

Blackboardlearn⁺

*Understanding the Change from
CE 4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1*



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Contents

Introduction	11
Fostering Student Engagement.....	11
Supporting Educator Efficiency	11
Delivering Open and Extensible Learning	12
Available Tools and Resources	13
Blackboard Upgrade Center	13
Preview Accounts and the Project NG Playground	13
Upgrade Services	13
Blackboard Learn Upgrade Kits.....	13
On-Demand Learning Center	14
Blackboard Learn Help	14
Blackboard Learn Technical Details	14
About This Document	15
Product Naming and Terminology	15
Project NG and Blackboard Learn Release 9.1.....	17
License Entitlement Moving to Release 9.1 and Project NG.....	17
Moving a Course from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn.....	18
User Interactions are Not Included	18
Subsystem Map.....	19
Content Areas.....	19
Impact on Course Content.....	20
Date/Time Fields	20
Field Truncation.....	20
Text boxes and HTML	20
Course Delivery Features	21
Accessibility.....	23
Frequently Asked Questions	23
Adaptive Release	24
Feature Enhancement	24
Feature Change.....	24
Feature Loss.....	25
Course Conversion Details	25
Announcements	27
Feature Enhancement	27
Feature Loss.....	28
Assignments.....	29
Key Functions of Assignments	29
Feature Enhancement.....	29
Feature Change.....	30
Feature Loss.....	30

Frequently Asked Questions	30
Course Conversion Details	31
Blackboard Connect Integration	33
Frequently Asked Questions	33
Blogs and Journals	35
Journals	35
Blogs	35
Grading Blogs and Journals	35
Frequently Asked Questions	36
Branding and Customization	37
Single Login Page	37
Brand Customization	37
Feature Enhancement: Login Page Customization	37
Feature Enhancement: Translation Options	38
Feature Enhancement: Color Customization Options	38
Feature Enhancement: Navigation/Content	39
Feature Loss	39
Frequently Asked Questions	39
Calendar	41
Feature Enhancement	41
Feature Loss	41
Course Conversion Details	42
Collaboration Tools (Chat and Whiteboards)	44
Feature Enhancement	44
Feature Change	44
Feature Loss	45
Course Conversion Details	45
Course Creation Wizard	46
Feature Enhancement	46
Feature Loss	46
Course Customization, Navigation, and Content	47
Multiple Methods of Content Presentation	47
Increased Options for Course Design and Style	48
Simplified Tool Management	48
Locations for Tool Links	48
Feature Enhancement	48
Feature Change	49
Feature Loss	51
Frequently Asked Questions	51
Course Conversion Details	51
Course Files (Manage Files)	54
Feature Enhancement	54

Feature Change.....	54
Feature Loss.....	55
Course Files with the Content Collection.....	55
Frequently Asked Questions	56
Course Conversion Details	57
Course/Organization Role Customization	58
Custom Course/Organization Roles with Community Engagement	58
Frequently Asked Questions	58
Course Conversion Details	59
Discussions	61
Feature Enhancement	61
Feature Change.....	62
Feature Loss.....	62
Course Conversion Details	63
Email and Messages.....	64
Feature Enhancement	64
Feature Loss.....	64
ePacks	66
Lost Data	66
External Links (URLs)	67
Feature Enhancement	67
Feature Change.....	67
Course Conversion Details	67
Glossary.....	68
Feature Loss.....	68
Course Conversion Details	68
Grade Center (Manage Students) – Instructor Views	70
Feature Enhancement	70
Feature Change.....	72
Feature Loss.....	72
Course Conversion Details	73
Grade Center (Manage Students) – My Grades	77
Feature Enhancement	77
Groups (Student Presentations)	78
Key Features of Groups	78
Feature Enhancement	79
Feature Loss.....	80
Frequently Asked Questions	80
Learning Modules	81
Feature Enhancement	81
Feature Change.....	81
Feature Loss.....	82

Frequently Asked Questions	82
Course Conversion Details	82
Lesson Plans for HigherEd and ProEd Clients	84
Creating Customized Lesson Plans	84
Controlling Visibility	84
Frequently Asked Questions	84
Lesson Plans for K-12 Clients	86
Creating Customized Lesson Plans	86
Controlling Visibility	86
Aligning Content to Learning Standards	86
Frequently Asked Questions	86
Mashups	88
Uploading Mashups Content	88
Filtering YouTube Content	88
Frequently Asked Questions	88
My Places	90
Feature Enhancement	90
Feature Loss	91
Frequently Asked Questions	91
Notifications	92
Notifications for Instructors	92
Notifications for Students	92
Notifications for Administrators	93
Frequently Asked Questions	93
Roster	97
Standards Alignment for K-12 Clients	98
Importing Standards into Blackboard Courses	98
Aligning Content to Standards	98
Updating Standards	99
Running Standards Coverage Reports	99
Creating Custom Standards	99
Frequently Asked Questions	100
Syllabus	102
Feature Enhancement	102
Feature Change	102
Feature Loss	102
System-Wide Changes	103
Feature Enhancement	103
Features Loss	103
System Administration	105
Feature Enhancement	105
Feature Change	106

Feature Loss.....	107
Tasks.....	109
Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools (Quizzes/Surveys and Question Database).....	110
Feature Enhancement.....	110
Feature Change.....	111
Feature Loss.....	111
Question Options.....	112
Course Conversion Details.....	112
Text Editor.....	115
Feature Enhancement.....	115
Feature Change.....	115
Feature Loss.....	116
Textbook	117
Tracking Reports.....	118
Feature Enhancement.....	118
Feature Loss.....	118
Web Services, Proxy Tools, and Building Blocks	119
Frequently Asked Questions	119
Wikis.....	122
Supporting Collaborative Learning	122
Creating and Editing Wikis	122
Versioning and Comparing Pages.....	122
Grading Wikis	122
Viewing Participation Summaries	123
Commenting on Wiki Pages	123
Creating Wiki Links as Course Content.....	123
Using Adaptive Release	123
Importing and Exporting Content.....	123
Aligning Wikis with K-12 Standards.....	123
Frequently Asked Questions	123
What's New Module	125
Community Engagement Features	126
Feature Enhancement.....	126
Frequently Asked Questions	127
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 1 (SP1)	128
Course Delivery Features	129
Community Engagement Features	131
Content Management Features	132
Outcomes Assessment Features.....	133
System Administration	134
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 2 (SP2)	135

System Administration Features	136
New fields “Suffix” and “Other Name”	136
Installer enables /Courses content area when upgrading to 9.1.	137
CaféScribe Building Block	138
Other Building Blocks	138
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 3 (SP3)	139
Course Delivery Features	140
Community Engagement Features	142
System Administration	143
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 4 (SP4)	144
Course Delivery	145
Support for Common Cartridge	145
Learning Tools Interoperability	145
Assessments	145
Community Engagement	146
Discovering Modules	146
Outcomes Assessment	147
Curriculum Maps	147
Distribution Lists	147
Blackboard Connect	148
Country Codes Available	148
System Administration	149
Data Sources	149
Search and Select All	149
Support for Google Analytics™	149
Resource Governor	149
Global XSS Filtering	152
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 5 (SP5)	153
Default Maximum Upload Limit	153
Known and Resolved Issues	153
Course Files Move Utility	153
Security	154
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 6 (SP6)	155
Course Delivery	156
Needs Grading	156
Timed Assessments	156
Test Announcements	156
Interactive Rubrics	156
SCORM Engine Integration	156
Content Management	157
Adaptive Release Rules Work on Content Collection Items	157

Desktop Integration	157
Automatic Student Access to Linked Files	157
Community Engagement	158
Institutional Hierarchy	158
Outcomes Assessment	159
Evidence Collection	159
Standard, Objective, and Goal (SOG) Alignment to Course Delivery Content	159
Standard, Objective, and Goal (SOG) Coverage Reports	159
Partner Integration	160
McGraw-Hill Connect and Create Integration	160
System Administration	161
Software Updates	161
The Batch UID Can be Used as a Context Identifier for a Basic Learning Tool Interoperability (LTI) Tool Provider	161
<i>Custom Parameters in Basic Learning Tool Interoperability (LTI) Configuration</i>	161
Web Services Enabled Automatically for Building Blocks	161
Page Scroll Location Maintained During Refresh	161
Select All	162
Student Information System Integration Building Block	162
Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 10 (SP10)	163
System Administration	164
Cloud Settings	164
New Content Editor	164
File Picker	165
Learning Tools and Interoperability (LTI 1.1)	165
Security	166
Input Validation Filter	166
Alternate File Domain Settings for Serving Content	166
Cookie Disclosure Building Block	166
Related Security Advisories	167
Course Delivery	168
Assessment Item Analysis	168
Assessment Fill-in-the-Blank Question Enhancement	168
Enterprise Surveys and Course Evaluations	168
Global Navigation	168
My Blackboard	169
Content Management	171
Set Default Course Files Properties for Course Copy, Export, and Archive	171
Copy Course File Attachments	171
New User Warnings for Deleting or Moving Linked Folders or Files	171
Partner Integration	172
ConnectTxt	172

NBC Learn	172
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Introduction

Challenged with meeting the expectations of their 21st-century learners, educators are constantly trying to find ways to make their instruction more engaging.

Faculty spend a lot of time on non-teaching administrative activities, such as grading, data-entry, paperwork, and Course management, that distract from learning activities which help retain and keep students engaged in academics.

Colleges, schools, and departments often spend significant amounts of time and resources on manual processes to align what is happening in the classroom to department, program or overall institutional objectives.

Clients are trying to navigate a time of significant demographic shifts and technology innovation while maintaining the integrity of the academic process, accessibility, service quality and accountability to leadership.

Blackboard Learn™ Release 9.1 will help you to meet these challenges by fostering student engagement, supporting educator efficiency, and delivering open and extensible learning.

Critical teaching and learning tools developed in coordination with our CE 4 clients provide users with a familiar environment to facilitate adoption and ease the transition to Blackboard Learn. At the same time, transitioning to the Learn platform will enable educators or facilitators to be more efficient and engage students and learners more effectively through our investment in new and exciting instructionally valuable capabilities for CE 4 clients.

Fostering Student Engagement

The exciting new social learning and teaching tools available in Release 9.1 foster more logical, visually impactful, and active learning opportunities for students, helping them stay connected to their educational experience 24 hours a day:

- Wikis for Courses, organizations, and groups
- Mashups
- Integration with Blackboard Connect
- Student Notifications and Dashboard
- Group area and Group tools
- Web 2.0 user experience

Supporting Educator Efficiency

Many of the new features and enhancements in Release 9.1 save educators and organizational leaders time and effort and make it easier to focus on student achievement and retention:

- Improved grading capabilities
- Standards Alignment for K-12 Clients
- Customizable Teaching Roles
- Instructor Dashboard
- Web 2.0 user experience

Delivering Open and Extensible Learning

With free access to partner technologies, expanded content partnerships and hundreds of building block extensions to choose from in Release 9.1, Blackboard Learn's open platform is designed to meet the learning needs of an institution at enterprise scale with an open architecture that supports agility and extensibility.

- Mashups
- Building Blocks and the Blackboard Developers Network
- Web Services
- Themes

Available Tools and Resources

Transitioning to a platform can often be an expensive proposition. Institutions and organizations face many costs including content conversion, end user training, and project management. Institutional and organizational leaders have to evaluate the financial costs as well as the cost to end users when making the decision to move. For Release 9.1, Blackboard is delivering tools, resources, and services to reduce the change management costs of transitioning to Release 9.1, both in terms of educator or facilitator time and institutional and organizational resources.

Blackboard Upgrade Center

The new [Blackboard Upgrade Center](#) was created to help you find all the information you need to make the upgrade process as simple as possible. This site is designed for Blackboard administrators, system administrators or anyone involved in the process of upgrading Blackboard from a technical or procedural standpoint.

Preview Accounts and the Project NG Playground

Reading about a new release and experiencing it are two different things. We know that you probably want to get a feel for Release 9.1 before you go through the work of setting up a pilot or test instance. Sign up for a preview account that will give you instructor level access in a Release 9.1 Course hosted by Blackboard. You can investigate Release 9.1 and invite others at your institution to access the software and contribute to the development of your upgrade plan. This account is available for 30 days and can be renewed at the end of its term.

Blackboard wants to share some of our newest ideas for Blackboard Learn and get your feedback to help shape future releases. The Project NG Playground Program is an exciting way to get a sneak peek at functionality while it's still in the experimental stages. Try the newest features on our hosted playground server and experience them from a student, teacher, and instructional designer perspective.

For more information, go to [Step 1.2 – Preview and Play](#) on the Upgrade Center.

Upgrade Services

Experience tells us that some institutions would like additional support and assistance in upgrading, so we've developed a host of custom services offerings and assistance that work as your virtual upgrade team. Let us help you with the upgrade by taking advantage of the expertise of the Blackboard Consulting Services team.

For more information, go to [Step 2.4 – Preview and Play](#) on the Upgrade Center.

Blackboard Learn Upgrade Kits

To assist in the upgrade process, Blackboard has produced an Upgrade Kit comprised of documentation resources specific to your upgrade path. For a detailed list and explanation of each document, see the `ReadMe.txt` file included in the CE 4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 Upgrade Kit available on the [Upgrade Center](#) or [Behind the Blackboard](#).

On-Demand Learning Center

The [On-Demand Learning Center](#) provides access to Quick Start Guides and Video Tutorials for many features in Release 9.1. In addition to accessing the site directly, users with the appropriate roles can access the site from the My Institution tab, the Course Panel, and the Administrator Panel.

Blackboard Learn Help

A full suite of reference materials for Blackboard Learn 9.1 is available Blackboard Help is available to everyone through Blackboard Learn and at <http://help.blackboard.com>.

Blackboard Learn Technical Details

The full technical details for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, including the Release Notes, Supported Technologies and Browsers, the Resolved Issues from previous releases, and Known Issues in the current release, are available on the [Maintenance Center](#) on Behind the Blackboard.

About This Document

This document is designed to give users a comprehensive look at the features and functions of Blackboard Learn, Release 9.1, and how they compare to the Blackboard Learning System – CE, Release 4 (CE 4). This document includes information about the following:

- [Project NG and Blackboard Learn Release 9.1](#)
- [Moving a Course from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn](#)
- [Course Delivery Features](#)
- [Community Engagement Features](#)
- [Blackboard learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 1 \(SP1\) Features](#)
- [Blackboard learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 2 \(SP2\) Features](#)
- [Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 3 \(SP3\) Features](#)
- [Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 4 \(SP4\) Features](#)
- [Blackboard learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 5 \(SP5\) Features](#)
- [Blackboard learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 6 \(SP6\) Features](#)

Product Naming and Terminology

Blackboard Learn is the new name of the Blackboard Academic Suite. It represents the singular purpose of the software suite and will help resolve some of the confusion around product names and terminology that are holdovers from the Blackboard-WebCT merger.

Blackboard Learn features and functions are grouped into modules. The table below identifies the product and names for sets of capabilities that are used to define Blackboard Learn.

Name	Description
Blackboard Learn	Blackboard's flagship product for enabling teaching and learning online.
Course delivery capabilities	Includes features and functions for creating online Courses.
Content management capabilities	Includes tools for storing, managing, and presenting content as well as tools for collaborating on content with other users.
Community engagement capabilities	Includes features and functions for building out a vibrant and diverse learning community as well as tools for delegated system administration.
Outcomes assessment capabilities	Includes features and functions to measure the success of institution learning initiatives.
Building Blocks	Building Blocks is the catch-all name for the program and interfaces used to integrate tools and outside systems with Blackboard Learn. Integrations like those that were achieved through Powerlinks are now achieved through Building Blocks.
Basic Edition	An entry-level version of Blackboard Learn that includes a subset of the features available with the Course delivery capabilities.

