here is the average score reported for the test in the Grade Center.
- **Average Time** - the average completion time for all submitted attempts.
- **Discrimination** - this area shows the number of questions that fall into the **Good** (greater than 0.3), **Fair** (between 0.1 and 0.3) and **Poor** (less than 0.1) categories. A discrimination value is listed as **Cannot Calculate** when the question’s difficulty is 100% or when all students receive the same score on a question. Questions with discrimination values in the **Good** and **Fair** categories are better at differentiating between students with higher and lower levels of knowledge. Questions in the **Poor** category are recommended for review.
- **Difficulty** - this area shows the number of questions that fall into the **Easy** (greater than 80%), **Medium** (between 30% and 80%) and **Hard** (less than 30%) categories. Difficulty is the percentage of students who answered the question correctly. Questions in the **Easy** or **Hard** categories are recommended for review and are indicated with a red circle.

**Note**: Only graded attempts are used in item analysis calculations. If there are attempts in progress, those attempts are ignored until they are submitted and you run the item analysis report again.

### About the Question Statistics Table on the Item Analysis Page

The question statistics table provides item analysis statistics for each question in the test. Questions that are recommended for your review are indicated with red circles so that you can quickly scan for questions that might need revision.

In general, good questions have:

- **Medium** (30% to 80%) difficulty.
- **Good** or **Fair** (greater than 0.1) discrimination values.

Questions that are recommended for review are indicated with red circles. They may be of low quality or scored incorrectly. In general, questions recommended for review have:

- **Easy** (> 80%) or **Hard** (< 30%) difficulty.
- **Poor** (< 0.1) discrimination values.
Tests, Surveys, and Pools > Running Item Analysis on a Test

Filter the question table by question type, discrimination category, and difficulty category. Investigate a specific question by clicking its title and reviewing its Question Details page. Statistics for each question are displayed in the table, including:

- **Discrimination** - indicates how well a question differentiates between students who know the subject matter those who do not. A question is a good discriminator when students who answer the question correctly also do well on the test. Values can range from -1.0 to +1.0. Questions are flagged for review if their discrimination value is less than 0.1 or is negative. Discrimination values cannot be calculated when the question's difficulty score is 100% or when all students receive the same score on a question.

Discrimination values are calculated with the Pearson correlation coefficient. \( X \) represents the scores of each student on a question and \( Y \) represents the scores of each student on the assessment.

\[
r = \frac{1}{n - 1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( \frac{X_i - \bar{X}}{s_X} \right) \left( \frac{Y_i - \bar{Y}}{s_Y} \right)
\]

The following variables are the standard score, sample mean, and sample standard deviation, respectively:

\[
\frac{X_i - \bar{X}}{s_X}, \bar{X}, \text{ and } s_X
\]

- **Difficulty** - the percentage of students who answered the question correctly. Difficulty values can range from 0% to 100%, with a high percentage indicating that the question was easy. Questions in the Easy (greater than 80%) or Hard (less than 30%) categories are flagged for review.

Difficulty levels that are slightly higher than midway between chance and perfect scores do a better job differentiating students who know the tested material from those who do not. It is important to note that high difficulty values do not assure high levels of discrimination.
• **Graded Attempts** - number of question attempts where grading is complete. Higher numbers of graded attempt produce more reliable calculated statistics.

• **Average Score** - scores denoted with an * indicate that some attempts are not graded and that the average score might change after all attempts are graded. The score displayed here is the average score reported for the test in the Grade Center.

• **Standard Deviation** - measure of how far the scores deviate from the average score. If the scores are tightly grouped, with most of the values being close to the average, the standard deviation is small. If the data set is widely dispersed, with values far from the average, the standard deviation is larger.

• **Standard Error** - an estimate of the amount of variability in a student's score due to chance. The smaller the standard error of measurement, the more accurate the measurement provided by the test question.

How to View Question Details on a Single Question

You can investigate a question that is flagged for your review by accessing its **Question Details** page. This page displays student performance on the individual test question you selected.

1. On the **Item Analysis** page, scroll down to the question statistics table.
2. Select a linked question title to display the **Question Details** page.
Use the arrows to page through questions sequentially or to skip to the first or last question.

Click Edit Test to access the Test Canvas.

The summary table displays statistics for the question, including:

- **Discrimination** - indicates how well a question differentiates between students who know the subject matter those who do not. The discrimination score is listed along with its category: Poor (less than 0.1), Fair (0.1 to 0.3), and Good (greater than 0.3). A question is a good discriminator when students who answer the question correctly also do well on the test. Values can range from -1.0 to +1.0. Questions are flagged for review if their discrimination value is less than 0.1 or is negative. Discrimination values cannot be calculated when the question’s difficulty score is 100% or when all students receive the same score on a question.

Discrimination values are calculated with the Pearson correlation coefficient. X represents the scores of each student on a question and Y represents the scores of each student on the assessment.

\[
r = \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( \frac{X_i - \bar{X}}{s_X} \right) \left( \frac{Y_i - \bar{Y}}{s_Y} \right)
\]

The following variables are the standard score, sample mean, and sample standard deviation, respectively:

\[
\frac{X_i - \bar{X}}{s_X}, \bar{X}, \text{ and } s_X
\]

- **Difficulty** - the percentage of students who answered the question correctly. The difficulty percentage is listed along with its category: Easy (greater than 80%), Medium (30% to 80%), and Hard (less than 30%). Difficulty values can range from 0% to 100%, with a high percentage indicating that the question was easy. Questions in the easy or hard categories are flagged for review.

Difficulty levels that are slightly higher than midway between chance and perfect scores do a better job differentiating students who know the tested material from those who do not. It is important to note that high difficulty values do not assure high levels of discrimination.

- **Graded Attempts** - number of question attempts where grading is complete. Higher numbers of graded attempt produce more reliable calculated statistics.

- **Average Score** - scores denoted with an * indicate that some attempts are not graded and that the average score might change after all attempts are graded. The score displayed here is the average score reported for the test in the Grade Center.

- **Std Dev** - measure of how far the scores deviate from the average score. If the scores are tightly grouped, with most of the values being close to the average, the standard deviation is small. If the data set is widely dispersed, with values far from the average, the standard deviation is larger.

- **Std Error** - an estimate of the amount of variability in a student’s score due to chance. The smaller the standard error of measurement, the more accurate the measurement provided by the test question.

- **Skipped** - number of students who skipped this question.
The question text and answer choices are displayed. The information varies depending on the question type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information Provided</th>
<th>Question Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Number of students who selected each answer choice - and - distribution of those answers among the class quartiles. | Multiple Choice  
Multiple Answer  
True/False  
Either/Or  
Opinion Scale/Likert |
| Number of students who selected each answer choice. | Matching  
Ordering  
Fill in Multiple Blanks |
| Number of students who got the question correct, incorrect, or skipped it. | Calculated Formula  
Calculated Numeric  
Fill in the Blank  
Hot Spot  
Quiz Bowl |
| Question text only. | Essay  
File Response  
Short Answer  
Jumbled Sentence (also includes the answers students chose from) |

Answer Distributions

The distribution of answers among the class quartiles is included for Multiple Choice, Multiple Answer, True/False, Either/Or, and Opinion Scale/Likert question types. The distribution shows you the types of students who selected the correct or incorrect answers.

- **Top 25%**: Number of students with total test scores in the top quarter of the class who selected the answer option.
- **2nd 25%**: Number of students with total test scores in the second quarter of the class who selected the answer option.
- **3rd 25%**: Number of students with total test scores in the third quarter of the class who selected the answer option.
- **Bottom 25%**: Number of students with total test scores in the bottom quarter of the class who selected the answer option.

Symbol Legend

Symbols appear next to the questions to alert you to possible issues:

- Review recommended
- Questions might have changed after deployment
- Not all submissions have been graded
- (QS) Question Set
- (RB) Random Block
- **Review recommended**: This condition is triggered when discrimination values are less than 0.1 or when difficulty values are either greater than 80% (question was too easy) or less than 30% (question was too hard). Review the question to determine if it needs revision.

- **Question may have changed after deployment**: Indicates that a part of the question changed since the test was deployed. Changing any part of a question after the test has been deployed could mean that the data for that question might not be reliable. Attempts submitted after the question was changed may have benefited from the change. This indicator helps you interpret the data with this in mind.

  **Note**: This indicator is not displayed for restored courses.

- **Not all attempts have been graded**: Appears for a test containing questions that require manual grading, such as essay questions. In a test containing an essay question with 50 student attempts, this indicator shows until the instructor grades all 50 attempts. The Item Analysis tool uses only attempts that have been graded at the time you run the report.

- **(QS) and (RB)**: Indicate that a question came from a Question Set or Random Block. Due to random question delivery, it is possible that some questions get more attempts than others.

### About Item Analysis and Multiple Attempts, Question Overrides, and Question Edits

The item analysis tool handles multiple attempts, overrides, and other common scenarios in the following ways:

- When students are allowed to take a test multiple times, the last submitted attempt is used as the input for item analysis. For example, a test allows three attempts and Student A has completed two attempts with a third attempt in progress. Student A’s current attempt counts toward the number listed under **In Progress Attempts** and none of Student A’s previous attempts are included in the current item analysis data. As soon as Student A submits the third attempt, subsequent item analyses will include Student A’s third attempt.

- Grade Center overrides do not impact the item analysis data because the item analysis tool generates statistical data for questions based on completed student attempts.

- Manually graded questions or changes made to the question text, correct answer choice, partial credit, or points do not update automatically in the item analysis report. Run the analysis again to see if the changes affected the item analysis data.

### Examples

Item analysis can help you improve questions for future test administrations or fix misleading or ambiguous questions in a current test. Some examples are:

- You investigate a multiple choice question that was flagged for your review on the item analysis page. More Top 25% students choose answer B, even though A was the correct answer. You realize that the correct answer was miskeyed during question creation. You edit the test question and it is automatically regraded.

- In a multiple choice question, you find that nearly equal numbers of students chose A, B, and C. Examine the answer choices to determine if they were too ambiguous, if the question was too difficult, or if the material was not covered.

- A question is recommended for review because it falls into the hard difficulty category. You examine the question and determine that it is a hard question, but you keep it in the test because it is necessary to adequately test your course objectives.
Grade Center

About the Grade Center

The Grade Center in Blackboard Learn is more than just a way to record students' grades. It is a dynamic and interactive tool, allowing you to record data, calculate grades, and monitor student progress. You can generate reports to communicate information to parents, administrators, and other stakeholders. You can determine which assigned grades to show to your students on their My Grades pages, including columns displaying performance results.

In the Grade Center, you can provide and manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis, and for ungraded items, such as surveys or self tests. You can also create grade columns for any activities or requirements you want to grade, such as special projects, participation, or attendance.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

Note: If the Grade Center is not loading or you are receiving error messages, please contact your school's computing help desk. They can help you determine the cause of the issue, including making sure you are using a compatible browser for your school's version of Blackboard Learn and checking to see if Javascript is enabled.

The Grade Center Interface

The Grade Center resembles a spreadsheet. Each row is populated by a user in your course and each column includes information for an item, such as an assignment, test, graded blog entry, or survey. You can also use columns to calculate grades. You can provide grades and comments directly on the Grade Center page, on the Grade Details page, and from a tool, such as the Discussion Board.

You are able to customize your view of the Grade Center and create grading schemas, Grading Periods, categories, and columns to present and gather the information you need. To learn more, see Setting Up the Grade Center.
The Needs Grading Page

If you have a heavy grading load, the Needs Grading page can help you determine what needs attention first and allows you to access it quickly. You can view all items ready for grading or review on the Needs Grading page, where you can begin grading and reviewing or sort and filter columns to narrow the list. Attempts are placed in a queue for easy navigation among items. To learn more, see About the Needs Grading Page.

Grading Offline

You can download and work with Grade Center data outside of the system. Then, you can upload the edited data to the Grade Center. To learn more, see Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline.

Grade Center Interactions With Other Tools and Components

The Grade Center interacts with several tools and components in Blackboard Learn. Understanding how and where these interactions happen provides a comprehensive view of the Grade Center and helps users take full advantage of this tool.

The following table explains how the Grade Center interacts with other tools and components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool/Component</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Course Content       | When you create gradable items in your course, such as gradable journals, blogs, wikis, discussion posts, tests, and assignments, a grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center.  
                       | For example, when you create a journal, you can select the grading option. A grade column is created automatically in the Grade Center with the name of the journal. |
| **Early Warning System** | The Early Warning System is a rule-driven communication tool that can help you identify student performance problems or achievement. You create rules that are based on a test score, calculated column, due date, or course access. When criteria of the rule are met, a warning is generated, and you can send email messages to students and their observers.  
                       | For example, you create a rule to list students who score below 60 percent on an exam. Then, you send an email to each student to offer help or set a meeting time.  
                       | The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.  
                       | To learn more, see Early Warning System. |
| Observers            | Observers can log in and access their observed students' released grades. Examples of observers might include a student's parents or guardians, or a tutor.  
                       | The Blackboard administrator at your school controls observer access. If allowed school-wide, you can determine observer access on a course-by-course basis.  
                       | To learn more, see Allowing Guest and Observer Access. |
| **My Grades** tool   | Students view their course grades on their My Grades pages. Grades are available by default, but you may choose to make a grade or grades unavailable in the settings for each column.  
                       | To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns. |
### Accessing the Grade Center

You access the Grade Center from the Control Panel. Expand the Grade Center section to display the links to the Needs Grading page, the Full Grade Center, and the Smart Views. Click the right-pointing arrows next to the Grade Center heading to go directly to the Full Grade Center.

The Needs Grading link allows you to view individual assignment, group assignment, and test attempts, as well as blog and journal entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts ready for grading or review. To learn more, see [About the Needs Grading Page](#).

The Full Grade Center link displays all columns and rows in the Grade Center and is the default view of the Grade Center.

The Smart View links appear as an indented list under Full Grade Center. A Smart View is a focused look at the Grade Center and shows only the data that matches a set of criteria. You can use Smart Views to quickly find data when the Grade Center includes a great number of students and columns. For example, the default [Tests] Smart View displays only test columns. You can create customized Smart Views and remove unneeded Smart Views. Click a Smart View link to open the Grade Center using that view. To learn more, see [Using Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).
About the Needs Grading Page

You can view individual assignment, group assignment, and test attempts, as well as blog and journal entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts ready for grading or review on the Needs Grading page. For courses with many enrolled students and gradable items, you can use the information and functions on the Needs Grading page to determine and organize your grading tasks. If you have a designated turnaround time set for all gradable items, the Needs Grading page allows you to customize the view of items with a needs grading status. You can sort and filter the list, allowing you to grade the most urgent items first. For example, you can sort by due date to ensure your final tests are graded by your school's deadline.

**Note:** If the Blackboard administrator at your school has made the SafeAssign tool available, the Needs Grading page also displays attempts for SafeAssignments. To learn more, see SafeAssign.
The Needs Grading Page

Access the Needs Grading page in the Grade Center section of the Control Panel.

Click Grade All on the Action Bar to begin grading and reviewing immediately. The Grade All function places all attempts in a queue for easy navigation among items. The items in the queue appear in the order they appear on the Needs Grading page.

Note: Tests with a grading status of Attempt in Progress do not appear on the Needs Grading page.

Sort columns to organize your list. To sort a column, click the column heading or caret. The sorted list remains in effect until you change it or log out. The following columns appear on the Needs Grading page:

- Category: Sort attempts to group all assignments or tests together.
- Item Name: Sort attempts by alphabetical order or reverse alphabetical order.
- **User Attempt**: Sort attempts by a student's name. The number of attempts for the item is listed in parentheses. For example: "Mary Johnson (Attempt 1 of 2)." Click a user's name to go directly to the attempt.

- **Date Submitted**: Sort attempts by the date and time students submitted the attempts. You may find this useful when a large number of attempts must be graded by a specific deadline.

- **Due Date**: If you provided a due date when the item was created, sort attempts by due date and grade items that are due first.

Apply filters to narrow the list by **Category**, **Item**, **User**, and **Date Submitted**. If a filter is applied, only the filtered items appear in the list and in the queue. For example, make selections in both the **Category** and **User** drop-down lists to display tests submitted by a particular user. Click **Go** to display the filtered items on the **Needs Grading** page. The filtered list remains in effect until you edit the filter choices or log out. Click the **X** to collapse the **Filter** field.

The total number of items to grade appears above the list of items. Once attempts have been graded, they do not appear on the **Needs Grading** page and the number of items updates to reflect the current number that needs to be graded. If the list is filtered, the number reflects how many items match the current filter settings. For example, "12 of 17 total items match current filter."

Click an item's **Action Link** (.getLine) to access the contextual menu and make a selection. For assignments, you can select **Grade All Users** or **Grade Anonymously**. For tests, you can also select **Grade by Question** and **View Attempts**. Interactive items such as blogs, journals, wikis, and discussion posts, which can be set to go into Needs Grading status after a certain number of activities, also have the option to **Reset All**, which clears that activity counter and moves the item out of Needs Grading status. A total number of attempts for the selected item is listed in parentheses.

Click **Show All** to display up to 1,000 items on one page. Click **Edit Paging** to change the number of items to view per page.

**Next Steps**

To learn about grading tests and assignments accessed from the **Needs Grading** page, see **Grading Tests** and **Grading Assignments**.

**Exploring the Grade Center Interface**

The Grade Center consists of rows and columns of student information and gradable items. Cells in the grid contain data specific to corresponding students.

The appearance of the Grade Center is completely configurable. To learn more, see **Setting Up the Grade Center**.
The Grade Center Interface

**A** Action Bar: Rows preceding the grid information containing functions and drop-down lists specific to the current page, such as **Create Column**, **Manage**, **Filter**, **Email**, **Sort Columns By**, and **Order**.

**B** Grade Information Bar: Information about a selected column, such as type of grade and points possible. Point to a Grade Center column title and details appear in the area preceding the grid and following the Action Bar. In this same row, you can view when data was last saved.

**C** Grid/spreadsheet: Columns, rows, and cells that make up the current view of the Grade Center data.

**D** Scroll bars: The horizontal and vertical scroll bars are used to navigate through the Grade Center columns and rows. When you navigate to another course area and return to the Grade Center, you will see the same rows and columns on the page from the last visit. The view remains in effect until you use the scroll bars again or log out.

**E** Icon Legend: Explanation of the symbols used in the columns and cells.

**F** Edit Rows Displayed: The number of rows appearing in the grid can be changed. In the box, type a number between 5 and 50, and click **Go**.

**About the Grade Center Action Bar**

You can perform many actions in the Grade Center using the functions appearing in two rows on the Action Bar.
The following functions appear in the first row of the Action Bar.

- **Create Column**: Click to create a grade column. To learn more, see [Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns](#).

- **Create Calculated Column**: Access a drop-down list with options for creating calculated columns. To learn more about the types of calculated columns, see [About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center](#).

- **Manage**: Access the drop-down list with options for managing the Grade Center. The options include:
  
  - **Grading Periods**: A set of Grade Center columns that have been grouped based on a shared characteristic, such as a period of time. To learn more, see [How to Create and Manage Grading Periods](#).
  
  - **Grading Schemas**: A grading schema takes the actual points scored on a graded item and compares it to the total points possible for that item to derive a percentage. This percentage is mapped to a range of scores for grade displays, such as A, B, and C or Pass/Fail. To learn more, see [About Grading Schemas in the Grade Center](#).
  
  - **Grading Color Codes**: User-defined rules to apply color to the cells in the Grade Center grid, either by grade or status. Color coding the Grade Center provides visual indicators to help you interpret information quickly. To learn more, see [How to Color Code the Grade Center](#).
  
  - **Categories**: Classifications of columns containing similar items, such as "Tests" or "Assignments," used to organize and view Grade Center data. To learn more, see [About Categories in the Grade Center](#).
  
  - **Smart Views**: Custom made views of Grade Center data created by instructors and saved for continued use. To learn more, see [Using Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).
  
  - **Column Organization**: Table view of the Grade Center with functions to change the order and visibility of columns. From this page, you can also assign columns to Grading Periods and categories. Changes made on this page are for your view of the Grade Center only and does not change which columns appear to students on their My Grades pages. To learn more, see [About Organizing the Grade Center Data](#).
  
  - **Row Visibility**: You can hide user rows to reduce the number of rows in the Grade Center grid and help you focus on specific data. To learn more, see [How to Hide and Show Users in the Grade Center](#).
  
  - **Send Email**: The Send Email page appears.

- **Reports**: Create reports from Grade Center data and access the grade history for all students. To learn more, see [Working with Grade Center Reports](#).

- **Filter**: To narrow your view of the Grade Center data, click **Filter** to expand the field and select an option from the following drop-down lists:
  
  - **Current View**: Includes the Full Grade Center view, Smart Views, and Grading Periods. You can select one of the views to use as the default view by clicking **Set Current View as Default** (enter) next to the Current View drop-down list. When you log out
and return to your course later, the view you selected as the default appears in the grid. You can select other views from the **Current View** drop-down list at any time.

- **Category**: Includes all default categories and any you have created.
- **Status**: Includes the following grading statuses:
  - All Statuses
  - Completed
  - Edited Manually
  - Exempt
  - In progress
  - Needs Grading
  - Not attempted

In some instances, you can make another selection in an additional drop-down list to further narrow the columns and users that appear in the grid. For example, after selecting the **Assignment** category, you can select the **Needs Grading** status and only view the columns and users containing assignments that need to be graded. The category or status you choose to view in the grid remains in effect until you change it or log out.

Click the X to close the Filter field.

![Grade Center: Full Grade Center](image)

- **Work Offline**: Access features that allow you to work with Grade Center data outside of Blackboard Learn. To learn more, see [Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline](#).

The following functions appear in the **second row** of the Action Bar.

- **Move to Top**: Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click **Move to Top** to move the rows to the first positions in the grid.
- **Email**: Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click **Email** to display the options of sending to users, observers, or users and observers. After selecting an option, the **Send Email** page appears.
- **Sort Columns By**: Access a drop-down list that allows you to sort the Grade Center items. You can sort by:
  - Layout Position (default)
  - Categories
  - Due Date
- **Date Created**
- **Points Possible**
- **Display Name**

- **Order**: Sort the data in **Ascending** or **Descending** order.

*Note*: The view remains in effect until you sort columns again or log out.

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**Accessing Grade Center Menus Using Action Links**

Throughout Blackboard Learn, items that are acted upon by users have contextual menus associated with them. A contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that item. To access a contextual menu, you must click the Action Link (⿉) appearing with an item’s title. The Action Link icon consists of two downward pointing arrows.

In the Grade Center, all cells and column headers have an Action Link. For example, a contextual menu for a test column includes options for **Column Statistics** and **Grade Questions**. For a non-grade column, such as **First Name**, you only have the options of hiding the column and sorting the cells. If an option does not appear in the contextual menu, you cannot perform the action on that column, row, or cell.
Contextual Menu Options for Columns

Each column's contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that column. The following options may be available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quick Column Information</td>
<td>Displays information about the column in a pop-up window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View and Add Rubrics</td>
<td>Displays the available rubrics that provide guidelines for grading this item. To learn more, see <a href="#">Rubrics</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Attempts</td>
<td>Provide a grade for an attempt made for this item. To learn more, see <a href="#">Entering Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Anonymously</td>
<td>Provide grades for this item without knowing the identity of each user. To learn more, see <a href="#">Entering Grades</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts Statistics</td>
<td>Displays the <a href="#">Statistics</a> page for tests and surveys. Each question for a test or survey appears, along with its score information for tests or percent answered for surveys. On the <a href="#">Survey Statistics</a> page, you can view the survey results. The percentage of students who selected each answer appears. You cannot view individual results for surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download Results</td>
<td>Allows you to download Grade Center data for this column as a delimited file that is used in other applications, such as spreadsheet programs or statistical analysis programs. To learn more, see Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View All Attempts</td>
<td>Displays the View All Attempts page for tests. From this page, you can grade the attempts, grade them anonymously, or grade by question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Questions</td>
<td>Provide grades for all of the responses for a specific question at one time. To learn more, see Entering Grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment File Download</td>
<td>Allows you to select and download files students have attached to their assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment File Cleanup</td>
<td>Allows you to select and delete the files attached to an assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit Column Information</td>
<td>Displays the Edit Column page for this column. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Statistics</td>
<td>Displays the Column Statistics page for this column. The following appears: Column details, status distribution, grade distribution, and basic statistics, such as range, average, median, and variance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set as External Grade</td>
<td>The results in the External Grade column are shared with your school as your students’ grades for your course. You decide which column is set as the external grade. In new courses, the default Total column is the default external grade column, and the external grade icon ( ) appears in the column header. To learn more, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show/Hide to Users</td>
<td>Show or hide this column from users. If you hide the column, the column remains in the Grade Center grid, but your students will not see it on the My Grades pages. In the grid, the Column Not Visible to Users icon ( ) appears in the column header for any column hidden from students. To learn more, see How to Hide and Show Users in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Attempts for All Users</td>
<td>Displays a separate window for clearing attempts for all users. You can clear attempts based on criteria or a date range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sort Ascending</td>
<td>Display the items in the column in an ascending order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sort Descending</td>
<td>Display the items in the column in a descending order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide Column</td>
<td>Hides the column from view in the Grade Center. To show the column, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list and select Column Organization. To learn more, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contextual Menu Options for Cells**

To see the Action Link for a cell in the Grade Center grid, move your mouse pointer over the cell. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
When you access the contextual menu for a user's name cell, you have options to hide a user's row, hide other rows to focus your attention on one row, or email a user. You can view which items are visible to a user based on availability and Adaptive Release rules or which items a user marked reviewed. You can also view the User Statistics page which provides statistical information related to a user's performance.

How to Make the Grade Center Accessible

To make the Grade Center accessible to as many people as possible, the Grade Center has two different modes, Interactive and Screen Reader.

- **Interactive Mode**: Grade Center default setting. You can freeze columns and type grades directly in the cells—called inline editing.

- **Screen Reader Mode**: Grade Center data appears in a simplified grid. The table is static and you type grades on the Grade Details page accessed from the cell’s contextual menu. You cannot freeze columns or edit inline, making it easier to navigate by keystroke and accommodate screen readers. When the Grade Center is first accessed by users with screen readers, users are immediately given a choice whether to use this non-interactive view before progressing any further.

In both modes, you can do the following:
- Move the mouse pointer from column to column using the tab key.
- Navigate the cells using the up, down, left, and right arrow keys on a standard keyboard.

Use the following steps to change to **Screen Reader Mode**.

1. Access the Grade Center.
2. Click the Action Link (מ) for the Grade Center heading to access the contextual menu.
3. Click **Turn Screen Reader Mode on**.

This setting is not saved across sessions. It lasts only as long as the current session. Once you log out, the view defaults back to **Interactive Mode**.

**Related Tutorials**

- Customizing the Grade Center View (Flash movie | 1m 39s)
- Viewing Grade Details (Flash movie | 2m 9s)

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**Setting Up the Grade Center**

You already know you invest a great deal of time planning and creating lessons, matching lessons with learning objectives, and then assessing whether those objectives have been met. Assessing learning objectives is accomplished in many different ways—through exams, projects, papers, group work, participation, and more. Assigning value to student work and configuring a grading schema to display grades to students is unique for every instructor and for every course.

**Customizing the Grade Center**

All Grade Center functions are initiated on the **Grade Center** page. This view is customizable, allowing you to sort items in ways to maximize efficiency and to view student information with a minimum of scrolling. You can also create rules to apply color to the cells in the Grade Center grid, either by grade or status. Color rules provide visual indicators to help you interpret information quickly.

You can customize your view using Grading Periods, creating additional categories and moving columns to them, and showing or hiding columns in the Grade Center to reduce scrolling. You also can customize a grading schema to interpret Grade Center scores.

By default, the columns for students’ first and last names appear first. Columns for gradable items and calculations of those items appear across the page. You decide which columns appear and in what order. Icons appear in cells and headings to signify the availability of students, the visibility of items to students, and the status of gradable items.

The Grade Center is populated with students when they are enrolled in your course or section. To learn more, see **Enrolling and Managing Users**.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.
About Grading Schemas in the Grade Center

In the Grade Center, when an item is graded, a numeric score appears in the students’ cells by default. You can choose to display grades in other ways by using grading schemas. A grading schema takes the actual points scored on a graded item and compares it to the total points possible for that item to derive a percentage. This percentage is mapped to a range of scores and displays a grade, such as a letter (A, B, C) or Pass/Fail. This information is presented in a table format.

The Grade Center includes a copy of a default grading schema based on assigning letters to the percentages. The Blackboard administrator at your school may edit this schema to reflect a general grading schema used at your school.

You can associate the default grading schema with an individual column or multiple columns in the Grade Center. When items are graded, the grade values (letters) appear in the cells in the Grade Center grid and to students on their My Grades pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades Scored Between</th>
<th>Will Equal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97 % and 100%</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 % and Less Than 97%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 % and Less Than 94%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 % and Less Than 90%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84 % and Less Than 87%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 % and Less Than 84%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 % and Less Than 80%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can edit an existing grading schema and save the changes within your course. For example, you can lower the percentages needed to achieve an A, B, C, and so on. You can also create additional schemas to reflect the multiple ways you want to grade throughout your course. New schemas and any edits to existing schemas only appear in the course you are in. You can create as many schemas as needed.

**Note:** If the Blackboard administrator at your school makes changes after you have edited the default grading schema, your administrator’s changes will not be reflected in your course.

Upon creation, a grading schema is included as an option in the Primary and Secondary Display drop-down lists when creating and editing columns in the Grade Center. Default grading schemas in the drop-down lists include: Score, Letter (A, B, C), and Percentage. To learn more about the default grading schemas, see How to Associate Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.

**Example: Letter Grading Schema**

For a quiz, a student’s raw numeric score is 88 out of 100 points possible. In a grading schema in which a percentage of 87 to less than 90 equals a B+, a student’s score of 88 results in a B+. In the quiz’s Grade Center column, a B+ is displayed. If you release the column’s grades to students, letter grades appear on their My Grades pages.

**Example: Text Grading Schema**

For a quiz, a student’s raw numeric score is 78 out of 100 points possible. You create a grading schema based on text terms, such as Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor. A student’s score of 78 results in Good.
the quiz’s Grade Center column, the term Good appears. If you release the column’s grades to students, the text terms appear on their My Grades pages.

Example: Test Curve Grading Schema

You have created a test grading schema and have associated it with all test columns. In the test grading schema, you require at least 94% for an A. However, for one particular test, you want to make an adjustment because of low scores. You can associate another custom grading schema with that test’s column to reflect a curve you want to apply to those lower scores. In this test curve schema, an A can equal grades scored between 90% and 100%. You can create as many test curve schemas as needed to fulfill your grading requirements and associate them with the appropriate columns in the Grade Center.

How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center

Each new course has a default letter grading schema. You can create additional grading schemas to reflect the multiple ways you want to grade throughout your course. You can create as many schemas as needed. Any schemas you create in your course can only be used in the course you create them in.

Example:

For group projects, you can create a grading schema that differs from the grading schema for assignments submitted by individuals. You can use lower percentages for the same letter grade as other assignments.

Use the following steps to create a customized grading schema in your course.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Grading Schemas.
4. On the Create Grading Schema page, type a Name. The name appears on the Grading Schemas page and in the drop-down lists for Primary Display and Secondary Display when creating or editing columns in the Grade Center.
5. Optionally, provide a **Description**. The description appears on the **Grading Schema** page and can assist with identifying the schema.

