

Getting Started with . . . the Course Environment

- 1** Course Menu The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course page. It holds buttons or text links to Content Areas, Tools, and links. The Course Menu is usually arranged by subject or the order in which Students progress through the course.
- 2** Breadcrumb Breadcrumbs appear at the top of pages and provide links back to each previous page the user navigated through to get to the current page.
- 3** Banner The Banner is the area at the top of a frame, often used to display an identifying image for the course organization or institution.
- 4** Help The Help icon appears in the top frame. It can be set by the System Administrator to point to institution resources for providing assistance to users.
- 5** Edit Mode The Edit Mode button allows you to change the view of content on screen from the instructor's view (Edit Mode: On) to the student's view (Edit Mode: Off).
- 6** Content Frame The Content Frame is the main area of the browser window where content items and tools are displayed.
- 7** Control Panel The Control Panel is the interface for managing the content, features, and appearance of a course or organization. It is accessible to users based on the privileges assigned to their Course Role. Students do not see the Control Panel.
- 8** Drag and Drop The Drag and Drop Arrows enable you to use the mouse to re-position items directly on a page by clicking on the item, dragging it to the desired location, and releasing the mouse button.

The screenshot displays the Blackboard course interface for 'Introductory Oceanography'. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Navigation Bar:** Includes links for 'My Institution', 'Courses', 'Community', 'Content Collection', 'Outcomes', 'System Admin', and 'Scholar'. A 'Help' icon (4) is located in the top right corner.
- Breadcrumb:** Shows the path 'Intro to Oceanography' > 'Home Page' (2).
- Banner:** A large blue banner with the text 'Introductory Oceanography' (3).
- Edit Mode:** A button labeled 'Edit Mode: ON' (5) is in the top right corner.
- Course Menu:** A vertical sidebar on the left (1) containing links such as 'Intro to Oceanography', 'Home Page', 'Announcements', 'Syllabus', 'My Grades', 'Getting Started', 'Speak Up', 'Chapter 1 - Global Climate', 'Course Content', 'Week 1', 'Week 2', 'Week 3', 'Week 4', 'Week 5', 'Journals', 'Assignments', 'Groups Page', 'Collaboration', 'Discussion', 'Instructor Info', 'External Links', 'Speak Up', and 'Tools'.
- Control Panel:** A section at the bottom left (7) with links for 'Control Panel', 'Course Tools', 'Course Links', 'Evaluation', and 'Users and Groups'.
- Content Frame:** The main area (6) displays the 'Home Page' with a yellow background. It includes a 'Add Course Module' button and a 'Customize Page' button.
- Notifications:** Several panels on the right (8) show 'What's New', 'My Announcements', and 'Needs Attention'. Each panel has an 'Edit Notification Settings' button and an 'Actions' dropdown.

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Task	What You Need to Know	Steps to Accomplish
Change Edit Mode Views	When the Edit Mode is set to ON, users with specific roles in the system can add, remove, and edit content and tools in the Course. Switching the Edit Mode to OFF displays the Course as students see it. The Edit Mode toggle appears only to those users who have permission to use it.	Click the Edit Mode button to ON or OFF to change the view.
View a Contextual Menu	The Contextual Menu is opened through an Action Link. It is a drop-down list providing access to additional actions associated with the item.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click the Action Link, to view the options available for the particular item. 2. Select your item of choice.
Drag and Drop Reordering	Drag and drop allows you to re-order elements on the Course Menu and in Content Areas.	<p>Drag and Drop Course Menu Items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click and hold the arrow icon to the left of the menu item. 2. Drag and drop the selected item to your preferred position. <p>Drag and Drop Content Area Elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click and hold the title bar of the item. 2. Drag and drop the selected element to your preferred position. Dashed boxes will appear where you can place the item.
Accessible Reordering	Keyboard Accessible Reordering enables the user to reorder the items in the Menu Area through the keyboard.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turn Edit Mode ON. 2. Click the Keyboard Accessible Reordering Tool on the Action Bar. 3. Select the item in the list. 4. Use the up and down arrows below the title box or on your keyboard to adjust the order. 5. Click Submit.
Add Course Menu Items	You can add a Content Area that provides direct access to a tool, internal or external link, or an element that helps organize the menu.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click the Add icon (+) above the Course Menu. 2. Select the item from the list. 3. Type the Name of the content item in the Name field. 4. Click Submit.
Rename Course Content Items	The Action Link beside a Content Area gives the user an option to rename it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click the Action Link icon beside the Content Area. 2. Select Rename link. 3. Type the new name in the box. 4. Click the Check icon to save the new name of the Content Area.

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Glossary

Content Area	Content Areas are Course or Organization areas dedicated to displaying content items. Users must have the appropriate application to open any content item file attachments. Learning Units, assessments, and links to tools may also be added to content areas.
Contextual Menu	Contextual menus are drop-down lists that provide access to additional actions associated with an item. The menu is accessed via an Action Link.
Course Cartridges	Course Cartridges are created by textbook publishers. Course Cartridges are content packages of materials that are imported into course or organization Web sites. Instructors must obtain a download key from the publisher to get this content, and students may need to obtain an access key to view the content.
Grade Center	The Grade Center is a customizable feature for tracking and analyzing performance. It interfaces with Assessments, Assignments, and the Discussion Board automatically.
Modules	Modules are containers for content. Module pages can hold several modules and users can reorder them and even choose which ones they see. Module pages can appear within courses.
Learning Modules	A Learning Module is a set of Content Items with an accompanying path for progressing through the items. The path can be set so that students must view content sequentially or to permit students to view the content in any order. All types of content, such as items, Assignment, and Assessments may be included in a Learning Module.
Availability	Availability determines whether or not content or features are accessible to users. Availability, in most cases, is time sensitive.
Help	The Help icon appears in the top frame. The Help icon can be set by the System Administrator to point to institution resources for providing assistance to users.
Action Link	An action link is an indication of the presence of a contextual menu enabling the user to perform actions related to a specific item.
List View	The List View of the Menu items displays the names of the file system.
Folder View	The Folder View of the Menu items displays the tree structure of the file system. This view also provides the ability to expand and collapse folders.
Text Editor	The WYSIWYG Editor, can be turned on or off. When the Text Editor is enabled, you can add links, attach files and images, or format text. When the Text Editor is disabled, you can edit in plain text.
Multi-Select Box	The multi-select box is a widget for selecting multiple items from a set.
View Results	The View Results controls are used to edit how many items appear on a page following a search.
Course Menu Item	Course Menu Items include links to a tool, external links, internal links, or elements used to help organize the menu. Course Menu items are separate from Content Area Items.