Name	Description
Enterprise Edition	The standard version of Blackboard Learn. This term is used to differentiate it from the Basic Edition. Other capabilities are licensed separately.

Project NG and Blackboard Learn Release 9.1

Through Project NG, Blackboard is committed to delivering a best-of-breed solution that combines the best of both legacy Blackboard and legacy WebCT products. Release 9.1 is the second release toward that vision.

In Release 9.0, Blackboard focused on the following areas:

- Assignments
- Accessibility
- Blogs and Journals
- Course Customization
- Group Management
- My Places
- Notifications
- System Customization
- Web Services and Proxy Tools
- User Interface Improvements

In Release 9.1, Blackboard focused on the following areas:

- Content building and management
- Custom Course/Organization roles
- Grade Center
- Learning Modules
- Lesson Plans
- Standards alignment (K-12)
- Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools
- Web Services and Building Blocks
- Wikis

Innovations in each of these areas represent the confluence of best-of-breed features and functions from earlier Blackboard products.

License Entitlement Moving to Release 9.1 and Project NG

When upgrading to Blackboard Learn, Release 9.1, clients should first work with their Blackboard Client Manager and Regional Sales Manager to determine which Blackboard Learn packages are available under their existing license agreement, and which packages are available with Blackboard Learn for an additional fee.

Once you have determined which Blackboard Learn packages are available to you under either existing license terms or under migration terms, work through the remainder of this guide to determine the path to Project NG.

Moving a Course from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn

During the process of moving data from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn, each CE 4 Course produces a Course within Blackboard Learn.

It is recommended to create an archive of any CE 4 Course that is to be migrated to Blackboard Learn 9 before the migration process.

In between semesters/quarters, CE 4 Courses should be migrated to Blackboard Learn when Instructors/designers have an opportunity to review the Course, make any corrections or changes, and build out additional content. While most of the content will come over during the move, the differences between a CE 4 Course and a Blackboard Learn Course are great enough that Instructors and designers will benefit from having time to go through the Course after the move and prepare it for delivery to Students. During this time, Instructors and designers can optimize the Course for Blackboard Learn and take advantage of the new features and functions as well as ensure that the content from the Course is displaying as it should.

User Interactions are Not Included

Although much of the data in the CE 4 Course will be added to the Blackboard Learn Course, user data and user interactions are not moved to the Blackboard Learn Course. For example, Discussion Board Forums are moved, but posts from individual users are not moved. For this reason, Courses should be moved to Blackboard Learn only when preparing to offer the Course to a new set of users. Moving the Course while Students are actively involved in learning will result in a loss of data and cause disruption.

In a few instances, data is moved into the Course and requires the user association to be edited. For example, a Course Calendar Entry will be moved, but the user associated with the creation of the entry will be set to a generic Blackboard Administrator account instead of the account of the user that created the entry in CE 4.

The following CE 4 Course areas are not moved to the Blackboard Learn Course because they consist of user data:

- Mail
- My Grades
- Roster, Profiles, Student Homepages
- Statistics
- Who's Online
- Notes
- Group Members

The impact is not limited to these areas. In other subsystems, some data may be brought over while user interactions are not. Data that is not brought over is called out in the detailed notes on each subsystem in this document. If not explicitly stated, you should expect that data that is linked to a specific user is not included in the move.

Subsystem Map

The following table identifies where data from the CE 4 Course can be found in the Blackboard Learn Course.

CE 4 Subsystem	Blackboard Learn Subsystem
Announcements	Announcements
Calendar	Calendar
Chat and Whiteboards	Collaboration Tools
Discussions	Discussions
General Content, Assignments, Syllabus	Content Areas
Glossary	Glossary
Learning Modules	Learning Modules
Manage Files and Class Files	Course Files If the content management capabilities of Blackboard Learn have been licensed, this area will be labeled "Content Collection."
Manage Students	Grade Center
Question Database	Question Finder
Quizzes/Surveys	Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools
Selective Release	Adaptive Release
Settings	Settings
Student Presentations	Groups
-	Blogs
-	Contacts
-	Early Warning System
-	Journals
-	Tasks

Content Areas

Content Areas are the organizational structure of a Blackboard Learn Course. They are storage containers for content and tools. Everything from tests to assignments to lecture notes are stored in Content Areas. Content Areas are flexible, so they could be arranged by time, with a week's worth of notes and activities in one Content Area, or by tool, with all of the lecture notes in one Content Area, Assignments in another, and Tests in still another Content Area.

The initial organization of the Course will mimic as closely as possible the organization of the CE 4 Course. Some areas in CE 4 Courses that were reserved for a singular type of content are converted to Content Areas. For example, Assignments. Once in the Blackboard Learn Course, Assignments can be moved out of the Assignments Content Area and added to other places in the Course. In this way, content and activities can be grouped together in whatever logical way helps Students learn the material best.

Impact on Course Content

Course content will be mapped to the corresponding Blackboard Learn tool during the move.

Date/Time Fields

Blackboard Learn has a standard date/time format. Whenever dates and/or times are imported, appropriate localization settings are applied so that the date/time will display correctly in the selected locale.

Date created: The date and time that an item was moved to Blackboard Learn will become the new “date created.” The date that an item was created in the CE 4 Course will not be moved.

Field Truncation

In a few instances, the data being moved to Blackboard Learn might exceed the character limit for the field. This is a rare occurrence that will not impact most users. If it does occur, the data will be truncated and an error will be reported in the log.

Text boxes and HTML

Data in text boxes will be brought over as plain text or as HTML depending on the settings. The HTML is imported as-is and not scrubbed. The result may include some inconsistencies based on differences in how HTML is rendered.

Course Delivery Features

Blackboard Learn 9.1 includes many innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [Accessibility](#)
- [Adaptive Release](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Assignments](#)
- [Blackboard Connect Integration](#)
- [Blogs and Journals](#)
- [Branding and Customization](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Collaboration Tools \(Chat and Virtual Classroom\)](#)
- [Course Creation Wizard](#)
- [Course Customization, Navigation, and Content](#)
- [Course Files \(Manage Files\)](#)
- [Course/Organization Role Customization](#)
- [Discussions](#)
- [Email and Messages](#)
- [ePacks](#)
- [External Links \(URLs\)](#)
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- [Tasks](#)

- [Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools \(Quizzes/Surveys and Question Database\)](#)
- [Text Editor](#)
- [Textbook](#)
- [Tracking Reports](#)
- [Web Services, Proxy Tools, and Building Blocks](#)
- [Wikis](#)

Innovations in each of these areas represent the confluence of best-of-breed features and functions from earlier Blackboard products.

Accessibility

Most of what makes Blackboard Learn so easy to use for all users, including those with assistive technologies, is under-the-covers with a combination of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) and semantic markup (that is, well formed HTML). Additional accessibility features include:

Keyboard Accessible Reordering: The Keyboard-Accessible Reordering component provides the user with an alternate method to reorder content groupings in columns and rows that would otherwise be completed using Drag and Drop. This component is positioned as a secondary emphasis page-level action.

Personal styles accepted: Users can adjust the font size and other style elements in their browser regardless of the style sheet that is in place. These adjustments will remain as long as the user is logged into the system.

Embedded and optional help: The embedded help throughout the application helps users with and without disabilities easily access the features of Blackboard. The personal setting to hide or show help until the user chooses to call upon it again helps users from both perspectives: it removes text from the application that may be distracting, or it adds text to the application that helps them without forcing them to leave what they are doing. The Personal setting is found in My Places, and the on-the-fly change can be executed using the help icon in the top right corner of any page with help available.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license?

No. Every capability of Blackboard Learn is designed to support accessibility.

Is everything accessible and highly usable in Release 9?

No. Accessible users should be aware of the following issues:

- **Virtual Classroom.** Although the Accessible Chat alternative is provided, this is not considered "equal access" to all users.
- **JavaScript Requirement:** The requirement of JavaScript to use Blackboard is sometimes considered not accessible. However, the login page of Blackboard recognizes if the user does not have JavaScript enabled and informs the user of the requirement. This means that for all users (sighted, not sighted, one who understands browsers or not), Blackboard responds in the same way – by informing them of what needs to be done.

Adaptive Release

Selective Release, as it is known in CE, is called Adaptive Release in Blackboard Learn. While similar, Selective Release functions do not directly map to Adaptive Release.

The function of the Adaptive Release tool is similar to previous releases. However, a few features are unavailable and a number of new features are now in place to enable the creation of more robust Adaptive Release rules. Please note that Adaptive Release was previously referred to as Selective Release.

Feature Enhancement

+ Adaptive Release on Individual Items

Instructors may set complex Adaptive Release criteria on individual items, such as a single assignment.

+ Additional Release Criteria

Instructors have a larger set of criteria to choose from for Adaptive Release on all types of items in the Course including Student performance, group membership, document reviews, and dates.

+ Customized Access Paths

Multiple release rules and criteria for individual items enable customized release paths for individual Students.

+ Content Notifications

Students are notified when content is made available through Adaptive Release.

+ Student Specific Views

Instructors can use the Performance Dashboard to view content available to individual Students in a Course.

Feature Change

New Rules Based on Grade Queries

The chief difference between Selective Release and Adaptive Release is the use of free-form criteria conditions. Adaptive Release uses much simpler criteria, so the following criteria are not used:

Instructors no longer have the following options available for rules based on grades:

- Contains
- Before
- After
- Starts with
- Ends with
- Blank
- Not Blank

The following options are now available rules based on grades:

- Greater than or equal to
- Less than or equal to

Feature Loss

– Release Criteria on Course Menu Items

Adaptive Release does not grant access to top-level items listed in the Course Menu. For example, Adaptive Release will not manage the Discussion Board link in the Course Menu. However, the Instructor can make the Course Menu link unavailable and use Adaptive Release to control access to the Discussion Board from a different Content Area.

– License Availability

Adaptive Release is available only with the Enterprise Edition. Please speak to your Client Manager if you are interested in learning more about this feature.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Selective Release Rules when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

Although the features share the same purpose, Selective Release does not map exactly to Adaptive Release. Before making the new Course available to Students, review the new Adaptive Release rules and criteria to make sure that the logic for controlling the release of content matches expectations.

Blackboard Learn uses a system where multiple rules use only an OR operation. Within a rule, only the AND operation is used for the rule criteria. Thus, Adaptive Release is structured first by defining the AND relationship between criteria in a rule. These rules are then related to other rules using OR statements.

Because of the change in logic, not all Selective Release criteria can be moved into a Blackboard Learn Course. An error message will be logged when a criterion cannot be moved, but other criteria can be moved.

Selective Release rules that control general availability (show or hide to all users) and date availability will be set under the options for the Content Item, and not as a new Adaptive Release rule. If more than one date rule exists, the set of dates that have priority will be moved into the Content Item, and the other dates will be made into Adaptive Release rules. If all of the dates are equal in importance, the dates with the greatest range will be moved into the Content Item. If multiple date rules are connected with AND operators, the most restrictive dates will be added to the Content Item.

Selective Release rules that rely on user data, such as selected users, are not moved to Adaptive Release rules in the Blackboard Learn Course.

Selective Release rules that are based on dates and Students achieving a certain mark are included in the Blackboard Learn Course.

Content Areas do not support Adaptive Release rules.

Adaptive Release is not available with a Basic license. Basic users can control access through the availability and date restriction options that are available as part of content items.

Field Map

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Release to selected users	(select specific users)	User data is not processed.
Release After date/time	Display After Date/Time	
Release until date/time	Display Until Date/Time	
Release Based On: (free-form conditions)		

Announcements

The features in the Announcements tool are very similar to those in previous releases of Blackboard. While institution level availability of Course Announcements has changed, faculty will enjoy a number of new features including more flexible options for displaying announcements. It is recommended that faculty be trained on the best practices for using the new features. Please note that Administrator Announcements are now referred to as Institution Announcements.

Administrator Announcements are not moved to Blackboard Learn because they are not Course data.

Feature Enhancement

+ Course Announcements

Instructors have the ability to post announcements directly to their Courses through Course Announcements. The difference between Institution (previously Administrator Announcements) and Course Announcements is that Instructors can create and manage Course Announcements for specific Courses and Institution Announcements are displayed to all users in the system.

+ Multiple Display Options

Announcements can be displayed on both a Course Announcements page and in a Course specific Announcements module giving the Instructors added flexibility over how the information is presented.

+ Permanent Display

Users will see announcements regardless of when they join a Course or institution when this is used. Instructors can ensure that important information in Announcements never expires.

+ Force Notification

To ensure that all users receive an announcement by email, Instructors can override a user's personal settings through Force Notification. This setting should be used only for critical information since it overrides users' personal settings.

+ Priority Ordering

Instructors have the ability to re-order the display of announcements so the most important information will appear first.

+ Login Page Announcements

Administrators can communicate critical information to users before they login by placing announcements directly on the login page. Institutions should develop and communicate business rules for displaying announcements prior to login.

+ Notifications

Notifications of new Course Announcements will appear on users' dashboards and/ or be sent through email according to the user's personal preferences.

Feature Loss

- Targeting Specific Announcements

Institution level announcements cannot be targeted at specific Courses. Institutions should refine existing business rules so that Course Announcements are used within Courses and System Announcements are used to communicate with the user base on institution-wide issues.

Assignments

A robust assignment feature is available in Blackboard Learn, but instead of using a central tool, Instructors create and access Assignments using Content Areas. Enhanced functions include the ability to allow multiple submissions, each of which can be tracked and graded.

The features of the Blackboard Learn Assignment tool allow groups of Students to work on and submit assignments together, as well as individually. This provides Instructors with the ability to assign a single grade to all of the Students in the group without losing the ability to override an individual's grade if necessary. This tool facilitates an interactive learning process by providing faculty with the ability to permit multiple attempts of the same assignment. This allows Students to edit, add to, and improve their original effort and allows Instructors to provide a grade and feedback for each submission.

Key Functions of Assignments

Instructors can deploy Assignments to all Students individually or to groups of Students. If an Instructor selects to deploy Assignments to groups of Students, the Instructor will have the ability to choose which groups receive the Assignment. One group member will submit the Assignment for the whole group. The Instructor can provide one grade for the submission and all members of the group receive the same grade automatically or can provide individual members with separate grades.

Instructors can allow Students to submit multiple attempts for the same assignment. Each of these attempts can be graded and commented on individually. Both Students and Instructors can track progress throughout the assignment. Instructors can specify how many attempts are allowed or allow an unlimited number of attempts. If the specific number of attempts were completed by a Student, the Instructor can allow an additional attempt if required.

Students can attach a file and include additional information and hyperlinks in their assignment attempt using a Submission field instead of simply attaching a file.

Feature Enhancement

+ Limited Number of Attempts

Previously, Instructors could allow Students to submit multiple attempts of the same assignment. In addition, Instructors now have the option to allow a specific number of attempts on an assignment.

+ Additional Attempts

Instructors have the ability to give specific Students an additional attempt at an assignment to accommodate extenuating circumstances.

+ Grading Multiple Attempts

With the new Assignment tool, Instructors will be able to provide feedback and grades for multiple assignment submissions.