6. In the **Schema Mapping** section, two default rows appear with ranges of percentages. You can edit the two ranges to customize a Pass/Fail schema.

**Example: Pass/Fail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades Scored Between</th>
<th>Will Equal</th>
<th>Grades Manually Entered as</th>
<th>Will Calculate as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50% and 100%</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% and less than 50%</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To create other types of grading schemas:

- Click **Insert New Row Here**—represented by a left-pointing arrow—to insert more rows for additional values. For example, if you are using A, B, C, D, and F for your grades, you need five rows in the table.
- Click **Delete Row** to remove a row from the table. At least one row must remain.
- In the **Grades Scored Between** boxes, type percentage ranges for the grade values. The percentage range for each grade value must be unique and begin with the lesser value listed first. Also, the values must overlap to avoid gaps that occur when a score falls between two numbers in a range. The range of 80 – 90% includes all grades up to, but not including 90%. The top range does include 100%.

**Note:** You cannot use the dash symbol as an entry. The dash represents a null value.

**Example:**

- A = 90 – 100%
- B = 80 – 90%
- C = 70 – 80%
- D = 60 – 70%
- F = 0 – 60%

- In the **Will Equal** boxes, type the grade values, such as:
  - A, B, C, D, and F
  - 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
  - Pass and Fail
  - Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory
  - Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor

**Note:** Duplicate grade values are not allowed.

- In the **Will Calculate as** boxes, type the percentage values to use if you provide a grade manually. The percentages must fall between the corresponding range of percentages in the first column. For example, grades you score manually as **A** (90 – 100%) will be calculated as 95%. For an item with 100 points possible, if you change the grading schema from letter grades to numeric scores, 95 is displayed as the grade in the cell instead of A.
7. Click Submit.

![Create Grading Schema](image)

**Result**

You can associate the new grading schema with an individual column or multiple columns in the Grade Center. To learn more, see How to Associate Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.

**How to Edit Grading Schemas in the Grade Center**

You can edit existing grading schemas in your course. The Grade Center includes a copy of a default grading schema based on assigning letters to percentages. The Blackboard administrator at your school may edit this schema to reflect a general grading schema used at your school. If you choose to display students’ scores as letter grades, you can edit the default letter schema. The edits you make to a grading schema only appear in the course you make the edits in.

**Note:** If the Blackboard administrator at your school makes changes after you have edited the default grading schema, your administrator’s changes will not be reflected in your course.

If you want to retain the default grading schema, you can copy it and edit the values. To learn more, see How to Copy or Delete Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.

Use the following steps to edit a grading schema in your course.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Grading Schemas.
3. On the Grading Schemas page, click a schema’s Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Edit**.

5. On the **Edit Grading Schema** page, type a new **Name** and optional **Description**. The name appears on the **Grading Schemas** page and in the drop-down lists for **Primary Display** and **Secondary Display** when creating and editing columns in the Grade Center. The description appears on the **Grading Schema** page and can assist with identifying the grading schema.

6. In the **Schema Mapping** section:
   - **Tip:** Start from the top and edit the values for the first grade value and move to the next row. Then, delete or insert rows needed. If you navigate to another course area without saving a grading schema, any unsaved changes are lost.
   - Click **Insert New Row Here**—represented by a left-pointing arrow—to insert more rows for additional values.
   - Click **Delete Row** to remove a row from the table. At least one row must remain.
   - In the **Grades Scored Between** boxes, type the new percentage ranges for the grade values. The percentage range for each grade value must be unique and begin with the lesser value listed first. Also, the values must overlap to avoid gaps that occur when a
score falls between two numbers in a range. The range of 80 – 90% includes all grades up
to, but not including 90%. The top range does include 100%.

**Note:** You cannot use the dash symbol as an entry. The dash represents a null value.

- In the **Will Equal** boxes, type the new grade values.

  **Note:** Duplicate grade values are not allowed.

- In the **Will Calculate as** boxes, type the new percentage values to use if you provide a
  grade manually. The percentages must fall between the corresponding range of
  percentages in the first column. For example, grades you score manually as A (90 –
  100%) will be calculated as 95%. For an item with 100 points possible, if you change the
  grading schema from letter grades to numeric scores, 95 is displayed as the grade in the
  cell instead of A.

7. Click **Submit**.

---

**Result**

You can associate the edited grading schema with an individual column or multiple columns in the Grade
Center. To learn more, see **How to Associate Grading Schemas in the Grade Center**.

If you have associated a grading schema with columns in the Grade Center and edit the schema, the changes
appear automatically in the Grade Center. For example, you can edit a text grading schema and change
**Excellent** to **Superior**. In the Grade Center column, any instances of **Excellent** now appear as **Superior**.

**How to Copy or Delete Grading Schemas in the Grade Center**

You can copy or delete existing grading schemas in the Grade Center. For example, if you want to make minor
changes to the default letter grading schema, you can retain it by copying it and editing it. To learn more, see
**How to Edit Grading Schemas in the Grade Center**.
How to Copy Grading Schemas

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Grading Schemas**.
3. On the **Grading Schemas** page, click a schema’s Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu.
4. Select **Copy**.
5. The copied schema appears in the list with a number appended to the name, such as **Letter (2)**.

How to Delete Grading Schemas

**Note:** You can delete the default letter grading schema only if it is not currently associated with a Grade Center column. If no letter grading schema exists, **Letter** will not be an option in the **Primary** or **Secondary Display** drop-down lists when associating schemas to columns.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Grading Schemas**.
3. On the **Grading Schemas** page, select one or multiple schemas’ check boxes.
Note: If no check box exists for a schema, you have associated it with a Grade Center column.

4. On the Action Bar, click Delete. Alternatively, select Delete from a schema’s contextual menu.
5. A warning appears stating: This action is final and cannot be undone. Click OK to delete the schema.

How to Associate Grading Schemas in the Grade Center

When creating or editing grade columns, you select a grading schema in the Primary and Secondary Display drop-down lists. The schema you select as the Primary Display displays the grade value in the Grade Center and to students on their My Grades pages. The Secondary Display grade value appears in parentheses only in the Grade Center, next to the Primary Display. The secondary grade value does not appear to students.

1. Access the Grade Center.
2. To associate a schema, click the Action Link (✓) in the column header to access the contextual menu.
3. Select **Edit Column Information**.

4. On the **Edit Column** page, make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. If you create a customized grading schema, it appears in the list. Five default options appear:

   - **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
   - **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
   - **Text**: Text appears in the column when a text grading schema is created. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor – OR – Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If no text grading schema is created, and the **Text** option is selected, you are allowed to type text in the column’s cells. If you choose to share the column results with students on their **My Grades** pages, they will see the text values for their grades.
     
     **Note**: When you convert a numeric score to text without defining a text grading schema, and then return to numeric scoring, values that cannot be converted display a zero after conversion. Therefore, if you want to include text as grades, Blackboard recommends creating a text grading schema and associating it with the appropriate columns.

   - **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70%.
   - **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔️) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

     **Note**: If you use this grading schema for an assessment column, when a student starts an assessment, a check mark appears in the column with the **Attempt in Progress** icon ( 

The Attempt in Progress icon is removed when a student submits the assessment.

### Edit Column

**Indicates a required field.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Column Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Center Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Display</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Group Project Letter Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Optionally, make a selection in the Secondary Display drop-down list. The default setting is None. The same options appear in this list with the exception of the option chosen as the Primary Display and Text. The default Text option does not appear for grade columns as you cannot edit a secondary value from a grade column’s cell. If you create a customized grading schema based on text and have not used it as the Primary Display, it appears in the list. In the Grade Center column, the secondary grade value appears in parentheses. The secondary grade value does not appear to students.

**Note:** For self-assessments, you cannot define a Secondary Display because the Primary Display is Complete/Incomplete.
6. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

In the Grade Center grid, you see the chosen grade displays. If you do not choose a grade display for a column, only the default score appears.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 2 Quiz</th>
<th>Group Project</th>
<th>Unit 3 Quiz</th>
<th>Survey: What do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>A- (93.33%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>A- (93.33%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>A- (93.33%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**About Categories in the Grade Center**

In the Grade Center, you can use categories to group related columns together and organize the data.

With categories, you can:

- Filter your view of the Grade Center. For example, you can filter using the Assignment category and view only assignment columns in the Grade Center grid. To learn more about filtering, see [About the Grade Center Action Bar](#).
• Calculate grades. For example, you can assign a weight to a category when calculating final grades using a Weighted column. To learn more, see About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center.

• Create a Smart View. Smart Views are views of the Grade Center based on a variety of student criteria. For example, you can generate a Smart View that only displays columns associated with the test category. To learn more about Smart Views, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.

• Create a report. You can create a printable report that displays statistics of performance for all of the columns in a certain category. To learn more, see Working with Grade Center Reports.

By default, the following categories are created in the Grade Center:

• Assignment
• Blog
• Discussion Board
• Journal
• SafeAssignment (when the tool is available and a SafeAssignment has been created)
• Self and Peer Assessment
• Survey
• Test
• Wiki (when the tool is available and a wiki has been created)

When you create a gradable item from the preceding list, a grade column is created automatically for the item in the Grade Center and the column is associated automatically to the appropriate category.

**Example:**

You create a gradable discussion forum titled “Week 1 Discussion.” A grade column with that name is included in the Grade Center and the column is associated automatically to the Discussion category.

You cannot edit the name and description or delete seven of the default categories, but you can move a column from one category to another category. When they appear, you are allowed to edit the name and the description of the SafeAssignment and Wiki categories, but you cannot delete them. You can also create an unlimited number of categories to organize grades. You manually associate columns to categories on the Column Organization page or by editing an individual column's settings. To learn more, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data and How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

**How to Create and Manage Categories in the Grade Center**

You can create as many categories as needed to organize your Grade Center data. The Categories page in the Grade Center displays the default categories and any you create. Each category’s row displays an optional description and the grade columns associated with that particular category.
### Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Assign: Moon Viewing on Monday Nights, Assign: Photo Instructions, Planet Paper, Group Outline, Group Plan, Assign: Extra Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Unit 3 Opinions, Disc: Unit 2: Astrophotography/Imaging, Disc: Pluto Opinion: Before, Disc: Discovery of Trans-Neptunian Object, Disc: 17-Jupiter mass object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Journal: Space Exploration, Group Journal: Most Unexpected Fact?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self and Peer</td>
<td>Current News Self and Peer Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Survey: What do you know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Practice Quiz, Unit 1 Quiz, Unit 2 Quiz, Unit 3 Quiz, Unit 4 Quiz, Unit 5 Quiz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip:** When you create a grade column, you can associate it with a category. To learn more, see [Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns](#). If you do not, it defaults to No Category. You can also create custom categories before manually creating grade columns. Then, when you create a grade column, you can select the appropriate custom category. For example, you can create a Group category and associate the group participation and attendance grade columns to it.

Once you have created a new category, you can do the following:

- Associate new columns to the category when creating the columns.
- Move existing columns to the category.

Use the following steps to create a category.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Categories**.
3. On the **Categories** page, click **Create Category** on the Action Bar.
4. On the Create Category page, type the category Name and an optional Description. The description can help differentiate categories and explain a category’s purpose.

5. Click Submit.

Result

In the Grade Center, the new category appears in the list on the Categories page.

Sorting, Editing, and Deleting Categories

On the Categories page, you can sort the list, and edit and delete categories you created. You cannot edit the name and description or delete seven of the default categories. When they appear, you are allowed to edit the
name and the description of the SafeAssignment and Wiki categories, but you cannot delete them.

To sort the Title column, click the column heading or caret. If many categories exist, click Show All to display all categories on one page. Click Edit Paging to change the number of items to view per page.

To edit or delete a category you created, click its Action Link ( ) to access the contextual menu and select Edit or Delete. Alternatively, select one or multiple check boxes or select the check box in the header row and click Delete on the Action Bar. You cannot delete a category that has columns associated with it.

How to View a Category and Associate Grade Center Columns

In the Grade Center, you can view the columns associated with a category in two ways. You can filter the view of the Grade Center and select a category, or you can view all categories and associated columns on the Column Organization page. If columns were not associated with a category when created, you can manually associate columns on the Column Organization page or when editing a column’s settings. For example, you can create a category for a group project and associate the columns that pertain.
How to Use the Filter Function

1. In the Grade Center, click Filter on the Action Bar to expand the Filter field.
2. In the Category drop-down list, select a category. The columns associated with the category appear in the grid. The view remains in the Grade Center until you change it or close your browser.
3. Click the X to collapse the Filter field.

How to Use the Column Organization Page

On the Column Organization page, you can:

- Move one or more columns to a category, a different category, or no category.
- Show and hide columns in the Grade Center grid.
- Change the order of Grading Period tables and columns.

To learn more, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

Use the following steps to view and associate columns with your categories.
1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Column Organization**.

3. On the **Column Organization** page, view each column’s association in the **Category** column. To sort a column, click the column’s Action Link (✓) and set an ascending or descending order.

4. To move a column to a category, a different category, or no category, select its check box. For example, you can move a column from the Discussions category to a category named Extra Credit. Select multiple check boxes to move multiple columns to a category in one action.

5. On the Action Bar, point to the **Change Category to…** drop-down list and make a selection.

6. Click **Submit**. If you try to navigate away from this page without clicking **Submit**, a pop-up window warns you to save the changes.
Setting Up the Grade Center

Result

After submitting, the column is associated with the new category or no category, and the change appears in the Category column.

**IMPORTANT!** Changes you make on this page do **not** affect what students see on their My Grades pages. For example, if you choose to hide a column using the Show/Hide drop-down list on the Action Bar, the column is only hidden from your view in the Grade Center grid. You must edit an existing column’s settings to hide a column from students on their My Grades pages or select Show/Hide to Users in a column’s contextual menu. In the Grade Center grid, the Column Not Visible to Users icon (🗑️) appears in the column header for any column hidden from students. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

How to Associate Columns Manually

You can also associate a column with a category, a different category, or no category by editing the column’s settings from the Grade Center grid.
1. In the Grade Center, click the Action Link in the column header.
2. Select *Edit Column Information*.

3. On the *Edit Column* page, make a selection from the *Category* drop-down list in the *Column Information* section.

4. Click *Submit*.

**Result**

After submitting, the column is associated with the new category or no category, and the change appears in the *Category* column on the *Column Organization* page.

**How to Create and Manage Grading Periods**

Grading Periods are user-created segments that help you manage the Grade Center. Defining Grading Periods and associating Grade Center columns with them allows you to effectively organize and report on Grade Center data. You can filter the Grade Center by Grading Periods to display only the columns in the segment. For
example, you can configure the Grade Center to display only the first quarter’s columns, reducing searching and scrolling.

You can create Grading Periods to group Grade Center columns together by a period of time, such as terms, semesters, or quarters. You can also create Grading Periods to group columns together by a shared characteristic, such as all the gradable columns for a group project or a research paper. When creating Grading Periods based on a date range, you can select a setting to automatically associate all existing columns with due dates that occur in the date range. You can also manually associate one or multiple columns to a Grading Period.

By default, the Grade Center has no Grading Periods established. You can associate any column with a Grading Period except user columns. You cannot associate a column with more than one Grading Period simultaneously.

You can use Grading Periods to:

- Filter your view of the Grade Center. For example, you can filter using the first quarter Grading Period and view only the pertaining columns in the Grade Center grid. To learn more about filtering, see About the Grade Center Action Bar.
- Calculate grades. For example, you can create a Total column that calculates a grade for the columns in the first quarter. To learn more, see About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center.
- Create a report. You can create a report that displays statistics of performance for all of the columns in a Grading Period. To learn more, see Working with Grade Center Reports.

You can create an unlimited number of Grading Periods to organize your columns. Once you have created a Grading Period, you can do the following:

- Associate a new column with a Grading Period during or after column creation, if at least one Grading Period exists.
- Associate existing columns with due dates that occur in a date range with a new Grading Period.

Use the following steps to create a Grading Period.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Grading Periods.
3. On the **Grading Periods** page, click **Create Grading Period** on the Action Bar.

4. On the **Create Grading Period** page, type a **Name**.

5. Optionally, provide a **Description**. The description can assist with identifying the Grading Period.

6. Select the **Grading Period Dates**.
   - Select **None** to manually associate columns with the Grading Period. For example, you can create a Grading Period named "Group Project." Later, you can manually associate the columns for the project. To learn more, see *About Organizing the Grade Center Data*.
   - Select **Range** and type a date range that is used to associate columns that **have a due date** within that range. Alternatively, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** to select dates. Each Grading Period must have unique dates.

   **Note:** This only applies to **existing** columns that you have assigned due dates to. New columns must be associated with the Grading Period during or after column creation, if at least one Grading Period exists.

7. Optionally, select the check box for **Associate Columns** to associate all existing columns **with a due date** within the assigned date range.
8. Click Submit.

**IMPORTANT!** You cannot associate Grade Center columns with more than one Grading Period. A newly created Grading Period with the same or overlapping date range will override the settings of an existing Grading Period. All columns associated with the existing Grading Period will become associated with the new one.

**Result**

Grading Periods appear in the list on the **Grading Periods** page and on the **Column Organization** page. If you chose to automatically associate columns with due dates with the Grading Period, the columns appear in the Grading Period table on the **Column Organization** page.
Sorting, Editing, and Deleting Grading Periods

On the Grading Periods page, you can sort, edit, and delete Grading Periods. To sort the Title column, click the column heading or caret. If many Grading Periods exist, click Show All to display all on one page. Click Edit Paging to change the number of items to view per page.

To edit or delete a Grading Period, click its Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu and select Edit or Delete. Alternatively, select one or multiple check boxes or select the check box in the header row and click Delete on the Action Bar. All Grade Center columns associated with a deleted Grading Period are reset and will not be associated with a Grading Period.

If you change the date range for a Grading Period and select the Associate Columns check box, all of the existing columns with due dates that match the new date range will be associated with the Grading Period.
How to View a Grading Period and Associate Grade Center Columns

In the Grade Center, you can view the columns associated with a Grading Period in two ways. You can filter the view of the Grade Center and select a Grading Period, or you can view all Grading Periods and associated columns on the Column Organization page. If columns were not associated automatically with a Grading Period based on due dates, you can manually associate columns on the Column Organization page or when editing a column’s settings. For example, you can create a Grading Period for a group project and associate the columns that pertain.

How to Use the Filter Function

1. In the Grade Center, click Filter on the Action Bar to expand the Filter field.
2. In the Current View drop-down list, select a Grading Period. The columns associated with the Grading Period appear in the grid.
3. Optionally, click Set Current View as Default to lock the view. In the grid, you will see the Grading Period’s columns each time you access the Grade Center. You can change the default view as often as you want. For example, when the second quarter begins, change the default view from the first quarter Grading Period to the second quarter Grading Period.
4. Click the X to collapse the Filter field.

How to Use the Column Organization Page

On the Column Organization page, you can:

- Move one or more columns to a Grading Period, a different Grading Period, or no Grading Period.
- Show and hide columns in the Grade Center grid.
- Change the order of Grading Period tables and columns.

To learn more, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

Use the following steps to view and associate columns with your Grading Periods.
1. On the Action Bar, point to **Manage** to access the drop-down list.

2. Select **Column Organization**.

3. On the **Column Organization** page, any Grading Periods you created and their associated columns appear in the corresponding table, such as Quarter 3. To sort a column, click the column’s Action Link (✓) and set an ascending or descending order.

   **Note:** If no Grading Periods exist, columns not associated with a Grading Period appear in the **Not in a Grading Period** table. If Grading Periods exist, the last table is named **Shown in Selected Views Only** and columns not associated with a Grading Period appear in the list.

4. To move a column to a Grading Period, a different Grading Period, or no Grading Period, select its check box. Select multiple check boxes to move multiple columns to a Grading Period in one action.

5. On the Action Bar, point to the **Change Grading Period to...** drop-down list and make a selection.

6. Click **Submit**. If you try to navigate away from this page without clicking **Submit**, a pop-up window warns you to save the changes.
Setting Up the Grade Center

Result

After submitting, the column is associated with the new Grading Period or no Grading Period and appears in the appropriate table.

**IMPORTANT!** Changes you make on this page do not affect what students see on their My Grades pages. For example, if you choose to hide a column using the Show/Hide drop-down list on the Action Bar, the column is only hidden from your view in the Grade Center grid. You must edit an existing column’s settings to hide a column from students on their My Grades pages or select Show/Hide to Users in a column’s contextual menu. In the Grade Center grid, the Column Not Visible to Users icon ((tderral) appears in the column header for any column hidden from students. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.
How to Associate Columns Manually

You can also associate a column with a Grading Period, a different Grading Period, or no Grading Period by editing the column's settings from the Grade Center grid.

1. In the Grade Center, click the Action Link in the column header.
2. Select Edit Column Information.

3. On the Edit Column page, make a selection in the Grading Period drop-down list in the Dates section.

4. Click Submit.

Result

After submitting, the Grading Period appears in the appropriate table on the Column Organization page.

Grading Periods and Grade Calculations

When creating calculated columns, you can use Grading Periods to display a variety of calculations, such as the average grade for a time period or the total points earned on a project consisting of several grades.

Before You Begin

Ensure the columns needed for grade calculations are included in the appropriate Grading Periods.
Example: Create an average column for a Grading Period
To calculate an average grade for all columns in the first quarter Grading Period, you create an average grade column named “Quarter 1 Average.” Columns associated with the Grading Period are included automatically in the average calculation.

Example: Calculate a grade based on all columns in a Grading Period
For the first quarter Grading Period, you create a calculated column named “Quarter 1 Total” using a total points calculation that includes all the grade columns for the first quarter. This column calculates a grade based on the relationship between the first quarter’s total points possible and each student’s points earned.

Example: Calculate a grade based on select columns in a Grading Period
For the first quarter Grading Period, you create a calculated column for the research paper assignments named “Quarter 1 Research Total.” This column calculates a grade based on the relationship between the total points possible for the research assignments and each student’s points earned.

Example: Calculate a grade based on more than one Grading Period
You have created Grading Periods for the first two quarters and associated columns with them. Therefore, you cannot create a semester Grading Period and associate the same columns that are associated with the first two quarters. However, you can create a column that calculates a semester grade quickly and easily. If you create two calculated columns for the first and second quarters that display the grades for their respective Grading Periods, you can create a calculated column for the semester using the two quarter calculated columns in its grade calculation.

Next Steps
To learn about calculated columns, see these topics:
- About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center
- About Total Columns in the Grade Center
- How to Create Total Columns in the Grade Center
- About Weighted Columns in the Grade Center
- How to Create Weighted Columns in the Grade Center
- About Average Columns in the Grade Center
- How to Create Average Columns in the Grade Center
- About Minimum/Maximum Columns in the Grade Center
- How to Create Minimum/Maximum Columns in the Grade Center

How to Hide and Show Users in the Grade Center
You can hide user rows to reduce the number of rows in the Grade Center grid and help you focus on specific data. When you hide user rows, the data is retained and you can show them at any time. You can hide user
rows using the hide functions in a user’s contextual menu or from the Row Visibility page. On the Row Visibility page, you can also show hidden user rows.

Note: If you have made a user unavailable on the Users page, the User Unavailable icon () appears in the user’s first cell in the Grade Center. However, the row is not hidden in the grid. Unavailable users cannot access your course. To learn more about setting user availability, see Enrolling and Managing Users.

How to Hide User Rows Using the Contextual Menu

1. In the Grade Center, move your mouse pointer over a student’s name cell to see the Action Link ( ). Click it to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Hide Other Rows to remove all but the user’s row from view.
   - OR -
   Select Hide Row to hide the user’s row.
3. When hiding one user’s row, a message appears stating that the row has been successfully hidden.

If you have chosen to hide all but one user’s row, show all rows again by selecting Show All Rows in the user’s contextual menu.
How to Show/Hide Users on the Row Visibility Page

On the **Row Visibility** page, you can show one or more hidden user rows. You can also hide multiple user rows simultaneously. Hiding or showing rows on this page only affects your view of the Grade Center grid and does not affect student availability.

To sort a column, click the column heading. For example, click the **Status** column heading to sort the column so all hidden users appear first in the list.

1. On the Action Bar, point to **Manage** to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Row Visibility**.
3. On the Row Visibility page, select the checkboxes for the users to show or hide. Select the checkbox in the header row to select all users.
4. On the Action Bar, click **Hide Users** or **Show Users**.
5. Click Submit.

**Result**

User rows that are hidden appear in italic text and do not appear in the Grade Center grid.

**How to Color Code the Grade Center**

You are able to create rules to apply color to the cells in the Grade Center grid, either by grade or status. Creating color rules in the Grade Center provides visual indicators to help you interpret information quickly. For example, you can use yellow to highlight graded items with failing scores so students and columns that require attention are prominent. Also, you can assign colors to the following grading statuses: In Progress, Needs Grading, or Exempt.

By default, color coding is not enabled in the Grade Center, and to use color coding you need to enable it in any Grade Center view. Once you define and save the color rules, the color coding applies to all views. This setting persists when the course is copied and restored.

**Note:** If you create a rule that contains some of the same information as another rule, the system generates a warning, allowing you to edit your criteria.

1. On the Control Panel, expand the Grade Center section and select a view.
2. On the Action Bar, point to Manage to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Grading Color Codes**.

4. On the **Grading Color Codes** page, select the check box for **Enable Grading Color Codes**.

5. In the **Color Coding Options** section:
   - For each **Grading Status**, click the Action Link (>>) in the **Background Color** column to access the **Swatch Color** box.
   - In the **Swatch Color** box, select a color and click **Apply** to save it.

6. In the **Grade Ranges** section:
   - Click **Add Criteria** to create a color rule.
   - In the **Criteria** drop-down, select **Between**, **More Than**, or **Less Than**.
   - Type a percentage in the box or boxes.
   - For **Background Color** and **Text**, click the Action Link to access the **Swatch Color** box.
   - Select a color and click **Apply** to save it.
   - Click **Add Criteria** to create an additional **Grade Ranges** field.
7. Click **Submit**.

**Note:** The Grade Ranges section allows you to preview your color choices in the Indicator Preview column. If you do not approve of a color choice, click the Reset icon (_circleing arrows_)—represented by two circling arrows—next to the Action Link.

**Result**
The Grade Center page appears with a success message stating that the color coding is updated. Colors based on your rules appear in the affected cells.
Setting Up the Grade Center

How to Manage Grading Color Codes in the Grade Center

You can choose to turn color coding on and off or edit the color rules you have created. Once you have enabled color coding, the **Hide/Show Color Coding** function appears on the Action Bar in the Grade Center.

**How to Turn Color Coding On and Off**

In any view of the Grade Center, click **Hide Color Coding** on the Action Bar to remove all defined colors from the cells. The color rules are retained.

Click **Show Color Coding** on the Action Bar to reapply the defined color to the affected cells.

**How to Edit Grading Color Codes**

At any time, you can edit the colors chosen or delete existing criteria. You can also create additional criteria.
1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Grading Color Codes.

3. On the Grading Color Codes page, clear the check box for Enable Grading Color Codes to remove all defined color from the cells in the Grade Center. The color rules you created remain on the Grading Color Codes page and you can reapply them at any time by selecting this check box again.
   
   **Note:** When color coding has been disabled, no function for showing or hiding color coding appears on the Grade Center Action Bar.

4. Click any Action Link to select a new color or click the Reset icon (⃝) — represented by two circling arrows — to remove a color rule.

5. Edit existing Grade Ranges criteria.
   
   **Note:** You can preview your color choices in the Indicator Preview column.

6. Click Delete Criteria to remove existing criteria. Removing criteria is final. Click OK in the pop-up window to verify the deletion.

7. Click Add Criteria to create an additional Grade Ranges field.
8. Click Submit.

### Grading Color Codes

**1. Color Code Information**

Enable Grading Color Codes

**2. Color Coding Options**

**Grading Status**

- In Progress
- Needs Grading
- Exempt

**Grade Ranges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Background Color</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Indicator Preview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 70%</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### About Organizing the Grade Center Data

The **Column Organization** page allows you to view all the columns in the Grade Center on one page. You can quickly reorder the columns, and the changes you make appear in the Grade Center grid.

On this page, each column in the Grade Center grid becomes a row. For example, the Last Name column in the grid becomes the Last Name row on the **Column Organization** page. The first column in the grid is the first row on this page. The order of rows on this page is the same as the order of columns in the grid.

From this page, you can organize the Grade Center columns in the following ways:

- Reorder columns quickly using the drag-and-drop function.
- Freeze or unfreeze columns in the first table. If a column is frozen, it remains stationary when scrolling through the Grade Center view.
- Hide or show multiple columns.
- Change a grade column's category or Grading Period.

**IMPORTANT!** Changes you make on this page do **not** affect what students see on their **My Grades** pages. For example, if you choose to hide a column on this page, the column is only hidden from your view in the Grade Center grid. You must edit an existing column's settings to hide a column from students on their **My Grades** pages or select **Show/Hide to Users** in a column's contextual menu. In the Grade Center grid, the **Column Not Visible to Users** icon (🔒) appears in the column header for any column hidden.
from students. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

How to Access the Column Organization Page

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Column Organization.

Understanding the Column Organization Page

On the Column Organization page, the rows are organized in tables. You can move most rows to any table, and you can reorder Grading Period tables.

- The first table holds rows that pertain to user information, and you cannot move them into another table. This table is always first and cannot be moved, but you can reorder the rows in this table.
- The last table holds rows that are not associated with a Grading Period. This table is always last and cannot be moved, but you can reorder the rows in this table.
- Other tables appear when you create Grading Periods. The tables display the Grading Period names, such as Quarter 1 or First Term. You can move most rows—except user rows—to Grading Period tables and reorder existing rows. If you have more than one Grading Period table, you can reorder them, but they cannot appear first or last on the page. To learn more about Grading Periods, see How to Create and Manage Grading Periods.
Use the functions on the Action Bar to show or hide columns, move columns to categories and Grading Periods, remove columns from categories and Grading Periods, or move columns into the first and last tables.
Select one or multiple columns’ check boxes and make a selection from a drop-down list. Hidden columns do not appear in the Grade Center grid, but all data is retained. You can show hidden columns at any time.

**Note:** From the Grade Center grid, you can also hide a column using its contextual menu and selecting **Hide Column**. The column is only hidden from your view, not from students on their My Grades pages.

The first table, **Shown in All Grade Center Views**, is always first and cannot be moved. The columns in this table pertain to user information, and you cannot move them into another table. If shown, these columns always appear on the left side of the grid. You can also freeze columns in the first table. To change which columns are frozen and remain stationary when scrolling in the Grade Center view, drag the bar that states: **Everything above this bar is a frozen column**. Alternatively, drag a column above the bar to freeze it. Columns in gray are frozen in place on the left side of the Grade Center. Use this feature to easily match up individual students with their data across the Grade Center.

**Note:** If you freeze more columns than fit on the Grade Center grid, the number of frozen columns is reduced automatically so at least one non-frozen column appears in the Grade Center view.

You can reorder the columns in the first table or move columns from other tables to this table. If you move a column to the first table, it appears in all views of the Grade Center. For example, you can move the Total column to the first table. Then, if you change your Grade Center view to only show a single Grading Period, the Total column appears also. Carefully consider which rows you move to the first table. For example, if you filter your view to show only the Assignment category, but you moved a test column to the first table, it will appear with the assignment columns in the grid after the filter is applied.