+ Group Grades

If a Group completes an assignment, the Instructor can grade one Student's submission and provide the same grade to all Students in the Group. The Instructor also has the ability to provide each Student an individual grade overriding the group grade.

+ Submission History

The Submission History provides a quick recap of the submission content, feedback, comments, grades, and participants for each submission. This allows Students to see what they have completed and allows Instructors to view the progress made throughout the lifecycle of the assignment.

Feature Change

Central Assignment Tool Area

Instructors no longer have a default central area where all assignments in the Course display. Instead, Instructors have the ability to add assignments to a dedicated content area or to different content areas throughout the Course. Additionally, the notification modules will alert users to assignments that are due or need grading.

Feature Loss

- Cut-off Date

Instructors can no longer set a cut-off date for Assignments, which allowed a Student to submit an item after the due date and have it marked "Late." Instructors can use the availability date feature to deny access to the assignment when they no longer want to accept submissions. However, after the end date has passed, Students will no longer be able to view or submit the assignment.

- Grade Settings

Grading options, such as when to release the Students' score and whether the columns should be visible in the My Grades tool, are no longer available in the Assignments Tool. All of these functions are now completed in the Grade Center and not within the Assignment tool. Instructors should change their workflow to grade Students' work through the Grade Center, which is where they can control when to release grades to the Students.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where does this feature appear?

Assignments can be added to any content page within Courses and organizations.

What is the difference between Multiple Attempts and Iterations?

Iterations allowed Instructors to return submissions to Students for further editing, but changes between iterations were not maintained and only one grade was associated with the submission. Multiple Attempts allows Students to maintain a history of all of their submissions and Instructors to attach a grade to each attempt. The submission history displays the progress that a Student has made over the Course of the assignment.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Assignments when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

When moved to Blackboard Learn, Assignments from the CE 4 Course are placed in a Blackboard Learn Content Area named Assignments. All Assignments link to a column in the Grade Center regardless of whether that link existed in the CE 4 Course. If Grade Center information is not available when the Course is moved, a default column will be created using the Grade Center settings.

After being placed initially in the Blackboard Learn Assignments Content Area, Assignments can be moved to any Content Area. Assignments can be placed in the same Content Area as other content. This will allow other tools used to organize the Course by Units and keep all of the content and activities used to teach a topic in the same location creating a stronger organizational flow.

Field Map

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Import Assignment file	Attach File	
Title	Name	
Instructions	Instructions	
Due date/time	Due date/time	
Maximum Grade	Points Possible	
Cutoff date	Display Until Date/Time	In Blackboard Learn, Display Until specifies a date beyond which the Students will not be able to access the assignment. The Due Date compared to the date of submission determines whether the submission will be marked "Late." If allow late submissions=Y until a specific date, that date becomes the Display Until date and the Cutoff Date becomes the Due Date. If allow late submissions=Y with no date, Cutoff Date becomes the Due Date and no Display Until date exists. If allow late submissions=N, Cutoff Date becomes the Display Until date.

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Release column (Show to Students in My Grades)	Show to Users	This is set in the Grade Center, not when editing the Assignment. The Grade Center column in Blackboard Learn has a setting to determine whether the column displays to Students.
Display Order		In Blackboard Learn Assignments can be included in any Content Area and can be moved to any position on the page.
Availability starting (Immediately or Specify a date)	Display After date/time	Blackboard Learn defaults to immediately available if the Assignment is available and no Display After date is specified.
Due date (Unlimited or Specify a date)	Due Date (Y/N)	
Multiple Submissions	Number of Attempts	If the CE 4 assignment specified multiple attempts, in Blackboard Learn the assignment will have an unlimited number of attempts.
Student score release (Release the score once the assignment has been graded, Release the score once the availability period has ended and the assignment has been graded, or Do not release score)		The Grade Center column in Blackboard Learn has a setting to show the column to Students. It does not provide specific criteria for when to display the column.

Blackboard Connect Integration

Clients who have licensed both Blackboard Learn and Blackboard Connect can now integrate the two products. This integration includes the following features:

- The ability to “push” user data from Blackboard Learn into a new Blackboard Connect installation.
- The ability for Blackboard Learn system administrators to send System Announcements by SMS text message or text-to-voice phone calls through Blackboard Connect.
- The ability for Blackboard Learn users to receive Notifications (the same kind of Notifications supported in 9.0 through email or the Learn web interface) by via SMS text message or text-to-voice phone calls through Blackboard Connect. Users still have the ability to select which types of Notifications they will receive and through what media (web, email, SMS, voice call).

For more information about Blackboard Connect, see the Blackboard Connect documentation available on [Behind the Blackboard](#) or contact your Blackboard Client Manager.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

Yes. Clients must license both Blackboard Learn Enterprise Edition and Blackboard Connect.

Where does this feature appear?

If the integration is enabled, the Announcements page accessed through the Administrator Panel is updated to reflect the additional SMS and text-to-voice options. The Notifications Settings page will display two additional columns (SMS and Voice) in addition to the existing columns (Web and Email) for users to select the mode for Notifications.

Did this feature change any existing workflows?

The SMS and text-to-voice options are simply additional options available to System Administrators when creating System Announcements and Notifications.

Is the integration automatic?

No. The integration must be activated for the client by the Blackboard Connect Client Care team in the Blackboard Connect central service. Once enabled, the System Administrator has to enable the Blackboard Connect proxy tool in Blackboard Learn.

At that point, the data between the two systems needs to be synchronized. If it is a new Blackboard Connect implementation, the Blackboard Learn System Administrator can “push” the user data from Blackboard Learn into Blackboard Connect. However, if there is an existing Blackboard Connect installation on campus or if the campus wants to use a system other than Blackboard Learn as the data source for Blackboard Connect, additional services work may be required.

At what phone number will the users receive the SMS messages or voice calls?

How the phone number is configured will vary from institution to institution. The phone number needs to be a part of the Blackboard user record (most likely using the existing fields in Personal Information), but there is no requirement that the phone number fields be managed through Blackboard Learn. As an alternate example, the phone numbers could be populated into Blackboard Learn through an SIS (Student information system).

What if Students do not want to receive SMS messages or voice calls from Blackboard Learn?

Users must explicitly indicate that they want to receive Notifications (and Announcements) in these modes.

Blogs and Journals

Blogs and Journals provide Students and Instructors with a social learning tool for expressing their thoughts and reflecting on their learning, either privately (with the Instructor) or publicly (with others in the Course). These tools empower all Course users to create and share ideas, while Instructors maintain the ability to edit or remove any inappropriate material.

Journals

Individual Journals allow Students to record their Course experiences and what they are learning. These thoughts can be a private communication between a Student and the Instructor or shared with everyone in the Course. Journal entries can be commented on by the author and the Instructor. Others are able to read public Journals, but they cannot comment on them.

Group Journals allow groups of Students to reflect collaboratively on their Course work and comment on their fellow group members' findings. To maintain privacy, Journal entries may be added anonymously by group members.

Blogs

Individual Blogs provide each Student with his or her own area to publicly share thoughts and work with others in the Course and to receive comments and feedback on entries. Avatars added by Students will be displayed in their public space to help personalize the page.

Course Blogs allow all users in the Course to share their thoughts and work in one common area that everyone can read and comment on. All entries are posted to the same page to help promote collaboration among all Course members. Users can add entries and comment on entries anonymously to maintain privacy.

Group Blogs allow groups of Students to collaboratively post thoughts and comment on each others' work while all other users in the Course can view and comment on their entry.

In each of these cases, users create entries, which are added to their Blog or Journal. The entries can be saved as drafts or published and then edited later. When entries are added to the Blog or Journal, they are added automatically to an index organized by date. A "New" indicator is displayed on entries and comments that the user has not yet displayed. Entries also can be marked by the users as "New" again to create a reminder.

Grading Blogs and Journals

Instructors can enter grades for Blogs and Journals for individuals and for Groups within the Blog and Journal areas without having to navigate to the Grade Center, or they can enter them directly in the Grade Center. This enables Instructors to enter grades within the Blog or Journal so that the grading process is completed in context. All grade entries made within the Blog and Journal areas are automatically added to the Grade Center.

In addition to entering a grade, Instructors can enter grading notes and submit feedback to the Student. The grade and Instructor feedback is visible to Students, but the grading notes are not visible. For Group Blogs, Instructors can assign a Group-wide grade that applies to all Group members or assign individual grades for each Student. Instructors also have the flexibility to override the Group grade for particular Students.

Students can view their grades for Blogs and Journals within the Blog and Journal areas or in My Grades. Students will see their grade as well as any feedback provided by the Instructor.

This feature appears along the right hand margin of the Blog or Journal in the About this Journal or About this Blog section under the Student's name. Instructors can also grade Blogs or Journals from the Grade Center. Instructors will be able to set a Blog or Journal as gradable on the Create or Edit Blogs or Journals pages, which are accessed from the Control Panel by clicking **Course Tools** and then **Blogs** or **Journals**.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do these features appear?

Blogs and Journals exist as tools within the Course environment. Instructors can access them from the Control Panel under **Course Tools**. Instructors can provide access to Students through tool links on content pages, the Menu, and the Tools page. Students access Group Blogs and Journals from within a Group space.

What is the difference between a Blog and a Journal?

A Journal is an on-going reflection or record of events by an individual or set of individuals. A Blog is a commentary by an individual or set of individuals that is for public consumption and comment.

Can I make Blogs and Journals Public?

No. The privacy of Students' Course work needs to be respected. Opening these tools to the outside world may violate privacy laws.

Can Instructors grade individual Blog and Journal entries?

No. Blogs and Journals are only gradable in Release 9.1 as a single grade per Student as opposed to an individual grade for each entry.

Branding and Customization

Institutions will enjoy numerous customization options available to a larger user community alongside an improved user experience. Administrators should consider the Institution's need and best practices when using these features.

Single Login Page

In response to client feedback from current administrators of all products, we have made improvements to the user experience on entry to the Blackboard Learn software. Administrators can choose whether users begin on a gateway page that includes the login form, or directly on the My Institution tab that includes a login module. Administrators can publish system announcements directly to the gateway page using familiar announcements tools, and Enterprise Edition clients can customize it extensively using a simple template.

Brand Customization

Release 9 provides an extensive set of user interface themes that can change the entire look and feel of the system. The Blackboard default theme uses modern rounded edges and a soft blue and yellow color scheme. To help ease the transition to Release 9, themes inspired by each of the legacy LMS products (CE 4, CE 8, Vista 8, and Academic Suite 8) are available, as well as a Schoolhouse theme designed to appeal to younger learners and a Brushed Metal theme with clean lines, drop shadow, and neutral colors.

Fifteen separate color palettes will also ship with Release 9, each of which can be overlaid on top of any theme to change the set of colors used throughout the system.

For clients who want even more flexibility, the colors of the most common interface elements can be customized individually beyond the color palette offerings. For example, an administrator can set the button color throughout the system to an institution-defined value.

Release 9 also allows Enterprise Edition clients with technical expertise to download and customize the entire package of style sheets for each theme, or the single style sheet for all colors in the color palette, and upload those changes for use on their system.

Feature Enhancement: Login Page Customization

+ User Login Directly from First Loaded Page

All users will be able to log in from the first page. There is no need for a gateway page.

+ Post Announcements Directly to the Login Page

Administrators can create HTML or text announcements posted directly to the login page from the Announcements tool. This will ensure that users see the most important information even before logging in. Please note that the tool used to customize the information on the login page may be used without changing the template.

+ Support for User-Translated Text on the Login Page

Administrators can add their own custom translated text to the Login Page template instead of creating a separate template for each language. Administrators who use this feature should review how to manage resource bundles for custom translation and using the <fmt> tag in the template.

+ Simple Upload/Download Template for the Login page

Administrators will be able to use a simple upload/download template mechanism for customizing the login page. This new process allows them to use simple HTML tags in a single template file to tailor the look and feel. This feature is available only with the Enterprise Edition. Please speak to your Client Manager about licensing at this level.

Feature Enhancement: Translation Options

+ Integrated Translations

Translations are included with the release instead of being made available at a later date. A complete translation of the interface into any language can be enabled for individual users, individual Courses, and/or for the entire system. Those who license at the Enterprise Edition will have a great number of languages to choose from.

+ Language Pack Editor

The Language Pack Editor may be used to edit individual text including embedded help and new full translations can be imported using the Enterprise Edition. Using this tool, Administrators can align the software with their terminology and provide specific detailed assistance on screen. For example, the Administrator can add additional information to the embedded help to explain the institution's standards for using a specific tool.

Feature Enhancement: Color Customization Options

+ Themes and Color Palettes

Administrators can apply themes and color palettes to the entire system, including a "WebCT Classic 2" theme, inspired by Campus Edition 4. Applying an interface look and feel is useful for easing retraining anxiety or for creating a bold new look.

+ Customize Individual Colors

Custom individual colors in common use throughout the system can be changed using the standard color picker. For example, the Administrator could match the tabs to the rest of their institutional design. This enables institutions to customize the interface to match 'corporate' branding, such as Harvard Crimson.

+ Color Picker

A new more accessible color picker is used throughout the system that allows users to select any color and uses color names and hexadecimal codes to identify colors in use.

+ Modifying the CSS (Cascading Style Sheet)

Staff with technical expertise can fully customize all aspects of the user interface with downloadable CSS themes through the Theme and Palette library tool. This feature is available only with the Enterprise Edition.

Feature Enhancement: Navigation/Content

+ Custom Navigation Settings

Schools can provide some branding elements to match their business processes or style guides by modifying the navigation settings, primarily for the top frame.

+ Tabbed Navigation Outside of Courses

The new tabbed navigation interface is available outside of Courses for separating and deploying content, including modules and links. This gives Administrators the ability to organize information for all aspects of campus life.

+ Custom Content

Schools can provide links to other campus systems and rotate fresh content into their users' experience. This content, Hot Spots or Hot Links, is deployed in either the top frame and/or each tab.

Feature Loss

- Directly Editing the Custom Login Page

Administrators cannot edit the login page directly using HTML/script manipulation. They will need to use the Announcements tool or the login template mechanism to re-apply previous customizations. The login template mechanism is available only with the Enterprise Edition.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license level?

All licenses will have the ability to choose a single theme and palette and set individual color settings to be shared by all users.

The following features are available only with the Enterprise Edition:

- Customize the login page.
- Download and upload custom themes and color palettes.

The following features are available only when the community engagement capabilities have been licensed:

- Customize a portion of the login page differently for different hostnames (for example, `bizschool.myinst.edu`).
- Create Tab Groups to organize related content.
- Associate different themes, palettes, and settings with different host names or user communities.

For more information, see [Community Engagement Features](#).

Where do these features appear?

Feature	Location
Tabs	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Tabs and Modules . On the Tabs and Modules page, click Tabs .
Login Page	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes . On the Brands and Themes page, click Customize Login Page .
Themes	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes .
Gateway Page	On the Administrator Panel, under Security , click Gateway Options .
Announcements	On the Administrator Panel, under Tools and Utilities , click Announcements .
Themes	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes .

Do I have to know CSS to customize Blackboard Learn?

No. Administrators who are comfortable with the Blackboard Learn interface can use the theme and palette library that ships with Release 9.1 to choose one of more than 100 combinations of theme and color palette for their system. If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, Administrators can apply distinct combinations to any campus community they choose, by institution role, hostname, or both. Furthermore, with the new Blackboard Learn color picker, more than 16 million color choices are available for any of the 21 commonly used color elements in the system.

Calendar

The features in the Calendar have changed from the previous release of the product, and may affect how users take advantage of the feature since a number of options have been removed. Users will enjoy a new user interface and navigation. All users should be educated on the changes in the Calendar tool.

Feature Enhancement

+ Duration of Activity Display

By displaying the duration of activities, the Calendar allows for easier planning and enables users to view overlaps and conflicts between entries.

+ Visual Textbox Editor

The Visual Textbox Editor is available for users building Calendar events, enabling them to build rich event descriptions using WYSIWYG or HTML modes.

+ One Click Navigation between Views

Standard one click switching between day, week, month and year views allows for easier navigation.

+ Year View

Calendar users can now facilitate long-term planning and quick navigation by viewing the calendar year at a glance.

Feature Loss

- Calendar Wizard

Users will need to use the on-page Help to guide them through creating a new Calendar item. Users should be educated on the Show/Hide page instructions option which appears whenever page level help is available.

- Bulk Import Entries

Users will need to create Calendar events one by one. They may also import a Course package that includes Calendar data.

- Bulk Delete Entries

Users will need to delete Calendar events one by one or use Course Recycle to delete all events.

- Flexible Creation of Events

Only Instructors (including Teaching Assistants and Course Builders) have access to create Course events from the Course Calendar. Users can only create personal events from the Personal Calendar.

- Flexible View Filtering

Users are unable to pick which Course events appear in the Calendar. In addition, users cannot create printable event agendas for a date or date range. Users can view Calendar events for all Courses or for a single Course.

– All Day Events

Users must provide a start time and an end time for every event. To approximate an All Day Event provide a Start Time of 12:00am and an End Time of 11:59pm.

– Course Links to Calendar Items

Instructors cannot create links to the Calendar from Content Area (previously Course Content) items.

– Course tags in the My Calendar View

The My Calendar view does not tag individual items with the Course they belong to. Users will have to infer this by using the Course filter or opening the detail view of a specific item.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Calendar Events when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

Course Calendar Events are moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course, but Personal Calendar Events are not moved. Instructors should review Course Calendar Events and edit and delete them as appropriate before offering the Blackboard Learn Course to a new set of Students.

In Blackboard Learn, the Course Calendar is used by the Instructor to post public Events related to the Course. Students are not allowed to post public Events in the Blackboard Learn Course Calendar. Instructors and Students cannot post personal Events to the Course Calendar, but they may add them to their Personal Calendars.

Blackboard Learn does not record all-day Events as a separate type of event. All-day Events that are moved into a Blackboard Learn Course appear with a start time of 12:00 AM and an end time of 11:59 PM.

Blackboard Learn does not have a recurring Events function, but all Events set to recur are moved to individual Events in the Course Calendar.

Blackboard Learn does not allow the insertion of URLs or Course Content links within Calendar Events.

Field Map for Calendar Settings

CE 4 Field	Notes
Allow Students to make public entries	In Blackboard Learn, Students are not allowed to make public entries using the Course Calendar.
Allow Students to make private entries	In Blackboard Learn, Students can create personal calendar events in the My Institution calendar, but not in the Course calendar.
Instructor-added entries default to public or private	In Blackboard Learn, Instructors cannot add personal events in the Course Calendar. Instructors can create personal calendar events in the My Institution calendar.

Field Map for Calendar Entries

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Summary	Event Name	
Detail	Description	
Date, Start Time	Date, Start Time	
End Time	End Time	
Access Level (Private/ Public) (Public = Y/N)		Only public events that are associated with a Course will be moved, not private events or institution-level events. The move will not differentiate between Student-created public events and Instructor-created public events in the Course- all public events will be moved. After the move, Students are no longer able to create public events in Courses.
URL		Blackboard Learn does not allow the insertion of URLs and Course Content links within Calendar Entries.
Internal Link		Blackboard Learn does not allow the insertion of URLs and Course Content links within Calendar Entries.

Collaboration Tools (Chat and Whiteboards)

Faculty and Students will enjoy a number of new features in the Collaboration Tools. Overviews of training materials should be given to Faculty detailing the new options available within the tools to ensure they are aware of new capabilities.

Feature Enhancement

+ Chat and Whiteboard Tools Integrated in the Virtual Classroom

Users can communicate and share visual information in a single tool/session rather than opening multiple tools to achieve the same goal. The integrated tool should be explained to Instructors and Students to ensure that they understand the differences between the Lightweight Chat and Virtual Classroom.

+ Add Chat/Whiteboard Sessions and Remove Default Sessions

Instructors can create additional sessions and remove the default sessions to provide specific teaching and learning conversation opportunities for Course participants. Make Instructors aware of the ability to create and manage multiple Chat Rooms.

+ Chat Room Availability

Instructors can set the availability of chat rooms in advance to allow prior planning without providing early access. This gives the Instructor a chance to set up the Course ahead of time and make particular collaboration sessions accessible when they are ready to do so.

+ Breakout Sessions

Instructors have more control over managing conversations and can split the class into smaller discussion groups 'on the fly' and then bring the Students back into the larger conversation later on.

+ Web Page Sharing

Instructors have the ability to share a web page with session participants as well as navigate through Content Areas (previously Course Content) so the context of the discussion is maintained.

Feature Change

Saving Whiteboard Sessions

If a Whiteboard session is recorded, the work completed on the canvas is saved with the rest of the session archive. If the session is not recorded, the Whiteboard work will only remain accessible for the duration of the session.

Feature Loss

– General Chat Room

Users will not be able to access a chat space available to all the users in a system. Chat sessions will be limited to users enrolled in a particular Course.

– Whiteboard Image Pasting

Users will not be able to copy and paste images from external sources into the Whiteboard canvas.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Collaboration Tools when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

CE 4 Whiteboards and combinations of Chat Whiteboards map to Blackboard Virtual Classrooms.

CE 4 Chat Rooms map to Blackboard Learn Chat Sessions. Chat Sessions in Blackboard Learn can be used as a stand-alone tool or as part of the Virtual Classroom. If CE 4 Chat Rooms were linked to the menu or content pages, the links are moved to Course Links in Blackboard Learn. Instructors control private messaging and recordings settings from within each session. Many of the settings available in CE 4 Chat Rooms are not moved to Blackboard Learn:

- No limits exist for the number of users.
- Users are not allowed to use aliases.
- Users are not allowed to show and hide parts of a combined room.
- Goals are not available.

Course Creation Wizard

The Course Creation Wizard is missing some significant areas of familiar use, which may impact how users adopt the feature. Faculty should be educated on these changes and best practices.

Feature Enhancement

+ Course Shell

Instructors have the ability to create the following: Course shells, availability and duration of the Course, whether Students can enroll themselves or not and the text and button style to use within the Course.

+ Course Content Wizard

The Wizard walks Instructors through selecting whether to create an empty Course, use a Course template, copy an existing Course's content, or use a Course cartridge to create the content area.

+ Course Menu Customization

The Wizard guides users through modifying the Course Menu items that are displayed by default in the Course.

Feature Loss

- Building Content Areas

Blackboard Learn does not provide a Course Creation Wizard to walk Instructors through building Content Areas (previously Course Content). The Wizard only creates Course shells. While Instructors cannot use the Wizard to build content they will be able to take advantage of the intuitive user interface to easily build out their Course materials. (See the Course Navigation and Learning Content section for more details on building Course content).

- Activate Communication Tools

Blackboard Learn does not include a Wizard to walk Instructors through selecting and activating communication tools to use in a Course such as discussions, mail, calendar and chat. In Blackboard Learn edit mode allows Instructors to add or remove these communication tools in the Course Menu, Content Areas, and the Tools page.

Course Customization, Navigation, and Content

All Course management tools will be immediately available upon Course access for Instructors, teaching assistants, and other users with the appropriate entitlements. Course management tools in the control panel and Course content editing capabilities have been organized into common tasks.

Instructors will have direct access to edit and organize their Course Menu, including the ability to add content areas, tool links, sub-headers, and visual separators to the menu as well as to rearrange the order of menu items using drag and drop or a keyboard accessible method of organization. More intelligent handling of empty content areas, such as hiding them from the Students' view of the Course if they do not contain at least one piece of content, will keep the Course clean and organized.

All users will enjoy an enhanced Course navigation experience as well as a number of content enhancements. However, faculty members should note that a few features are not available, such as customized content. Before using the new Course environment, faculty will need to be educated on the functions and best practices of the following features.

Multiple Methods of Content Presentation

Course Module pages can be added to a Course to provide easy access to a variety of information. By default a Course homepage will be created that contains modules such as "Course Announcements", "What's New", "Calendar", and "Tasks." Particulars of content presentation include:

- Any community engagement module can be displayed within a Course by the System Administrator.
- Any module that displays roll up information (Announcements, Tasks, What's New) will only display content relevant to the Course when displayed on a Course Module page.
- Any module which can be displayed within a Course can also be added to a group home page and will further filter the display to reflect information applicable to the specific group.
- The Instructor will have the option to allow the individual user to personalize Course Module pages giving them the ability to add additional content at their own discretion.
- The content layout options previously available in all Learning System products as well as a new layout option will be available:
 - Icon Only (Vista 8 and CE 8)
 - Icon with Text (legacy Academic Suite)
 - Text Only (new)

Instructors can make use of all three layout options within a Course to ensure the content for any given area is being presented in the most appropriate manner for their users. Content in all layouts can be repositioned using drag and drop or using a keyboard accessible method.

Increased Options for Course Design and Style

Instructors will have the ability to design and style their Course to reflect the individual needs of their subject and material:

- Select the menu color and style of the Course menu (including the option to use text or buttons to represent individual items).
- Create a customized page banner (using the Text Editor).
- Select the color scheme displayed on each Course Module page.
- Upload a Course banner image to be displayed on the page designated as the “Course Entry Point.”

All of these options provide the Instructor with added flexibility to determine the presentation of their Course.

Simplified Tool Management

Instructors can manage the availability of all Course tools in a single interface. They will have full control over how tools are presented to users. Tools can be added as direct links on the Course menu, embedded in line with other Course content or made available on a central Tools page for easy access.

Locations for Tool Links

All tools are available from the Course Tools page, which is an option on the Course Menu. In addition, individual tools can be added to the Course Menu. For example, Instructors can add frequently used tools, such as the Discussion Board, directly to the Course Menu. As well, links to tools can be embedded with content. For example, a Student can read something and then interact with others through the Discussion Board from within the same content area. To continue with the same experience as previous releases of Blackboard, create the tool links directly in the Course menu.

Feature Enhancement

+ Flexible Course Welcome Page

The Course Dashboard is the default Course entry point. However, Instructors may select any area of the Course Menu to function as the Course entry.

+ Easily Accessible Control Panel

All options in the Control Panel are available from the main Course page. Instructors no longer have to navigate to a separate area of the system to access these controls.

+ Presentation Options

Items in specific content areas can be displayed in Icon View, Icon with Text or Text Only for increased flexibility in Course creation. This increased flexibility in content presentation allows Instructors to build Content Areas that suit their unique pedagogical needs. Instructors may prefer the Icon View which will be familiar to CE 4 users.

+ Page Level Actions

Placing page level actions at the top of the page makes better use of screen real estate and allows more space for the display of content areas. If users want a more familiar look and feel, the Administrator can apply the “WebCT Classic 2” theme to their system, which will place the action bar on the right of the screen again. Users should note that, while the layout will be familiar, all actions are not performed exactly the same.

+ Contextual Menu

Contextual menus enable users to know which actions are available on individual items and allow for quick changes. This will save users’ time because they will no longer attempt to perform actions on items that are not applicable.

+ In-line Add, Edit, and Drag and Drop

Inline actions and drag and drop results in quicker Course Menu set up and management. Instructors no longer have to navigate to multiple areas of the Course to access these controls and they can complete each action with fewer clicks.

+ Dividers and Sub-Headers

Using dividers and sub-headers in the Course menu helps Instructors with Course organization.

+ Multiple Course Menu Displays

Instructors can choose a Course menu display that aligns with their preferences for building and teaching a Course, including opening the menu in a separate window and collapsing the Course Menu for optimal screen real estate.

+ Module Pages

Course module pages provide the Instructor with another way to present Course related information to Students. When building or updating a Course, Instructors should keep in mind this new page type, the kind of material that can be added to it, and the personalization options available for Students if they enable it.

+ Notifications

Notifications enable users to access content that is new or that they need to take action on. Users view this information and can access the content directly from the Notifications module within a Course, through email, and if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, from the Notifications Dashboard.

Feature Change

Edit Settings

Edit – OFF (instead of the Student View tab) is used to see the Course as it appears to Students, Edit – ON (instead of the Designer Options tab) is used to access all of the controls to build and manage a Course. Instructors and Designers may use the Edit toggle.

Wizards are not included with Individual Tools in the system.

Intuitive user interface and standard web navigation makes individual tool wizards unnecessary.

Orientation Bar

Breadcrumbs may be used to determine where in the Course an item is located. They reflect the location of an item, not the path the user took to get to it.

Presentation Options

Items in content areas can be displayed in Icon View, Icon with Text View, or Text Only View. This increased flexibility in content presentation allows Instructors to build Content Areas that suit their unique pedagogical needs. Instructors may prefer the Icon View, which will be familiar to CE 4 users and includes an icon and title of the content item as the link to the content item.

Content Types

Multiple content types provide Instructors with extended flexibility when adding content and structuring that content within a Course In Blackboard Learn. These options can be found in the Build area of the Action Bar and enable the Instructors to add different types of content to a Course, including videos and images as well as packaged content, such as IMS and SCORM. Instructors also have numerous options for organizing this content, such as Content Folders, Lesson Plans, and Learning Modules.

The available content types are listed in the Build area of the Action Bar when uploading content to an area within a Course.

Customized Course Design

Instructors have a number of Course design options available such as Course banners, module pages banners, and Course menu colors and layout. However, Instructors cannot customize the general Course design, such as colors, background images, and icons. Some of these changes can be made at the system level using options for themes and icon sets.

Adding a New Content Area

Instructors can manage Content Areas inline from the Course Menu, instead of having to navigate through the Control Panel.

Control Panel Organization

The Control Panel includes all of the functions for building and teaching a Course organized in a new way.

Course Settings Availability and Location

The choices available in Course Settings are primarily the same. However, the location of these options has changed. The following options are no longer available:

- Modifying the Instructor's name in each Course
- Selecting the time and numeric data format
- Choosing to show or hide the Equation Editor

Feature Loss

– Customized Content Area

Instructors no longer have the option to customize the content area with headers, footers, banners, page colors, background images, and icons. However, information previously included in the Header and Footer used may be added as a Description or Instructions for a content item. Banners may still be added to the Course entry point and Course Module pages. The text editor can be used to add images to content items. In addition, some of these changes can be made at the system level using options for themes and icon sets.

– Resume Course Button

Students no longer have a way to get to the page they were viewing when they last left the Course. They will always enter the Course on the page the Instructor designates as the entry point.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license level?

A core set of Blackboard modules (including Announcements, Calendar, Tasks, What's New, Needs Attention, To Do List, and Alerts) will be available for inclusion on Course module pages. If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, users will have the increased ability to make any module available for display within a Course.

What do Administrators need to know about Course Modules?

Any system module can be made available for display in Courses and organizations. If the module shows roll up information when displayed on a tab it will be filtered to display information specific to the Course or organization when viewed in that context. Permission to view modules is still controlled by institution role so modules which have limited access (such as Faculty only) will only display to users with the selected institution role(s) even when viewed in Courses or organizations.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Content Items when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

Most of the Content Fields are moved from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn. To preserve as much data as possible, fields are sometimes combined during the move.