Reorder Grading Period tables using the move icon ( )—represented by a double-headed arrow or a handle. Expand and collapse the contents of a table using the plus and minus icons.

Drag a column to a new location using the move icon ( )—represented by four arrows. Alternatively, select one or more columns’ check boxes and make a selection in one of the drop-down lists on the Action Bar.

Reorder the Grading Period tables -OR- columns in a table using the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool ( )—represented by two arrows. In the **Reorder** box, make a selection and use the up and down arrows to adjust the order. Click **Apply**.

Sort columns. Click the column’s Action Link ( ) to access the contextual menu and set an ascending or descending order.

The last table is named either **Shown in Selected Views Only** and columns not associated with an existing Grading Period appear in the table -OR- if no Grading Periods exist, the table is named **Not in a Grading Period** and all grade and calculated columns appear in the table.

**IMPORTANT!** Click Submit to save changes. If you try to navigate away from this page without clicking Submit, a pop-up window warns you to save the changes.

**Result**

After submitting your changes, you are returned to the Grade Center grid. Columns now:

- Appear in the order you set.
- Are associated with the categories, Grading Periods, no category, or no Grading Period as chosen.
- Are shown, hidden, or frozen as chosen.

After you make your changes, all new columns created in the Grade Center appear last in the grid and in the last table on the **Column Organization** page. However, if you associate a new column with a particular Grading Period while creating it, then the new column appears in the Grade Center grid with the other Grading Period columns and in the appropriate Grading Period table on this page. If you create a gradable group item from the group homepage, such as a gradable discussion forum or blog, the new column appears with the other group
columns in the grid. However, if group columns are rearranged and moved to other tables and then a new group column is created, the new group column appears first in the last table.

**IMPORTANT!** If two users (an instructor and a grader) are editing the Column Organization page at the same time, the changes made and saved by the first user are over written when the second user saves his or her changes.

**Related Tutorials**  
[Customizing the Grade Center View](#) (Flash movie | 1m 39s)  
[Creating Smart Views](#) (Flash movie | 3m 12s)  
[Color Code the Grade Center](#) (Flash movie | 2m 34s)

**Next Steps**

After you use the Column Organization page to determine how the Grade Center data will appear, you can further sort and filter the data to customize your view using functions on the Grade Center Action Bar. For example, you can use the Filter function and only view test columns in the grid. You can use the Sort Columns By drop-down list to sort columns by due date. To learn more, see About the Grade Center Action Bar.

**Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns**

In the Grade Center, three types of columns appear: user, grade and calculated. Each column has a contextual menu with options. The options that appear vary depending on the type of column. When you create or edit grade and calculated columns, you can select the appropriate settings to configure the Grade Center to calculate and display the data most useful to you. You also have the abilities to hide and show columns, associate columns with categories and Grading Periods, and view columns in any order. To learn more, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

Grade Center columns are utilized by course functions outside of the Grade Center. For example, when you create Adaptive Release and Early Warning System rules, you can select Grade Center grade and calculated columns as rule criteria. To learn more, see Adaptive Release and Early Warning System.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

**About User Columns in the Grade Center**

In a new course, six default user columns appear in the Grade Center grid:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Username
- Student ID
- Last Access
- Availability

You cannot delete or edit default user columns. You can hide all but the first user column in the grid. If you need to hide the first column, you can rearrange the user columns on the Column Organization page, but at least one user column must show. You can also freeze user columns so they remain in place as you scroll in the grid. To learn more about the Column Organization page and freezing columns, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.
On the Users page, you can make a user unavailable. In the Grade Center, the User Unavailable icon ( ) appears in an unavailable user’s column. To learn more, see Enrolling and Managing Users. However, the user’s row is not hidden in the grid. Unavailable users cannot access your course.

To sort any column, click the column heading or caret. For example, you can sort the Last Access column so users who accessed the course most recently appear first in the list. The sorted list remains in effect until you change it or log out.

About Grade Columns in the Grade Center

When you create gradable items in your course, grade columns are created automatically in the Grade Center. You can edit a grade column to rename it, associate it with a different category or Grading Period, change the grading schema, determine if students will see the results on their My Grades pages, and include or exclude the column in calculations. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns. The grade columns created automatically include:

- **Assignments**: You can deliver assignments to individuals or groups. When an assignment is ready to grade, the Needs Grading icon ( ) appears in a student’s cell in the Grade Center, and you must grade the attempt manually.

- **Surveys**: Surveys are scored automatically by the system. When a student completes a survey, a check mark ( ) appears in the student’s cell in the Grade Center. To view survey results, access the column’s contextual menu and select Attempts Statistics. On the Survey Statistics page, you can view the percentage of students who selected each answer. You cannot view individual results.

- **Tests**: Most test questions are scored automatically by the system. If you create a test that contains questions that need to be scored manually, such as essay or short answer questions, the Needs Grading icon appears in students’ cells for completed tests. You must grade those questions before the test results appear in the students’ cells.

- **Discussion Board**: If you have enabled grading for forums or threads, you must manually grade submitted posts. After a student submits a post, the Needs Grading icon does not appear in the student’s cell in the Grade Center. If you start the grading process in the Discussion Board tool, you can view who has posts that require grading. On the Grade Discussion Forum and Grade Discussion Thread pages, the Needs Grading icon appears next to users who have submitted one or more posts.

  **Note**: When a group member submits a post in a graded Group Discussion Board, the grade you assign is only for the individual member.

- **Blogs, Journals, and Wikis**: If you have enabled grading, you must manually grade submitted entries and wiki contributions. After a student submits work, the Needs Grading icon does not appear in the student’s cell in the Grade Center. If you start the grading process in the appropriate tool, you can view who has work that requires grading. On the topic page in the side panel, the Needs Grading icon appears next to users who have submitted work.
Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center

In the Grade Center, you can calculate grades using calculated columns. Calculated columns combine data from multiple columns to attain performance results. You can share these results with students and your school.

You can use calculated columns to do the following:

- Calculate the total grade.
- Weight grades by column, category, or both.
- Calculate the average grade.
- Calculate a minimum or maximum grade.
- Set criteria when creating Adaptive Release rules and Early Warning System rules. To learn more, see Adaptive Release and Early Warning System.

You can include a calculated column when creating another calculated column. For example, if you created a calculated column that weighs quiz grades, you can include the column when creating a final grade column.

Two calculated columns are created by default and appear in new courses—the Total and Weighted Total columns. You can rename, change the settings, determine which columns are included, or delete these default columns. To learn how to edit existing columns, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

Default Total Column

- Sum of all grade columns.
- Calculated columns are not included.
- Ungraded items are not included. You can change this by editing the column and selecting No for Calculate as Running Total.
- Included in Smart Views > Final Grade View. To learn more, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.
- Set as the External Grade column. This is the column used for the final grade. It is shared with the school as the student’s grade for the course. Set any column as the External Grade column by clicking the Action Link in the column header and selecting Set as External Grade. You must set another column as the External Grade before you can delete the Total column.

Default Weighted Total Column

- No default settings. You must edit the column to select the columns to include in the weight calculation.
- Included in Smart Views > Final Grade View.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

How to Create Grade Columns in the Grade Center
If a grade column is not created automatically, you can create grade columns for any student work you want to grade. For example, you can create a column to record participation grades.

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Chapter 1 Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akbar</td>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casper</td>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the preceding image, two grade columns are shown:

- Participation: Created manually by an instructor to record participation grades.
- Chapter 1 Test: Created automatically by the system when an instructor created and deployed the test.

The data in the "Participation" column is populated when an instructor manually assigns the grades. The data in the "Chapter 1 Test" column is populated when students complete their tests and the test is scored automatically by the system. If the test includes questions that need to be graded by an instructor, such as an essay or short answer question, the Needs Grading icon (?[?) appears in the students’ cells after the tests are submitted.

When creating Grade Center columns, you can do the following:

- Choose how the grade appears. You can display the grades in the Grade Center grid and on students’ My Grades pages as a score, letter, text, percentage, or as complete/incomplete.
- Associate it with a category and Grading Period.
- Exclude or include the column in any potential Grade Center calculations, such as when creating a calculated column.
- Determine whether the column’s results appear on students’ My Grades pages.

Use the following steps to create a grade column.

1. In the Grade Center, click Create Column on the Action Bar.
2. On the Create Grade Column page, type a brief, descriptive Column Name. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ My Grades pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the Grade Center Name box.

   **Note:** Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar. The entire name appears on students’ My Grades pages.

3. Optionally, type a Description. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their My Grades pages.
4. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their **My Grades** pages. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:

- **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
- **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
- **Text**: Text appears in the column when a custom text grading schema is created. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor – OR – Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If no custom text grading schema is created, and the **Text** option is selected, you are allowed to type text in the column’s cells. If you choose to share the column results with students on their **My Grades** pages, they will see the text values for their grades. To learn how to create a custom grading schema, see How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.

**Note**: When you convert a numeric score to text without creating a custom text grading schema, and then return to numeric scoring, values that cannot be converted display a zero after conversion. Therefore, if you want to include text as grades, Blackboard recommends creating a custom text grading schema and associating it with the columns.

- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✓) appears in the
column, regardless of the score achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Display</td>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display** and **Text**. The default **Text** option does not appear as you cannot edit a secondary value from a column's cell. If you create a customized grading schema based on text and have not used it as the **Primary Display**, it appears in the list. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Display</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip:** If you choose **Percentage** as the **Primary Display** and type the achieved numeric score into the Grade Center grid directly, the number you type is interpreted as a percentage and not the score. Therefore, if you want the system to calculate percentages when you type a score, select **Score** as the **Primary Display** and select **Percentage** as the **Secondary Display**. Scores you type directly in the grid will display a percentage in parentheses.

6. Optionally, you can associate the column with a category by making a selection in the **Category** drop-down list. The default setting is **No Category**. You can use categories to filter Grade Center data, create Smart Views that focus the view of the Grade Center data, and create calculated columns. To learn more, see **How to Create and Manage Categories in the Grade Center**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Created</td>
<td>Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self and Peer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. In the **Points Possible** box, type the total points. Entries must be numeric.

8. If Grading Periods exist, you can associate the column with a Grading Period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use Grading Periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns. To learn more, see **How to Create and Manage Grading Periods**.
9. Optionally, select the option next to Due Date and type a date (mm/dd/yyyy) or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar. Columns that are assigned a due date are associated automatically with a Grading Period if the due date falls within the date range of the Grading Period. The option to automatically associate columns with a Grading Period is set when creating or editing the Grading Period. You can use due dates with the Early Warning System to generate an alert if a test or assignment is not submitted on time. To learn more, see Early Warning System.

10. Select the Options.

- Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
- Show this Column to Students: Select Yes to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
- Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

Note: When editing the Grade Center column for a test, the options to Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations and Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades are not available if you select the option to Hide Results for this Test Completely from Instructor and the Grade Center on the Test Options page.

11. Click Submit.
Result

Once you have created the grade column, you can:

- Associate a rubric with it to make grading easier and less subjective.
- Assign grades.
- Include the column when creating calculated columns.

About Total Columns in the Grade Center

The Total column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns and categories are included in a Total column’s calculation. When creating a Total column, you can include other calculated columns.

A Total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column. The following list includes the settings for the default Total column.

- All grade columns are included in the calculation.
- Calculated columns are not included.
- Ungraded items are not included. You can change this by editing the column and selecting No for Calculate as Running Total.
- Included in Smart Views > Final Grade View. To learn more, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.
- Set as the External Grade column, which is the grade reported to your school. You cannot delete the default Total column until you set another column as the External Grade. Set any column as the External Grade column by clicking the Action Link ( ) in the column header and selecting Set as External Grade.

Note: Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a Total column’s calculation. For example, if you set a column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in grade calculations.

Total Points Formula

Add the points possible of all selected columns to find the total points. Then, add a student’s earned scores for all selected columns. This is the total earned out of the total points possible. Exempted items are ignored. The results display according to the Primary and Secondary Display options.

Column 1 points earned + Column 2 points earned + Column 3 points earned + Column 4 points earned = Total Points Earned out of Total Points Possible

Example: Student A

Eight values: 8/10, 3/5, 2/2, 3/7, 47/50, 20/25, 88/100

Earned Points Value: 171
Points Possible Value: 199
Total Points: 171/199

Example: Student B

Eight values: 9/10, X (exempt), 1/2, 5/7, 45/50, X, 22/25, 90/100

Earned Points Value: 172
Points Possible Value: 194
Total Points: 172/194
**Note:** You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

### How to Create Total Columns in the Grade Center

The Total column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns, Grading Periods, and categories are used in the calculation for a Total column. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

**Note:** A Total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column.

When creating a Total column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns:** Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period:** If Grading Periods exist, include only the grade columns associated with a Grading Period.
- **Selected Columns and Categories:** Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).

**Note:** Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a Total column's calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

**Example: Selected Columns**

You create a Total column to determine the final grade for the first quarter that includes all of the columns in the first quarter Grading Period.

**Example: Selected Columns and Categories**

You want to provide students with a percentage score showing their effort on assignments and participation. When creating a Total column, you select the Assignment category and two participation columns. Students can view their percentage scores on their My Grades pages.

Use the following steps to create a Total column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Total Column**.
3. On the **Create Total Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ My Grades pages. If this name is too long
to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the Grade Center Name box.

**Note:** Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar. The entire name appears on students’ My Grades pages.

4. Optionally, type a Description. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their My Grades pages.

5. Make a selection in the Primary Display drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their My Grades pages. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:

   - **Score:** A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
   - **Letter:** A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
   - **Text:** This default display option does not display text for a Total column or allow you to type directly in the column’s cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor - OR- Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students on their My Grades pages, they will see the text values for their grades. To learn how to create a custom grading schema, see How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.
   - **Percentage:** A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.
   - **Complete/Incomplete:** When an item is submitted, a check mark ( ✓ ) appears in the
column, regardless of the score achieved.

6. Optionally, make a selection in the Secondary Display drop-down list. The default setting is None. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the Primary Display. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column's cell.

**Note:** If you select the default Text option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.

7. If Grading Periods exist, you can associate the Total column with a Grading Period by making a selection in the Grading Period drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use Grading Periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns. To learn more, see How to Create and Manage Grading Periods.

8. In the Select Columns section, select what to include in the Total column's calculation. The following table lists the options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns</td>
<td>Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns in Grading Period</td>
<td>Select a Grading Period from the drop-down list to include only those columns associated with the Grading Period in the calculation. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Selected Columns and Categories | Select grade columns and categories individually. Select the columns in the **Columns to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the **Column Information** area below the **Columns to Select** box.  
   **Note:** A column that is set to **No** for **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** does not appear in the selection list.  
   **Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.  
   Select the categories in the **Categories to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the **Category Information** area below the **Categories to Select** box. Other options appear after you move the category to the **Selected Columns** box:  
   - If Grading Periods exist, make a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. If you have selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.  
   - **Drop Grades** removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for each category from the calculation. If you do not type numbers in the boxes, no grades are dropped.  
   - **Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate** removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.  
   **Note:** To delete a selection in the **Selected Columns** box, click the red **X**.  
| 9. Calculate as Running Total | Select **Yes** to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select **No** to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low. |
10. Select the Options.
   - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
   - **Show this Column to Students**: Select Yes to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
   - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

11. Click **Submit**.

   **Note**: If a column is deleted from the Grade Center that is included in a Total calculation, it is also removed from the calculation.

**Result**

The new Total column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a Grading Period. All Grading Period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.
You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a Total column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no Action Link (✓) appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a Total column.

To keep a Total column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it. To learn how, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

Next Steps

To learn how to set the new Total column as the External Grade, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.

You can delete a Total column at any time if it is not set as the External Grade column. You can also rename, change the settings, and change which columns are included in calculated column calculations. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

About Weighted Columns in the Grade Center

The Weighted column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the result of selected columns and categories, and their respective percentages. When creating a Weighted column, you can include other calculated columns or other Weighted columns.

A Weighted Total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns and categories are included, or delete this default column. The default Weighted Total column displays no results until you select the columns and categories to include in the calculation.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

Example: Weighted Quarter Final Grade

You can create a Weighted column that calculates a grade for one quarter of the year in which the Test category, the Assignment category, and the participation grade column are each given a certain percentage of
the quarter's final grade for your course.

(Tests = 40%) + (Assignments = 40%) + (Participation = 20%) = (Quarter Final Grade)

**Example: Weighted Final Grade for the Year**

You can create any number of Weighted columns, including Weighted columns that include other Weighted columns. You can create a Weighted column that uses the quarters’ Weighted columns and the final test grade columns to calculate the final grade for your course.

(Quarter 1 = 15%) + (Quarter 2 = 20%) + (Quarter 3 = 15%) + (Quarter 4 = 20%) + (2 Semester Tests = 30%) = (Year Final Grade)

**Note:** Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a Weighted column’s calculation. For example, if you set a column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in grade calculations.

In a new course, the default Total column is the default External Grade column, but you can set any column as the External Grade. The External Grade is the grade reported to your school. To learn more, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.

**How to Create Weighted Columns in the Grade Center**

The Weighted column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the result of selected columns and categories, and their respective percentages. When creating a Weighted column, you can include other calculated columns or other Weighted columns. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

**Note:** A Weighted Total column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, or delete this default column. The default Weighted Total column displays no results until you select the columns and categories to include in the calculation.

When creating a Weighted column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns:** Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **Selected Columns and Categories:** Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).
- **Selected Columns from a Grading Period:** If Grading Periods exist and you have chosen a category, include only the grade columns that have been associated with a specific Grading Period.

**Note:** Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a Weighted column’s calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

**Example: Simple Weighted Column for First Quarter**

You create a Weighted column based on two columns and two categories:

- Assignments Category = 25%
- Chapter Quizzes Category = 25%
- Midterm Test = 20%
- Final Test = 30%

Use the following steps to create a Weighted column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Weighted Column**.

3. On the **Create Weighted Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

   **Note:** Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar. The entire name appears on students’ **My Grades** pages.

4. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their **My Grades** pages.

5. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their **My Grades** pages. The default setting is **Percentage**. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:
- **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column.
- **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
- **Text**: This default display option does not display text for a Weighted column or allow you to type directly in the column's cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor - OR - Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students on their My Grades pages, they will see the text values for their grades. To learn how to create a custom grading schema, see How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.
- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%. If you do not make a selection, the percentage appears in the grid.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is None. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display**. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column's cell.

**Note**: If you select the default Text option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Created</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If Grading Periods exist, you can associate the Weighted column with a Grading Period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use Grading Periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns. To learn more, see How to Create and Manage Grading Periods.

8. In the **Select Columns** section, select what to include in the Weighted column's calculation and assign percentages for each column or category.
   - Select the columns in the **Columns to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the **Column Information** area below the **Columns**.
to Select box.

**Note:** A column that is set to No for Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations does not appear in the selection list.

**Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.

- Select the categories in the Categories to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the Selected Columns box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the Category Information area below the Categories to Select box. The following table lists the options that appear after you move a category to the Selected Columns box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grading Period drop-down list</td>
<td>If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. If you have selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight Columns</td>
<td>Select how to weigh columns within the category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Select Equally to apply equal value to all columns within a category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Select Proportionally to apply the appropriate value to a column based on its points compared to other columns in the category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Grades</td>
<td>Removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for each category from the calculation. If you do not type numbers in the boxes, no grades are dropped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate</td>
<td>Removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** To delete a selection in the Selected Columns box, click the red X.

9. Type a percentage for each selection. The percentages of all columns added together must equal 100 percent. After assigning the last percentage, click anywhere in the box to update the percentage below the Selected Columns box in the Total Weight field.

10. **Calculate as Running Total:** Select Yes to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select No to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.
11. Select the **Options**.
   - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
   - **Show this Column to Students**: Select Yes to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
   - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12. Click **Submit**.

**Result**

The new Weighted column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a Grading Period. All Grading Period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.
You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Ensure the percentages total 100%. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a Weighted column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no Action Link (/kubernetes) appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a Weighted column.

### IMPORTANT!
If you delete a column that is included in the calculation for a Weighted column, the percentage assigned to the deleted column is removed. In the Selected Columns box, the Total Weight will no longer equal 100%. The calculation does balance itself, but it will not necessarily be based on the percentages you assigned because a column is missing. The system does not update percentages in the Selected Columns box, but the grade that appears in the Weighted column in the Grade Center is based on 100%.

To keep a Weighted column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it. To learn how, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

**Note:** You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

### Next Steps
To learn how to set the new Weighted column as the External Grade, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.

You can delete a Weighted column at any time if it is not set as the External Grade column. You can also rename, change the settings, and change which columns are included in calculated column calculations. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

### About Average Columns in the Grade Center
The Average column is a type of calculated column that displays the average for a selected number of columns. For example, you can display the average for all tests or display the average grade for each student for a Grading Period.
Simple Average Formula

To find the average of all selected columns, the percentage is calculated to four decimal places. The percentage values for all selected columns are added together. The result is divided by the number of columns included in the calculation. The results display according to the Primary and Secondary Display options.

\[(\text{Column 1\%}) + (\text{Column 2\%}) + (\text{Column 3\%}) + (\text{Column 4\%}) = \% \text{ earned divided by 4 columns} = \text{Average percentage score}\]

Example:
Three values: 8/10, 3/5, 2/2
Percentage equivalents: 80.0000\%, 60.0000\%, 100.0000\%
Total of the values: 240.0000
Number of items: 3
Total value divided by number of columns: 240.0000/3 = 80.00\%

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

How to Create Average Columns in the Grade Center

The Average column is a type of calculated column that displays the average for a selected number of columns. You can select which columns and categories are used in the calculation for an Average column. For example, you can display the average for all assignments. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

When creating an Average column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns**: Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period**: If Grading Periods exist, include only the grade columns associated with a Grading Period.
- **Selected Columns and Categories**: Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).

Note: Columns with text as the grade display are not included in an Average column’s calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

Use the following steps to create an Average column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Average Column**.

3. On the **Create Average Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

   **Note:** Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar. The entire name appears on students’ **My Grades** pages.

4. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their **My Grades** pages.

5. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their **My Grades** pages. The default setting is **Percentage**. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:
Grade Center - Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns

- **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column.
- **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
- **Text**: This default display option does not display text for an Average column or allow you to type directly in the column’s cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor - OR - Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students on their My Grades pages, they will see the text values for their grades. To learn how to create a custom grading schema, see How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center.
- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%. If you do not make a selection, the percentage appears in the grid.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔️) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Display</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Optionally, make a selection in the Secondary Display drop-down list. The default setting is None. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the Primary Display. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column’s cell.

**Note**: If you select the default Text option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a customized text grading schema.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Display</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Created</td>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If Grading Periods exist, you can associate the Average column with a Grading Period by making a selection in the Grading Period drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use Grading Periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns. To learn more, see How to Create and Manage Grading Periods.

8. In the Select Columns section, select what to include in the Average column’s calculation. The following table lists the options.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns</td>
<td>Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns in Grading Period</td>
<td>Select a Grading Period from the drop-down list to include only those columns associated with the Grading Period in the calculation. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Columns and Categories</td>
<td>Select grade columns and categories individually. Select the columns in the <strong>Columns to Select</strong> box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the <strong>Selected Columns</strong> box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the <strong>Column Information</strong> area below the <strong>Columns to Select</strong> box.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** A column that is set to **No** for **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** does not appear in the selection list.

**Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.

Select the categories in the **Categories to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the **Category Information** area below the **Categories to Select** box. Other options appear after you move the category to the **Selected Columns** box:

- If Grading Periods exist, make a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. If you have selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.

- **Weight Columns** allows you to select how to weigh columns within the category.
  - Select **Equally** to apply equal values to all columns within a category.
  - Select **Proportionally** to apply the appropriate value to a column based on its points compared to other columns in the category.

- **Drop Grades** removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for each category from the calculation. If you do not type numbers in the boxes, no grades are dropped.

- **Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate** removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

**Note:** To delete a selection in the **Selected Columns** box, click the red X.

9. **Calculate as Running Total:** Select **Yes** to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select **No** to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.
2. Dates

Grading Period: Quarter 1
Date Created: Mar 9, 2011

3. Select Columns

Include in Average:
- All Grade Columns
- All Grade Columns in Grading Period: Quarter 1
- Selected Columns and Categories

Columns to Select:
- Blog: Sparse Stations
- Blog: Group Saturn
- Wiki: Course Glossary
- Wiki: Group Saturn
- Assign: Manual Viewing on Monday Nights
- Assign: Photo Instructions
- Planet Paper
- Group Outline
- Column Information

Selected Columns:
- Category: Test
- Weighted by: Equally

Categories to Select:
- Assignment
- Survey
- Test
- Discussion
- Blog
- Journal
- Category Information
- Test: Practice Quiz, Unit 1 Quiz, Unit 2 Quiz, Unit 3 Quiz, Unit 4 Quiz, Unit 5 Quiz

Calculate as Running Total: Yes

10. Select the Options.

- Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
- Show this Column to Students: Select Yes to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
- Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

11. Click Submit.

Result

The new Average column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a Grading Period. All Grading Period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.

You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.
You are not allowed to type directly in an Average column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no Action Link (✓) appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in an Average column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Average</th>
<th>Test Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To keep an Average column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it. To learn how, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

**Note:** You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

**Next Steps**

You can delete Average columns at any time. You can also rename, change the settings, and change which columns are included in calculated column calculations. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

**About Minimum/Maximum Columns in the Grade Center**

The Minimum/Maximum column is a type of calculated column that displays either the minimum or maximum grade for a selection of columns. For example, you can find the minimum score on all tests, but only show it in the Grade Center grid and not to your students on their My Grades pages.

**Minimum/Maximum Formula**

**Minimum:** The percentage value for each column included in the calculation is compared up to four decimal places and the lowest value is displayed. The result displays up to two decimal places.

**Maximum:** The percentage value for each column included in the calculation is compared up to four decimal places and the highest value is displayed. The result displays up to two decimal places.

**Example:**

Three values: 8/10, 3/5, 2/2
Percentage equivalents: 80.0000%, 60.0000%, 100.0000%
Minimum: 60.00%
Maximum: 100.00%
**Note:** If two values are exactly the same for a Minimum/Maximum column, that is the value that appears in the Grade Center grid.

### How to Create Minimum/Maximum Columns in the Grade Center

The Minimum/Maximum column is a type of calculated column that displays either the minimum or maximum grade for a selection of columns. You can select which columns and categories are used for displaying a minimum or maximum value. For example, you can display the minimum score for a Grading Period to help you determine what content your students may be struggling with. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

When creating a Minimum/Maximum column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns**: Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period**: If Grading Periods exist, include only the grade columns associated with a Grading Period.
- **Selected Columns and Categories**: Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).

**Note:** Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a Minimum/Maximum column's calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, you cannot use it in calculations.

Use the following steps to create a Minimum/Maximum column.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Create Calculated Column on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Minimum/Maximum Column.
3. On the Create Minimum/Maximum Column page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the Grade Center and on students’ *My Grades* pages unless you provide a different name in the Grade Center Display Name box. If this name is too long to display clearly in the Grade Center, you can type a short, descriptive name in the Grade Center Name box.

   **Note:** Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the Grade Center grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the Grade Information Bar. The entire name appears on students’ *My Grades* pages.

4. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their *My Grades* pages.
5. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the Grade Center and to students on their My Grades pages. The default setting is **Percentage**. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:

- **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column.
- **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
- **Text**: This default display option does not display text for a Minimum/Maximum column or allow you to type directly in the column’s cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor - OR - Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students on their My Grades pages, they will see the text values for their grades. To learn how to create a custom grading schema, see [How to Create Grading Schemas in the Grade Center](#).
- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%. If you do not make a selection, the percentage appears in the grid.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔️) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

6. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the Primary Display. In the Grade Center column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary
value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column's cell.

**Note:** If you select the default **Text** option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Display</th>
<th>Secondary Display</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete/Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If Grading Periods exist, you can associate the Minimum/Maximum column with a Grading Period by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use Grading Periods to filter Grade Center data and create calculated columns. To learn more, see [How to Create and Manage Grading Periods](#).

8. In the **Select Columns** section, select **Calculation Type:** Minimum or Maximum.

9. Select what to include in the Minimum/Maximum column's calculation. The following table lists the options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns</td>
<td>Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Grade Columns in Grading Period</td>
<td>Select a Grading Period from the drop-down list to include only those columns associated with the Grading Period in the calculation. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Selected Columns and Categories | Select grade columns and categories individually. Select the columns in the **Columns to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the **Column Information** area below the **Columns to Select** box. **Note:** A column that is set to **No** for **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations** does not appear in the selection list. **Tip:** For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key. Select the categories in the **Categories to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the **Selected Columns** box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the **Category Information** area below the **Categories to Select** box. Other options appear after you move the category to the **Selected Columns** box:  
  - If Grading Periods exist, make a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. If you have selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.  

**Note:** To delete a selection in the **Selected Columns** box, click the red X.
10. **Calculate as Running Total**: Select *Yes* to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select *No* to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.

11. Select the **Options**.
   - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select *Yes* to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
   - **Show this Column to Students**: Select *Yes* to display the column to students on their *My Grades* pages.
   - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select *Yes* to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

12. Click **Submit**.
Result

The new Minimum/Maximum column appears last in the Grade Center grid unless you associated it with a Grading Period. All Grading Period columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.

You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a Minimum/Maximum column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no Action Link (○) appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a Minimum/Maximum column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Minimum</th>
<th>Test Minimum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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To keep a Minimum/Maximum column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it. To learn how, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the Grade Center displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

Next Steps

You can delete Minimum/Maximum columns at any time. You can also rename, change the settings, and change which columns are included in calculated column calculations. To learn more, see How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns.

Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center

The results in the External Grade column are shared with your school as your students’ grades for your course. You decide which column is set as the External Grade. In new courses, the default Total column is the default External Grade column, and the External Grade icon (○) appears in the column header. You cannot delete the default Total column until you set another column as the External Grade.

Click the Action Link (○) in the column header for the column you want to set as the External Grade column and select Set as External Grade. The check mark appears in the column header you chose and no check mark appears in the default Total column header.

If you copy or restore a course, the External Grade column you chose remains as the External Grade column.
How to Edit Columns, Hide Columns, and Select Options for Grade Center Columns

You can edit most Grade Center columns and change the column's name, settings, grading schema, what is included in a calculated column's calculation, and whether students can see the column results on their My Grades pages by hiding the column from users. You can also use the options in a column's contextual menu to perform a variety of actions, such as viewing information about the column, sorting the contents, or downloading results.

You cannot edit or delete the default user columns:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Username
- Student ID
- Last Access
- Availability

You can hide all but the first user column in the grid. If you need to hide the first column, you can rearrange the user columns on the Column Organization page, but at least one user column must show. To learn about organizing your columns, see About Organizing the Grade Center Data.

You can use the options in a column's contextual menu to hide a column from your view in the grid (Hide Column) or from students' My Grades pages (Show/Hide to Users). When you hide a column from your students, you will still see it in the grid. To learn more, see the example following the image: Hide a column from users.

Each column's contextual menu displays options that are available and specific for that column. For example, a test column's contextual menu includes options for Column Statistics and Grade Questions. For a default user column, such as First Name, you only have the options of hiding the column and sorting the items. If an option does not appear in the contextual menu, you cannot perform the action on that column. To learn more about the options available in a column's contextual menu, see Accessing Grade Center Menus Using Action Links.
Use the following steps to edit a column.