In CE 4, many tools are available that allow files to be attached to Content Items. All of the files in the File Manager (Manage Files) are moved to Course Files in Blackboard Learn. Be aware that there is no way to prevent sensitive information, such as Student submissions or private files, from being moved if it is stored in the File Manager.

For any items that cannot be moved to a Content Area that is analogous to the CE 4 Course, content containers will be placed in a Content Area named Information.

All Content Items are converted to UTF-8.

CE 4 User data is not moved to Blackboard Learn. As a result, many of the customizations made in CE 4, such as the use of custom icons and templates, are not available in Blackboard Learn.

Field Map for Content Items

CE 4 Field	Learn Field	Notes
Title	Name	
Description/Instructions	Text/Instructions	If the source has more than one text field, they are combined and inserted into the Text field so that the content is not lost.
Release After (date/time)	Display After date/time	Blackboard Learn defaults to immediately available if the content is available and no Display After date is specified.
Release Until (date/time)	Display Until date/time	Simple date availability is stored with the content item. This information is set using Selective Release in CE 4.
URL Address	URL	
Default or custom icon		This data is associated with a user. CE User data does not move to Blackboard Learn.
Open in new browser window or same browser window		Blackboard Learn only provides the ability to open in a new window for External Links. This provides a more consistent user experience.
Show navigation buttons (Y/N)		This data is associated with a user. CE User data does not move to Blackboard Learn.
Link on Course Menu (Y/N)		In Blackboard Learn, the location of the content item is determined by where one chooses to create it. When pages are moved into Blackboard Learn, they will be in the same folders and in the same position on the page as they were in the source Course.
Link on Organizer Page [select page]		In Blackboard Learn, the location of the content item is determined by where one chooses to create it. When pages are moved into Blackboard Learn, they will be in the same folders and in the same position on the page as they were in the source Course.
Link shows item title		This data is associated with a user. CE User data does not move to Blackboard Learn.
Link shows icon		This data is associated with a user. CE User data does not move to Blackboard Learn.

CD-ROM Content

CE 4 data that points to a specific file or directory on a CD is not moved from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn. However, within CE 4, these files are also stored in the File Manager and will be moved as part of the File Manager move. When stub files (marker files that indicate where the original file is located) were used to avoid storing the file on the CD within the File Manager, the content will move to Blackboard Learn Course Files.

Folders

Folders are moved to Blackboard Learn and nested as they were in the CE 4 Course. Top-level folders that appear on the menu CE 4 become Content Areas in Blackboard Learn, which also appear on the menu.

Course Links

Links to other places in the CE 4 Course are moved to Blackboard Learn as Course Links. Course Links in Blackboard Learn are managed separately from the items to which they link. Course Links have their own availability settings, names, and descriptions.

Page Customization

Blackboard Learn does not support background images and customization within Courses. Administrators can change the system-wide look and feel using themes.

WebEQ Equations

WebEQ equations on all Content Pages will be converted to the Blackboard Learn format for equations.

Student Tips

CE 4 can display a tip when Students log in. Blackboard Learn does not provide this feature. The content from Student Tips is moved to the Blackboard Learn Course, and as with other Content Types, a new Content Area named Student Tips is created to store this information. Because this Content cannot be delivered as tips, the Instructor must decide how to deploy this content. Options include using Announcements or Date Restrictions to reveal a new tip each day.

Course Files (Manage Files)

Clients who have been using the Manage Files area in CE 4 will find Course Files familiar as a central file management feature. Users should be educated about the following features and best practices for each.

Feature Enhancement

+ Drag and Drop File Upload

A new Multi-File upload tool enables users to drag and drop single files, multiple files, and entire folders of files into Course Files from their desktop.

+ Flexible Permissions

While the system has automatic permissions settings for files, these settings are exposed to users for greater control. For example, the system will automatically ensure that Students can view files attached to the Course from Course Files, but the Instructors may modify this for individual files and folders if they choose.

+ 360° View

This file report is available in Course Files and any place that the file is attached in the Course. It includes details about the file and how it is used in the Course, including where it is used in the Course, file data (such as type and size), and information about when it was last edited.

+ Viewing Images as Thumbnails

In Course Files (and the Content Collection if the content management capabilities have been licensed), users can switch between **View List**, which lists the files in a directory, and the new **View Thumbnails**, which shows a resizable thumbnail of image files. All non-image files will display the appropriate icon for the file type.

Feature Change

.Zip Packages

Users have separate options in Course Files for uploading .zip packages and for extracting the content.

Saving HTML Content

Content added to a Visual Text Box Editor (VTBE) in the Course is not automatically saved to Course Files. Users can choose to save this content on the Create Item and Create Folder pages.

If the content management capabilities have been licensed, users can save HTML content entered in VTBE fields throughout the system.

SCORM Content

SCORM packages attached to a Course are not automatically saved to Course Files.

Feature Loss

– Editing HTML Content

While users can modify HTML content built in Blackboard Learn they cannot modify HTML content built in another application within Blackboard Learn. For example, content built in Dreamweaver and added to Course Files cannot be edited within Blackboard Learn. This content must be edited using an HTML tool.

Course Files with the Content Collection

For clients who have licensed the content management capabilities, Course Files fully integrates individual Course content with the Content Collection. Course Files encourages the sharing and reuse of content by allowing users to access and manage all of their files in the Content Collection from within a Course and across Courses. The additional features available include:

- Cross-Course sharing of content
- Institutional content repositories
- Personal content repositories
- Reusable Objects
- Metadata for content
- Version control
- File locking
- Tracking user interaction with an item
- Sharing of comments
- Advanced search function
- Permissions and passes control
- e-reserves
- e-portfolios
- Portfolios
- Integration with the outcomes assessment capabilities

In addition, administrators can change the default directory for an individual Course by clicking **Properties** under **Customization** in the Course Control Panel. Administrators can also change the default directory for an individual Course or multiple Courses using a command line tool.

If a client who licenses only the course delivery capabilities later decides to license the content management capabilities, the Course Files feature will integrate seamlessly with the Content Collection.

For more information, see the Course Files and Content Management topics in [Blackboard Help](#) or contact your Blackboard Client Manager.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

No.

Where does this feature appear?

For clients who have not licensed the content management capabilities, Instructors or other users with the appropriate Course role can access the Course Files area by clicking **Files** in the Control Panel on the left side of the screen. Clicking on a directory in the Files panel displays its contents (files and folders) in the right-hand content panel of the Course environment.

For clients who have licensed the content management capabilities, users will see the traditional Content Collection view that displays all available Course Files and content management functionality, including individual Course Content (which is equivalent to the content on the **Files** panel seen by users who have not licensed the content management capabilities), My Content, All Courses Content, All Organizations Content, and Institution Content.

For all clients, Course Files can also be accessed when attaching files to a content item. The **Browse My Computer** button, which allows the user to browse their local computer for files, is now accompanied by a **Browse Course Files** button to select files from Course Files (or any Content Collection if the content management capabilities have been licensed). The **Browse Course Files** button brings up the Course Files interface in a pop-up window for file selection.

What's the difference between Course Files and the Content Collection?

Course Files is available to all Blackboard Learn clients and provides basic file management capabilities within a Course. In short, Course Files does not change a lot about what you can do with uploaded files in a Blackboard Learn Course, but it changes how you do those things by providing more control and management capabilities to the Instructor.

The content management capabilities provide a much wider array of content management capabilities within the Course and across the institution.

What happens with content added to Course Files if we upgrade our Blackboard Learn system to include the Content Collection?

If a client licenses only the Course delivery capabilities and later adds the content management capabilities, no additional action is necessary to continue using Course Files. Because Course Files is built on the same underlying file storage system as the Content Collection, the Course Files directory and a Course's Content Collection are one and the same. The Instructor will now be able to take advantage of the full Content Collection view and the expanded Files panel (described above).

Can you set a default “landing” directory for the file picker when launched from Course Files?

No. The file picker defaults to the current Course Files directory.

If the content management capabilities have been licensed, administrators can change the default directory for an individual Course by clicking **Properties** under **Customization** in the Course Control Panel. Administrators can also change the default directory for an individual Course or multiple Courses using a command line tool.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to files when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

Clients who have been using the Manage Files area in CE 4 will find Course Files familiar. After a CE 4 Course is moved to Blackboard Learn, the content that had previously resided in the File Manager will now reside in the Course Files area in the new target Blackboard Learn Course (or in the Content Collection if the content management capabilities of Blackboard Learn have been licensed) and links between the content area and those files will be preserved. The original folder and file structure is maintained.

Linked HTML files open within the Blackboard Learn interface in both Learning Modules and content areas.

SCORM content that was in the Manage Files area in CE 4 will appear in Course Files. However, when a new SCORM package is attached to the Course from the local computer, it will not automatically appear in Course Files.

Files from the Manage Files area in CE 4 that were attached to a Course will appear in Course Files and will be linked to from the Course.

Course/Organization Role Customization

Administrators can now create custom Course/Organization Roles based on the standard Course/Organization Roles that ship with Blackboard Learn. Standard and custom roles can be made available to specific Courses and with special privileges. Custom roles inherit their parent role privileges by default, but these privileges can be changed.

Administrators can permit or restrict the more than 100 privileges available for standard or custom roles to best fit the needs of their institutions. As a result, users will have more granular permissions that align more closely with what they are expected to do in Blackboard Learn.

This flexibility focuses on separating Course design privileges from teaching privileges. This is particularly important to institutions that have strict expectations about the responsibilities of different types of faculty and staff. For example, some institutions designate a set of users as designers who are responsible for creating Course templates. The Courses are then passed to another set of users whose sole purpose is to teach the Course. This capability enables such institutions to enforce this separation of responsibilities. These privileges may, for example, allow a school to create a Manager role that is available only in organizations and has fewer privileges than an Instructor in a Course as well as an Assistant role that has no privileges to add or delete content in Course.

The Snapshot tool and the Batch and GUI enrollment tools fully support custom roles.

Custom Course/Organization Roles with Community Engagement

If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, standard and custom roles can be made available separately to specific organizations. This allows an institution to treat Courses and the relationship among their enrolled users differently than those in organizations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license level?

Yes. Enterprise Edition clients have no restrictions for this feature. Basic Edition clients can review available privileges, but they cannot create custom roles or grant or revoke privileges.

Where does this feature appear?

Administrators can configure these roles from the Administrator Panel under **Users** by clicking **Course/Organization Roles**. Roles that can be copied to create new roles will have a **Copy** option in the role's contextual menu.

Privileges can be added from the Administrator Panel under **Users** by clicking **Course/Organization Roles** and then clicking **Privileges** in the contextual menu for the role.

Can all standard roles be used to create new roles?

The following are the default roles that can be copied to make new roles:

- Course Builder/Organization Builder
- Grader/Grader
- Instructor/Leader
- Teaching Assistant/Assistant

Can the privileges for all standard roles be changed?

No. The privileges for the Student and Guest roles cannot be changed.

Are all privileges available to be added to Course/Organization roles?

In this release, only a subset of privileges will be made available to be granted or revoked.

The following are the product areas that are impacted:

- Course Content
- Course Files
- Adaptive Release
- Standards Alignments
- Discussion Board
- Groups
- Course Settings Management
- Course Tools

Privileges associated with the Grade Center have not been made flexible. Any access that the source role has to the Grade Center will be inherited by the derived role and cannot be changed.

How are System Roles impacted by the additional privileges?

System Roles can also be granted the new privileges that have been made available. This means that a given user with a System Role does not have to quick enroll into a Course to get the privileges of a particular Course role as long as they have been granted the corresponding privileges.

Can the same Course or organization role have different capabilities based on the Course or organization it is enrolled in?

No. Each Course or organization role has the same privileges regardless of which Course or organization they are enrolled in. An administrator would have to create as many unique custom roles (with their associated privileges) to cover all of the unique Course-level capabilities desired.

Course Conversion Details**What happens to teaching roles when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?**

The custom roles replace the CE 4 method of granting access to Courses based on a role of either Designer or Teaching Assistant. The teaching roles that ship with Learn 9.1 expand on the teaching roles available in CE 4.

To recreate the TA role available in CE 4, create a new custom role (probably based on the Blackboard Learn 9.1 TA role) and remove privileges related to the design and build out of the Course.

Field Map

CE8 Role	Learn 9.1 Role Equivalent
Designer	Instructor
TA + some additional capabilities	Teaching Assistant
-	Course Builder
-	Grader

Discussions

All users will enjoy an improved user experience in the Discussions feature that includes several enhancements. Users should be educated about the following features and best practices for each.

Feature Enhancement

+ Message Drafts

Users will be able to save messages as drafts and return later to post them to the Forum. Drafts are visible in the Thread page where they will appear when published.

+ Unavailable or Hidden Threads

Instructors can remove threads either from the default view or from all Students' views to keep the freshest threads prominent.

+ Moderated Forum Capability

Forum managers can review and control the publication of posts, and can provide feedback to post authors before publication. Faculty should be trained on the new workflow of the moderation queue and rules of engagement when posting in participation forums.

+ Forum User Role Management

Forum managers can delegate responsibilities for moderation and grading to other users in the forum, and can control whether specific users can post or simply read a forum. Managers can also block users from seeing the forum or its posts. It is important that faculty understand the mapping between Course roles and forum roles, and the workflow for managing an individual forum.

+ Reply with Quote

If the forum is configured to allow it, users can quote posts directly in their replies.

+ Subscriptions to Forums and Threads

Instructors can choose to allow an email to be generated when a new post is made to a thread or a forum. This email may contain the body of the post or just a link to the post depending on the Instructor's preference. Users can opt whether or not to receive subscription emails. Users should also check their notification settings since these impact the types of emails they receive.

+ Notifications of New Posting Activity

Notifications of new posts in the Discussion in the What's New module include links directly to the forum.

+ Post and Thread Tagging

Forum managers can label individual posts or threads with any text tags they wish, and users can collect all messages with a given tag.

+ Disabling the Use of File Attachments

Instructors can create forums where file attachments are not allowed.

+ Copying a Forum within a Course

Instructors can copy forums from a group to the Course, from a group to another group, or from the Course to a group. They can also duplicate forums within a Course or group.

+ Performance Dashboard Integration

Instructors can access metrics on discussion performance by individual Students from the performance dashboard, including collections of posts by individual authors.

+ Grade Book Integration

Forum managers and graders can opt to create grade center columns for a forum or thread automatically. They can also assign scores to individual participants directly from the discussion tool.

Feature Change

Terminology/Concept Change

Campus Edition 4 users are accustomed to creating and managing Topics and Replies in the Discussion feature. The equivalent in Blackboard Learn is an additional level for managing Forums, which consists of Threads and Replies.

Sorting and Filtering Messages

Messages can be sorted by subject, author and date in Campus Edition 4 and Blackboard Learn. They may also be filtered by read/unread status, author and other criteria. However in Blackboard Learn, they are sorted and filtered in the Collect interface, which also displays the message bodies.

Scope of Locked Messages

Messages can be locked in both Campus Edition 4 and Blackboard Learn, meaning no further replies are allowed. In Blackboard Learn, this must be done for the whole thread. It cannot be done for a specific lower-level message in a thread.

Feature Loss

- Discussion Creation Wizard

Users will need to use the on-page Help to guide them through creating a new thread and posting a message to it.

- Moving Individual Posts between Threads

Portions of discussions can be hidden or made unavailable, but cannot be duplicated or moved. Only Forums as a whole can be copied.

- Forwarding Messages to the Mail Tool

Users cannot automatically compose mail messages using the discussion post. Subscription messages that contain the post contents can be forwarded once received, or messages can be copied and pasted into the mail tool.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Discussions when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

Discussion Topics in CE 4 are moved to Blackboard Learn Discussion Boards. Topics are moved to Blackboard Learn Forums. Because User data is not moved, only the first message in each thread is moved. These messages are displayed as posted by "Anonymous."

CE 4 Discussion Categories are not moved to Blackboard Learn.

Field Map

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field
Topic Name	Forum Name
Topic Description	Forum Description
Subject	Subject
Message	Message

Email and Messages

Users should note that the Email and Messages features may be missing significant areas of familiar use. There are a few additional features that will add flexibility for sending and replying to messages. Instructors should be educated on these options.

Within Blackboard Learn, Email is used to communicate to user email accounts outside of the system. Messages are used for simple messages sent between users that are enrolled in the same Course. Instructors cannot monitor the messages sent between students.

Feature Enhancement

+ Send Messages to Recipients as Carbon Copies or Blind Carbon Copies

Users gain additional flexibility in how they communicate by sending messages to multiple recipients.

+ Send Messages to External Email Addresses of Users in the Course

Students can send email messages through the Send Email Tool to users or groups of users in the Course. They also have the ability to send email to users who are not currently logged in.

+ Reply to All Recipients of a Message

Recipients do not have to send multiple emails for a given received email.

+ Recipients Can View Other Recipients of the Same Message

Recipients now have more visibility into who is part of their communication thread.

Feature Loss

- Save Message Drafts

Users are restricted to using this tool for simple messages. They can save text of draft messages offline or use the tool for brief messages.

- Search for Messages

Users must manually scan the Email and Messages tools for a desired message.

- View Emails in a Thread Format

Users cannot easily distinguish separate email conversations. They can track conversations manually by organizing emails with personal folders.

- View Messages from Multiple Folders on a Single Page

Users have a limited ability to view a comprehensive list of their messages. They can switch between folders to view all messages.

- Display or Hide Messages Based on Status

Users will see all messages regardless of read or unread status.

- Compile Messages

Users do not have the option to combine the text of several messages.

- **Download Messages**

Users cannot download messages from Blackboard.

- **Delete All Messages from All Folders at Once**

Users will need to take more time to delete their messages. They can still delete all of their messages but must do so one at a time.

- **Resize Text Area when Composing Messages**

Users may have to scroll through text when completing their messages.

- **Wizard that Guides the Message Composition Process**

Users will have to explore the message composition process on their own. However, this is a simple one page task.

ePacks

Blackboard recognizes content originating from an ePack after the content has been moved. When ePack content is accessed by Students within a Course, the PIN is validated against existing purchasing records on the ePack server.

There are no user-visible changes to existing Blackboard Cartridge handling and PIN validation. Similarly, there is no impact to ePack processing on CE 4 systems.

Note Courses that are moved from CE 4 do not process user data. As a result, when Students in the Blackboard Learn Course try to access ePack content, they will need to validate with a PIN.

Lost Data

CE 4 Courses require PIN validation before Students can enter a Course that uses ePack content. Blackboard Learn allows Students to enter the Course and prompts for validation only when an attempt is made to access ePack content. There is no grace period to gain temporary access to Courses with ePack content.

Warning! ePacks contain a shared secret that is encrypted with a key longer than the 128-bits allowed by the security policy shipped with Java 1.5. (The required encryption type is Blowfish/CBC/PKCS5Padding with a 296-bit key.) You must manually install the JCE or you will be unable to validate ePack PINs.

External Links (URLs)

The External Links feature is very similar to previous releases.

External Links were known in CE 4 as URLs.

Feature Enhancement

+ Ability to Add a File in Addition to the URL

Instructors may add a file along with a URL to provide additional guidance or information.

+ Description Fields

Description fields associated with External Links enable Instructors to provide more information to Students about the URL before they access the link.

Feature Change

Category Organization for External Links

External Links cannot be organized into categories. Instructors can create folders within a content area for category organization.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to URLs when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

CE 4 URLs are renamed External Links in Blackboard Learn and come over as a Content Type. External Links do not use categories. Category data is not moved to Blackboard Learn. If a URL is used in multiple places in the Course, a separate External Link will be created for each instance. Making a change to one instance will not update the External Link everywhere that it appears.

Glossary

The Glossary is missing significant areas of familiar use. Even though a few features are now unavailable, faculty should be educated about these changes and note that with an updated workflow they can accomplish the same tasks by building separate content areas for their needs.

Feature Loss

– Glossary Links in Learning Modules

Instructors do not have the option to link to the Glossary within Learning Modules. Instead of using the Glossary tool, use Content Items to represent Glossary terms. Content items may be added or linked to Content Areas and Learning Modules.

– Image Database

Instructors do not have an image database in which to store content. Instructors can create a Content Area for images using folders to categorize them and add each image to the Content Area as a content item.

– Auto-linking to Terms within the Glossary

Links are not automatically created for items that are used in multiple glossary locations.

– Adaptive Release of Glossary Terms

Instructors cannot create Adaptive Release rules for terms in the Glossary to control their availability. Save glossary terms as items in a Content Area (instead of in the Glossary), and add Adaptive Release rules to these items.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to the Glossary when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

The Blackboard Learn Glossary does not allow HTML or file attachments. Input to the Glossary is plain text. CE 4 glossary entries map directly over to Blackboard Learn glossary entries. CE 4 keywords become Blackboard Learn Terms and CE 4 definitions become Blackboard Learn definitions.

CE 4 Image Databases are moved to Content Areas in Blackboard Learn. Because CE 4 Courses can have multiple Image Databases, each existing database becomes its own separate folder in the Content Area in the Course.

Blackboard Learn does not allow custom columns and metadata to be added to Image Database Content Areas.

Field Map for Glossary

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field
Keyword	Term
Definition	Definition

Field Map for Image Database

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Title	Name	
Filename	Name of Link to File	
Description	Text	
Keywords		Keywords will be appended to the content item text. They will be separated by commas.
Creator		This data is not processed because it is user data.
Thumbnail		
Column Label		This function is not supported in Blackboard Learn.
Column Type		This function is not supported in Blackboard Learn.

Grade Center (Manage Students) – Instructor Views

All users will enjoy an improved user experience and number of new enhancements that offer more flexibility within the feature. Faculty need to be educated about the following features and best practices of each.

Feature Enhancement

+ Rubrics for Grading

Instructors can create a Rubric to provide guidelines for grading an item. Instructors can associate the Rubric to a grading column and view the Rubric while assigning a grade. The Rubric needs to include how many entries will be required, the minimum length of entries, and the grading criteria.

This feature is accessed through the Course Tools menu.

+ Anonymous Grading

Instructors can grade assignment and test attempts while information identifying the Student remains concealed. Only after the grade for the attempt has been submitted will the identity of the Student be exposed.

The objectives of grading anonymously include creating a grading workflow that is less prone to bias or favoritism on the part of the Instructor. It also serves as a protection for Instructors who may be subject to a complaint of unfair grading.

The Instructor will have the option of selecting to grade anonymously before beginning the grading process for the item. The order of the attempts is scrambled during the anonymous grading process to address scenarios where an Instructor may have a class somewhat memorized by alphabetic order.

This feature is accessed through the column contextual menu in the Grade Center. In addition, it can be activated when grading by test attempt as well as when grading by question.

+ Grade by Question Attempt

Question-by-question grading accommodates Instructors whose preferred workflow for assignments and assessments is to enter grades by question for all Students as opposed to by all questions by Student. For example, an Instructor may want to gain an overall feel for how the class has answered an essay question by moving through all of the Students' attempts at that question before moving to the next question. Question attempt grading also provides great efficiency for the grading process by enabling Instructors to immediately start grading without having to open each assessment or assignment.

This feature is accessed through the column contextual menu in Grade Center.

+ Smart Views

Instructors can use Smart Views to view specific information and data as desired in the Grade Center. The system views include viewing only Assignments, Assessments, Blogs, Discussion Boards, or Journals. These views can be customized so that Instructors may select criteria of categories, status types, or users.

Instructors can also create custom Smart Views with different variations on these configurations. Instructors can designate any system or custom Smart View as a favorite, which will result in it displaying in the Control Panel. By doing this, Instructors can directly access their preferred views from the Control Panel without having to enter the Grade Center and then select a Smart View. By default, Smart View favorites for Assignments and Tests are available on the Control Panel. In addition, the Full Grade Center is now accessible from the Control Panel.

Instructors can instantly manipulate the Grade Center grid display by selecting category and status filters that have been placed on the main Grade Center page. This feature enables Instructors to quickly view specific categories and status types, such as assignments that need to be graded, without having to configure a Smart View.

The Smart View feature is accessed in the Manage menu of the Grade Center. After Smart Views have been created and designated as favorites, they are accessible either through the Control Panel or in the Smart View list under the Manage menu. The Category and Status filters are located on the main page of the Grade Center.

+ Individual Grade Exemptions

Instructors can exempt an individual from an assignment they are not responsible for completing.

+ Printable Reports

Instructors can generate a printable report for each Student and select what grade information will be included. These reports are used to communicate grades with Students, parents and other interested parties.

+ Inline Edit of Grades

Entering grades directly in the Grade Center interface enables Instructors to make quick modifications for multiple Students and multiple columns instead of having to go to another page.

+ Sophisticated Grade Tracking

Detailed information about assignment submissions, grade entries, and modifications are available. The Instructor also has the ability to override a grade without losing the original attempt grade.

+ Flexibility for Downloading Grades and Working Offline

Instructors have complete flexibility over how they work offline. They can download a single column with comments, a specific grading period or smart view or the entire grade center data.

+ More Flexible Options for Uploading Offline Grades

Instructors can upload grades entered offline with increased flexibility. They can upload a single column with comments or upload a full set of grade data in a single step.

+ Custom Grading Schemas

Instructors can use the default system defined letter grading schema or create their own custom schema to communicate both the points the Students earned and the schema based representation of their grade.

+ View All Students

Students are all listed when the Grade Center is displayed so there is no need for Instructors to page through a large list of Students.

+ Column Management and Reordering

Instructors can enjoy easy management and organization of Grade Center columns through bulk management and drag and drop reordering on the Column Organization page.

+ Quicker Access to Important Column Information

Column details like points possible, the grade type (score, letter, or percentage) and more is available at a first glance through the grade information bar and one click away with Quick Column Information from the contextual menu.

+ Grading Periods

Increased flexibility to organize, view and figure grades using Grading Periods allows Instructors to manage their Grade Center according to the academic schedule of their Institution.

+ Simple Interface for Developing Calculated Columns

Instructors can build powerful calculations with ease for figuring out term and final grades.

+ Multiple Grade Formats

The grades can be displayed in more than one format (such as, score, percentage, and letter) and can be displayed to users in multiple formats simultaneously.

Feature Change

Granting and Denying Access to Course Participants

Users can be hidden from view in the Grade Center but access management for the Course has been centralized within the User Management area. It is important that faculty be advised of best practices for user management versus grade management.

Feature Loss

- Update or Modify Columns or Settings Information Directly from Content Items

Columns are created with information defined at the time of item creation but any modifications to grade settings or column properties need to be made within the Grade Center. Inform Instructors that columns will still be created automatically with data defined in the content item but they will need to make most modifications and updates from the Grade Center.

- Grade an Assignment or Test from the Content Item

Instructors will need to go to the Grade Center to view or grade all assignments or test submissions. Note that Discussion Board posts may be graded from the Discussion Board.

- Customize the Alignment and Decimal Display of Grades

Instructors can no longer define the alignment and decimals displayed in the grade or calculated columns in the Grade Center. The alignment and decimals displayed in the Grade Center are standardized for consistency and accuracy of calculation.

- Selection Box Column Type

Instructors can no longer create a column type that allows them to select a value from a list of pre-defined values when grading.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to the Grade Book when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

The CE 4 Grade Book is significantly different from the Blackboard Learn Grade Center. Many new features and functions in the Grade Center do not have a corresponding function in the CE 4 Grade Book. Spend some time exploring the Grade Center and setting up calculated columns before making the Course available to Students.

In general, grading schemas that map scores or percentages to a letter or textual grade are stored separately in Blackboard so that they can be associated with one or more grading columns.

CE 4 Calculated Columns will map to Blackboard Calculated Columns only if the formulas for calculating the scores match. Blackboard does not support free-form formulas and as a result, non-standard formulas cannot be moved and retain their functions. Columns that have non-standard formulas will map to a plain column. Instructors can replace it with a new Blackboard Learn calculated column, calculate grades offline to enter manually, or delete the column if it not useful.

Grading columns that are tied to Grading Forms in CE 4 are mapped to plain columns in Blackboard Learn.

Field Map for Grade Book Settings

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Default choice for each column type		Many of the fields in CE 4 are not used in Blackboard, so default settings for column types is not available
Allow self-registration	Self-enrollment	Users are not allowed to self-enroll in the Grade Center.
Records per page		Instructors can at any time change the number of records on the Grade Center View
Download options (display separator selection or default to comma or tab)		Instructors can select the delimiter type (comma or tab) on the Download Grades page.
Show/Hide access denied users		Viewing users based on availability is provided in the Grade Center by creating a Smart View that filters on the criteria of Availability, or by going to Show/Hide Users and hiding the unavailable users.

CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Show/Hide inactive users	Select users' criteria, Availability	Viewing users based on availability is provided in the Grade Center by creating a Smart View that filters on the criteria of Availability, or by going to Show/Hide Users and hiding the unavailable users.
Lower limit percentages	percentages between values	
Letter Grades	will equal grades	Instructors can use Custom Grading Schemas. For more information, see Feature Enhancement in this section.
Association of the grading schema to columns	Display	
Set grading schema as Course default		Blackboard does not provide the ability to set default grading schemas at the Course level. This is done at the system level.
	Name	Grade Schemes in CE 4 and CE8 do not have names, so when they are moved, they will be given the name of the column they are associated with.

Field Map for Grade Book Columns

Column Type	CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Alphanumeric Calculated Letter Grade Numeric Selection Box Text Grading Form	select type	Primary Display	In Blackboard column types are roughly equivalent to the display option chosen. However, Blackboard columns are more flexible than CE 4 column types.
All	Column Label	Column Name	
All	Align Column (center, right, left)		All columns in the Grade Center are aligned left for readability purposes.

Column Type	CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
All	Hide Column		Blackboard Learn does not support hiding columns.
All			The Blackboard Grade Center allows Instructors to create Smart Views that include any columns they choose, so there is no need to specify columns as grade-related or not.
All	Release Column	Show this column in My Grades	
Calculated Numeric Assignment Quiz	Show Statistics (none, all, or mean only)	Show statistics in My Grades	In Blackboard, the choice to show statistics is all or nothing, rather than providing options.
Calculated Numeric Assignment Quiz	Show Decimals (0, 1, 2, or all)		Blackboard Learn does not support decimals.
Alphanumeric Numeric Selection Box	Allow self-registration (required, optional, or not shown)		Users are not allowed to self-enroll in the Grade Center.
Calculated	Formula		Blackboard does not provide the ability to generate free-form formulas for calculated columns. Instead, the most common types of calculated columns are provided in an easy-to-use format.
Letter Grade	Select or create Grading Scheme to associate with this column (Letter Grade Editor page)	Display	Instructors can use Custom Grading Schemas. For more information, see the “Feature Enhancement” in this section.