1. In the Grade Center, click the Action Link (✔️) in the column header to access the contextual menu.
2. Select an option. Depending on the option:
   - A change occurs automatically. For example, if you select Set as External Grade for a Weighted column, the column immediately becomes the External Grade column. The External Grade icon (✔️) appears in the column header.
   - You can make necessary changes or selections. For example, if you select Edit Column Information for a grade or calculated column, you can change the column's name, settings, grading schema, and whether students can see the column results on their My Grades pages. You can also choose which columns are included in a calculated column's calculation.
   - You can assign grades, provide feedback to students, and include grading notes for yourself. For example, if you select Grade Attempts for a test column, you can begin the grading process.
   - You can review information. For example, if you select Quick Column Information or Column Statistics, you can view basic information or statistics, such as range, average, median, variance, and grade distribution.
3. As needed, click Submit -OR- click OK to return to the Grade Center.

Example: Hide a column from users > Change whether students see the column results on their My Grades pages

If you want to hide column results from students on their My Grades pages, you can select Edit Column Information in the column's contextual menu. On the Edit Column page, select No for Show this Column to Students. You can edit the column again at any time to show the results to your students. Alternatively, you can select Show/Hide to Users in a column's contextual menu. When you want to show the column to students, select Show/Hide to Users again. In the Grade Center grid, the Column Not Visible to Users icon (🔍) appears in the column header for any column hidden from students. You will still be able to view the column in the grid.
Example: Change the grading schema

For each column, you can choose how grades appear to students on their My Grades pages and in the Grade Center grid. Select Edit Column Information in the column's contextual menu. On the Edit Column page, you can change the grade display in the Primary and Secondary Display drop-down lists. If you choose to share the column results with students, they see grade values based on what you select in the Primary Display drop-down list, such as Score, Letter, or Percentage. The Secondary Display selection is optional and only appears in the Grade Center.

At any time, you can also change the grading schema to display grades based on new grading schemas you create. For example, for a particular test, you want to make an adjustment because of low scores. You can associate a custom grading schema with that test's column to reflect a curve you want to apply to those lower scores. You can create as many test grading schemas as needed to fulfill your grading requirements and associate them with the appropriate columns in the Grade Center.
Example: Change which attempt is used as the score in the Grade Center

When multiple attempts are allowed for an assignment or test, you can edit columns to change which attempt is used as the score in the Grade Center. For example, if you have allowed students to submit an assignment more than once, you can select Edit Column Information in the assignment column's contextual menu. On the Edit Column page, select which attempt to use for the score. The default is Grade of Last Attempt. If you do not edit the column, the Grade Center automatically uses the grade of the last attempt when more than one attempt is allowed. You can choose from the following options in the Score attempts using drop-down list on the Edit Column page:

- Last Graded Attempt
- Highest Grade
- Lowest Grade
- First Graded Attempt
- Average of Graded Attempts

Example: Editing column names

While in the Grade Center, you cannot change the Item Name of columns created automatically for gradable items, such as tests, assignments, discussion posts, journal and blog entries, and wiki contributions. You can
edit the name of a gradable item in your course and the name will change in the Grade Center. For example, to change an assignment name, you must go to the Content Area containing the assignment and edit the name there. The name change is applied automatically in the Grade Center.

**IMPORTANT!** On the Edit Column page for auto-created columns, you can provide a different name by typing a Grade Center Name. The name you provide appears on students’ My Grades pages and in the Grade Center grid, but does not overwrite the name of the item in your course. This could cause confusion for students when the names they see on their My Grades pages and the names they see for gradable items in the course do not match.

**How to Edit Grade Center Columns From External Files**

When you upload grade columns to the Grade Center from an external file, they appear as text columns with points possible equaling zero (0). You may see numbers in the cells, but they are just placeholders. You must edit these columns to include the scores in Grade Center calculations.

1. In the Grade Center, click the Action Link () in the column header to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Edit Column Information.
3. On the Edit Column page, change the Primary Display to Score and provide the Points Possible.
4. Click **Submit**. The assigned scores appear in the column's cells.

To learn more about external data, see [Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline](#).

**About Deleting Grade Center Columns**

Before deleting gradable content in your course, you must carefully consider what the ramifications may be. Student work, such as test and assignment submissions, is deleted along with the deletion of the content item in your course. Each type of gradable content has its own options and consequences for deletions.

When you create gradable items in your course, grade columns are created automatically in the Grade Center, including columns for:

- Tests, surveys, and self and peer assessments
- Assignments and SafeAssignments
- Discussion posts
- Journal and blog entries
- Wiki contributions

The only way to delete these auto-created grade columns is to first delete the gradable items in your course. For some, if no student submissions exist when you delete the item, the Grade Center column is deleted automatically or you are allowed to decide whether to delete the column. However, when you delete an assignment or SafeAssignment in your course, you must also delete the corresponding column in the Grade Center.

You are not allowed to delete the default user columns and the External Grade column. If a grade or calculated column is set as the External Grade column, you must select another column as the External Grade column before you can delete the first one. To learn more, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.

How to Delete a Gradable Item in Your Course

**WARNING!** Once you delete a gradable item in your course, it is permanently deleted and all the student submissions are deleted also. The action is final. In some cases, you can choose to save the grades assigned in the Grade Center. Even if you retain grade columns in the Grade Center, you cannot access the student submissions because they were deleted with the item in your course. Alternatively, you can preserve the submissions and the scores in the Grade Center by making a gradable item in your course unavailable.

1. Access the gradable item in your course, such as an assignment, discussion post, journal topic, or test.
2. Click its Action Link (✓) to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Delete. Click OK in the pop-up window to confirm the deletion.
4. If no student submissions exist, the item and the Grade Center column is deleted automatically or you are allowed to decide whether to delete the column.
   -OR-
   For some items, if grades have been assigned, a page appears so you can confirm your deletion or decide what is deleted. No confirmation page appears for SafeAssignments and self and peer assessments with graded submissions.

Deleting an Assignment in Your Course

When you delete an assignment that has student submissions, the Delete Assignment page appears stating that the assignment and all its submissions will be deleted, but the scores will remain in the Grade Center column. Click Submit to confirm the deletion. You can delete the assignment column in the Grade Center at any time, but you cannot access the students’ submissions again.
Deleting Gradable Discussion Posts, Journal and Blog Entries, and Wiki Contributions in Your Course

When you delete a gradable interactive tool item that has an auto-created Grade Center column, you have two options on the Delete Confirmation page:

- **Do not select check boxes**: The item will be deleted, but the Grade Center column and scores you have assigned are retained. For example, all student entries have been graded and you want to keep the Grade Center column for the final grade calculations. If you delete the item, yet retain the Grade Center column, you can delete that column from the Grade Center at any time. However, you cannot access the students’ submissions again.

- **Select the check boxes**: The grade column in the Grade Center and the item are deleted. For example, you can delete both if no student submissions exist or you do not want to include the grade column for the item in the final grade.

Click Remove to confirm the deletion.

Deleting Tests in Your Course

If a test has no submissions, you can delete it in your course and the auto-created column is deleted from the Grade Center.

When you delete a test in your course that has student submissions, you are also deleting all the submissions. You have two options available:
How to Create an Extra Credit Column in the Grade Center

You can create an extra credit column in the Grade Center that is included in the total computation and has a maximum score of 0. Then, you can assign extra credit points as needed.

**Example: Columns in Grade Center**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assign 1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign 2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Credit</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be sure to set the Total column as the External Grade column. To learn more, see Understanding the External Grade Column in the Grade Center.

Use the following steps to create an extra credit column in the Grade Center.

1. On the Action Bar, click **Create Column**.
2. On the **Create Grade Column** page, provide the appropriate information.
3. For **Primary Display**, select **Score** from the drop-down list.
4. For **Secondary Display**, select **Percentage** from the drop-down list.
5. For **Points Possible**, type 0.
6. Select **Yes** for **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**.
7. Click **Submit**.
The extra credit column appears in the Grade Center. After adding points in an extra credit column, it is possible for a student’s total points to equal more than 100 percent. If a student receives full credit for all gradable items (100 points) and also receives 6 extra credit points, his or her total is 106 out of 100 or 106%.
Using the Grade Center

Entering Grades

Grades are entered into the Grade Center in a variety of ways. Scores from items that have been added to the content of a course such as online tests, exams, and surveys are automatically entered into the Grade Center. Grades from an external source, such as a comma separated values (CSV) file or an Excel spreadsheet, are uploaded to the Grade Center, eliminating the need for double entry. Other grades are manually entered into the Grade Center using any of the views of the Grade Center.

Automatically Entered Grades

Tests that are added to the content of a course and are scored online, automatically record the grade for that test in the corresponding Grade Center column. Grades that are scored automatically can be edited manually.

To edit grades, see Overriding Grades.

Manually Entered Grades

Tests that are added to the content of a course can be edited to allow students to have multiple attempts to take the test. These attempts are graded manually in the Grade Center.

There are many ways to manually enter these grades:

- From the main Grade Center page. To learn more, see How to Enter Grades From the Grade Center Page.
- Anonymously from the main Grade Center page. To learn more, see How to Enter Grades Anonymously From the Grade Center Page.
- From the Grade Details page. To learn more, see How to Enter an Attempt Grade From the Grade Details Page.
- Anonymously from the Grade Details page. To learn more, see How to Enter an Attempt Grade Anonymously From the Grade Details Page.
- Grading tests by question. To learn more, see How to Grade Tests by Question.

You can enter grades for certain tools without having to navigate to the Grade Center. Grading is done within the tool if the item has been set to be graded. Once these grades have been entered, they can be changed in the Grade Center.

You can add comments while using any method of entering grades. To learn more about comments, see Including Comments With a Grade Entry.
Uploading Grades From External Sources

To eliminate repeated entry of Grade Center data in several tools, you can work offline and then upload grades into Grade Center. You can upload grades from external sources such as a comma separated values (CSV) file or an Excel spreadsheet. Data must be formatted specifically to upload correctly and be synched with existing Grade Center data. For in depth information about uploading grades, see Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline.

How to Enter Grades From the Grade Center Page

Grades are entered in any cell in the Grade Center or from the Grade Details page. When typing directly in a Grade Center cell, the grade may be an override grade. To learn more about what qualifies as an override grade, see Overriding Grades.

1. Click within the cell you want to type a grade in.
2. Type the value.
3. Press ENTER.
4. Click OK to save the grade.

Note: If ENTER is not pressed and you attempt to leave the entry cell or Grade Center, a dialog box asks if you want to save the grade entry.

How to Enter Grades Anonymously From the Grade Center Page

You can grade items in the Grade Center without viewing user information. The students appear in a random order without any identifying information to you (or your designated grader) for grading. Anonymous grading is helpful to reduce bias from an instructor or TA when grading. This option is available in the column header contextual menu on the Grade Center page.

1. From the column header, click Grade Anonymously.
2. Type a grade in the text box for each question.
3. Click Save and Exit to return to the main Grade Center page.
   -OR-
   Click Save and Next to show the next student.
   -OR-
   Click the arrows on the Action Bar to navigate to the next or previous student.

How to Enter an Attempt Grade From the Grade Details Page

1. From the contextual menu next to a grade, select View Grade Details.
2. On the Attempts tab, click Grade Attempt.
3. Type a grade in the Grade text box.
4. Click Save and Exit to return to the main Grade Center page.
   -OR-
   Click Save and Next to display the next attempt.

How to Grade and Manage Multiple Attempts From the Grade Details Page

Multiple attempts are enabled during test or assignment creation or by later editing the test or assignment's
options. The **Attempts** tab on the **Grade Details** page lists all submitted attempts so that you can grade, clear, and ignore attempts. Grades for all attempts are tracked in the Grade History log.

1. From the contextual menu next to a grade, select **View Grade Details**.
2. On the **Grade Details** page, the **Attempts** tab lists all completed attempts.
3. For each attempt, you can **Grade Attempt**, **Clear Attempt** to remove it, or **Ignore Attempt** to keep it but omit the score from Grade Center calculations and not count it toward the number of allowed attempts. Assignment attempts also have an **Edit Grade** button.
4. You can use the **Delete** drop-down list to delete the first or last attempt, highest or lowest scoring attempt, attempts in a date range, or all attempts.

You can also see a list of completed attempts when you access the contextual menu for a grade in the Grade Center grid. When you access attempts in this way, you do not have the options for clearing and deleting attempts.

**Note:** If multiple attempts were allowed for a test or assignment when you created it, the most recent graded attempt’s score appears in the Grade Center and shows to students in My Grades by default. To change the attempt used for the score, go to Grade Center and in the test or assignment’s column header, click the Action Link to access the contextual menu. Select **Edit Column Information** and select from the options in the **Score Attempts Using** drop-down list.

### How to Enter an Attempt Grade Anonymously From the Grade Details Page

You can hide user information from the **Grade Details** page. Once an attempt has been selected, the you can hide the student information before grading the attempt.

1. From the contextual menu next to a graded item, click the **Attempt** link.
2. Click **Hide User Names**.
3. Click **OK**. This action opens a new attempt with all student identification removed. Any unsaved changes to the current attempt will be lost.
4. Type a grade in the **Grade** text box.
5. Click **Save and Exit** to return to the main Grade Center page.
   - OR-
   Click **Save and Next** to display the next student.
   - OR-
   Click the arrows on the Action Bar to navigate to the next or previous student.

### How to Grade Tests by Question

You can grade all of the responses for a specific question at one time by using the **Grade Questions** option. This procedure is used for entering new grades or changing grades. Grades can be given anonymously by clicking **Hide User Names** on the **Grade Responses** page.

The test remains in **Needs Grading** status until all of the responses for all of the questions have been graded.

1. From the contextual menu of the column header, click **Grade Questions**. The **Grade Questions** page opens. You can select the option to grade responses anonymously.
2. Click the number in the **Responses** column to access the question.
3. Click **Edit** next to the score for the user.
4. Type a new grade in the **Score** text box, or if a rubric has been associated with an Essay, File Response, or Short Answer question, click **View Rubric** to grade the question using the rubric. To learn more, see **Rubrics**.

5. Click **Submit**.

6. Click **Back to Questions** to return to the **Grade Questions** page to select the next question to grade.

**Related Tutorials**

- **Anonymous Grading** (Flash movie | 2m 7s)
- **Grading with Rubrics** (Flash movie | 3m 17s)
- **Creating Grading Notes** (Flash movie | 1m 24s)

**Viewing Grade Details**

Access the **Grade Details** page from the contextual menu for any graded item listed in the Grade Center.

*Note:* To be able to access the **Grade Details** page, a grade must be entered in the cell. If there is no grade, the option to view grade details will not appear.

This page also serves as the main location for users with assistive technology such as screen readers. All of the information associated with an item is viewed on the **Grade Details** page. Changes are made where appropriate.

**Using the Grade Details Page**

**Navigating on the Grade Details Page**

The current **User** and **Column** are displayed at the top of the page. Use the left and right arrow buttons to scroll through all of the users in the course or all of the columns in the Grade Center.

Click the **Jump to** button to use **Column** and **User** drop-down lists.

Click **Return to Grade Center**, located at the bottom of the page, to display the Grade Center page.

**Grading Tests by Question**

The **User** and **Column** navigation features on the **Grade Details** page is useful when entering or changing grades question by question. You can examine and grade all the responses to a single question for a test using this method.

To learn more about this method of grading, see [Entering Grades](#) and [Overriding Grades](#).

**Viewing the Current Grade**

**Current Grade** displays the current score. Click **Grade Attempts** to edit the current grade or grade another attempt. Clicking **Exempt** will exclude this column from the student’s Grade Center calculations.

You can access all the attempts associated with this grade by clicking **Grade Attempts**. To learn more, see [Entering Grades](#).

**Using the Attempts Tab**

From the **Attempts** tab, you can view each attempt’s submission date, feedback, and grading notes. Use **View Attempts** to successively view each attempt in detail.

For each attempt, you can **Grade Attempt**, **Clear Attempt** to remove it, or **Ignore Attempt** to keep it but omit the score from Grade Center calculations and not count it toward the number of allowed attempts. Assignment
Using the Grade Center

attempts also have an Edit Grade button. If a student has submitted the maximum number of attempts, the Allow Additional Attempt button appears so that you can permit another submission.

You can use the Delete drop-down list to delete the first or last attempt, highest or lowest scoring attempt, attempts in a date range, or all attempts.

Note: To change the number of attempts allowed, go to the course area where the test is deployed. Click the test’s Action Link and select Edit the Test Options. Type a new number for Number of Attempts and click Submit.

Using the Manual Override Tab

Use the Manual Override tab to enter a new grade for the item. Type a new grade in the Override Grade field. Feedback to User and Grading Notes may also be provided. The full features of the Text Editor may be turned on or off to allow you to format text or include files as part of the comment.

To learn more, see Overriding Grades.

Using the Column Details Tab

The View Column Details tab presents information about the Grade Center column where this grade resides:

- Column name
- Column description
- Primary display
- Show to users
- Included in calculations
- Average score
- Median score

Viewing the Grade History Tab

The Grade History tab displays all of the changes that have been made to this item. A message appears if no Grade History information available.

The two most recent actions are displayed by default. You can see more by clicking View Complete History.

Using the Icon Legend

Click Icon Legend to display the definition of the icons viewed in the Grade Center cells.

Including Comments With a Grade Entry

You can include comments with a grade to give additional feedback to students on their performances. You can also use comments to expand on grading decisions, take notes for future reference, or to share with other instructors, teaching assistants, or graders.

You can include comments with any grade entry. Provide comments during grading, after grading, or while working offline with a downloaded column. To learn more, see Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline.

Comments provided in the Feedback to User section are visible to students when a grade is made available.

Comments provided in the Grading Notes section cannot be accessed by students or observers.
How to Provide or Edit an Attempt Comment From the Grade Center

Attempt comments relate to individual attempts and you can provide them without including a grade. If you have permitted multiple attempts, you can provide a comment to share feedback with a student before assigning a grade to the assessment.

1. To see the Action Link (✓) for a cell in the grid, move your mouse pointer over the cell.
2. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Type comments in the Feedback to User or Grading Notes sections. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups.
5. Click Save and Exit to return to the Grade Center or use the Save and Next and View Previous functions to navigate through the attempts in the queue.

Note: You can also provide comments on the Grade Details page by clicking View Attempt or Edit Grade.

How to Provide or Edit a Grade Comment From the Grade Center

1. To see the Action Link (✓) for a cell in the grid, move your mouse pointer over the cell.
2. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
3. Select Quick Comment.
4. In the pop-up window, type text-only comments in the Feedback to User or Grading Notes sections -OR- click the Text Editor function to access all the full set of features.
5. Click Submit.

Note: You can also provide comments on the Manual Override tab on the Grade Details page when assign an override grade.

Related Tutorials ➤ Creating Grading Notes (Flash movie | 1m 24s)

Overriding Grades

The roles of Instructor, Teaching Assistant, and Grader are allowed to change grades in a course. When grades are changed, the new data is automatically figured into existing weighted, total, or calculated grade columns. Each time a grade is changed, an entry is made in the Grade History log. To learn more, see Working with the Grade History.

Sometimes a grade change results in an override grade. A true override grade is applied to attempt-based Grade Center items only, which are tests, assignments, and SafeAssignments. An override grade for a test or an assignment takes precedence over all other grade entries, including attempts a student submits after an override grade is assigned. For example, if a grade is based on the average of multiple assignment attempts, but you want to ensure that the grade for a certain student is one other than the average, you can assign an override grade that takes precedence over all other grades and future attempts.

You can remove an override grade for a test or an assignment with the Revert function. Grades for the interactive tools—journal and blog entries, wiki pages saves, and discussion posts—are not attempt-based, but rather activity-based. For these tools, you can edit an override grade to change it from the grading panel of the tool.

When you override a grade, an orange triangle appears in the Grade Center cell.
IMPORTANT! When you assign a grade to a cell with no attempt for an assignment or a test, it is an override grade, and the override icon appears in the grade cell. If you assign a grade for an interactive tool’s gradable activity, but no activity exists, no icon appears in the grade cell because it behaves as if you are assigning a grade in the grading panel of the tool.

You can assign an override grade in two ways:

- Use the **Manual Override** tab on the **Grade Details** page. This is the recommended way to assign an override grade. After assigning the grade, you can add feedback for the user and notes for yourself explaining the grade change. You will have a record of why you chose to override any future attempts. The only way to assign on override grade for gradable journal and blog entries, wiki page saves, and discussion posts is on the **Manual Override** tab. However, the interactive tools allow you to edit an override grade from the tool’s grading panel and disallow its precedence.

- Type directly in a Grade Center cell to assign an override grade for a test attempt or for an assignment attempt where multiple attempts are allowed. If an assignment only has one attempt, you can type directly in the Grade Center cell and that is not an override grade. However, if you allow two attempts and have assigned a grade for the first attempt, and then decide to ignore the second attempt by typing directly in the cell, that is an override grade. If you go on to grade the second attempt from the **Grade Assignment** page, the override grade still supersedes the second attempt grade you assign. Therefore, avoid assigning grades directly in Grade Center cells for assignments and tests without considering the ramifications first.

  *Note:* If you typed a grade directly in the Grade Center cell and want to add feedback for the user or notes for yourself, see **Including Comments With a Grade Entry**.

**Overriding a Grade From the Grade Details Page**

1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing the student’s graded test or assignment grade to override.

   *Reminder:* You may also assign override grades to graded activity in the interactive tools, but you can edit the override grade from the tool’s grading panel to remove it.

2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to see the Action Link.

3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.

4. Select **View Grade Details**.

5. On the **Grade Details** page, select the **Manual Override** tab.

6. Type a new grade in the **Override Grade** text box.

7. Optionally, provide **Feedback to User** that explains the grade change and **Grading Notes** for yourself. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups.
8. Click Save.
9. Click Return to Grade Center to go back to the main Grade Center page.

How to Revert an Override Grade
You can use the Revert function to clear an override grade and display the previously assigned grade, if one exists -OR- the Needs Grading icon.
1. In the Grade Center, locate the cell containing the student’s override grade to revert.
2. Move the mouse pointer over the cell to see the Action Link.
3. Click the Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select View Grade Details.
5. On the Grade Details page, click Revert in the Current Grade section. A warning message appears asking you to confirm the action.
6. Click OK. The override grade is cleared. The action is recorded on the Grade History tab on this page. Whatever was in the Grade Center cell before assigning the override grade appears again: the previously assigned grade - OR - the Needs Grading icon.
7. Click Return to the Grade Center to go back to the main Grade Center page.

Deleting or Clearing Grades

In a course, you may need to delete a grade or revert a grade back to its previous state, such as resetting a test to give a student who experienced technical problems another chance. You accomplish these tasks through the Grade Center. Grades that have been deleted have the override grade and associated comments deleted.

How to Delete a Grade From the Grade Center Page

Grades can also be set to null by typing the NULL character in the cell.

1. Click within the graded cell.
2. Press DELETE or BACKSPACE to delete the grade.
3. Press ENTER. If ENTER is not pressed, and the user attempts to exit the entry cell or Grade Center, a dialog box is shown asking if the user would like to save the grade entry. If so, in the dialog box, select OK to save the grade.
4. Click OK to null the Grade Value. Grades that are set to NULL display a dash (-).

How to Clear an Attempt on the Grade Details Page
1. From the contextual menu next to a graded item, select View Grade Details.
2. Click Clear Attempt on the Edit tab.
3. Click OK.
4. Click Return to the Grade Center.

Working with the Grade History

The Grade History page acts like a log file that records all of the changes that occur to grades within a course, and displays all the data for grade submissions for the course within a set date range. It is possible to manipulate the view and export the information.

The Grade History page is accessed from the Reports drop-down list on the Action Bar. Select View Grade History to display the page. It displays the following columns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>The date that the grade item was graded or had the grade changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Edited By</td>
<td>The name of the last user to edit the grade. When clicked, the name will display the username and role of the person who edited the grade. If the score is entered from an online assessment, the modifier is listed as Automatic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>The value of the grade as viewed in the Grade Center as well as the type of value and entry type, such as attempt grade, override grade, and others. If a rubric has been associated with the item, you can view it by clicking View Rubric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Any associated Feedback or User or Grading Notes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The default view includes the two most recent actions on this grade. To see more, click View Complete History.

How to Disable or Enable Grade History

To disable Grade History, from the Action Bar on the Grade History page, click Disable Grade History.

To enable Grade History, click Enable Grade History.

Note: Both the ability to disable or enable Grade History are settings controlled by your Blackboard administrator, and may not be available to instructors.

How to Change the View of Grade History

The Grade History page is filtered to display entries within a date range. It can also be sorted to display items by column name, score, or date.

1. In the Grade Center, on the Action Bar, point to Reports and select View Grade History.
2. Select the data parameter from the drop-down list Show Entries from Past, including the following:
   - 1 Day
   - 7 Days
   - 14 Days
   - 30 Days
6 Months
All
3. Click Go.
4. Click OK to return to the main Grade Center page.

To sort items to display by order of a column, click a column heading. The column will display in descending alphabetic, score, or date order, depending upon the column chosen.

How to Download the Grade History File

The Grade History is exported as a delimited file and downloaded to local machine.
1. On the action bar of the Grade History page, click Download.
2. Select the Delimiter Type for the file, either comma or tab.
3. Select Yes to Include Comments or No to exclude them from the download.
4. Click Submit.
5. Click Download to save the file to your computer.
6. Click OK to return to the main Grade Center page.

How to Clear Grade History

A Grade History is cleared, flushing all the data, by clicking Clear Grade History. This action is final and cannot be reversed. To ensure that data is not lost, download the Grade History before clearing it.

Exempting Grades

You can exempt students from any grade item in the Grade Center to take into consideration students that transfer to a school, add a course late, drop a course, or require other accommodations. Exempted items are not added into any statistical or total grade calculations.

Existing grades that have been exempted are not deleted but are ignored in all total and statistical calculations. No secondary display value is shown for items that are exempt.

Exemptions entered for system-generated column are saved as the override grade. Exemptions entered for manually created columns are saved as the grade for the column when no override grade exists.

How to Exempt a Grade From the Grade Center Page

Students are exempted from a grade from the Grade Center page or the Grade Details page. When a grade has been exempted, an Exempted icon appears in the cell of the exempted grade. Comments are added to any exempted grade.
From the contextual menu for the item, select Exempt Grade.

How to Exempt a Grade From the Grade Detail Page

1. From the contextual menu next to the item, select View Grade Details.
2. Move to the Manually Override tab.
3. Select Exempt user from this item. Enter any feedback or grading notes.
4. Click Save.

**How to Clear the Exemption**

From the contextual menu next to the exempted item, select **Clear Exemption**.

**How to Add Comments to an Exemption**

1. From the contextual menu next to the exempted item, select **Quick Comment**.
2. Type in the comments in the **Feedback to User** and **Grading Notes** fields.
3. Click **Submit**.

**Calculating Grades**

In the Grade Center, you can calculate grades by combining multiple columns to attain performance results, such as class averages, final grades that are based on a weighted scale, or total points. These are called calculated columns. You can display these columns to students so they can view performance results, or you can display them only in the Grade Center for your use. The available calculated columns include the following:

- **Total**: A calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed.
- **Weighted**: A calculated column that generates a grade based on the result of selected columns and categories, and their respective percentages.
- **Average**: A calculated column that displays the average for a selected number of columns.
- **Minimum/Maximum**: A calculated column that displays either the minimum or maximum grade for a selection of columns.

New courses contain two created columns: A Total column and a Weighted Total column. To learn more, see **About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center**.

**Sending Email from the Grade Center**

You can communicate using email with students, their observers, and others in the Grade Center. This form of direct contact allows you to actively communicate with relevant parties while engaged in grading in the Grade Center. Such immediate feedback can quickly lead to intervention if required, promoting positive outcomes for students.

Email is sent from the Grade Center in two different ways, depending on whom you want to contact.

**How to Send Email to Multiple Users From the Grade Center Page**

1. From the **Grade Center** page, select the students you want to email.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Email** and select the type of recipients: **Email Selected Users**, **Email Selected Users and their Observers**, or **Email Observers for Selected Users**.
3. Fill in the **Subject** and **Message** fields on the **Send Mail** page.
4. Select **Include list of recipients** to show the names of every user who will receive this email.
5. Click **Attach a file** to include an attachment to the message.
6. Click **Submit**.
Note: Although an email is sent to the selected group, each individual recipient is not aware of any other recipients.

How to Send Email to Individual Users in the Grade Center

1. From the contextual menu next to a user’s first or last name select Email User.
2. Fill in the Subject and Message fields on the Send Mail page.
3. Select Include list of recipients to show the names of every user who will receive this email.
4. Click Attach a file to include an attachment to the message.
5. Click Submit.

Viewing Grade Center Statistics

In the Grade Center, you can view various statistical information related to a column and any user. The Column Statistics page displays numerous statistics for a grade item, including average, median, standard deviation, and so on. The User Statistics page displays a student’s statistics in the categories.

Note: The statistics pages are read-only, and you cannot edit grades or other information from this area.

Viewing User Statistics

On the User Statistics page, the following student details are displayed:

- **User**: First name, last name, and user name
- **Student ID**: The student ID number
- **Contact**: Contact information including address, home and work phone numbers, and email address. This information is generated from the student’s User Properties.
- **Items Completed**: The percentage and total number of Items completed in the course as of the present time and date.

The following Category Statistics are displayed in a table on the User Statistics page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>All the possible categories in the Grade Center, both created and default</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>The percentage value average of a particular category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>The number of graded Items of a particular category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Progress</td>
<td>The number of graded Items that are in progress, or incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Grading</td>
<td>The number of graded Items that have not been graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td>The number of Items that are exempt from grading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to View Statistics by User/Student

The User Statistics page displays a student’s statistics in the various categories.

In the Grade Center, open the contextual menu next to a user’s first name, last name, or username and select View User Statistics.

How to Change the User Statistics Page

To view another student’s data while on the User Statistics page, select the appropriate student name from the
drop-down list, and click **Go**. Left and right arrow buttons advance alphabetically to the previous or following student.

To change the statistics that are viewed on this page, select a view from the **Show Statistics For** drop-down list and then click **Refresh**. By default, the full view of the Grade Center is shown, but if a particular view is selected, then those statistics are shown. To learn more about Smart Views, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.

### How to Email a User in the User Statistics Page

To send an email to a user, click the email address of the user.

### Viewing Column Statistics

The **Column Statistics** page displays numerous statistics for a grade item, including average, median, standard deviation, and others that are defined on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column</td>
<td>The column in the Grade Center currently being viewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Possible</td>
<td>The points possible for this column</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>The description of the column provided when the column was defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Number of graded items in the calculations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Value</td>
<td>The lowest value of all graded columns in the Grade Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Value</td>
<td>The highest value of all graded columns in the Grade Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>The numeric range between the highest grade and the lowest grade for an item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>The statistical average of the item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>The midpoint score of the items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>The difference between the values of the item and the average of the item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>A statistical measure of the spread or variation of the items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status Distribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Null</td>
<td>The number of null student grade columns or calculated columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Progress</td>
<td>The number of student items in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Grading</td>
<td>The number of student items that need grading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td>The number of student items that have been exempted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Distribution</td>
<td>A table that displays the statistics for the grading schema ranges of the items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How to View Statistics By Column

In the Grade Center, open the contextual menu next to a user's first name, last name, or username and select **Column Statistics**.