Column Type	CE 4 Field	Blackboard Learn Field	Notes
Selection List	Selection Box choices		In Blackboard, Grading Schemas can use any type of text. However, data is not upgraded because CE 4 does not have scores associated with the text options, and scores are required in Blackboard Grading Schemas.
All	Column order (move left or right)	change order	
Calculated Letter Grade Assignment Quiz	Out of X (points possible)	Points Possible	
All	Creation Date	Creation date	
All	Last Modified Date	Last Modified Date	

Grade Center (Manage Students) – My Grades

All Students will enjoy an improved user experience and several enhancements giving them more information about their grades in a timely manner. Students need to be educated about the following features and the best practices for each.

Feature Enhancement

+ Direct Access to Assignment or Test Submission Data

The Students can view the details of any assignment or test submission from the My Grades Tool.

+ Status of Assignment/Test Submission and Notification of Grades

Students can see the status of submitted assignments and tests from the My Grades tool and are notified when something is graded by the Instructor.

+ Detailed Information about all Graded Items

The Students are able to view more information about graded items including due dates and submitted or graded dates to fully understand the grades provided to them.

+ View Comments Posted by Instructor as Student Feedback

The Students will be able to review any feedback given to them by the Instructor.

+ Rubrics for Completing Assignments

Instructors can make a grading Rubric available to Students to provide guidelines when completing a particular assignment. If the Instructor has made it available to them, Students can access the Rubric from My Grades.

Groups (Student Presentations)

Collaboration through social interaction allows Students to share their personal experiences and understand those of others. Working with peers in a Group enhances Student motivation by increasing their personal involvement in the learning process. The Groups tool provides the platform for this social interaction to take place.

The Groups tool provides Students with a forum to meet and connect with their peers, which they may not have in a large Course environment or through distance education. The Group tools allow Students to communicate and collaborate effectively. The customizable space provides Students with a sense of ownership within the Course. The new Groups tool provides Instructors with more insight into individual Student participation within Group activities. These features will aid in creating problem-based learning exercises as well as developing constructivist learning environments.

The Group creation options are time savers, allowing Instructors to easily create and enroll Students into any number of Groups at one time. Instructors also can empower Students to create their own Groups so that they can take advantage of the robust Group tools available without Instructor intervention or if they wish to create their own study Groups.

Please note that the name Group Manager has been changed to Groups.

Key Features of Groups

Instructors can create any number of Groups at once and provide default settings and description for each Group. Students can then be automatically enrolled in those Groups, manually enrolled at a later date, or asked to sign-up up for a Group themselves. These Groups then can be managed collectively or individually.

Group Members can access a customizable Group area where they will communicate and collaborate with their Group members using the Group tools available on the page. Group assignments and notifications will be listed within the modules provided, and Group material can be saved and authored collectively from this location. The Group area provides a one stop shop for Group work.

Group Tools: Group members can create their own Discussion Board forums that allow them to conduct ongoing conversations. Group members are able to Blog thoughts and ideas for the rest of the Course to comment on or add Journal entries for private reflection within the Group. Group members can create Tasks to track the progress of their deliverables. These tasks can be conducted and completed by any of the members in the Group.

Building Blocks can be Group aware and made available to Groups within their Group area.

Students can create their own Groups in the absence of Instructor participation to take advantage of the robust Group communication and collaboration tools provided. Students can provide a description of the Group and limit the number of Students able to enroll in the Group. Instructors always have the option of modifying or restricting access to Groups created by Students.

Feature Enhancement

+ Group Creation Options

There are now more ways to create Groups. Options include sign-up sheets where Students can sign-up for the Groups they would like to participate in or Instructors can create sets of related Groups and batch enroll users into them.

+ Students Create Groups

Instructors can choose to give Students the ability to create their own Groups that other Students can sign-up for without any intervention by the Instructor.

+ Bulk Management of Groups after Creation

Instructors can manage Group sets and their properties in bulk upon Group creation.

+ Additional Group Tools

Groups have a number of tools available to them beyond Discussions and Files, such as:

- Blogs that the rest of the Course can comment on
- Journals for private communication within the Group
- Tasks to track progress of the Group deliverables
- Collaboration Tools that can be made available for synchronous communication between Group members
- Group email so that Students can email the entire Group to organize activities or provide on-time information

+ Quick Access to Group Area

Students will have quick access to their Group area from the new Groups palette in the Course Menu as well as the Notifications modules.

+ Group Module Page

The Group Area is a module page that provides access to new and existing Groups. The page also allows Group members to add any additional modules to the page that will help with their work.

+ Customizable Group Area

Groups can customize their Group Area to create their own space with its own look and feel.

+ Group Assignments

Instructors can create Assignments to be completed by an entire Group and then give one grade for the Group while still having the ability to override the Group grade and submit individual grades. (See the Assignment feature for additional details).

+ Adaptive Release Group Membership Criteria

Adaptive Release criteria (previously referred to as Selective Release) can include Group Membership for release of content areas and activities to a specific set of Students to meet their particular needs.

+ What's New Group Modules

Groups have access to modules that provide Group specific data about anything new and anything that is due.

Feature Loss

- Student Presentation Tool

Students in Groups can no longer add or share files posted as web pages with their classmates. Students can use Portfolios or the Group Blog tool instead to share information they have learned and projects they have worked on with everyone else in their class.

Portfolios are available only with Learning Content. Speak to your Client Manager if you are interested in learning more about this feature.

Content from Student Presentations is not moved to Groups in the Blackboard Learn Course.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where does this feature appear?

All Group areas can be accessed from a palette in the Course Menu. Each Group in which the Student is enrolled will be listed.

How can Students collectively author and submit an assignment?

If a Group member saves a file to the File Exchange tool within their Group area, each of the members will have access to that file. The Students then can use the communication tools to collaborate. The file then can be updated by any member of the Group until it is complete. A Group member then can attach the file to an Assignment and submit it. The submission will be associated automatically with each member of the Group.

What is the difference between a Group and a Group Set?

A Group is a collection of Students. A Group Set is a collection of Groups. Originally, all of the Groups within the Group Set will contain the same default settings and description. Groups within a Group Set can then be managed in bulk or modified individually to customize the settings or description for a specific Group.

Learning Modules

Learning Modules include a number of enhancements, including an option for a fixed navigation path. However, some functions have been removed. Instructors should be educated about the following tools and best practices for use.

Learning Modules were known in CE 4 as Content Modules.

Feature Enhancement

+ Learning Modules Include Course Links

Learning Modules may include links to any content areas including Assignments, Groups, and External Links instead of just files, HTML pages, and quizzes. Learning Modules may also include any type of content that is used in a Course. Instructors are no longer limited to including just a few types of items.

+ Option to Force Students to follow a Path

Instructors can establish learning paths by setting a fixed order for Students to review materials in the Learning Module.

+ Drag-and-Drop Reordering of Content

Instructors can easily re-order the content in a Learning Module using drag and drop.

+ Table of Contents View

The Instructor can choose whether to present the content contained in the Learning Module in a hierarchical, outline-style format. Using this view, a Student will be able to navigate through the Learning Module in the manner prescribed by the Instructor. If the Table of Contents is selected, the Instructor can also select the numbering or lettering format to be used in the Table of Contents.

The Table of Contents can be manipulated by Instructors and Students to accommodate individual viewing preferences. It can be minimized and oriented on the left side or along the bottom of the screen.

+ Sequential Navigation of Content

When an Instructor chooses sequential navigation, items in the Learning Module will become viewable as users progress through the content. Without sequential navigation, all content items in the Learning Module are viewable and users may navigate the content at will.

Feature Change

Content Folder Structure

Instructors may create folders and sub-folders within Learning Modules and populate them with content. As the Learning Module is populated, the Table of Contents will be created accordingly and numbered or lettered automatically in the format selected by the Instructor. New content items in Release 9.1, such as Mashups and Lesson Plans, can be incorporated into Learning Modules.

Feature Loss

– Header and Footer

Headers and footers are not available to include instructions for Students. Faculty will need to add instructions to individual items within the Learning Module. They may also add items to the beginning and end of the Learning Module to include this information.

– Background Images and Page Colors

Instructors cannot select background images or page colors.

– Action Menu to Provide Links to Tools

Students will not have access to tools related to the Learning Module in a top level area. Faculty may create a page or folder within the Learning Module that contains links to the tools.

– Edit all Content Titles at Once

Instructors cannot edit the names of all items within the Learning Module from a central area.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

No.

Where does this feature appear?

Instructors access Learning Modules from the Build action bar button as a content creation menu item.

Students access Learning Modules from Content Areas in the Course Menu.

Can Learning Modules contain Folders?

Yes. The only kind of content a Learning Module cannot contain is another Learning Module.

Can Learning Modules support direct file uploads?

Yes. You can upload individual files directly to Learning Modules and folders from the **Create File** and **Create Item** pages. To upload multiple files, you must use the **Create Item** page.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Content Modules when moved from a CE 4 Course to a Blackboard Learn Course?

All Content Modules will appear in Blackboard Learn in a Content Area named Learning Modules. Discussion forums, other tools, and other file types will still be presented as links to separate pages. For example, Assignments that are a part of a CE 4 Content Module will be moved to the Assignments Content Area. A link will appear in the Learning Module so that users can access that Assignment from within the Learning Module. HTML and text files will be converted to embedded content instead of links to separate pages, which provides a more streamlined experience. The new Table of Contents for Learning Modules in Release 9.1 provides navigation that is very similar to the Table of Contents in CE 4.

When converted, Discussion forums, other tools, and other file types will still be presented as links to separate pages. For example, Assignments that are a part of a CE 4 Learning Module will be placed in the Assignments Content Area in Blackboard Learn. A link to the Assignment will appear in the Learning Module. When Instructors build this content within Blackboard Learn, it can be created directly within a Learning Module.

HTML and text files will be embedded into the Learning Module content instead of presented as links to separate pages. This will provide a more streamlined experience.

Lesson Plans for HigherEd and ProEd Clients

The Lesson Plan feature enables Instructors and Course designers to create a structured unit plan with distinct and customizable sections that provide a means of documenting information such as description, learning level, delivery instructions, and so on. Lesson Plans also include content designed for an individual unit using any type of content or tool enabled in the Course.

This feature will meet the challenge of developing unit plans and incorporating content in blended environments where classroom Instructors use Blackboard Learn as an instructional tool in the classroom as well as for online teaching. Another challenge that Instructors have is reducing the time spent planning and creating materials to focus on instructional activities. As a planning tool, the Lesson Plan feature will benefit Instructors who can centrally plan and consolidate materials and resources. Instructors will also have a streamlined means of selectively exposing information and resources to Students as part of the planning process.

Creating Customized Lesson Plans

Each section of a Lesson Plan can be individually renamed and reorganized however the Instructor wishes. There is a high degree of variation in institutions as to what information and details are required in Lesson Plans. The Lesson Plan feature has maximum flexibility to accommodate these variations.

Controlling Visibility

The Lesson Plan feature enables Instructors to select which Lesson Plan sections are visible to Students. This enables Instructors to include non-Student-facing instructional information (such as instructions for delivery in the classroom, comments, suggestions for use, and so on) in the Lesson Plan while also including Student-facing information (such as learning objectives, materials needed, Student team assignments, and so on). In effect, Lesson Plans provide a planning tool for Instructors and Course designers as well as a tool for organizing Student-facing instructional materials.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

No.

Where does this feature appear?

The user will be able to create a unit plan from any content area or content list page within a Course or an organization.

Can the administrator change the names of the lesson sections for all users?

It is expected that institutions may have specific terminology used in lesson plans and instructional materials. As with any text within Blackboard Learn, system administrators can use the language pack editor to change the pre-defined unit plan sections and provide Instructors familiar section titles. Changes made within the language pack will apply to all instances of the Lesson Plan feature. For more information about the language pack editor, see [Working with Language Packs](#) available on [Behind the Blackboard](#).

Can the administrator define templates for lessons?

Release 9.1 does not provide an explicit template tool as part of the Lesson Plan. However, Instructors or Course designers may create shells by constructing Lesson Plans with the appropriate sections, section titles, and organization, and then use the Course or item copy functionality to reuse the defined format and structure for additional Lesson Plans within this or other Courses. These pre-defined lesson plans could be included by default in a Course shell.

Can I copy a lesson?

Lesson plans, their included content items, and all standards alignments will be maintained during a full Course copy, Course archive, or Course export operation. In addition, Instructors can share individual or groups of Lesson Plans with colleagues. Although there is no explicit export feature for individual Lesson Plans, the Course export operation can be used to accomplish this task. To do so, create Content Areas containing one or more Lesson Plans, use the Course export operation to export those Content Areas, and then upload the resulting .ZIP packages into another Course or email the packages to other teachers with whom you want to share resources.

Content that is owned by the Lesson Plan as well as all standards alignments will be included in the export. Links to content not explicitly owned by the Lesson Plan (such as Assignments, Tests, Surveys, and content linked using Course links) will be included, but the original content items will not. If the referenced content items do not exist in the destination Course, the links will be broken and the content will need to be recreated.

Lesson Plans for K-12 Clients

The Lesson Plan feature enables teachers to create a structured lesson plan with distinct and customizable sections that provide a means of documenting information such as description, grade level, delivery instructions, and so on. Teachers may also incorporate any kind of content type or tool enabled in the Course within an individual lesson.

Developing Lesson Plans and integrating them into the instructional process has traditionally been a time consuming, paper-based exercise. The Lesson Plan feature will meet the challenge of developing Lesson Plans and incorporating content in blended environments where classroom teachers use Blackboard Learn as an instructional tool in the classroom as well as for online teaching. Another challenge teachers have is reducing the time spent planning and creating materials to focus on instructional activities. As a planning tool, the Lesson Plan feature will benefit teachers who can centrally plan and consolidate materials and resources. Teachers will also have a streamlined means of selectively exposing information and resources to Students as part of the planning process.

Creating Customized Lesson Plans

Each section of a Lesson Plan can be individually renamed and reorganized by the teacher. There is a high degree of discrepancy in schools, school districts, and states as to what information and details are required in lesson plans. The Lesson Plan feature has maximum flexibility to accommodate these variations.

Controlling Visibility

The Lesson Plan feature enables teachers to select which Lesson Plan sections are visible to Students. This provides a means for teachers to include non-Student-facing instructional information (such as instructions for delivery in the classroom, comments, suggestions for use, and so on) in the Lesson Plan while also including Student-facing information (such as learning objectives, materials needed, Student team assignments, and so on). In effect, the Lesson Plan feature provides a planning tool for teachers, curriculum specialists, and Course designers as well as a tool for organizing Student-facing lessons and instructional materials.

Aligning Content to Learning Standards

Lesson Plan content items may be aligned to learning standards. Content built inside the Lesson Plan can also be aligned to standards independently from the Lesson Plan. There is no correlation or transfer of standards alignment of the Lesson Plan and its content. Each must be individually aligned. For more information about Standards Alignment, see [Standards Alignment for K-12 Clients](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

Yes. Aligning content to learning standards requires a Blackboard Learn for K-12 license.

Where does this feature appear?

The user will be able to create a Lesson Plan from any content area or content list page within a Course or an organization.

Can the administrator change the names of the lesson sections for all users?

It is expected that school districts and institutions may have specific terminology used in Lesson Plans and instructional materials. As with any text within Blackboard Learn, system administrators can use the language pack editor to change the pre-defined Lesson Plan sections and provide teachers familiar section titles. Changes made within the language pack will apply to all instances of the Lesson Plan feature. For more information about the language pack editor, see Working with Language Packs available on [Behind the Blackboard](#).