### How to Include Unavailable Students in the Column Statistics Page

1. From the **Show Statistics For** drop-down list, select **All Users**.
2. Click **Refresh**.
How to Change Columns from the Column Statistics Page

From the **Column Statistics** page, the current column displaying statistics can be changed to any other column in the Grade Center. To view another column, select the appropriate column from the **Column** drop-down list, and click **Go**. Left and right arrow buttons advance to the previous or following column.

Working with Grade Center Reports

You can create printable reports for your courses and students. You can also create a progress report that contains all of the grades from a particular Grading Period for a defined group of students in a class, such as special-needs students or transfer students. This report can then be printed, and handed out to each student, parent, or guardian.

Prerequisites and Notes about Grade Center Reports

- Reports can display all or a number of students, groups, and grade or calculated columns, a Grading Period, or all of the columns in a category.
- Reports are customized in a variety of ways, including report header and footer information. Reports can also include a signature line, date, course information, and so on.
- Reports print one student per page.
- You can only choose students within the section being used to appear in the report. If there is more than one section of a course, a separate report must be run for each section.

How to Create a Report

1. In the Action Bar, point to **Reports** and select **Create Report**.
2. Select information to be included in the **Header Information** of the report and type in the appropriate fields.
3. Select the users (students) to be included in the report:
   - **All Users**: This will include all students in the course on the report.
   - **All Users in Group**: Select a group to be included in the report. A group must be created before it is chosen when creating a report.
   - **Selected Users**: Select one or more students in the course. To select multiple students, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.
4. Select the check box if you want to **Include Hidden Users in Reports**.
5. Select the **User Information** to be included in the report.
6. Select the **Columns** to be included in the report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Columns</td>
<td>Select to include all of the Grade Center columns in the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Columns in Grading Period</td>
<td>Select to display all of the columns of a particular grading period in the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Columns in Category</td>
<td>Select to display all of the columns of a particular category. Select a category to display the category’s columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Columns</td>
<td>Select the desired columns to be displayed in the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include Hidden Columns in Reports</td>
<td>Click this check box to display any column that was hidden from the Grade Center view.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Select the column information to be included in the report. The column name and current grade will display automatically in the report, and these cannot be deleted.
   - **Description**: Select to display the column’s description in the report.
   - **Due Date**: Select to display the column’s due date in the report.
   - **Statistics**: Click and then select to display the class **Average**, **Median**, or **Both** for each calculated column of grade column included in the report.

8. Select the footer information to be included in the footer of the report. It includes the following:
   - **Custom Text**: Select and then enter any desired text to be displayed in the footer section of the report
   - **Signature Line**: Select to display a signature line on the report.
   - **Date**: Select to display the report creation date on the report. This can be edited.
   - **Course Information**: Select to display the course name and course ID on the report.

9. Click **Preview** to open the report in a new browser window, leaving the report creation browser open.

10. Click **Submit**. This will display the report in a new browser window, but the report creation browser window will return to the Grade Center page.

### How to Save or Print a Report

To save a report, use your browser's **Save As** function and choose the save location. The report will be saved as an HTML file, which can be opened using any compatible web browser.

To print a report, use your browser's **Print** function. Select the appropriate options, including the printer location, paper, duplexing (if available), and so on.

*Note:* For more information on how to save or print displayed content, see your browser's online help.

### Uploading or Downloading Grade Center Items for Working Offline

To eliminate potential double entry of Grade Center data, you can perform offline grading, and then import grades into Grade Center. You can also upload grades from external sources such as an Excel spreadsheet or a comma separated values (CSV) file. Data must be formatted very specifically to upload correctly and be synchronized with existing Grade Center data.

### Formatting External Files for Uploading

To synchronize external data to Grade Center data, unique identifiers are necessary for each student and for each column in the Grade Center. The unique identifier used for each student is the student's user name. The unique identifier for each column is a column ID number. Column ID numbers are generated by the system and should not be changed or deleted. Columns that do not have column ID numbers in an uploaded file will create new columns in the Grade Center.
**IMPORTANT!** Columns that are added to the Grade Center from an external file are added as text columns with points possible equaling zero (0). Text columns cannot be included in calculated columns, such as weighted, total, average, and minimum/maximum. To learn more, see Calculating Grades. Convert text columns to other columns types and add points possible by editing the column after the upload. For information about editing columns, see How to Edit Grade Center Columns From External Files.

Each data file uploaded to the Grade Center requires a header row with one record per line subsequently. The format of the data file uploaded to the Grade Center is determined by the type of delimiter that is used to parse the data into separate columns. Data files are tab delimited with a file extension of .xls, or comma delimited with a file extension of CSV.

Data in each column of comma-delimited files (file extension of CSV) must be contained within a quote character, the most common being quotation marks (" "). Data in each column of tab-delimited files does not require a quote character.

**Tips for Working With External Data**

It is best to use tab-delimited files for uploading onto the Grade Center to avoid having to use quote characters and because tab-delimited files open directly in Microsoft Excel. Tab-delimited files will also open directly in Microsoft Excel.

To obtain a file that is formatted correctly for uploading, download the Full Grade Center first and open it in a text editor or spreadsheet application. Existing columns will have column ID numbers that must be included in future uploads.

**Batch File Standards**

Batch files are .txt files that hold large quantities of information to upload to the system. Each batch utility contains specific instructions on creating the batch file. The following batch file standards are universal.

- Each file must be one of the supported file types: TXT or CSV.
- Each file must be in DOS format. Files in MAC or UNIX format must be converted to DOS.
- Each field must be enclosed in double quotation marks. For example: "ENG_201"
- If quotation marks appear in a field, use an escape character to indicate that the next character does not mark the end of the field. The escape character is a backslash (\). For example: "\"ENG_201\"
- Each field must be separated with one of the following delimiters: comma, colon, or tab. When selecting AUTO, only one type of delimiter may be used in each batch file. For example: "ENG_201","English Literature" or ""ENG_201";"English Literature"
- Each record must be on a separate line. For example:
  - "ENG_201","English Literature"
  - "ENG_201","English Literature"
- Do not include blank lines between records. The blank line will be processed and return an error.
- It is recommended that each batch file not exceed 500 records because of timeout restrictions associated with most browsers.

**How to Upload a File to the Grade Center**
1. From the Action Link of the Grade Center, point to Work Offline and select Upload.
2. Browse for the file. Files are uploaded from a local computer or if available, from the Content Collection.
3. Select the delimiter type: Comma, Tab, or Auto. Choosing Auto will attempt to automatically detect the delimiter used in the selected file.
4. Click Submit to upload the selected file.
5. Review the list of data from the file to be uploaded on the Upload Grades Confirmation page. Clear the check boxes for any data to be excluded from the upload. Using this method, it is possible to upload only the desired columns of data from the file.
6. Review the Data Preview column to ensure the correct data is being uploaded. Data that appears incorrect can denote an improperly formatted file. The data preview will only show a sample of the data in each column in the file.
7. Large files take significant time to process and a warning message will be displayed for any files that need extra time to process. To avoid long processing times, break up large files into separate uploads.
8. Click Submit to confirm and upload the file.

**Note:** Any file uploaded that contains Incomplete for a grade entry will be set to null, with no grade or text displayed. Any file uploaded that contains Complete for a grade entry will be set to an override grade of the maximum points possible (100% for a grade item) in a column that has the primary display of complete/incomplete. Any file uploaded that contains a numeric entry will be a numeric entry.

### How to Download Grades From the Grade Center

Full or partial data can be downloaded from the Grade Center. Once downloaded, grades and comments accessed through the Quick Comment feature or Manual Override page can be changed and added offline and later uploaded to the Grade Center.

1. From the Action Link of the Grade Center, point to Work Offline and select Download.
2. Select the data to download:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Grade Center</td>
<td>Contains all columns and associated data. Comments will not be included and cannot be added offline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Grading Period</td>
<td>From the drop-down list, select a grading period. Grading periods must be created before they are chosen. To learn more, see How to Create and Manage Grading Periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Column</td>
<td>Using the drop-down list, select one column and its data. Select the check box to Include comments for this Column, which will download comments from the Quick Comment feature or Manual Override page. Included comment text can be edited offline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User information</td>
<td>Columns containing student data such as user name are included.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Select the file delimiter, Comma or Tab.
4. Select whether to Include Hidden Information in the downloaded data. Hidden information includes columns and students that have been hidden from the view in the downloaded file.
5. Select the location for the download. Click Browse to select the folder in the Content Collection.
6. Click Submit.
7. On the next **Download Grades** page, click **Download** and save the file. Do not change the file name while saving, because the Grade Center needs the information it contains to deliver it to the appropriate column when uploading.

**How to Download Grade History Data**

1. Point to **Reports** in the Action Link and select **View Grade History**.
2. Click **Download** from the **Grade History** page.
3. Select the **Delimiter Type** for the file.
4. Select **Yes** to **Include Comments** or **No** to exclude them from the download.
5. Click **Submit**.
6. Click **Download** to save the file to your computer.

**How to Work Offline**

After the file is downloaded and opened in the appropriate editing software, changes may be made. If the Full Grade Center has been downloaded, grades can be added or changed, and the file saved for uploading. If a single column has been downloaded, grades and comments can be added or changed, and the file saved for uploading.

**Editing Comments**

Comments will be downloaded only when a single Grade Center item and the option to include its associated comments are selected. The comments downloaded and uploaded will be for the grade (accessed in the **Quick Comment** feature or **Manually Override** page) and not the attempt (accessed in the **View Attempt** or grading pages).

Four comment-related columns will be included in the downloaded file. If comments have been added online, those will be included in the download. Otherwise, comments may be added offline and uploaded to the Full Grade Center to appear in the **Manually Override** or **Quick Comments** screens.

Add or edit comments in the **Grading Notes** or **Feedback to User** column.

Links within comments to rich media, such as images or sound files, should be inserted and edited online.

When editing to grades and comments is complete, save the file, return to the Full Grade Center, and click **Work Offline**, then **Upload**.

**Comment-Related Columns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grading Notes</td>
<td>Grade Center column-specific comments visible only to the Instructor or TA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes Format</td>
<td>Smart Text, Plain Text, or HTML.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback to User</td>
<td>Grade Center column-specific comments visible to students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback Format</td>
<td>Smart Text, Plain Text, or HTML.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feedback Format Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smart Text</td>
<td>Automatically recognizes a link, the ENTER key as a paragraph tag, and accepts HTML tags.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain Text</td>
<td>Displays text as it is written in the text area. Plain text does not render HTML code. HTML code will appear as text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTML</td>
<td>Displays text as coded by the user using HTML tags.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Related Tutorials  [Viewing and Downloading Grade History](Flash movie | 1m 17s) | [Working Offline with the Grade Center](Flash movie | 3m 30s)

Working with Grade Center Reports

You can create printable reports for your courses and students. You can also create a progress report that contains all of the grades from a particular Grading Period for a defined group of students in a class, such as special-needs students or transfer students. This report can then be printed, and handed out to each student, parent, or guardian.

Prerequisites and Notes about Grade Center Reports

- Reports can display all or a number of students, groups, and grade or calculated columns, a Grading Period, or all of the columns in a category.
- Reports are customized in a variety of ways, including report header and footer information. Reports can also include a signature line, date, course information, and so on.
- Reports print one student per page.
- You can only choose students within the section being used to appear in the report. If there is more than one section of a course, a separate report must be run for each section.

How to Create a Report

1. In the Action Bar, point to Reports and select Create Report.
2. Select information to be included in the Header Information of the report and type in the appropriate fields.
3. Select the users (students) to be included in the report:
   - All Users: This will include all students in the course on the report.
   - All Users in Group: Select a group to be included in the report. A group must be created before it is chosen when creating a report.
   - Selected Users: Select one or more students in the course. To select multiple students, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.
4. Select the check box if you want to Include Hidden Users in Reports.
5. Select the User Information to be included in the report.
6. Select the Columns to be included in the report.
Using Smart Views in the Grade Center

As you provide and view grades, you are obtaining information on how students are performing in your course. You can tailor your view of student progress by creating Smart Views. A Smart View is a focused look at the Grade Center. It shows only the columns that match a set of criteria, and the view is saved for continued use. When the Grade Center includes a great number of students and columns, you can use Smart Views to quickly find data.
Several Smart Views are available by default, but you can also create your own. You can easily move between the Full Grade Center view and any of the available Smart Views. You can set a Smart View as the default view of the Grade Center and change it at any time.

With Smart Views, you can view the progress of the following:

- An existing group
- Student performance for a particular item
- Individual students
- Category and status of items
- Custom combination of attributes

**Example: Tracking Low Scores**

You create a Smart View to track students with low scores to quickly see which students need help. You can email these students directly from the Grade Center or decide to create remedial materials or alternative assessments for them.

**Example: Assessment Comparison**

You create a Smart View to display only two columns in the Grade Center grid: a calculated Total column for tests and a calculated Total column for assignments. You can compare the two columns to gauge how students are performing on each type of assessment.

**Viewing Smart Views in the Control Panel**

In the Grade Center section of the Control Panel, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order as an indented list under Full Grade Center. In a new course, the Assignments and Tests Smart Views appear in the list by default. When you click Assignments, the Grade Center page opens and only assignment columns appear in the grid. When you click Full Grade Center, all the columns appear in the grid.

You can tag Smart Views as favorites so they appear in the list, allowing you to easily navigate from one view to another. At any time, you can remove a Smart View from the list on the Control Panel. To learn more, see [How to Add Smart Views to the Favorite List on the Control Panel](#).

**How to Access the Smart Views List in the Grade Center**

Eight default Smart Views appear in a new course. Each Smart View allows you to access a set of columns in
the Grade Center grid. For example, when you access the Tests Smart View, only test columns appear in the grid. When you enable grading for blogs, journals, and discussions, those grade columns appear when you access the appropriate Smart View. The default Smart Views include:

- Assignments
- Blogs
- Discussion Boards
- Final Grade View: Displays all columns, including the default Total and Weighted Total columns
- Journals
- Preview of My Grades: Displays all columns visible to students
- Self and Peer Assessments
- Tests

Use the following steps to access the list of Smart Views.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the Smart Views page, the list of Smart Views appears. In the Type column, all default Smart Views are designated as System. When you create your own Smart Views, Custom appears in the Type column.
4. Click a Smart View title to open the Grade Center with the appropriate columns in the grid.
You can edit and copy default system Smart Views, but you cannot delete them. Click a Smart View’s Action Link to access the contextual menu. To learn more, see How to Edit, Copy, or Delete Smart Views in the Grade Center.

To sort the Title column, click the column heading or caret. If you have many Smart Views, click Edit Paging to change the number of items to view per page. Click Show All to display all items on one page.

How to Add Smart Views to the Favorite List on the Control Panel

You can add Smart Views to the favorites list on the Control Panel so you can access them easily.
1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the Smart Views page, click the star icon (☆) in the Add as Favorite column.
   -OR-
   Select one or multiple check boxes, click Favorites on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list, and select Add to Favorites.
4. In the Grade Center section of the Control Panel, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under Full Grade Center.

Deleting Favorite Smart Views
If you do not want a Smart View to appear on the Control Panel, click the Smart View’s star to clear it.
-OR-
Select one or multiple check boxes, click Favorites on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list, and select Remove from Favorites.

How to Edit, Copy, or Delete Smart Views in the Grade Center
You can edit and copy default system Smart Views, but you cannot delete them. For example, you can edit the Tests Smart View and change the Filter Results so only test columns with a Completed status appear in the Grade Center grid. If you create a Smart View, you can delete it.
1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the Smart Views page, click a Smart View's Action Link to access the contextual menu.
4. Select Edit to make changes to a Smart View, such as renaming or selecting different criteria.
   -OR-
   Select Delete to remove a Smart View you created. Removing a Smart View does not delete any data from the Grade Center.
   -OR-
   Select Copy to create a copy of an existing Smart View. “Copy of” appears in the title of the copied Smart View on the Smart Views page. Select Edit to make changes to the copy, such as renaming or selecting different criteria. You can delete copies you create.

**Note:** If you copy a Smart View that is selected as a favorite, your copy is added automatically to the favorite list and appears in the Control Panel. Click the star in the Add as Favorite column to remove it from the favorite list.

### About the Types of Smart Views in the Grade Center

You can create five types of Smart Views in the Grade Center.

- **Course Group**: Subsections of students. You must create course groups before you can use them as selection criteria. To learn more, see [How to Create Course Group Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).
- **Performance**: Student performance on a single item, such as a test. To learn more, see [How to Create Performance Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).

- **User**: Individual students. To learn more, see [How to Create User Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).

- **Category and Status**: Based on a category, user or users, and grade status. For example, you can select the Blog category, one or more users or groups, and a status, such as Completed. To learn more, see [How to Create Category and Status Smart Views in the Grade Center](#).

- **Custom**: A query for selecting students using a combination of attributes. To learn more, see [How to Create Custom Smart Views Using the Formula Editor in the Grade Center](#).

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**How to Create Course Group Smart Views in the Grade Center**

You can create Smart Views that are based on groups you create in your course. You can use the course groups in two ways to create Smart Views.

- Students use the groups to collaborate with other students and complete group assignments. You create Smart Views to track their progress.

- You create a group to track a set of students who are not performing well on assignments and tests. You make the group unavailable to students and use it only to view data in the Grade Center.

Use the following steps to create a Course Group Smart View.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

2. Select **Smart Views**.
3. On the **Smart Views** page, click **Create Smart View** on the Action Bar.

4. On the **Create Smart Views** page, type a **Name** for the Smart View and provide an optional **Description**. The description can assist with identifying the Smart View.

5. Optionally, select the **Add as Favorite** check box to make the Smart View a favorite. In the **Grade Center** section of the **Control Panel**, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under **Full Grade Center**.

6. For **Type of View**, select **Course Group**.

7. In the **Condition** drop-down list, select **Equal to** or **Not Equal to**.

8. In the **Value** box, select the group or groups. If no groups exist, the selection box is empty.

   **Note:** To select multiple groups (or items) in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last groups. To select groups out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each group needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

9. In the **Filter Results** drop-down list, select which columns, categories, or Grading Periods you want to appear in the Grade Center grid when you access the Smart View. For example, when tracking a specific group, you can narrow your view of columns appearing in the Grade Center by filtering the results by a category, such as **Tests**, or view only specific group assignment columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Columns</td>
<td>All Grade Center columns that are <strong>not</strong> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear when accessing the Smart View, including columns that you have hidden from users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None (Show user information only)</td>
<td>No grade columns are selected. Only user columns, such as Last Name, appear when accessing the Smart View. If you chose to hide some user columns from view, they do not appear when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All columns shown to users</td>
<td>All columns set to appear to users and those that you have <strong>not</strong> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear in the Grade Center grid when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All columns hidden from users</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All columns appear that are hidden from users. Each column has the Column Not Visible to Users ( ) icon in the column heading when accessing the Smart View. Columns that you hid on the Column Organization page do not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Columns Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select columns from the list of columns that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Categories Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select the categories from the list of categories that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Grading Periods Only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Grading Periods from the list of Grading Periods that appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If the **Include Hidden Information** check box appears, you can select it to display hidden columns pertaining to the filter. When viewing the Smart View, the columns you hid on the Column Organization page appear in the grid also.
11. Click Submit.

Result
The **Course Group** Smart View appears on the **Smart Views** page. Click the title to display it in the Grade Center grid.

*Note:* When you create a Smart View, **Custom** appears in the **Type** column.
How to Create Performance Smart Views in the Grade Center

You can create Smart Views that are based on student performance for a single item, such as a test.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the **Smart Views** page, click **Create Smart View** on the Action Bar.

![Create Smart View](image)

4. On the **Create Smart Views** page, type a **Name** for the Smart View and provide an optional **Description**. The description can assist with identifying the Smart View.

5. Optionally, select the **Add as Favorite** check box to make the Smart View a favorite. In the **Grade Center** section of the Control Panel, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under **Full Grade Center**.

6. For **Type of View**, select **Performance**.

7. In the **User Criteria** drop-down list, select a Grade Center column.

8. In the **Condition** drop-down list, select one of the following options:
   - Equal to
   - Greater than
   - Greater than or Equal to
   - Less than
   - Less than or Equal to
   - Between
   - Status Equals

9. In the **Value** box, type a score or scores, or select a status, such as **Needs Grading** or **Completed**.

10. In the **Filter Results** drop-down list, select which columns, categories, or Grading Periods you want to appear in the Grade Center grid when you access the Smart View. For example, if you select the third test column in the **User Criteria** section, you can filter the results against the first two test columns. Then, you can determine if the third test was significantly more difficult as reported by students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Columns</td>
<td>All Grade Center columns that are <em>not</em> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear when accessing the Smart View, including columns that you have hidden from users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None (Show user information only)</td>
<td>No grade columns are selected. Only user columns, such as Last Name, appear when accessing the Smart View. If you chose to hide some user columns from view, they do not appear when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All columns shown to users</td>
<td>All columns set to appear to users and those that you have <em>not</em> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear in the Grade Center grid when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All columns hidden from users</td>
<td>All columns that are hidden from users. Each column has the <strong>Column Not Visible to Users (⊥)</strong> icon in the column heading when accessing the Smart View. Columns that you hid on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page do not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Columns Only</td>
<td>Select columns from the list of columns that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Categories Only</td>
<td>Select the categories from the list of categories that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Grading Periods Only</td>
<td>Select Grading Periods from the list of Grading Periods that appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** To select multiple items in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

11. If the **Include Hidden Information** check box appears, you can select it to display hidden columns pertaining to the filter. When viewing the Smart View, the columns you hid on the **Column Organization** page appear in the grid also.
12. Click **Submit**.

![Creating a Smart View](image)

**Result**

The **Performance** Smart View appears on the **Smart Views** page. Click the title to display it in the Grade Center grid.

**Note:** When you create a Smart View, **Custom** appears in the **Type** column.
### How to Create User Smart Views in the Grade Center

You can create Smart Views to display all or selected grade columns for specific users.

**Example: Track Student Progress**

If several students are taking your course without completing a prerequisite course, you can create a Smart View to track their work as the term progresses. You can use this data to determine if you will allow students to enroll in your course without the required foundation course in the future.

1. In the Grade Center, point to **Manage** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Smart Views**.
3. On the Smart Views page, click **Create Smart View** on the Action Bar.

4. On the Create Smart Views page, type a **Name** for the Smart View and provide an optional **Description**. The description can assist with identifying the Smart View.
5. Optionally, select the **Add as Favorite** check box to make the Smart View a favorite. In the **Grade Center** section of the **Control Panel**, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under **Full Grade Center**.

6. For **Type of View**, select **User**.

7. In the **Users** drop-down list, select:
   - **All Users** to include results for all students.
   - **Selected Users** to select individual students.

   **Note:** To select multiple users (or items) in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each user needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

8. In the **Filter Results** drop-down list, select which columns, categories, or Grading Periods you want to appear in the Grade Center grid when you access the Smart View. For example, you can select **All Users** and narrow your view of columns appearing in the Grade Center by filtering the results by a category, such as **Tests**. Or, you can select a single or multiple test columns to display in the grid to compare student progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Columns</strong></td>
<td>All Grade Center columns that are <em>not</em> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear when accessing the Smart View, including columns that you have hidden from users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>None (Show user information only)</strong></td>
<td>No grade columns are selected. Only user columns, such as Last Name, appear when accessing the Smart View. If you chose to hide some user columns from view, they do not appear when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All columns shown to users</strong></td>
<td>All columns set to appear to users and those that you have <em>not</em> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear in the Grade Center grid when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All columns hidden from users</strong></td>
<td>All columns appear that are hidden from users. Each column has the <strong>Column Not Visible to Users ( )</strong> icon in the column heading when accessing the Smart View. Columns that you hid on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page do not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Columns Only</strong></td>
<td>Select columns from the list of columns that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Categories Only</strong></td>
<td>Select the categories from the list of categories that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Grading Periods Only</strong></td>
<td>Select Grading Periods from the list of Grading Periods that appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. If the **Include Hidden Information** check box appears, you can select it to display hidden columns pertaining to the filter. When viewing the Smart View, the columns you hid on the **Column Organization** page appear in the grid also.
10. Click Submit.

Result

The User Smart View appears on the Smart Views page. Click the title to display it in the Grade Center grid.

Note: When you create a Smart View, Custom appears in the Type column.
How to Create Category and Status Smart Views in the Grade Center

You can create Smart Views that display columns based on a specific category, selected users or groups, and a grading status.

**Example: Assignments Not Attempted**

Use a Smart View to display only the assignment columns in the Grade Center grid with a Not Attempted grading status. You can contact those students to remind them of deadlines or offer help.

**Example: All Unit Tests**

For a specific group in your course, create a Smart View to display all the unit test columns in the Grade Center grid with a Completed grading status. Then, you can determine if a study session is needed before the final test.

Use the following steps to create a **Category and Status** Smart View.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the Smart Views page, click Create Smart View on the Action Bar.

4. On the Create Smart Views page, type a Name for the Smart View and provide an optional Description. The description can assist with identifying the Smart View.

5. Optionally, select the Add as Favorite check box to make the Smart View a favorite. In the Grade Center section of the Control Panel, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under Full Grade Center.

6. For Type of View, select Category and Status.

7. In the Categories drop-down list, select a category, such as Assignment or Test. Categories you have created appear in this list also.

8. In the Users drop-down list, select:
   - All Users to include results for all students. Select the Include Hidden User Information check box to display the user rows you hid from view in the Full Grade Center.
   - Selected Users to select individual students.
   - Selected Groups to select individual groups. If no groups exist, the selection box is empty.
   
   **Note:** For Windows, to select multiple users (or items) in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each user needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.

9. In the Filter Results drop-down list, select a grading status from the following list:
   - All Statuses
   - Completed
   - Edited Manually
   - Exempt
   - In progress
● Needs Grading
● Not Attempted

10. Click Submit.

Result

The **Category and Status** Smart View appears on the **Smart Views** page. Click the title to display it in the Grade Center grid.

**Note:** When you create a Smart View, **Custom** appears in the **Type** column.
About Custom Smart Views in the Grade Center

Custom Smart Views allow you to use a variety of criteria in one formula. These Smart Views are based on complex search queries provided in the Formula Editor. Detailed Smart Views can help you build a comprehensive organization of Grade Center data.

About the Formula Editor

When creating a Custom Smart View, you can use multiple user criteria. By default, as each criterion is added, it is assigned a number and appears in the Formula Editor box. The numbers are connected by AND. Each criterion that is added can have a condition such as Equal to, Greater than, and Less than. Each condition requires a value to compare with the condition. For example, you can view scores that are Less than (condition) 60 (value) on a test.

After you have added the criteria, the formula for the query is represented by a statement: 1 AND 2 AND 3. Use the Manually Edit function below the Formula Editor box to edit the formula to change the operators (AND and OR) and to insert parentheticals to change the way the formula is completed.

Example:

You are teaching a course in which the midterm and final tests account for the majority of the semester grade. Of the 40 students enrolled in your course, 30 have declared a major in your subject. You are interested in how the other 10 students perform on your tests.
You enroll these 10 students in 2 course groups that are unavailable to students and only used for Grade Center calculations:

- Non-majors
- High school students receiving college credit

The following table lists the criteria used in this Smart View.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formula Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Midterm test grade is less than 60 (failure cut off).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Final test grade is less than 60 (failure cut off).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non-major group: Students who have a declared major that is not the subject your course is related to or who have not declared any major.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High school students group: Students who are enrolled in high school, but taking your college course. They receive high school and college credit for your course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You want your Smart View to display which students scored below 60 on either exam and whether they are in one of the groups. This data provides information about whether there is a difference in the failure rates of the two groups. When creating a Custom Smart View, you manually create the formula in the Formula Editor box to gather this information.

For this Smart View, you use the following formula:

\[((1 OR 2) AND (3 OR 4))\]

Using the OR operator between 1 and 2 displays students who did poorly on either test. If you use the AND operator, your results show students who did poorly on both tests and, therefore, omit students who score less than 60 on only one test.

When viewing the Smart View in the Grade Center grid, only students who meet the criteria set by your formula appear: students who scored less than 60 on the midterm test (1) or the final test (2) AND are non-majors (3) or high school students (4). In this scenario, two test columns and up to ten rows (the number of students in the two groups) appear. If two students fail either of the tests, two user rows appear in the grid.

**How to Create Custom Smart Views Using the Formula Editor in the Grade Center**

You can create Smart Views that allow you to use a variety of criteria in one formula.

1. In the Grade Center, point to Manage on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select Smart Views.
3. On the **Smart Views** page, click **Create Smart View** on the Action Bar.

4. On the **Create Smart Views** page, type a **Name** for the Smart View and provide an optional **Description**. The description can assist with identifying the Smart View.

5. Optionally, select the **Add as Favorite** check box to make the Smart View a favorite. In the **Grade Center** section of the **Control Panel**, favorite Smart Views appear in alphabetical order in the indented list under **Full Grade Center**.

6. For **Type of View**, select **Custom**.

7. In the **Select Criteria** section, make selections and provide values:
   - In the **User Criteria** drop-down list, make a selection, such as a group, a grade column, or last access.
In the **Condition** drop-down list, make a selection, such as **Equal to** or **Less than**, or select **Status Equals**.

In the **Value** box, type a score or scores, or select a grading status for the condition.

**Note:** As data is selected, a query formula is built in the **Formula Editor** box. The first set of criteria is labeled "1."

8. To add a second set of criteria, click **Add User Criteria** and make additional selections. The second set of criteria is labeled "2." Continue to add more criteria as needed.

9. Click **Manually Edit** to change the operators (**AND** and **OR**) and insert parentheses to edit the formula.

10. In the **Filter Results** drop-down list, select which columns, categories, or Grading Periods you want to appear in the Grade Center grid when you access the Smart View. For example, you can choose to view only the columns that are used in the formula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Columns Used in Criteria</strong></td>
<td>Only the columns selected in the <strong>Select Criteria</strong> section appear when viewing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Columns</strong></td>
<td>All Grade Center columns that are <strong>not</strong> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>None (Show only user information)</strong></td>
<td>No grade columns are selected. Only user columns, such as Last Name, appear when accessing the Smart View. If you chose to hide some user columns from view, they do not appear when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All columns shown to users</strong></td>
<td>All columns set to appear to users and those that you have <strong>not</strong> hidden on the <strong>Column Organization</strong> page appear in the Grade Center grid when accessing the Smart View.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All columns hidden from users</strong></td>
<td>All columns appear that are hidden from users. Each column has the <strong>Column Not Visible to Users</strong> (🔒) icon in the column heading when accessing the Smart View. Columns that you hid on the Column Organization page do not appear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Columns Only</strong></td>
<td>Select columns from the list of columns that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Categories Only</strong></td>
<td>Select the categories from the list of categories that appears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected Grading Periods Only</strong></td>
<td>Select Grading Periods from the list of Grading Periods that appears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** To select multiple items in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

11. If the **Include Hidden Information** check box appears, you can select it to display hidden columns pertaining to the filter. When viewing the Smart View, the columns you hid on the **Column Organization** page appear in the grid also.
12. Click **Submit**.

Result

The **Custom** Smart View appears on the **Smart Views** page. Click the title to display it in the Grade Center grid.

*Note:* When you create a Smart View, **Custom** appears in the **Type** column.
How to Filter the Grade Center Using a Smart View

You can use the Filter function and a selected Smart View to narrow your view of the Grade Center grid.

1. In the Grade Center, click Filter on the Action Bar.
2. In the expanded Filter field, point to Current View to access the drop-down list.
3. Select a Smart View.

   Note: Once you create a filtered view, you can lock it and use it as the default view. Click Set Current View as Default next to the Current View drop-down list to lock the view. You can change this at any time. Click the X to close the Filter field.

4. The Smart View's columns appear in the grid.

Related Tutorials  Creating Smart Views (Flash movie | 3m27s | 2,323 KB)
Sharing and Reusing Grade Center Data

Sharing Grade Center Data

Instructors can not only record assessment data through the Grade Center, but they may share this data and other information with teaching assistants (TAs), graders, students, observers, and other stakeholders. The role of these users will determine what access they have to the Grade Center and Grade Center data.

To share Grade Center data with other users, the other users must first be added to the Blackboard Learn. In addition to being added to the system, some users will be required to be added to the course, and some course settings will need to be adjusted. The sections below provide basic information about how to share Grade Center data with other users.

**WARNING!** To protect student privacy and comply with international, national and regional laws and regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the United States, review institutional policy and guidelines before releasing student information to observers or other users.

Sharing the Grade Center With Teaching Assistants and Graders

Once added to a course, teaching assistants (TAs) and graders have the same access to features and tools in the Grade Center as instructors. TAs and graders can view the Grade Center data in many ways by sorting and filtering. To learn more about editing the way data is viewed, see About the Grade Center Action Bar.

TAs and graders can create unlimited Smart Views of their data that are saved and reused. To learn more, see Using Smart Views in the Grade Center.

**IMPORTANT!** If multiple users are working in the Grade Center at the same time there is a risk that one user’s changes will be overwritten by another. To help avoid this situation, each user working in the Grade Center can create and save Smart Views of their students.

Sharing the Grade Center With Students

Instructors control which Grade Center data is released to students and when it is released. The Any Grade Center column can be shown or not shown to students. Columns that are available are displayed in the View Grades tool, the My Grades course tool, and can be displayed individually in the Report Card module.

Columns that are not available will not display in any of these places.

Grade Center statistics can also be made available to users or unavailable to users. If statistics are available with a column, they will be displayed when the column is displayed.

There are multiple ways to make Grade Center columns available or unavailable to users depending on the task or workflow you are engaged in. Follow any of these sets of these steps below to control the availability of Grade Center columns.

When adding a new Grade Center column:

1. To **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**, select Yes.
2. To **Show this Column to Students**, select Yes to allow students to view the column on their My Grades pages, or No to make the column unavailable.
3. To **Show Statistics (average and median)** for this column to **Students in My Grades**, select **Yes** or **No** to hide statistics from students.

4. Click **Submit** to save selections.

When viewing the Grade Center page:

1. Click the Action Link in the appropriate column header to access the contextual menu.
2. Select **Edit Column Information**.
3. Change the availability **Options** for the column.
4. Click **Submit** to save changes.

**Sharing the Grade Center With Observers**

To share Grade Center data with observers, observers must first have user accounts created on the system with a system role of observer. Next, observers must be associated with students enrolled in the course, and finally be granted access to the course.

Once granted access to the course, observers can view available Grade Center data from their associated students. Grades are viewed by accessing the **Observer Dashboard** or using observer tools within the course.

To learn more about assigning roles to users, including observers, see **Course Roles**.

**Archiving and Copying Courses**

For the continued development of quality teaching and learning, you can preserve course material for review, reuse, and improvements. You can save Grade Center settings and data within a course in various ways depending on the method of saving the course.

**Preserving Grade Center Settings and Data**

You can copy course material with or without users. Copied material is added into a new course or into an existing course. To copy the corresponding Grade Center columns for assignments, discussion board posts, tests, and surveys, they must be selected along with Grade Center items and settings.

The following table describes the different ways that course information and data is saved and reused with respect to Grade Center settings and data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>How Grade Center Data and Settings are Handled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Archive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Archive</strong> creates a complete copy of a course in ZIP file format. All cumulative grade columns, student grades and associated settings in the archived source course are included in the course package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restore</strong></td>
<td><strong>Restore</strong> uses an archived course to create a new course. All calculated grade columns, student grades, and associated settings in the selected archived course are restored to the destination course as part of a restore operation. The default final total points and final weighted grade columns in the new course are overridden with the cumulative grade columns in the archived course package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Copy Course Materials into a New Course</strong></td>
<td>Select material from an existing course that you want to copy into a new course. Grade Center settings from the original course are copied into the new course. When the Grade Center is selected as part of the copy, all calculated grade columns and associated settings in the source course are copied to the destination course. The default final total points and final weighted grade columns in the new course are overridden with the cumulative grade columns in the source course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### How Grade Center Data and Settings are Handled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>How Grade Center Data and Settings are Handled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Copy Course Materials into an Existing Course</strong></td>
<td>Select material from an existing course to copy into another existing course. Grade Center columns from the copied course are added to any existing columns in the destination course. When the Grade Center is selected as part of the copy, all calculated grade columns and associated settings in the source course are copied into the destination course. The source and destination courses are merged and nothing in the destination is overridden. The destination course contains all calculated grade columns from both courses. This may result in duplication of the final total points and final weighted grade columns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Copy Course with Users (Exact Copy)</strong></td>
<td>Makes an exact duplicate of an existing course including all users and their data. All calculated grade columns, student grades, and associated settings in the source course are copied to the destination course. The default final total points and final weighted grade columns in the new course are overridden with the calculated grade columns in the source course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Export</strong></td>
<td>Export allows you to select all or parts of an existing course to add to an exported ZIP file. Does not include student data. When the Grade Center is selected as part of an export, all calculated grade columns and associated settings in the source course are included in the course package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Import Package</strong></td>
<td>Import Package is used to upload selected course materials from an exported ZIP file into a course. Either the entire ZIP file is uploaded or selected parts of the ZIP file are uploaded. When the Grade Center is selected as part of an import operation, all calculated grade columns and associated settings in the exported course package are imported to the destination course. The course package and destination courses are merged and nothing in the destination is overridden. The destination course contains all calculated grade columns from both courses. This may result in duplication of the final total points and final weighted grade columns, which is allowed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How to Archive Courses

An archived course is an exact copy of all of the content and data in the course, captured at the moment the archive is created. Archived courses are saved as ZIP files, and are downloaded and saved on your computer or saved in the Content Collection. You can reactivate archived courses using the Restore function on the Courses page, accessed from the Administrator Panel. For assistance, your school.

1. On the Control Panel of a course, expand the Packages and Utilities section and click Export/Archive Course.
2. On the Export/Archive Course page, click Archive Course on the Action Bar to create a new archived course ZIP file.
3. Select the check box for Include Grade Center History to add this file to the archive. If the Grade Center history is extensive, the file size of the archive increases as well as the processing time.
4. Choose one of the following options to include copies of Content Collection items linked to in the course:
   - **Copy Links to Course Files**: No copies of linked files are included in the copy. The copied course will have the same set of links and those links will point back to the original location of the link defined in the origin course.
   - **Copy links and copies of the content**: (New to SP 10) This will make copies of linked files, but ONLY those files that are linked. Files within the course’s home folder that are not linked to any content within the course are not included in the copy.
   - **Copy links and copies of the content (include entire course home folder)**: This will make copies of ALL files in the course’s home folder whether those files are linked to course content or not.

Note about the new option: Previously when users chose to include copies of course files, the entire course files directory was included in the package. With this new option, users can choose to take the entire folder of files or only those files that are actually linked to
course content. Your school determines what options are available when linking to course files for copying courses.

**Note:** You need manage permission on an item to include copies of those files. If you do not have this permission, you may be missing some files after the copy.

5. Click **Submit**.
**Course Files**

**About Course Files**

Creating and maintaining a repository of materials is an important part of developing an online course. With Course Files, you have access to all of your files for a specific course. You can organize, view, manage, and link to those files as suits your needs.

Course Files provides file storage on the Blackboard server for a single course. Course Files within each course displays content for that specific course, not for other courses you teach. You can create folders and sub-folders in Course Files to organize your content in a way that is logical to you.

You can move a large amount of content from your computer or network drive to Course Files in one action or upload files while creating content. Once content is in Course Files, you can link it to any place in your course where attaching files is available. Course Files has support for WebDAV to allow direct upload, editing, and management of files in the Course Files area from your computer desktop or through WebDAV capable applications.

Content in the repository is considered content for reuse. Therefore, you can delete links to files in your course, yet the files themselves remain in Course Files, where you can link to them again. Also, if you modify or move a file to another Course Files folder after it is linked in your course, the link will not be broken.

Students cannot upload files to Course Files. They may only browse for and attach files from their computers when participating in a course. Student files are **not** saved in Course Files. They can view files in a course that are linked from Course Files. These links are automatically assigned read permission. To learn more about permissions assigned to files and folders in Course Files, see Controlling Access to Course Files.

**Course Files vs. the Content Collection**

Course Files is the file repository available with all Blackboard Learn courses. However, if your school licenses content management, the Content Collection is the file repository.

The first section in the Control Panel shows where your files are stored. Click Files to expand the section and click the course ID to open Course Files in the content frame.
Course Files

- Content is stored for a single course.
- You cannot share content across courses.
- Students do not have access to store or share files.

Content Collection

- You can store content for multiple courses you teach.
- You can share content across courses and with other users.
- Students may have access to store or share files.

Viewing Files and Folders in Course Files

The course ID is the title of the top-level folder that contains the files and folders you uploaded to your course.
Course Files Features

Perform an action on one file or multiple files and folders at one time. Select an item's check box and click a function on the Action Bar, such as Download Package, Copy, Move, or Delete.

Click a folder’s name to view its contents.

Access an item's contextual menu and select an option, such as Edit, Copy, Move, or Delete.

Sort a column by clicking the column title or the caret.

In the Permissions column, click the icon to view and change who can see, edit, delete, and manage a file or folder.

Switch from View List—the default view—to View Thumbnails.

Using List and Thumbnails Views in Course Files

You can view files and folders in Course Files as a list of file names or as thumbnail icons. Click the links at the top of the page to switch views.

View List: The default view in Course Files is a list of file names with standard small icons in the File Type column.
**View Thumbnails:** In this view, each file and folder is represented by a larger icon. Use the slider at the top of the page to change the size of the thumbnails.

The thumbnails view displays the image of an item for image file types, such as PNG, JPG, and DOC. Click an icon to preview an image. For all other file types, a standard icon representing the file type is shown. Folder icons include information about how many items are in a folder and the size. Click an icon or folder title to view a folder’s contents.

You can perform the same actions on files and folders in either view.

**Note:** The system remembers which view you chose and it remains until you change it.

**Related Tutorials** 🎥 Course Files Tour (Flash movie | 7m 10s | 3,846 KB)
Creating and Editing Folders in Course Files

You can create Course Files folders and sub-folders needed to organize your files. Creating a logical filing system makes it easy to locate and link to files when creating content in your course. The folder structure in Course Files is separate from folders in a Content Area of your course and has no impact on the presentation of content.

How to Create Folders

You can create folders in the top-level folder of Course Files or inside another folder.

1. In Course Files, click Create Folder on the Action Bar.
2. Type a Folder Name.
3. Click Submit.

Result

The folder appears in the list. Click the folder's title to create one or more sub-folders to further organize content.

How to Edit Folder Names

You can edit the name of any folder except the top-level course ID folder. Changing a folder's name does not break any links to content in your course.

1. Access a folder's contextual menu.
2. Select Edit.
3. On the **Edit** page, change the **Folder Name**.
4. Click **Submit**. The new name appears in the list.

### How to Delete a Folder

You can delete any folder except the top-level course ID folder. If you delete a folder, the contents of the folder are permanently deleted and the links to that content in your course are broken. You are notified that the **Delete** action will result in broken links. In your course, the broken links appear with an "Invalid File" statement next to them.

1. Access a folder’s contextual menu.
2. Select **Delete**. Alternatively, you can delete items by selecting their check boxes and clicking **Delete** on the Action Bar.
3. A warning appears. Click **OK** to verify the deletion.

4. On the **List Files and Folders With Links** page, if a folder contains files that are linked to course content, or if the folder is directly linked to course content, the system informs the user of those existing links. You can clear the check boxes for items you do not want to delete. You can also view the 360° view report.

5. Click **Submit**.
Adding Files to Course Files

You can add files and folders to Course Files in multiple ways, including when you create course content. You can save all Recognized Attachment File Types to Course Files.

**Note:** Students cannot upload files to Course Files. When participating in a course, they can only browse for and attach files from their computers. Those files are **not** saved in Course Files.

Methods to Add Files

You can add content in four ways:

- Upload files and folders into Course Files, either one at a time or in batches, using the drag-and-drop function or the browse function.
- Upload files when content is created in your course. Files uploaded from your computer using the **Browse My Computer** function are saved automatically in the top-level folder in Course Files.
- Create content in Course Files and save it as an HTML Object. When creating HTML objects, you can upload files.
- Use WebDAV for direct upload, editing, and management of files in Course Files from your computer desktop or through WebDAV capable applications.

How to Use the Drag-and-Drop Function

You can use the drag-and-drop function to upload a single file, multiple files, or one or more folders to Course Files. After uploading, you can move files and folders to other folders as needed.

Uploading multiple files and folders in one action and using the drag-and-drop function require a Java plug-in. If the plug-in is not available or you need an accessible option, select **Single File** at the top of the page to browse for and upload files one at a time.

1. Click the Course Files folder where you want to upload the files or upload files to the top-level folder.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Upload** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Upload Files**.

4. Select **Multiple Files** at the top of the page, if needed. The **Upload Multiple Files and Folders** page appears.
5. On your computer, open the folder containing the files and folders to upload. Position the folder next to the **Upload Multiple Files and Folders** page.

6. For Windows, to select multiple files and folders in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select files and folders out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key.

7. Press the files and drag them into the upload box on the **Upload Multiple Files and Folders** page. Attempting to upload a file with the same name as an existing file generates a prompt to overwrite the current file.

8. The files and folders appear in the upload box. Continue to upload files and folders from your computer, if needed. View the total size of the files ready to upload at the bottom of the **Size** column. To delete a file in the list, click the **X** in the **Remove** column.
Adding Files to Course Files

Note: The contents of folders appear individually in the upload list, but after they are uploaded, they are contained in their parent folders.

9. Click Submit. A status bar displays the progress of the upload.

10. A message appears stating that the Upload completed successfully and a check mark appears in each file's Status column. After a moment, the files and folders appear in the selected folder in Course Files.
### How to Use the Browse Function

You can use the browse function to upload a single file, multiple files, or one or more folders to Course Files. After uploading, you can move files and folders to other folders as needed.

Uploading multiple files and folders in one action and using the browse function require a Java plug-in. If the plug-in is not available or you need an accessible option, select **Single File** at the top of the page to browse for and upload files one at a time.

1. Click the Course Files folder where you want to upload the files or upload files to the top-level folder.
2. On the Action Bar, point to **Upload** to access the drop-down list.
3. Select **Upload Files**.
4. Select **Multiple Files** at the top of the page, if needed. The **Upload Multiple Files and Folders** page appears.
5. On the **Upload Multiple Files and Folders** page, click **Browse** and open the folder on your computer containing the files and folders to upload.
6. For Windows, to select multiple files and folders in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last items. To select files and folders out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key. Click **Open**. Attempting to upload a file with the same name as an existing file generates a prompt to overwrite the current file.

### Adding Files to Course Files

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>erupting_volcano.jpg</td>
<td>16.3 KB</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rock_dunite.jpg</td>
<td>104.3 KB</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. The files and folders appear in the upload box. Continue to upload files and folders from your computer, if needed. View the total size of the files ready to upload at the bottom of the **Size** column. To delete a file in the list, click the **X** in the **Remove** column.
Note: The contents of folders appear individually in the upload list, but after they are uploaded, they are contained in their parent folders.

8. Click **Submit**. A status bar displays the progress of the upload.

9. A message appears stating that the **Upload completed successfully** and a check mark appears in each file's **Status** column. After a moment, the files and folders appear in the selected folder in **Course Files**.
How to Use the Browse My Computer Function

When you create content in your course, you can browse for a file on your computer and link to it. Files you upload using the Browse My Computer function are saved in the top-level folder in Course Files. You do not have the option to select a different folder when uploading a file. By default, files you upload to your course in this way are assigned the read permission and all enrolled users can view them. When students upload files from their computers, the files are not saved in Course Files.

If an uploaded file has the same name as a file already in the top-level folder, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, course_assignment.doc becomes course_assignment(1).doc.

Note: Some files uploaded to your course are not saved in Course Files, such as when creating test questions and wiki pages. For a complete list, see About Files Added Automatically to Course Files.

In the following steps, a file is uploaded to a content item in a Content Area. The Browse My Computer steps are similar when used in other course areas or with tools, such as the discussion board or announcements.

1. On the Create Item page in the Attachments section, click Browse My Computer to search for a file on your computer. The file name appears in the File Name column.

2. Type a Link Title so the file name does not appear in your course.
Note: Click Do not attach to remove the selected file.

Attaching Files Using the Content Editor Functions

Alternatively, you can use the Content Editor functions to create links to files. Files uploaded using the Content Editor are saved in Course Files in the top-level folder. Creating a link to a file using the Content Editor offers more control over where a file’s link appears in relationship to other text. Also, you can select the Open in a new window option and provide Alt Text. For example, if you attach an image, you may want the image to open in a new window. Then, users can view it alongside other course content. Alternative text appears when a user moves the mouse pointer over a link and it is read by screen readers. These selections are not available in the Attachments section of the Create Item page.
Result

The file uploaded to the content item appears as a link in the content area and has been saved in Course Files in the top-level folder. You can move the file to a different folder in Course Files and the link in your course will not be broken.

How to Upload a Zipped File in Course Files

You can zip (compress) files and folders into a zipped package and upload it into Course Files. You can choose to upload the zipped file and unzip its contents, keeping the folder structure and links intact, or keep the file zipped.

Before You Begin

You can create a collection of files or an entire lesson, including cascading style sheets (CSS), and upload it into Course Files from your computer.

Unzip file

You create a lesson with several interrelated pages with navigation, images, web links, and documents. You zip the contents into a package and upload the zipped package to Course Files using the Upload Package option. When you upload a zipped package in this way, the system unzips its contents. When you create content in your course, you can create a link to the unzipped package by selecting a starting page. In your course, students click the starting page link and view the lesson. You can edit any part of the lesson's content.
and overwrite just the edited file or files without removing and uploading a new zipped file. All links remain intact in your course.

File remains intact

You want to include several images for students to use in a presentation and use the Upload Files option to upload the zipped package to Course Files. The file remains zipped. When you create content in your course, you can create a link to the zipped file. In your course, students click the link to the zipped file, download it to their computers, unzip the package, and are able to use the contents.

1. Create a folder in Course Files for the contents of the unzipped package, if needed. When unzipping a package with many files and folders, it can be helpful to contain the contents in a folder. To learn more, see Creating and Editing Folders in Course Files.
2. Click the name of the new folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to Upload to access the drop-down list.
4. Select Upload Package. Select Upload Files to keep the file zipped.
5. Click Browse to locate the file on your computer.
6. Click Submit. The zipped package unzips in the selected folder.

In the following example, the zipped package contents were unzipped in the "lesson_1" folder. The zipped package contained three folders.
Next Steps

In a course area, from the Build Content drop-down list, select File and use the Browse Course function to search for the start page for the unzipped content. Students click the link for the lesson's start page and can view the lesson contents in order with all links intact. You can rename the start page link and manage permissions for the files and folders in the unpackaged zip.

In the example, the first page has been named "Start Here."

![Create File](image)

**Note:** If a description or instructions are necessary and a title cannot convey that meaning, you can create an item content type instead of a file. When creating an item, use the attach file function in the Content Editor to select the starting page so you can select the Open in New Window option.

As needed, you can edit one or more files, and you do not need to upload a new zipped file and select a starting page. Edit the individual file that needs updating and overwrite it in Course Files. The changes show in the course area and no links are broken. To learn more, see How to Overwrite a File in Course Files.

How to Create HTML Objects

Within Course Files, you can create new items using the Content Editor. These items are called HTML objects. An HTML object is a type of reusable content. If your school licenses content management, you can create other types of reusable content also.

You create HTML objects in Course Files using the Create HTML Object function on the Action Bar. You can use the Content Editor functions to format text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.
to an HTML object. You can link an HTML object to one or more locations in your course as a file attachment. As needed, you can make a change to an HTML object stored in Course Files and the change is reflected in all instances where the HTML object is linked in your course.

Note: If this feature is not available, your school may have disabled the feature.

1. Click the Course Files folder where you want to create the HTML object or create it in the top-level folder.
2. Click Create HTML Object on the Action Bar.

3. On the Create Reusable Object page, type a Name. This will be the file name in Course Files.
4. Type information in the Content box. Optionally, use the Content Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups. Any files you upload from your computer are saved in Course Files in the top-level folder.
5. Click Submit. The HTML object appears in the selected folder in Course Files. The system adds the .html extension to the HTML object file name in Course Files.

If you delete an HTML object from your course where it is linked, it is not deleted from Course Files. The link to the HTML object in your course is deleted. To delete an HTML object from your course completely, you must delete it from Course Files. If the file is linked in your course, a warning message appears alerting you that the deletion will introduce broken links. You may cancel the deletion and view the 360° view report to see where the file is linked before continuing the deletion. To learn more, see How to View a File’s Course Links in Course Files.
How to Edit HTML Objects

You can make a change to an HTML object stored in Course Files and the change is reflected in all instances where the HTML object is linked in your course.

1. In Course Files, access the HTML object’s contextual menu.
2. Select Overwrite Reusable Object Content.
3. On the Edit Reusable Object page, make the changes needed.
4. Click Submit.

About Web Folders (WebDAV)

You can use WebDAV to share files over the internet. WebDAV is compatible with most operating systems. When used with Blackboard Learn, you can use it as a way to upload to and access content in Course Files, as if it were any other network drive or folder on your computer.

When WebDAV—or a web folder—is set up, you can manage all the files for your course from your computer, dragging in content from multiple drives and folders, and organizing it as needed.

Note: When using a Mac, you will set up a shared location rather than a web folder.

You can perform other actions on the files and folders in a web folder because the folder structure is visible and can be navigated. Also, you can edit a file directly in a web folder, without downloading it, editing it, and uploading it again. For users who have moved pre-9.1 content containing HTML files, they can use a web folder to access their files for editing in the program of their choice.

Many users are accustomed to using WebDAV and prefer to continue to use this method for file management.

Note: If this feature is not available, your school may have disabled the feature.

Web Folder/Shared Location Actions

You can perform the following actions on files and folders using WebDAV with Course Files:

- Upload files and folders.
- Browse the contents of folders in Course Files.
- Open, view, and edit files, such as a Microsoft® Word file.
- Create folders.
- Move, copy, rename, and remove files and folders.
How to Set Up a Web Folder for Windows®

To connect to a web folder, use the web address of the Course Files folder and a valid username and password.

1. In Course Files, click **Set Up Web Folder** on the Action Bar of the top-level folder. Starting from this location ensures WebDAV access to all folders contained in Course Files. You can select any folder inside Course Files, but the web folder path must be less than 240 characters. Each selected folder has a different address.

2. On the **Using Web Folders** page, right-click and copy the URL that appears for **Current Web address**. You will paste the address in later steps.

   ![Course Content: earth_sys_sci_2](image)

   ![Using Web Folders](image)

   *Course Content: earth_sys_sci_2*

   **Using Web Folders**

   WebDAV is used for sharing files over the Internet and is compatible with most operating systems. WebDAV is a means for users to access content from their course repository as if it were on their computer.

   When WebDAV, or a Web Folder, is set up, all of your course files can be managed from any location and organizing it as needed. Also, files can often be edited directly in the Web Folder again.

   To connect to a Web Folder, use the following Web address of the folder and a valid username and password. Any folder can be selected; however, the Web Folder path must be less than 240 characters.

   **Current Web address**: [http://dev9nx.local:80/bbcswebdav/courses/earth_sys_sci_2](http://dev9nx.local:80/bbcswebdav/courses/earth_sys_sci_2)

3. From the Start Menu in Windows, select **Documents > My Documents**. Select **My Network Places** in the left frame.

4. Select **Add a network place** from the **Network Tasks** menu.

5. In the **Add Network Place Wizard**, select **Choose another network location** to create a shortcut.

6. Paste the URL for the web folder you copied earlier and click **Next**.

7. If prompted, type your Blackboard Learn username and password. Type a name for the network place and click **Next**. Click **Finish** to close the wizard. You may be prompted again for a username and password.

8. The web folder opens and displays the files and folders in your Course Files folder. Locate the appropriate folder to upload the files or folders to. Locate the folder on your computer containing the files and folders you want to transfer.

9. With your folder and the web folder open, move one or more files and folders between them using the drag-and-drop function. Click a file and press, then drag it to the destination folder. Release the mouse button and it is dropped in the folder. Files and folders dragged to the web folder are copied to Course Files. Also, you can copy files and folders from the web folder to your computer. Alternatively, use copy and paste rather than the drag-and-drop function.
10. In Course Files, click **Refresh** on the Action Bar to view the uploaded files.

After you copy all files and folders, disconnect from the web folder. If you do not disconnect, the server connection remains open until your computer is shut down. If you use a computer that others use, they have access to everything in your Course Files.

When you need to use the web folder in the future, access **My Network Places** and select the web folder shortcut you created.

**How to Set Up a Shared Location for the Mac OS©**

To connect to a web folder, called a shared location for the Mac, use the web address of the Course Files folder and a valid username and password.

1. In Course Files, click **Set Up Shared Location** on the Action Bar of the top-level folder. Starting from this location ensures WebDAV access to all folders contained in Course Files. You can select any folder inside Course Files, but the shared location path must be less than 240 characters. Each selected folder has a different address.

2. On the **Using Shared Locations** page, copy the URL that appears for **Current Web address**. You will paste the address in later steps.
3. On the Finder bar, select Go > Connect to Server.

4. In the Connect to Server window, paste the URL you copied into the Server Address box. Click Connect.

Tip: Click the plus sign next to the pasted address to include it in the Favorite Servers box. You can select the address and not copy it each time. In the future, start with step 3 to connect to this shared location.

5. If the WebDAV File System Authentication window appears, type your Blackboard Learn login username and password. Click OK.

6. Once you are connected to the shared location, a Mac network icon appears on your desktop. Double-click the icon to open the shared location. The shared location displays the files and folders in your Course Files folder. Locate the appropriate folder to upload the files or folders to.

7. Locate the folder on your computer containing the files and folders you want to transfer.
8. With your folder and the shared location open, move one or more files and folders between them using the drag-and-drop function. Click a file and press, then drag it to the destination folder. Release the mouse button and it is dropped in the folder. Files and folders dragged to the shared location are copied to Course Files. Also, you can copy files and folders from the shared location to your computer. Alternatively, use copy and paste rather than the drag-and-drop function.

9. In Course Files, click **Refresh** on the Action Bar to view the uploaded files.

![Image of desktop with files]

**Note:** After using the shared location, some files may appear with duplicate file names that begin with "._" or ".DS Store." You can safely delete them from Course Files.

When you have copied all files and folders, close the window and drag the Mac network icon to the trash to disconnect from the shared location. If you do not disconnect, the icon and server connection remain open until your computer is shut down. If you use a computer that others use, they will have access to everything in your Course Files.

### About Files Added Automatically to Course Files

You can upload files to Course Files in two ways:

- Upload files directly into Course Files. When you create content in your course, you can link to the files.
- Upload files when creating content in your course and those files are saved automatically in Course Files.

When you use **Browse My Computer** to upload files from your computer, most files are saved automatically in Course Files. If you upload them into a course area, you do not need to upload the same files directly to Course Files.

**Example: Adding Files to Your Course**

In a Content Area, you create a content item named "Course Schedule." Click **Browse My Computer** to upload a file from your computer that details the due dates for all assignments and tests. The file appears as a link in the content item and is also saved automatically in Course Files in the top-level folder. You can link to the file again in one or more course areas.
Course Files Saved Automatically When Creating Content

When creating content, most files are saved automatically in Course Files. Examples include:

- Files uploaded to content types from the Build Content drop-down list, such as item, file, URL, image, audio, video, syllabus, and course link
- Files uploaded when creating assignments
- Files uploaded when creating announcements
- Files uploaded to descriptions and instructions in tests
- Course banner files uploaded to the course entry point
- Files uploaded using the functions in the Content Editor for journals and blogs, and when creating a wiki
- Files uploaded to the discussion board using the Content Editor or the Attachments section
- Files uploaded when creating HTML Objects
- Imported course packages—attached files must fit requirements above

Course Files Not Saved Automatically When Creating Content

When creating content, some files are not saved automatically in Course Files because of potential privacy issues or the type of file. Examples include:

- Test question files
- Self and Peer Assessment files
- Files uploaded to journals and blog entries in the Journal/Blog Entry Files section
- Files uploaded to wiki pages and the wiki home page
- Course cartridge files
- SCORM files
- Glossary files
- Student files uploaded when participating in course activities, such as uploading an assignment document or attaching files when creating journal entries

Linking to Files and Folders in Course Files

After you upload files to Course Files, you can link to them when creating content in your course. For example, you can link to a file in Course Files when creating content items, a syllabus, calendar events, tasks, and announcements. Also, you can link an HTML Object in Course Files to the file content type.

After you link to files, they are assigned the read permission by default, and all enrolled users can view them. You can delete the links to files in your course, yet the files themselves remain in Course Files where you can link to them again.

Note: You do not need to upload files to Course Files before you create content in your course. Wherever attaching files is available, click Browse My Computer to select a file. To learn more, see How to Use the Browse My Computer Function.

How to Link a File or Folder in Course Files to a Content Item

In the following steps, a file from Course Files is linked to a content item created in a Content Area. Wherever attaching files is available, click Browse Course to select a file when creating content. Some course tools do
not allow linking to files in Course Files, such as when creating individual wiki pages or test questions.

**Note:** If your school licenses content management, you will browse for files in the Content Collection and use the **Browse Content Collection** function.

1. On the **Create Item** page in the **Attachments** section, click **Browse Course** -OR- use one of the functions in the Content Editor to attach a file.

   **Note:** Attaching a file using the Content Editor offers control over where the file's link appears in relationship to other text. Also, you can select the **Open in a new window** option and provide **Alt Text**. For example, if you attach an image, you may want the image to open in a new window so users can view it alongside other course content. Alternative text appears when a user moves the mouse pointer over the link and it is read by screen readers. These selections are not available in the **Attachments** section of the **Create Item** page.

2. In the **Browse Course** or **Browse Content Collection** window, navigate to the file or folder needed and select its check box. You can link multiple files and folders to the content item. When linking to a folder, use caution as students receive the read permission by default on all the folder's contents. Read permission allows students to view all the files and sub-folders in the folder.

3. Click the **Show List** function, represented by a full square, to open the **Select Items** area to view the selections. When you open the area, the square icon collapses. To remove a selected file or folder, click the **X**.

4. Click **Submit**. To learn more about the functions in the **Browse Course** or **Browse Content Collection** window, see [About Browsing for Files in Course Files and the Content Collection](#).
5. On the Create Item page, type a Link Title so the file name does not appear in the content area. Click Mark for removal to remove the selected file.

6. Select the Options for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.

7. Click Submit.
Result

The content item appears in the content area with the selected file linked to Course Files or the Content Collection. Students can view and download files attached to content that you linked from Course Files or the Content Collection.

Note: You can make a change to a file stored in Course Files or the Content Collection, and the change is reflected in all instances where the file is linked in your course.

How to Link an HTML Object to the File Content Type

You can link an HTML object in Course Files to the file content type in a course area.

After uploading your HTML files to Course Files or the Content Collection, you select which file is the starting point, such as index.html or page_1.html. The file name appears in the Name box. Edit the name to help users access the content. For example, change the name to "Start Here" or "View Lesson 1."

When you select an HTML file, the Manage Access section appears so you can define the access users are granted. You have three options:

- **Give users access to all files and folders in the folder**: Choose this option to give users access to all files and sub-folders within the parent folder of the file you are linking to. This option is appropriate for users who are linking to a website with a typical hierarchical structure with sub-folders for CSS, javascript, and images contained in the parent folder.

- **Give users access to this file only**: Choose this option when you are linking to one HTML file that has all the formatting within the page itself and does not reference other files or images.

- **Give users access to selected files in folder**: Choose this option if you want to embed a website with a more complicated structure. If some of the content exists outside of the parent folder in other folders in Course Files or the Content Collection, you need to browse for and manually select the parent folder and the additional files and folders. This ensures users have access to all the content in your website.

You view the file content type as a page within your course or as a separate piece of content in a separate browser window or tab. The file content type allows you to create content without descriptions, allowing for less scrolling in course areas.

In the following steps, an HTML object in Course Files is linked to the file content type in a Content Area. To learn more about creating an HTML object, see How to Create HTML Objects.

1. In a Content Area, point to Build Content on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.
2. Select File.
3. On the Create File page, click Browse Course or Browse Content Collection if your school licenses content management.
4. In the **Browse Course** or **Browse Content Collection** window, you can select only one item. Navigate to the appropriate HTML object and select its check box. HTML object file names have the `.html` extension.

5. Click **Submit**.

6. For **Manage Permissions**, select the option for the appropriate permissions for users. Students receive read permission by default.

7. Type a **Name** so the file name does not appear in the content area. You cannot include a description with the file content type, as only the link to the file appears. The **Name** becomes the link students click to access the content. Be sure the name is descriptive so students understand why this content is included and how to use it. Click **Select a Different File** to remove the selected file.

8. Select **Yes** or **No** for **Open in New Window**. If you select **No**, the content appears in the content frame and users have access to all course navigation, such as the breadcrumbs and the Course Menu. If you select **Yes**, the content appears in a new window or tab and users can view it alongside other course content.

9. Select the **Standard Options** for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.

10. Click **Submit**.
Result
The file content type appears in the content area. Students click the file’s title to access the content. Students can view and download files attached to the HTML object.

Note: You can make a change to an HTML object stored in Course Files or the Content Collection, and the change is reflected in all instances where the file is linked in your course.

How to View a File’s Course Links in Course Files
You can view information about a file stored in Course Files. The 360° view report includes the file’s properties, such as name, file type, file size, and when it was last edited. You can also view the permissions assigned to users. Since you can reuse a file in a course, the 360° view report lists all of the course areas where the file is linked.
linked. You can view the report to determine which links in your course will break if you delete a file or where changes will occur if you edit the file.

1. In Course Files, access a file’s contextual menu.
2. Select 360° View.
360° View Report

A View the file name at the top of the report.

B Click a heading’s double arrows to collapse or expand a section.
View the permissions assigned to users.

View where the file is linked in your course. In the example, the file is linked to a content item and a blog entry.

How to Delete Files Linked to Course Files

If you delete a link to a file or folder in your course, it is not deleted from Course Files. The link to the file or folder in your course is deleted. To delete a file or folder from your course completely, you must delete it from Course Files. Use the **Delete** function in a file or folder’s contextual menu or select its check box and click **Delete** on the Action Bar.

If you choose to delete files or folders in Course Files that are linked in your course, a **List Files and Folders With Links** page appears to notify you that broken links will occur in your course. Select the check boxes for the files or folders to delete, or cancel the deletion and view the 360° view report to see where each file or folder is linked before continuing the deletion. To learn more, see [How to View a File’s Course Links in Course Files](#).
About Browsing for Files in Course Files and the Content Collection

Wherever attaching files is available in your Blackboard Learn course, you can use the **Browse Course** function to select a file from Course Files. If your school licenses content management, you will browse for files in the Content Collection and use the **Browse Content Collection** function.

The **Browse Course** and **Browse Content Collection** windows include tabs and functions to make browsing and searching for files easier.

To learn more about the differences between Course Files and the Content Collection, see **About Course Files**. To learn about linking to files stored in your course, see **Linking to Files and Folders in Course Files**.
The Browse Course Window

A **Browse, Upload, and Advanced Search** tabs:
- Browse for folders you have access to. If you have Course Files, you only have access to the course you are in. With the Content Collection, you may be able to access other folders such as My Content, Course Content, and Institution Content.
- Upload one file, multiple files, or a package.
- Perform an advanced search. You can search file and folder names, metadata, file contents, file comments, location, size, recycle bins, date created, and creator.

B **View List** and **View Thumbnails**: View files and folders as a list of file names or as thumbnail icons. Click the links at the top of the page to switch views.

C Breadcrumbs path: Navigate to other folders using the links in the breadcrumbs path.
- Use the downward arrow next to a folder name to access and navigate to its sub-folders.
- Click the checkmark icon (✓) to select the current folder to link it in your course. After selection, the checkmark turns green (✓).
- Use the up arrow icon (▲) to move up one folder to the parent folder, if one exists.

D **Search Content**: Perform a basic search for file and folder names. The search does not include options to search metadata. You can optionally search files contents. Type search criteria and click **Go**.

E Use the check boxes to select files and folders to include in your content item. You can select the header check box to select all visible items. When linking to a folder, use caution as students receive the read permission by default on all the folder's contents. Read permission allows students to view all the files and sub-folders in the folder. You can click a header's title to sort the column.
Select Items: The files and folders you select appear in this area. Click the Show List function, represented by a full square, to open the Selected Items area to view the selections. When you open the area, the square icon collapses. To remove a selected file or folder, click the X.

Related Tutorials  Attaching Files from Course Files to Items (Flash movie | 2m03s | 1,203 KB)

Managing Files and Folders in Course Files

With Course Files, you can rename, move, copy, overwrite, download, and perform a quick search for files and folders.

How to Rename, Copy, and Move Files and Folders

You can move a file to a different folder, and you can move a folder into another folder. When you rename or move files and folders, the links to content in your course remain intact.

You can rename, copy, and move any file and any folder except the top-level course ID folder.

1. In Course Files, access a file or folder's Move on the contextual menu.
2. Select Copy or Move. Alternatively, select multiple check boxes and select Copy or Move on the Action Bar. To rename a file or folder, select Edit from the contextual menu.
3. On the Copy or Move page, click Browse to select a destination folder for the file or folder.
4. On the **Select Folder** page, you can:
   - Select a folder copy or move the file or folder to.
   - Click a folder's name to select a sub-folder.
   - Select **Select current directory** on the Action Bar to copy or move a file or folder from a sub-folder to the top-level Course Files folder.
   - Click **Create Folder** on the Action Bar and create a new folder in the current folder.

5. Click **Submit** on the **Select Folder** page.

6. Click **Submit** again on the **Copy** or **Move** page. The copied or moved file or folder appears in the folder selected.

**Result**

**Copied Files and Folders**

When you copy a folder, links to the content in the folder are *not* copied. The content remains linked to the files inside the original folder. The files inside the copied folder lose their original permissions and inherit any new
moved files and folders

when you move a file or folder, the links to content in your course remain intact. if you move a file to a different folder, it maintains its original permissions. it does not inherit permissions associated with the parent folder. the same is true for all files in a moved folder. to learn more about permissions, see controlling access to course files.

how to overwrite a file in course files

you can edit and overwrite individual files in course files while maintaining the course links to those files.

example:

when creating a content item in the getting started content area, you create a link to the syllabus file in course files. later, you need to make changes to the file. you edit a copy of the file on your computer and upload the new version of the syllabus to course files using the overwrite file function. the link to the file in the content area remains intact. when students access the syllabus in your course, they see the revised content.

before you begin

make changes to a file on your computer that was previously uploaded to course files, as well as linked in your course.

two methods to overwrite a file

1. in course files, use the overwrite file function in a file’s contextual menu to browse for the edited file on your computer. the system overwrites the existing file in course files with the same name, even if the file from your computer has a different name. if the file is linked in your course, the link remains intact and the edits appear.
2. A file uploaded to Course Files with the same name as an existing file generates a prompt to overwrite the existing file with the new file. Overwriting a file is permanent and final. To keep both versions, change the name of one file or store one of the files in a different folder.

**Result**

When you edit or overwrite a file, changes made to the file appear in your course. You do not need to edit the link in your course. For example, you can edit and overwrite one or more files in an unzipped package, such as a lesson linked in your course. You do not need to remove the entire unzipped package and upload it again after editing. The link to the lesson will remain intact in your course.

When you overwrite files in Course Files, file names and link titles in your course do not change. For example, if the original linked file in your course is named `group.presentation.doc` and you overwrite the file with `group_information.doc`, the original file name of `group.presentation.doc` remains in your course. This is different than some familiar workflows, such as in Windows Explorer, but it enables you to easily change content without creating new links.

**How to Download Files and Folders From Course Files**

You can select files and folders in Course Files and download them to your computer as a zipped package. This is helpful if you want to reuse selected files and folders in other courses or edit several files and folders offline.

1. In Course Files, select the check boxes next to the files and folders to include in the zipped package.
2. On the Action Bar, click **Download Package**.
3. In the pop-up window, select **Save** and click **OK** to save the zipped package to your computer. The file name for the file is the course ID with the .zip extension.

**Result**

Files and folders you edit on your computer and upload again into Course Files retain their links in your course, as long as the original file names remain. If you change the name of a file or folder while it is on your computer, a new file or folder is saved in Course Files when uploading. The edits made to the file or folder will not show in your course where it is linked. When uploading, you can overwrite files which you may have renamed while on your computer to ensure course links remain intact. To learn more, see [How to Overwrite a File in Course Files](#).

**How to Search for Files and Folders in Course Files**

Search for files and folders within Course Files using the **Search** function in the **Files** section of the Control Panel.

**Note:** If this feature is not available, your school may have disabled the feature.

**Quick and Basic Search**

To perform a quick search of Course Files, expand the **Files** section of the Control Panel. Type a keyword or text string in the text box and click **Go**. Searches are **not** case-sensitive. Results appear on the **Search Content** page. The search produces files and folders in the specific course, not from across courses.
Alternatively, click **Basic Search** below the text box in the **Files** section to open the **Basic Search** page in the content frame. A basic search locates files and folders based on a keyword or single text string AND allows you to search file contents. Select the check box for **Search File Contents**. File contents are indexed periodically, so new content may not be found immediately. Searching file contents can increase the search time.
Controlling Access to Course Files

You determine who can view and perform actions on your files and folders available in Course Files by changing the permissions for users.

By default, the roles of course builder, instructor, and teaching assistant (TA) receive read, write, remove, and manage permissions for files and folders they upload directly to Course Files. Students do not receive any permissions for a file or folder until you link it to content in your course. After you link a file or folder to content, it is assigned the read permission for all course users, which includes all users enrolled in your course. Students can view and download the linked file or folder.

You can change the permissions for all files and folders in Course Files. For example, to allow all teaching assistants to view and download—but prevent them from editing or deleting a particular file—change the permission for the teaching assistant user list to read permission.

The following table describes the privileges for each type of permission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Permission</th>
<th>Privileges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read</td>
<td>View and download</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Edit and overwrite&lt;br&gt;Upload files and folders to a folder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove</td>
<td>Delete files from the folder or the folder itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage</td>
<td>Control properties&lt;br&gt;Determine permissions on the Manage Permissions page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To copy a file or folder, users need read permission for the file or folder (and all its files and sub-folders) and write permission for the destination folder.

To move a file or folder, users need read and remove permissions for the file or folder (and all its files and sub-folders) and write permission for the destination folder.

How to Edit User Permissions

1. In Course Files, navigate to the folder or file.
2. Click the Permissions icon for the file or folder.
3. On the Manage Permissions page, next to the role in the User/User List column, access the contextual menu.
4. Select Edit.
**Note:** Delete removes the role and the permissions for the file or folder. To restore a deleted role, click Add Course User List on the Action Bar. On the Add Course User List page, add or edit one or more roles and set the permissions for the file or folder.

5. On the Edit Permissions page, select or clear the check box next to the Permissions type. For folders, select the Overwrite check box to make these permissions changes for all folder contents and sub-folders and replace all existing permissions. If you do not select Overwrite, the selected permissions are added to all folder contents and sub-folders, but previously existing permissions are not removed.

6. Click Submit.
7. Click **OK** to return to Course Files.

**About Editing Folder Permissions**

When you upload files to folders, they inherit the same permissions as the parent folder. After uploading files, you can edit permissions.

When you *copy* a file to a different folder, it loses its original permissions and inherits the permissions associated with its new parent folder. However, when you *move* a file to a different folder, it maintains its original permissions. The file does not inherit permissions associated with the parent folder.

**Example: Editing and Overwriting Folder Permissions**

Your teaching assistant has read permission for a folder named Course Notes, and has read and write permissions for the Week 1 file within that folder. You edit the Course Notes folder permissions and add manage permission. Now your teaching assistant has read and manage permissions for the Course Notes folder and read, write, and manage permissions for the file.

If you select the **Overwrite** option, your teaching assistant has read and manage permissions for the folder and all files within it, including the Week 1 file.

**Note:** Even after using the **Overwrite** option for the entire folder, you can edit an individual file’s permissions,
**Example: Copying and Moving Files into Folders**

You add the following file and folder:

- File named **Terminology**. You assign course builders to have read and write permissions.
- Folder named **Assignments**. You assign course builders no permissions.

If you *copy* the Terminology file to the Assignments folder, course builders have no permissions for the file in the Assignments folder. If you *move* the file, course builders retain the read and write permissions for the file.

**Moving Files to Course Files**

*Note:* This help topic is applicable only for moving existing course content in pre-9.1 Blackboard Learn courses to release 9.1 (and higher) Course Files folders.

You can use the **Move Files to Course Files** tool to move specific existing course content in pre-9.1 Blackboard Learn courses to the Blackboard Learn 9.1 (and higher) Course Files folder to take advantage of its capabilities.

You can access the **Move Files** tool in the Control Panel to move files on a course-by-course basis.

**About Moving Files to Course Files**

Using the **Move Files** tool to move course content to Course Files is only necessary in specific scenarios where pre-9.1 courses are copied to or reused in a 9.1 installation and the files were not moved previously by your school.

Do not use the **Move Files** tool when Export and Import processes are used to move courses to the 9.1 installation. The import operation ensures that all file attachments in a pre-9.1 course are placed in Course Files of the new course so you can begin managing files in a central location.

When you move files from local file storage to Course Files, the resulting folder structure reflects the Course Menu structure. After the files are moved, you can change the folder structure.

If a file with the same name exists in the folder, the name of the moved file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, **Course_Assignment.doc** becomes **Course_Assignment(1).doc**.

All content moved to Course Files is stored in a sub-folder of the `/courses/MyCourseID` directory. The sub-folder is named using the following format: **Course_ID_ImportedContent_DateTimeStamp**.

*Note:* Your school must make this tool available to your course role.

**How to Move Files to Course Files**

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Packages and Utilities** section and select **Move Files to Course Files**.
2. On the Move Files to Course Files page, in the Select Course section, select the check box to move all of the content in your course to Course Files. The Source Course ID that appears is for the course you are in.

3. Click Submit.

About the Types of Content Moved

The Move Files tool moves all files attached to course Content Areas to the Course Files folder. This includes files originally uploaded to your course using the Attach File options available on specific pages in the application, as well as files attached using the Content Editor. The following lists include the files that are moved and not moved when using the tool.

**Types of Content Moved**

- Content folders
- Content items
- Course links
- Instructions
• Web links
• Learning modules

Types of Content Not Moved

• Self and Peer Assessments
• Messages
• Tests, surveys, and question pools
• Assignments
• Course cartridges
• Items uploaded to the **Grade Assignment** page by an instructor, including comments for a specific user
• Student files uploaded when participating in course activities, such as uploading an assignment document or attaching files when creating journal entries
Content Collection

About Content Management and the Content Collection

If your school licenses content management, Instructors can store, share, and publish content within personal user folders, course folders, and Institution Folders in the Content Collection throughout Courses in Blackboard Learn. Files and Portfolios may be linked to from different areas in a Course and items from a Course may be added to a folder in the Content Collection.

If the Content Collection is available, a Content Collection tab will appear in the Blackboard Learn user interface.

Adding Portfolios to a Course

It is easy for Instructors to quickly add Portfolios stored in the Content Collection to their Courses. These Portfolios may be viewed by all users enrolled in the Course. Portfolios can be shared with a Course and this process must be complete from the Content Collection tab.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school may disable Portfolios or your institution may not license the Content Collection; if this is the case the option will not be available within your Course if the tool is disabled.

All Portfolios that have been shared with a Course are located on the Course Portfolios page. Click Course Portfolios from the Control Panel under Course Tools to access the Portfolios Homepage.

How to Create a New Personal Portfolio

1. Click My Portfolios on the Portfolios Homepage.
2. Click Add Personal Portfolio.
3. Click Create new.
4. Type a Title.
5. Type a Description.
6. Click Save and Continue.
7. Select a Layout.
8. Select a Background Color and Background Image.
9. Select the Font Settings.
10. Select the Menu Style and Menu Font.
11. Designate a status for the Tab by clicking Mark step as in progress or Mark step as complete.
12. Click Save and Continue.
13. Build the Portfolio by adding pages and ordering them.
14. Click Save and Continue.
15. Click Complete if the Portfolio is finished and ready for display to reviewers.
16. Click Available.
17. Click Comments are Private to hide comments from others.
18. Designate a status for the Tab by clicking Mark step as in progress or Mark step as complete.
19. Click Save and Exit.
How to Create a Template-Based Portfolio

1. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios Homepage.
2. Click **Add Personal Portfolio**.
3. Click **Select Existing**.
4. Select a Portfolio template.
5. Click **Save and Continue**.
6. Select a **Layout**.
7. Select a **Background Color** and **Background Image**.
8. Select the **Font Settings**.
9. Select the **Menu Style** and **Menu Font**.
10. Designate a status for the Tab by clicking **Mark step as in progress** or **Mark step as complete**.
11. Click **Save and Continue**.
12. Build the Portfolio by adding pages and ordering them.
13. Click **Save and Continue**.
14. Click **Complete** if the Portfolio is finished and ready for display to reviewers.
15. Click **Available**.
16. Click **Comments are Private** to hide comments from others.
17. Designate a status for the Tab by clicking **Mark step as in progress** or **Mark step as complete**.
18. Click **Save and Exit**.

Sharing a Portfolio

After Portfolios have been added to a Course, they may be shared with other course members or people outside of Blackboard Learn.

How to Share a Portfolio with Users in a Course

Portfolios are made available to users through the Content Collection. Before adding Portfolios to the Course, the Portfolio must be shared first. Follow the steps below:

1. Click **Portfolios Homepage** on the Tools menu.
2. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios page.
3. Select **Edit** next to the appropriate Portfolio
4. Click **Share Portfolio**.
5. Click **Share with Users**.
6. Click **Browse** to select users.
7. Click Send Email to notify the users that a Portfolio has been shared with them.
8. Edit the Subject text if necessary. There is default text in the field.
9. Edit the message text in the text box. There is default text in the Text Box.
10. Click **Send copy of message to self** if necessary.
11. Click **Use blind carbon copy (Bcc:)** if necessary.
12. Click **Submit**.
A Course Portfolio area appears in the Course Menu. Users may view Portfolios that have been shared with the Course in this area.

**How to Share a Portfolio with External Users**

Portfolios are shared with users outside of the Blackboard Learn.

1. Click **Portfolios Homepage** on the Tools menu.
2. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios page.
3. Select **Edit** next to the appropriate Portfolio.
4. Click **Share Portfolio**.
5. Click **Share with External Users**.
6. Type the appropriate email addresses in the Email Recipients field. Use commas when entering multiple addresses: fido@university.edu, spot@company.com, rover@nonprofit.net.
7. Click **Send copy of message to self** if necessary.
8. Click **Use blind carbon copy (Bcc:)** if necessary.
9. Click Use password and enter a password to protect the Portfolio.
10. Click Include password in email if necessary.
11. Determine the length of time the Portfolio is shared:
    - **No expiration**
    - **Lifetime**: Type a number in the first field and choose a time measurement from the drop-down list.
12. Click **Submit**.

**How to Share a Portfolio with Courses or Organizations**

1. Click **Portfolios Homepage** on the Tools menu.
2. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios page.
3. Select **Edit** next to the appropriate Portfolio.
4. Click **Share Portfolio**.
5. Select **Share with Courses** or **Share with Organizations** from the Other Items drop-down list.
6. Click **Browse** to select courses or organizations. Use commas when entering multiple courses or organizations.
7. Click **Submit**.

*Note*: After a Portfolio is shared, it must be made available in the Course before it may be accessed by users.

**How to Share a Portfolio with Institution Roles**

1. Click **Portfolios Homepage** on the Tools menu.
2. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios page.
3. Select **Edit** next to the appropriate Portfolio.
4. Click **Share Portfolio**.
5. Select **Share with Institution Roles** from the Other Items drop-down list.
6. Select the **Roles** and use the arrow buttons to move them to the **Selected Roles** field.
7. Click **Submit**.

How to Share a Portfolio with All System Accounts

Allow this Portfolio to be searched by All System Accounts from Portfolio Search.

1. Click **Portfolios Homepage** on the Tools menu.
2. Click **My Portfolios** on the Portfolios page.
3. Select **Edit** next to the appropriate Portfolio.
4. Click **Share Portfolio**.
5. Select **Share with All System Accounts** from the Other Items drop-down list.
6. Click **Submit**.

Copying Files to the Content Collection

The Copy Files to Collection tool enables Instructors to copy content from their Courses in Blackboard Learn to a folder in the Content Collection. This is very helpful for Instructors who have attached files that exist outside of the Content Collection to Course Content Areas. Items that are added through to the Content Collection may be used in new Courses, shared with other users, and added to Portfolios.

This tool is meant for adding new content to the Content Collection. It does not detect Content Collection items that have been added to a Course or make changes to the Course itself.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school may disable the Copy Files to Collection tool. This tool will not be available if it is disabled by the Administrator.

Types of Content That Can Be Copied

The Copy Files to Collection tool copies files that have been attached to Course Content Areas. These files are originally added the Course through the **File to Attach** option available on specific pages in the application or the third row action buttons in the Text Editor.

The Copy Files to Collection tool copies items attached to the following:

- Content folders
- Content items
- Course Links
- Assignments
- Instructions
- Web links
- Learning Modules

**Note:** All attachments associated with unprotected Course Cartridges are copied; protected cartridge content will not be copied.

Types of Content that Cannot Be Copied

Attachments added to the following areas of a Course are NOT added to Content Management through the Copy files to CS tool:
• Attachments added to any Assessment areas (this includes Tests, Surveys and Question Pools)
• Attachments added to Discussion Board messages, including Group Discussion Board messages
• Files uploaded to the File Exchange by Instructors
• Items added to the grade Assignment page by the Instructor are not copied. These items include comments for a specific user and are sent when the Assignment is graded. (Items added to the Add Assignment page by an Instructor are copied)

Student files added to a Course are also not copied, this includes:
• Files uploaded to the File Exchange by users
• Files uploaded by users to Assignments

How to Enable Copy Files to Collection

Instructors have the option of enabling or disabling the Copy Files to Collection tool for each of their Courses. The tool is disabled by default when a Course is created. Follow the steps below to enable the Check Collection Links tool:

1. Open the Control Panel for a Course.
2. Under Course Tools, click Manage Tools.
4. Select the checkbox under Available for Copy Files to Collection and click Submit.

*Note:* The Blackboard administrator at your school may disable the Copy Files to Collection for the entire system. This tool will not be available within Courses if it is disabled by the Administrator.

How to Copy Files to Collection

Instructors access the Copy Files to Collection tool within the Control Panel of a Course.

Follow the steps below to run the Copy Files to Collection Tool:

1. Under Packages and Utilities, click Copy Files to Collection. The Copy Files to Collection page appears.
2. Under Select Areas, use the check boxes for those areas that will be copied. In each area selected, attached items will be copied to the Content Collection.
3. The path in the Destination field defaults to the location of the course folder in Course Content in the Content Collection. The path to a different folder may be entered.

*Note:* Users can only copy content to folders within the Content Collection to which they have Write permission.

A receipt page appears after the copy is complete. The receipt states all areas that were successfully copied and any that have failed. The copied items will appear in the Content Collection in a folder named Copied Content.

Running the Tool Multiple Times

The Copy Files to Collection tool may be run on the same Course multiple times. This may be helpful in the following situations:

• Too much or too little content was selected to copy and a clean copy is needed.
• If files were copied at the beginning of the term, the process may need to be run at the end of the term to copy additional files that have been uploaded.
Each time this tool is run, a new set of folders appears in the Content Collection. If the content is copied to the same area, for example Course Content, the Copied Content folder is appended with the number of the copy. For example, the folder created after the tool is run a second time is named Course ID Copied Content (2).

**File Structure in the Content Collection**

All files copied to the Content Collection are stored in the destination folder selected on the Select Areas to Copy page. All of the content from the Course is stored in a folder with the following naming convention: Course ID Copied Content. The structure of files within Copied Content mimics the structure of the files in the Course.

**Example**

The copy from History100 included Course Documents and Course Information.

Course Documents folder contained:
- A Course item with the file Syllabus.doc attached.
- A Course folder named Chapter One (no items attached to the folder).
- In the Chapter One folder - a Course item with the file WeekOne.doc attached.

Course Information folder contained a Course item with the file CourseOverview.doc attached. The structure of files within the Content Collection will be as follows:

```
>History 100 folder
   >History100 Copied Content folder
      >Course Documents folder
         >Syllabus.doc
         >Chapter One folder
            >weekOne.doc
      >Course Information folder
         >CourseOverview.doc
```

**Copying Special File Attachments**

There are a few cases where copied content receives special treatment in the Content Collection:
- Content uploaded to Blackboard Learn, as package files (for example, zip files) where the user selected to unpackage this file are copied to the Content Collection in the zip file format with the unpackaged items under a folder with the following format: dir_fileattachmentname.fileextension
  
  For example, a file called unzipme.zip is unpackaged at the root of the Course Information folder. The Content Collection will have both the unpackagae.zip file at the root of the Course Information folder and also dir_unzipme.zip that contains the contents of the original file.
- All files uploaded through the Text Editor are copied to individual sub-folders named embedded(unique#). This is also true for files uploaded through the Text field when the Text Editor is not available.
- When an HTML file that contains references to images is uploaded, the user is prompted to upload the images. These are "missing images". Missing images are copied to a folder with the following format: dir_fileattachmentname.fileextension
Copying Files with the Same Name

The Content Collection does not allow a folder to contain multiple files with the same name. This type of duplication is permitted within Courses in Blackboard Learn. The same is true of folders with the same name.

When files and folders with the same name are copied to the same folder in the Content Collection, the names will be appended with a number. For example, if two files named Syllabus.doc are copied to the same folder, they will appear as Syllabus.doc and Syllabus1.doc.

Exporting/Importing and Archiving/Restoring Content Collection Items

When a Course in Blackboard Learn is exported or archived, links to any Content Collection files are included. If a package is then imported or restored, these links are included in the content. The behavior of these links depends on the state of the items in the Content Collection.

Items Remaining in the Content Collection

If the items are stored in the same location within the Content Collection, the links to these items in the Course will function properly. The Instructor needs to check the permissions for these items as they may need to be edited. Permissions for this item need to be granted to the Course User list so all users enrolled in the Course may access the items. If users do not have permissions to the item, an **Access Denied** error message appears when they select the link.

Items Restored or Imported to a Course without the Content Collection

If a Course package is restored or imported to a Course in Blackboard Learn without the Content Collection, all of the links to Content Collection items in the imported or restored Course will be broken. This is because the Course saves a link to each item, not the actual files.

The Instructor must delete the links to these items from the Course. If the items are accessible, they are added to the Content Collection and linked to again from the Course.

**Note:** If the Content Collection is moved or deleted, the same behavior described above will occur. All of the links to the Content Collection items will be broken.

Copying Courses and Content Collection Items

Links to Content Collection items in a Course are copied during a Course copy operation. Because links to Content Collection items are copied and not physical files, all users must have permission within the Content Collection to view these files. Users in the new Course will not have the appropriate permission. When a user without the appropriate permission to a Content Collection item selects a link to the item in the Course, an **Access Denied** message appears.
The Instructor must add permission for these users to the item in the Content Collection or the Administrator may enable the Copy Settings options to automatically edit permissions when a Course is copied.

**Note:** The automatic permissions upgrade only applies to Courses that are copied. If a Course is imported or restored, user permissions to Content Collection items linked to in the Course are not automatically upgraded, the above will occur. All of the links to Content Collection items will be broken.

### Automatically Updating Permissions for Content Collection Items

A Copy Settings option is available for Administrators to manage the permissions of Content Collection items that are copied as part of a Course copy operation. There are two options the Administrator may enable in the system. One or both may be enabled. If these options are enabled, the permissions for Content Collection items located in almost all Course areas will be automatically updated.

- **Update permissions for general links:** If this option is selected, all users enrolled in a copied Course automatically receive Read permission to Content Management items linked to in the Course.
- **Update permissions for e-Reserve links:** If this option is selected, all users in a copied Course automatically receive Read permission to e-Reserves items linked to in the Course.

**Note:** The one exception to this is Tests. The permissions for Content Collection items linked to in Tests, Surveys, and Questions Pools are not automatically updated. The Instructor must update the permissions to these items manually through Content Management.

### Item Permissions in the Content Collection

When a Content Collection item is copied through Course Copy and the permissions are automatically updated, the new permissions are visible for the item in the Content Collection. When a Content Collection item is viewed in the Content Collection, Read permission will appear for All Course Users.

### Organizing and Managing Content

#### Organizing Content in Folders

Before adding any content to the Content Collection, users should plan out how they will manage their content. This will allow them to organize content in a way which best meets their individual needs.

Files in the Content Collection are organized in a tree structure of nested folders up to, and including, the content area level. This means that each folder may contain other subfolders and files. The term "items" refers to files and folders.

A folder stores both files and other folders. Folders are automatically available to the user who added the folder but must be shared if other users are to view the folder and its contents. It is important to remember that all folders are contained within other folders up to the root (/) folder. Root folders are folders in which all other folders are placed. Content Areas, such as Users, Courses, Institution, and Library, are simply folders stored under the root folder.

The system does not allow subfolders with the same name in a single parent folder. For example, two folders named Group Projects may not be created in the top-level of the username folder. The system also does not allow files with the same name to exist in a folder.

#### Using Private Content Space and Public Content Space

Creating separate folders for personal content (private space) and folders that are available to other users...
(public space) is very helpful. This method allows the user to have certain folders available only to them, where they can store personal content. For example, one personal folder may contain papers and projects that are in progress, while another contains professional content that is not ready to be shared, such as resumes and cover letters for jobs. Additional permissions for these personal folders are not granted to anyone else.

When a document is ready to be shared, it may be copied or moved to a public folder. For example, if an Instructor is working on a Course document he or she can create the draft in a personal folder, and then move it to a shared folder when it is complete. The shared folder is shared with all users enrolled in the class (public space that is set to be available to only course members), and allows for collaboration.

Creating a Private Folder

A private folder is created in the same way as other folders in the Content Collection, through the Add Folder option. The permissions granted on the folder determine whether or not it is private.

In the username folder, a private folder is a subfolder that is not shared with any other users. A user may create a subfolder in his or her username folder and not grant any other users permissions to it.

In a Course folder, a private folder may be specifically for the Instructor, or it may also be accessible by users with other Course Roles. For example, a private subfolder may be created with permissions granted to the Instructor, Teaching Assistant, and Course Builder. This folder would not be available to any Students enrolled in the Course.

Creating a Public Folder

Similar to private folders, public folders are created in the same way as other folders, using the Add Folder option. The permissions granted on a folder determine whether or not it becomes to multiple users and groups of users. Any user with Manage Permissions may share the item with a wider audience.

In a username folder, a public folder may be created and shared with a group of users collaborating on a project.

In a Course folder, a public folder may be created and shared with all users enrolled in the Course. This folder would include course information or articles that the whole class needs to read.

Related Tutorials Creating a Folder in the Content Collection (Flash movie | 2m 15s)

About the Library

Instructors can enhance their courses by adding content from the Library. The Library is used to post eReserves, electronic manuscripts, and other Institution resources. It allows seamless integration with Blackboard Learn, making it a powerful way to share and distribute library materials. Instructors can use the Library content to supplement their course offerings.

By default, there are two main areas within the Library:

- Library Content
- eReserves

The Blackboard administrator at your school can add additional areas to the Library to meet your school's specific needs.

Library Content

The Library is a folder within the Library that can be organized according to your school's specific needs. This area is intended for content that may be shared across the entire school.
User Access to Library Content

All users have read access to all content within Library Content by default.

Instructor Access to Library Content

Instructors may add items from Library Content to courses within Blackboard Learn.

How to Add Content from the Library to a Course

Instructors may add items from the Library to their Course Content Areas. This includes items that appear in their course folders within eReserves, as well as items from Library Content. Follow the steps below to add an item from the Library to a Course:

1. Turn **Edit Mode** is **ON**.
2. Open a Content Area.
3. Point to **Build Content** and select **Item**.
4. Type a Name for the link.
5. Type a description in the text box.
6. Click **Browse** next to **Link to Content Management Item**.
7. Use the Course Map to select the item from the Library.
8. Permit users to view the content item by clicking Yes.
9. Track the number of views by clicking Yes.
10. Choose the date and time restrictions by using the **Display After** and **Display Until** date and time fields. Click both the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the chosen dates and times.
11. Click **Submit**.

Instructors also have the option of adding items in the Content Collection to Courses through the Text Editor. The **Add Item** option in the third row action bar of Text Editor may be used to locate and add items in Content Management.

**Note:** Only items within the eReserve course folder that correspond with that Course may be added to the Course. Content in eReserve course folders for other Courses you may be teaching may not be added. All items within Library Content are available to use within a Course.

eReserves

The eReserves area is a folder within the Library that contains materials for which access must be controlled, such as documents with copyrights. This area may be made available only for courses. eReserves are not available for organizations.

eReserves are automatically organized by course. Each course in Blackboard Learn has a corresponding course in eReserves.

**Note:** The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this folder is available. If this folder is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

User Access to eReserves

All users have automatic read access to eReserves for courses they are enrolled in. eReserve folders for other courses do not appear in the file tree.
Instructor Access to eReserves

Instructors may add items from eReserves to courses within Blackboard Learn.

Managing eReserve Folders

Generating Course Folders in eReserves

Course folders within eReserves are automatically generated the first time the Instructor, Teaching Assistant, or Course Builder accesses the Content Collection after the Course is created. If a Course is added to the Blackboard Learn, the eReserve course folder will appear to Course users the first time the Instructor accesses the Content Collection.

Controlling Course Availability and eReserves

The ability to see the eReserve folder when the Course is made unavailable depends on the user’s Course Role. Instructors, Course Builders, and Teaching Assistants can see the folder whether the Course is available or unavailable. Students can only see the eReserve course folder when the Course is available.

Deleting a Course and eReserves

If a Course is deleted from the Blackboard Learn, the eReserve folder, and all of its content, is also deleted.

Organizing Folder Permissions

Organizing Folders

It is helpful if users organize folders in a way that allows them to manage permissions by folder, rather than by file. For example, create a folder that contains all files used in a group project. This way the entire folder may be shared with the group members, rather than trying to manage permissions on separate items stored in different folders.

Only Read permission should be added to a top-level folder, for example the username folder. Any time a permission is added or changed on the top-level folder, check any subfolders or files designated as Private and verify that additional permissions have not inadvertently been added that would expose protected information.

Sharing Folders

When adding folders and files to the Content Collection, keep in mind which users and user lists the content will be shared with. Try to create folders in which all items are to be shared with the same users. When items shared with the same users are spread out among different folders, it may become very difficult to manage. For example, if the user plans on creating documents that will be applicable to all users at the Institution, they should create a folder that will be shared with All System Users, then add the specific items to this folder.

Sharing files

Files are automatically available to the user that added the file but must be shared if other users are to view the item.

Files inherit permissions from the folder they reside in. This means that if a file is added to a folder that already has Read and Write permission for certain users or user lists, the those same users will also have Read and Write permission on the newly added file.
Setting Overwrite Options on Folders

When editing or adding permissions to a parent folder, the user has the option to force all files and subfolders to inherit these permissions. For example, if the Read and Write permissions are added to the folder, and an item within the folder has Read, Write, and Remove permissions, Remove permissions would be deleted from the file. All subfolders and files within the parent folder would be granted Read and Write permissions.

If this option is not selected, the files and subfolders are automatically granted any additional permission given to the parent folder, but existing permissions are not deleted. For example, if Read, Write and Manage permissions are added to the folder, and an item within the folder has Read, Write, and Remove permissions, the permissions for the file would remain Read, Write and Remove, and Manage would be added.

After editing permissions on a folder, the user may edit the permissions on an item, but these will be overwritten the next time permissions on the parent folder are edited. This is one reason storing items with the same purpose and audience in a single folder makes managing permissions much easier.

Sharing and Finding Content

A number of tools are available to facilitate sharing content and searching for content that has been shared. These options are dependent on the level of the folder shared, for example granting permission on a top-level folder versus a subfolder. Remember that when a folder is shared, permissions are granted to all content in the folder.

Finding Folders

The Find Folder option allows users to search for top-level folders they have permissions to, for example if another user has granted him or her Read permission on a username folder. When a user is granted permissions to a top-level folder, the Find Folder option allows the user to locate the folder and add it to his or her Content Collection menu, making it easy to access the folder on a regular basis.

Users may decide to share a top-level folder with another user, and then adjust the permissions on the content within, limiting the content this user may access. For example, grant the user Read permission on the username folder. Then open the folder and delete Read permission for the content this user should not view. The user may still use the Find Folder option, but they will only view specific content in the folder.

Searching for Files and Folders

Search allows users to locate all files and folders that have been shared with them. When a search is performed only those items to which a user has permissions will be returned. If permissions are granted on a nested folder (and not the top-level folder) the user may search for the folder and bookmark it; the Find Folder option may not be used on nested folders.

Going To a Location

Go to Location allows users to go directly to a specific folder that has been shared with them in the Content Collection. This time-saver allows users to enter the path to open a folder and Bookmark the location at the same time.

Bookmarking Folders

Bookmarks enable quick access to frequently used content a without having to navigate through several folders. Bookmarks are organized into folders and subfolders as needed by the user. This tool is helpful when permissions are granted on a nested folder, since the Find Folder tool may not be used.
Sending Workflow Activities

If a user is expected to take action or respond to an item, it is helpful to send a Workflow Activity with the item. When a Workflow Activity is created, users are selected to share the item with and permissions are granted. An option may also be selected to send an email to these users stating that this item has been shared with them and that a Workflow Activity is attached to it.

Creating Passes

Passes may be used to share a file with a user for a specific amount of time. This is especially useful for sharing files with users who do not have system accounts. When a pass is created, the user decides whether to grant Read or Read and Write permission to the file with the pass. When the time allotted for the pass is over, the user will no longer be able to access the file.

Creating Portfolios

Portfolios allow users to collect and organize files into custom Web pages. These Portfolios can then be presented to individuals and groups of users. It is important that users consider the permissions granted to files that are linked to in a Portfolio. If another user has permissions (other than Read) to a file that is linked to a Portfolio, the file may be edited or deleted, resulting in issues for the Portfolio users.

Organizing Course Folders

A Course folder for each Course appears by default under Courses. The default roles that have full permissions (Read, Write, Manage, and Remove) to this folder when the folder is first created are Instructors, Teaching Assistants, and Course Builders. The Administrator may edit this default. For example, the Administrator may set it so that when a Course folder is first created, only Instructors and TAs have full permissions. It is very important to understand which permissions have been granted to the folder before proceeding with setting up subfolders and additional permissions.

Any user with Manage permission on the course folder can grant additional permissions on that folder to other users. For example, an Instructor may want to grant Read permission to all Students in the Course to the course folder, and Read and Write permission to a public folder created beneath the main course folder.

Storing Single Course Content

The temporary nature of Courses makes the course folder (tied to the Course ID) useful for storing content that is specific to a single Course. If a Course is deleted, the folder tied to the Course ID is no longer accessible. If content that is stored in the course folder does need to be reused, options for copying and moving items are available.

It may be easier to store content that is used in multiple Courses in the Institution Folder or the Instructor's user folder. This also depends on how the Administrator configures the Institution Folder and its availability. Keep in mind that if Course-related content is stored in a user folder, and it has not been shared. This content will be unavailable if the user leaves the Institution and is deleted from the system.

Folder Examples

Subfolders within the course folder may be used to store both private and public content. The following are some examples of folders that may be created in the course folder:
Private Folder
A folder shared with the Instructor, Teaching Assistant, and other applicable Course Roles that contain private course information, such as test and survey results. These users all have Read, Write, Manage and Remove permission on the folder.

*Note:* The Instructor may decide to retain the course folder as a workspace for the Course, and not allow users to access any items in the course folder. Instead, the Instructor may link to Content Collection items from the Course. In this scenario, the entire course folder would be a private folder.

Group Folders
Folders shared with Course groups, which may be used as group collaboration areas. There are a few options for setting this up:

- Grant all Students in the Course Read access on the top-level course folder. Remove Read permission for Students to all private folders. Add permissions for each group to their respective Group folder. This option allows Students to use the Find Folder tool to locate the Group folder.
- Grant each Course Group permission to their respective Group folder in the Course (do not grant any permission for Course users to the top-level course folder). The Students may use Search, Go To Location, and Bookmarks to locate the folder.

Public Folder
Folder shared with all Course users where they may access Course related materials, such as the syllabus or reading list. There are a few options for setting this up:

- Grant all Students in the Course Read access on the top-level course folder. Remove Read permission for Students to all private folders. Add permissions for all Course users to the public folder. This option allows Students to use the Find Folder tool to locate the public folder.
- Grant all Course users permissions to the public folder (do not grant any permission for Course users to the top-level course folder). The Students may use Search, Go To Location, and Bookmarks to locate the public folder.

Using web folders and shared locations
WebDAV is used for sharing files over the Internet and is compatible with most operating systems. When used with Blackboard Learn, WebDAV is a means for users to add to and access content in course files or the Content Collection, as if it were any other network drive or folder on their computers.

*Note:* Students cannot upload to course files.

When WebDAV—or a web folder— is set up, you can manage all the files for your course from your computer, dragging in content from multiple drives and folders and organizing it as needed.

**IMPORTANT!** When using a Mac, you will set up a shared location rather than a web folder.

You can perform other actions on the files and folders in a web folder or shared location because the folder structure is visible and can be navigated. Also, it is possible to edit a file directly in a web folder or shared location, without downloading it, editing it, and uploading it again. For users who have moved pre-9.1 content containing HTML files, they can use a web folder or shared location to access their files for editing in the program of their choice.

All you need to connect to a web folder or shared location is the web address of the course files or Content Collection folder and a valid username and password. web folders and shared locations mount a folder and all
its subfolders and files to the operating system. Files may be opened and accessed with any appropriate application for viewing and editing.

Many users are accustomed to using WebDAV and prefer to continue to use this method for file management.

**Web Folder Availability**

If web folders are not available, the Blackboard administrator at your school may have disabled the feature.

**About File Names**

The characters that are acceptable in file names include:

- a-z
- 0-9
- period '.'
- underscore '_'

All standard ISO 8859 characters (not foreign characters or symbols) are also supported.

All spaces are converted to underscores '_' in the name of the uploaded file. Special characters are not supported in file names.

**How to Set up a web folder for Microsoft Windows©**

1. Access course files or the Content Collection.
2. Click *Set Up web folder* on the Action Bar of the top-level folder. Starting from this location ensures WebDAV access to all folders contained in the repository. Any folder may be selected inside course files or the Content Collection, but the web folder path must be less than 240 characters. Each folder selected has a different address.
3. On the *Using web folders* page, right-click and copy the URL that appears for *Current Web address*. You will paste the address in later steps.
5. Select *Add a network place* from the *Network Tasks* menu.
6. In the *Add Network Place Wizard*, select *Choose another network location* to create a shortcut.
7. Paste the URL for the web folder you copied earlier and click *Next*.
8. Type your Blackboard Learn username and password, if prompted. Type a name for the network place and click *Next*. Click *Finish* to close the wizard. You may be prompted again for a username and password.
9. The web folder opens and displays the files and folders in the course files or Content Collection folder. Locate the appropriate folder to which to add files or folders. Locate the folder on your computer containing the files and folders you want to transfer.
10. With your folder and the web folder open, move one or more files and folders between them using the drag-and-drop function. Click a file and press, then drag it to the destination folder. Release the mouse button and it is dropped in the folder. Files and folders dragged to the web folder are copied to the course files or the Content Collection. Also, files and folders from the web folder can be copied to your computer. Alternatively, use copy and paste rather than the drag-and-drop function.
11. In the repository, click *Refresh* on the Action Bar to view the added files.
After all files and folder have been copied, disconnect from the web folder. If you do not disconnect, the server connection remains open until the computer is shut down. If you use a computer that others use, they will have access to everything in your repository.

When you need to use the web folder in the future, access My Network Places and select the web folder shortcut you created.

**How to Set up a shared location for the Apple Mac OS©**

1. Access course files or the Content Collection.
2. Click **Set Up shared location** on the Action Bar of the top-level folder. Starting from this location ensures WebDAV access to all folders contained in the repository. Any folder may be selected inside Course Files or the Content Collection, but the Shared Folder path must be less than 240 characters. Each folder selected has a different address.
3. On the **Using shared location** page, copy the URL that appears for **Current Web address**. You will paste the address in later steps.
4. On the **Finder** bar, select **Go > Connect to Server**.
5. In the **Connect to Server** window, paste the URL you copied into the **Server Address** box. Click **Connect**.
   - **Note**: Click the plus sign next to the pasted address to add it to **Favorite Servers**. You can select the address and not copy it each time. In the future, start with step 4 to connect to this shared location.
6. If the **WebDAV File System Authentication** window appears, type your Blackboard Learn login username and password. Click **OK**.
7. Once you are connected to the shared location, the Mac network icon appears on your desktop. Double-click the icon to open the shared location. Locate the appropriate folder to which to add files or folders.
8. Locate the folder on your computer containing the files and folders you want to transfer.
9. With your folder and the shared location open, move one or more files and folders between them using the drag-and-drop function. Click a file and press, then drag it to the destination folder. Release the mouse button and it is dropped in the folder. Files and folders dragged to the shared location are copied to course files or the Content Collection. Also, files and folders from the shared location can be copied to your computer. Alternatively, use copy and paste rather than the drag-and-drop function.
10. In course files or the Content Collection, click **Refresh** on the Action Bar to view the added files.

After using the shared location, some files may appear with duplicate file names that begin with "_." or ".DS Store." They can be safely deleted from the repository.

When all files and folders have been copied, close the window and drag the Mac network icon to the trash to disconnect from the shared location. If you do not disconnect, the icon and server connection remain open until the computer is shut down. If you use a computer that others use, they will have access to everything in your repository.
Enterprise Surveys

About Enterprise Surveys

Enterprise surveys enable you to measure satisfaction levels, community engagement, and other attitudes that impact institutional effectiveness. Surveys provide indirect measurements of student learning by relying on self-reported data and implied success.

Note: Enterprise surveys are delivered at the system level. They do not replace course surveys that are available to instructors in their courses. To learn more about course surveys, see About Creating Tests and Surveys.

Enterprise surveys collect feedback from specific groups of people. Survey recipients are selected based on their role in the system, their enrollment in courses, or their membership in a department or business unit if your school licenses Community Engagement. You can also upload a list of recipient email addresses to target community members, business leaders, alumni, parents and other stakeholders.

Question types available in enterprise surveys include Likert scale, matrix, multiple choice, either/or, and open answer questions. You can add instructions, section breaks, and page breaks, as well as brand your survey with a customized header and footer.

You can send your survey out to multiple sets of recipients and analyze the results. Survey results are compared using response periods, which are sets of recipients and a timeframe that you specify. You can also compare by enrollments, membership, demographics, or by a specific survey question. You cannot generate reports to compare results from different surveys, only different response periods for the same survey. To analyze results from different surveys, download the survey data and use a third party analysis tool.

You need a special user account to access the enterprise survey tool. Your school creates this account for you. From the My Institution tab, select Enterprise Surveys on the Tools panel.
About the Enterprise Surveys Page

Use the search filters to locate existing surveys.

Click on a number in the **Response Groups** column to view a survey's response periods, status, and number of completed surveys.

Click **Analyze Results** to see the results of your survey and to compare the results of different response periods.

How to Create an Enterprise Survey

Creating a new survey is a multi-step process. Providing descriptive survey information helps you and other users you share your survey with to understand the content and purpose of the survey.

1. Click **Create Survey**.
2. Type a **Survey Name**.
3. Type an optional **Description** that appears with the survey name in the list of surveys available to you.
4. Select **Do not allow backtracking** if you do not want to allow recipients to return to previous questions.
5. Click **Submit**. The **Design Survey** page appears. Next, create questions and customize the look of the survey. To learn more, see **Designing Enterprise Surveys**.

To edit the enterprise survey after submitting, go to the **Enterprise Surveys** page, access its contextual menu, and select **Edit Survey Information**.

Designing Enterprise Surveys

After you create an enterprise survey, design the way it is presented to recipients. Add questions, customize the header or footer, and insert visual elements such as instructions, section breaks, and page breaks. All survey elements can be arranged with the drag-and-drop feature. Click **Preview** to see how the survey looks to recipients.
Design Survey

How to Edit the Header and Footer

The header appears at the top of all pages in the survey. The footer appears at the bottom of all pages in the survey and is a good location for copyright information, authoring information, and links to privacy and data collection policies.

1. Access the contextual menu for an existing survey and select Design Survey.
2. On the design survey page, access the contextual menu for Edit Header or Add Footer.
3. Select Edit or Add.
4. Use the Content Editor to format the text, insert images, add links, and embed media.
5. Click Submit.

Creating Questions

Point to Create Question and select a question type. Consider these factors as you select the types of questions to add.

- What you are trying to measure?
- How long will it take recipients to complete the survey?
- How do you want to compare and report on the submission data?

To form a rating scale, you can specify point values for all answer choices for all question types. The points contribute to a numerical rating for each answer. The ratings are an average of all responses and appear in analysis reports. The rating can be used to rank responses and make comparisons.

You can associate existing system goals to the questions to provide another level of analysis. Goals are added to the system by your school. You can use goals to group questions together in analysis reports.

You can add tags to questions so that you can group questions during the analysis. For example, a set of questions in a course survey can be tagged with the label Student Satisfaction and another set can be tagged with Teacher Performance. These sets of questions can then be grouped based on the tags and compared.

Question Types
Likert Scale

Likert scale questions ask respondents to indicate where their response falls in the range provided in the scale. Creating a Likert scale question is a two-step process. First, select one of the existing scales or make your own, then type the question.

Matrix

Matrix questions are designed to measure a set of related actions using the same scale. Matrix questions combine questions, which shortens the time it takes to complete the survey. When you create the question you select a scale, type a general question, and add a set of related actions.

Multiple Choice

Multiple choice questions have a lot of flexibility. Use them whenever you want to provide recipients with the option of selecting more than one answer. Questions can include formatted text, links, attachments, images, and multimedia.
Either/Or questions ask respondents to select one of two options such as Yes or No, True or False, Agree or Disagree. Use one of the default answer sets or create your own.

Open Entry questions ask respondents to type in an answer in the text box provided. Answers can be set to accept short responses up to 255 characters or long responses up to 1000 characters.
Format Survey with Visual Elements

Point to Create Visual Element and select one of the following:

- **Instructions**: Provide as many sets of instructions as needed to help respondents answer questions or groups of questions. Use the Content Editor to format the text, insert images, add links, and embed media. New instructions appear at the bottom of a survey. Drag them into place.

- **Section Break**: Inserting a section break adds a label to a group of questions, giving respondents context around the questions. This helps respondents provide quality answers if the survey spans several topics. You can select Start section on new page if you want the section break to also function as a page break. New section breaks appear at the bottom of a survey. Drag them into place.

- **Page Break**: Adding page breaks to the survey limits scrolling for respondents and allows them to focus on a few questions at a time. When you add a page break, a Next Page button appears at the bottom of the survey. If you have allowed backtracking in the survey information, a Previous Page button also appears. New page breaks appear at the bottom of a survey. Drag them into place.

Creating a Response Period for an Enterprise Survey

Response periods represent the group of people the survey is sent to in conjunction with the timeframe the survey is open to collect data. The most efficient way to send the survey to different groups of people and during different times is to create different response periods for a single survey. You compare the results of different response periods when you analyze the survey results.

Examples

- Create an undergraduate course evaluation with response periods for the fall term and the spring term. The students taking the survey and the timeframe the survey is open to collect data are different, but the questions are the same. Results from students enrolled in different terms can be analyzed based by different criteria such as their courses or the department they are affiliated with.

- Create a post graduation survey for all alumni and distribute it by email. Create response periods for each graduation year by using different email lists. Results can be analyzed based on graduation year and by question.
How to Create Response Periods

1. Access an existing enterprise survey’s contextual menu.
2. Select Response Period.
4. Type information on the Detailed Summary tab.
5. Click Save and Continue to progress through the Select Recipients, Notify, and Scheduling tabs. Information about each tab is available below.
6. Click Save and Exit when you are done setting the response period parameters.

You can return to a response period for further editing by going to the Response Periods page, accessing an existing response period's contextual menu, and selecting Edit Response Period.

How to Select Recipients

On the Select Recipients tab, you select survey recipients by place, by role, or by uploading email addresses. Response periods can have only one set of recipients based on their enrollment, role, email addresses. You cannot combine a list of uploaded email addresses with a set of students enrolled in a course in one response period. Instead, use the same survey and create two response periods, one for the email addresses and one for the enrolled users.
By Places

Places refer to course and organization enrollments. You can send surveys to all the users who are enrolled in courses, in organizations or in both. You can narrow down the pool of recipients by including only specific course roles, courses within a term, and courses within a department or business unit if your school has licensed community engagement.

This example illustrates how to send a course evaluation to students enrolled in all biology department courses in the Spring 2012 term. It assumes that locations have been created at the school and terms added.

1. On the Choose Places tab, select Send to Location.
2. Click Find Location and then search for Biology Department.
3. Click Find Terms and then select Spring 2012.
4. Select Student under Course Roles.
5. Click Calculate or the refresh icon to see the approximate number of recipients.
6. Click Save and Exit.

By Users

You can send surveys to all users based on their institutional role role. You can narrow the pool of recipients by including only specific institutional roles, or institutional roles within a place such as a department or business unit if your school has licensed Community Engagement and created locations.
This example shows how to send an employee satisfaction survey to faculty and staff in the College of Arts and Sciences:

1. On the **Choose Users** tab, select **Send to Users by Location**.
2. Click **Find Location** and then search for College of Arts and Sciences.
3. Select **Faculty** and **Staff** from **Available Roles** click the arrow to move them to **Selected Roles**.
4. Click **Calculate** or the refresh icon to see the approximate number of recipients.
5. Click **Save and Exit**.

**By Uploading Email Addresses**

Email addresses are uploaded to the system in a text file. You can upload the file from your computer or from the Content Collection if your school licenses content management. Each email address must be on a separate line in the text file.

**How to Notify Recipients of Survey Availability**

On the **Notify** tab, you select how recipients are notified and edit the message they receive. Recipients are notified about an available survey by course alerts, My Blackboard alerts, or email. The notification methods available depend on the type of recipients you have selected. For example, recipients selected from an uploaded email list do not receive course alerts or My Blackboard alerts.

- **Course notifications** appear to selected users at the top of every page in their course when their course is selected as a place to send the survey. Course notifications only appear to users who are enrolled in the course and have been selected to receive the survey based on this enrollment and their course role.

  Course notifications are not available for surveys sent to users based on their institution roles or based on an uploaded email list.

- **My Blackboard** is a centralized location where users receive alerts, announcements, and other types of information about their participation in school. Users receive notification of a survey in My Blackboard when they have a role in the system.

  My Blackboard notifications are not available for recipients who are selected from an uploaded email list.

- **Email notifications** are available for all types of survey recipients. Email can be selected as an additional notification method when Course Notification and My Blackboard are available. It is the only notification method for uploaded email addresses.
When email notification is selected, you must enter a valid email address in the **From** box. Email that cannot be delivered is bounced to this email address. If you are sending a survey to a large email list, consider setting up an alternate email account for yourself that can receive large volumes of email.

You can include email addresses in the **Cc** box, including your own. This is optional.

### How to Edit Survey Notifications

Use the text editor to personalize the notification and submission messages the recipients receive to generate timely responses. It is not possible to add images, links, or media to notification messages. The text editor includes variables to automatically populate text, such as the survey name, school name, and the date the survey closes.

Notification messages have a subject line and a message body. Both fields are required and can be edited. Both fields can use variables. To edit a notification message follow these steps.

1. On the **Edit Response Period** page, access the **Notify** tab.
2. Under **Notification Method**, click **Edit** to open the text editor.
3. Type a **Subject**.
4. Click the **Insert Variable** icon and select the variable to include in the message.
5. Type a **Message**.
6. Click the **Insert Variable** icon and select the variable to include in the message.
7. Edit the **Survey Text Link**.
8. Click **Preview** to see how the message will appear to recipients.

### How to Edit Automated System Responses

Automated system response messages are sent to survey recipients after they have taken an action. Automated system responses have only a message body. When the survey is submitted, recipients receive the **Submission Message**. If the recipient attempts to submit a survey more than once, they receive the **Duplicate Submission Message**. If a recipient attempts to respond to a survey after the response period has ended, they receive the **Unavailable Message**.

1. On the **Edit Response Period** page, access the **Notify** tab.
2. Under **Automated System Responses**, click **Edit** to open the text editor for a message.
3. Type a **Subject**.
4. Click the **Insert Variable** icon and select the variable to include in the message.
5. Edit the **Submission Message**.
6. Click the **Insert Variable** icon and select the variable to include in the message.
7. Click **Preview** to see how the message will appear to recipients.

### How to Schedule Survey Delivery and Set Reminders

On the **Scheduling** tab, you can send or close an enterprise survey immediately or schedule delivery or closing for a future date and time.

1. On the **Edit Response Period** page, access the **Scheduling** tab.
2. Make selections for the date and times the survey will be sent and closed.
3. Click **Add Reminder** to send email reminders to recipients who have not responded to the survey.
4. Select the time interval or pick a specific date to send the first reminder.
5. Repeat the reminder at different intervals based on the date of the first reminder.
6. Type a **Subject**.
7. Type a **Message**.
8. Edit the **Survey Link Text**.
9. Click **Save**.

### About Enterprise Survey Results

After the recipients have responded to the survey, you can look at individual responses or analyze the results to view an aggregation of the responses. Analyzing the results generates a report that can summarize each response period individually or show results parsed by the criteria you selected.

### How to View Enterprise Survey Submissions

1. Access the **Enterprise Surveys** page to view a list of all surveys.
2. For a survey, click the number of corresponding response groups. Alternatively, you can access a survey’s contextual menu and select **Response Periods**.
3. On the **Response Periods** page, click the **Submissions Received** number for a response period.
4. The **Submissions** page lists all respondents. If the survey was anonymous, the respondent ID is a number. If the survey was not anonymous, the respondent is identified by name.
5. Access a Respondent ID’s contextual menu.
6. Select View to display responses in a new window.

How to Analyze Results of an Enterprise Survey

1. Access the Enterprise Surveys page to view a list of all surveys.
2. For a survey, click Analyze Results to view the survey responses.
3. Select one or more response periods.
4. Select questions to exclude from the analysis, if needed.
5. In the Compare Responses By area, select No Comparison Needed to view each response period summary and the aggregated detailed question results - OR - select comparison criteria to view results parsed by that criteria.
6. Click **View Results**.

Comparing Responses

You can select from several criteria to compare survey responses:

- **Response Period** - Select multiple response periods. Each response period displays as a separate bar in the report. If the response periods use different methods to select recipients, you might not be able to make comparisons. For example, if the survey had one response period based on uploaded email addresses and one based on course enrollment, you cannot make comparisons based on demographics because the email addresses do not include that information.

- **Demographics** - To compare survey responses by demographics, you need to have demographic information available in the system. If your school collects demographic information in user accounts, it can be used to analyze responses.

- **Courses and Organizations** - To compare survey responses by courses and organizations, the response periods need to include that information. For example, you can send an undergraduate course evaluation to all students enrolled in courses that were taught in the fall term. You can
compare the responses of all courses and organizations, or you can select specific ones. If your school licenses Community Engagement, you can also include Business Unit Averages if these places have been created and courses are affiliated with them. Your school must also have created an institutional hierarchy and affiliated users, and courses to the places or locations in the hierarchy, called nodes. The response periods need to include that information the name of the business unit (node).

- **Specified Survey Question** - To compare survey responses by question, select the question you want to use.

**Viewing Results for an Enterprise Survey**

Survey results are generated in a report. The top of the report summarizes the response periods included in the report and how the results are compared. An overall summary of the response rate for the response periods appears next. A pie chart displays the percentages of positive and negative responses.

Detailed results for each question are provided. If you have added points to question responses, you can see the average for each response.

Open response questions appear at the bottom of the report. Expand the section to read each response.

Click **Print Report** to generate a PDF version of the report that opens in a new window. You can save the PDF file or print it. If the survey has open entry questions, you can print the report with or without those questions.

**How to Export Submission Data**

You can export submission data as a .csv file so that it can be imported it into a third party analysis tool. You can compare different surveys by exporting their associated response period submissions data and then importing that data into a third party tool.

1. On the **Enterprise Surveys** page, locate the desired survey.
2. Click a number in the **Response Group** column.
3. On the **Response Periods** page, select the response periods you want to export.
4. Click **Export Submission Data**.
5. Select the delimiter to separate the data fields. You can choose tab or comma.
6. You can include responses that you excluded in the survey results.
7. Click **Download**.