Can the administrator define templates for lessons?

Release 9.1 does not provide an explicit template tool as part of the Lesson Plan. However, teachers or curriculum specialists may create shells by constructing Lesson Plans with the appropriate sections, section titles, and organization, and then use the Course or item copy functionality to reuse the defined format and structure for additional Lesson Plans within this or other Courses. These pre-defined lesson plans could be included by default in a Course shell.

Can I copy a lesson?

Lesson plans, their included content items, and all standards alignments will be maintained during a full Course copy, Course archive, or Course export operation. In addition, K-12 teachers and curriculum specialists can share individual or groups of Lesson Plans with colleagues. Although there is no explicit export feature for individual Lesson Plans, the Course export operation can be used to accomplish this task. To do so, create Content Areas containing one or more Lesson Plans, use the Course export operation to export those Content Areas, and then upload the resulting .ZIP packages into another Course or email the packages to other teachers with whom you want to share resources.

Content that is owned by the Lesson Plan as well as all standards alignments will be included in the export. Links to content not explicitly owned by the Lesson Plan (such as Assignments, Tests, Surveys, and content linked using Course links) will be included, but the original content items will not. If the referenced content items do not exist in the destination Course, the links will be broken and the content will need to be recreated.

Mashups

Increasingly, sites and services on the Web offer the means for end-users to consume and re-use the site's content outside of the site itself. In Web 2.0 applications, the term "Mashup" refers to displaying data from one third-party application in another application. For example, a real estate listing service that maps the homes-for-sale listing data onto Google Maps.

In educational settings, this ability to consume and re-use external content offers the opportunity for Instructors to incorporate content generated and hosted elsewhere into instructional or learning activities.

The new Mashup integrations with popular services allow Instructors and Students to discover, select, and embed content from those services without ever leaving the Blackboard Learn interface. This provides a seamless, easy-to-use experience that does not require the user to jump between Blackboard Learn and other sites or to have any particular knowledge about or comfort with HTML codes.

The Mashup tools, which are delivered as Building Blocks, are available by default. As long as a Mashup tool remains available, Instructors can add that Mashup type anywhere in a Course and Students can add Mashups anywhere the text editor is available to them, such as when creating Discussion Board or Blog posts.

Uploading Mashups Content

This release supports the uploading of Mashups content from the following third-party services:

- **YouTube:** YouTube enables users to share videos.
- **Flickr:** Flickr enables users to share photos.
- **SlideShare:** SlideShare enables users to share presentations.

Building Block Developers can also take advantage of new APIs to create their own Mashup integrations.

Filtering YouTube Content

Administrators can configure the YouTube Mashup to filter out videos that have been flagged as inappropriate by YouTube users. This setting can be especially useful for K-12 clients.

Note Because YouTube users flag content based on their perceptions, inappropriate content may still appear in search results even when this option is enabled.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

Yes. Uploading Mashups content requires an Enterprise Edition license. Basic Edition clients cannot upload Mashup content.

Where does this feature appear?

Users can add Mashup content using the action bar menu in content areas or through the text editor (VTBE).

The action bar item is available only to Course roles with the ability to add content to a content area. Each individual Mashup will have its own content handler under the main Build Content action bar button. Clicking this button presents a drop-down to choose the specific type of Mashup.

The VTBE action is available to all users anywhere that a VTBE is displayed, as long as the third row of buttons has been enabled.

If created from the action bar, Mashup content will appear as its own content item. If created through the VTBE, Mashup content will appear within a content item.

System Administrators manage Building Blocks from the Administrator Panel under **Building Blocks** by clicking **Building Blocks** and then clicking **Installed Tools**.

Did this feature change any existing workflows?

This feature introduces new search, select, and embed workflows for third-party content. It does not change any existing workflows.

Can anything be a Mashup?

No. Mashups are not automatic. A developer has to create a Mashup building block to pull the third-party service's content into Blackboard Learn. Also, not all services have APIs that allow that sort of integration to occur.

Why didn't Blackboard build a Mashup with _____?

For this release, Blackboard targeted stable, free, web-based services that focus on sharing user generated content. Mashups may be possible with other types of services, but the goal was to provide an easy and effective way to incorporate user-generated content from these services into Blackboard Learn.

In addition, not all services allow for use of their public APIs in commercial products.

Can we build our own Mashups?

Yes. The APIs necessary to take advantage of the Mashups deployment points in the action bar and VTBE and the Mashups framework are available as part of the Release 9.1 Building Blocks APIs. For more information, see <http://www.blackboard.com/Support/Extensions.aspx>.

Will Blackboard build more Mashups with other services?

Blackboard may build additional Mashups, but the hope is that the client base will be proactive in creating new Mashups using the Building Blocks APIs.

My Places

My Places is a new feature in Blackboard Learn that will enhance how users have previously used the My Blackboard link in the top frame in CE 4. Functions previously available on My Blackboard will be accessible from modules on the My Institution page or from personal settings links available within My Places. All users should be educated about the new features.

Feature Enhancement

+ One Click Access to Commonly Used Links and Preferences

Users can navigate to commonly accessed places within the system, such as Courses they are participating in, without returning to a common starting point.

+ Customizable List of Commonly Accessed Links

Users can define which links are displayed in My Places. These may include Courses, Organizations, Bookmarks, and Outcomes Places. The types of links available depend on the institution's Blackboard licenses.

All users can choose to display a list of Courses and organizations that have been accessed in the last [X] number of days. The value for [X] is 30 by default but can be changed by the user.

If the content management capabilities have been licensed, users can also choose to display a list of their Content Collection bookmarks (taken directly from the list of book marks in Content Collection).

If the outcomes assessment capabilities have been licensed, users can also choose to display a list of Place affiliations.

If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, users will have a link to the Notifications Dashboard if it is enabled.

All System Administrators will have a direct link to the Administrator Panel from My Places.

+ Manage Notifications Settings

From My Places, users will be able to manage notification settings for all Courses and organizations they are enrolled in as well as other personal and privacy settings including updating their name, address and contact information, determining what information is public, who can view it, and who can email them.

+ Personal Avatar Image

Avatars are a personal image which can be used to represent the user throughout their online experience. Administrators can enable avatars on the system and either allow a user to upload an image of their choice or select an institution approved image to display. Avatars are displayed in My Places, Blogs, Journals, and within Notification Modules including: What's New, Needs Attention, To Do, and Alerts. Users will have quick access to accessibility options including how to enable the Blackboard interface to display according to operating system settings for high contrast and how to increase the browser font size. If avatars are enabled by the System Administrator, the additional function will include policies for image selection and upload.

+ Quick Access to Personal Settings Links

Users have one-click access to personal settings such as email and privacy options.

Feature Loss

– Quick Access to Personal and Institutional Bookmarks

The Bookmarks area of the My Blackboard page is not included in My Places. The Bookmarks module may be added to the My Institution page if the institution has licensed the Blackboard Learning Content module. Please speak to your Client Manager for more information about this feature.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license?

Yes. Content Collection bookmarks will be available for display in My Places only if the content management capabilities have been licensed.

Links to Outcomes Places will be available for display in My Places only if the outcomes assessment capabilities have been licensed.

Organization links and the link to the Notifications Dashboard will be available for display in My Places only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

Where does this feature appear?

All users will access My Places from a direct link in the top frame. Administrators can manage avatars from the Tools and Utilities section of the Administrator Panel.

What does the System Administrator need to know about Avatars?

Avatars can be enabled or disabled by the system administrator at any time, for the entire system.

If enabled, the administrator has the option to allow users to upload their own image or select from a system approved image.

User-uploaded images do not go through any approval or moderation process, but they are stored in a specific file system location and the avatar file name contains the user's user ID, so files can be deleted or otherwise managed as needed.

If the administrator opts to have users choose a system approved image, the admin will need to upload the set of images to the Blackboard system and define the location in the settings pages for Avatars.

Notifications

Notifications recognizes the fact that Instructors desire to use more than just Blackboard to deliver their Course information to reach Students and will use email to guide Students back into Blackboard Learn to view or act upon the Notification.

Notifications provide a quick reference point for Instructors to keep abreast of their Students' Course related activities on a daily basis. Combined with the Early Warning System, Notifications give Instructors insight into which Students may be at risk and provides a mechanism for communication with their Students.

The customization of Notifications gives users increased control over their experience within Blackboard and provides a way for System Administrators to decide which aspects of the Notifications system they will provide to their users.

Notifications for Instructors

Blackboard Learn provides timely and actionable Notifications of Instructor's Course information, including when new content becomes available, when Students meet Early Warning System rules criteria and when Student submitted assignments and tests are available for grading. Notifications are displayed in modules within Blackboard Learn and are delivered by email, either as individual email notes or as a daily Notifications digest.

Instructors should consider several things when creating Course content to take full advantage of Notifications:

- **Content Availability**, which can be controlled by the Display As Of dates in the content properties
- **Adaptive Release rules**, which will be respected by Notifications
- **Early Warning System rules**

The user experience is much improved with this centralized view of Course related activity. If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, Instructors are not required to keep track of their Students' activities inside each Course. Instead, they will have easy access to notifications across all of their Courses. The format of the display automatically segments by urgency, further automating the process of determining which of the multitude of events require immediate attention, or which can be deferred.

Notifications for Students

Blackboard Learn provides timely and actionable Notifications of Student's Course information, including when new content becomes available as well as Due Dates of Assignments and Tests. Notifications are displayed in modules within Blackboard Learn and are delivered by email, either as individual email notes or as a daily Notifications digest.

Notifications will make Students' online learning experience easier. Instead of hunting around for all of their new content and wondering when Assignments and Tests are due, this information will be given to them in a more readable format. Using the context menu to navigate to the appropriate action page (that is, Assignment Due notification will take the Student to the Submit Assignment page and Survey Available notification will take the Student to the Survey), Students will have a more intuitive way to navigate the Course.

If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, the To Do List on the Notifications Dashboard gives Students a single source of all of their upcoming Due Dates, allowing for more efficient management of their time.

Notifications for Administrators

Release 9.1 provides timely Notifications of what is happening in the user's Courses, including newly available content and surveys as well as assignment and test due dates.

The Notifications subsystem can be customized on several different levels:

- User-level personalization of Notifications
- System-wide settings, including general availability of Notifications
- Default Notifications settings that affect newly created Courses and Organizations

For more information, see the Notification topics in [Blackboard Help](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license?

All Blackboard Learn licenses provide on-line Notifications within Courses and through email. The community engagement capabilities provide an additional Notifications Dashboard, which shows Students a roll-up of their Notifications across all of their Courses and Organizations.

Where does this feature appear?

Notifications modules can be made role-specific and can reside on any Modules page in the system. By default they appear on the Home Page within Courses and, if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, on the Notifications Dashboard tab of My Institution.

Four Notifications modules are available to users:

- **To Do List** shows future due dates as well as any due dates they may have missed.
- **What's New** shows all Course content as it becomes available and any unread posts to Discussion Boards, Blogs and Journals.
- **Needs Attention** shows Student submissions that are ready for grading. This is an excellent place for Instructors to get a sense of what needs to be done today.
- **Alerts** show Students who have not submitted work as of its due date and Early Warning System rules. It provides a good sense of which Students may be falling behind in their Course work.

Students can access their Notifications Settings through a button on each of the Notifications modules and through My Places. Students can choose, on a Course-by-Course basis, which types of Notifications they want to receive and whether they want to receive Notifications by email.

Administrators can access the various notifications settings from the Administrator Panel. For Course administrative settings, under **Courses**, click **Course Settings**. For Organization administrative settings, under **Organizations**, click **Organization Settings**. Administrators can access the general notification settings from the Administrator Panel under **Tools and Utilities** by clicking **Notifications**.

How do Instructors create Notifications and when will Students receive Notifications?

Most Notifications are tied directly to the creation of Course content. When creating Course content, Instructors can control the delivery of Notifications in several ways:

- **Display As Of date range:** Content Availability Notifications will be sent to Students based on these dates. If there are no Display As Of dates on the item, Notifications will be delivered immediately.
- **Adaptive Release Rules:** Any content that is subject to Adaptive Release rules will send Notifications to the appropriate Students if and when they meet the criteria of the Adaptive Release rules.
- **Announcements:** When creating Announcements, email Notifications can be forced to Students by email, regardless of what personalization settings the Student may have. This is an excellent way to send emergency Notifications, such as when a class is canceled.

Some Notifications are created by the actions of Students, as when a Student submits an Assignment or Survey, or when posts are made to Discussion Board forums, Blogs, and Journals.

How can Students use Notifications to take action?

Notifications, both on-line and in email, include links to pages where Students can take appropriate actions. For example, Notifications for unread Discussion Board postings contain links to the Course Discussion Board and Notifications for Submitted Assignments contain links to the Assignment Submission page. Most Notifications also provide a quick way to send an email to the Instructor or Course Group members pertinent to that Notification.

Many Instructors use Announcements as a way to notify Students when Assignments are due. Do Announcements generate Notifications to Students?

Students will receive Notifications when Course Announcements become available to them. However, Instructors will discover that Students are also receiving Notifications when Assignments become available and are due and will quickly learn they can rely on Notifications to keep Students up to date.

How can Instructors take advantage of Notifications to determine at-risk Students?

The Alerts module displays information about which Students may be at risk. For example, when a Student misses a Due Date for an Assignment, Passed Due Notifications display in the Alerts Module.

The Alerts module also displays Early Warning System rules created by the Instructor. The Early Warning System is an excellent way to search for at risk behaviors. Rules can be created based on a Student's last access to the Course, on specific Grade Center columns or on specific Due Dates. Once a day, these rules will collect the latest information about which Students meet the rule criteria. Results of Early Warning System rules are displayed in the Alerts module.

How can Instructors communicate with Students?

Each Notification has a contextual menu. For many types of Notification this menu provides, among other actions, a quick way to communicate with Students or Groups via email.

How can Instructors track Course activity on a daily basis?

The Needs Attention module displays all Student Submissions that are ready to be graded. Not only can Instructors easily see which Students have submitted each assignment, they can use the Notifications' context menu to navigate directly to the submission page where they can view and grade the submission. Submission Notifications even tell the Instructors if a submission came in after the due date.

The To Do List shows the due dates of Assignments and Tests. What if a Student wants a few days advanced notice?

Students can set up Reminders via email for Due Date Notifications by defining how many days in advance they would like to receive them.

Are Notifications only for Course content?

Notifications cover Course and Organization content, but not System Announcements. Students can have different personalization settings for each of their Courses and organizations.

How do Students receive email Notifications?

Email Notifications are turned off by default. If the System Administrator has turned on email Notification, Students can select which types of Notifications they would like to receive in email form.

Students can also elect to have their email Notifications come individually (one email note per notifications) or as a daily digest of all new Notifications.

Is the Notifications System enabled by default?

No. The System Administrator will need to turn on Notifications before any Course or Organization Notification data will be collected.

The Notifications System is on and users receive Online Notifications, but are not receiving Email Notifications. Why?

Email is turned off by default on the user level as well. The System Administrator can turn on email Notifications to give users the ability to choose if they want individual email or a daily digest of their notifications. However, users still need to opt-in to email notifications by editing their Notifications Settings.

Is there a way to clear out old, unneeded notifications?

Many Notifications have known life cycles. For example, an Assignment Due Date Notification will be removed from your display after you have submitted the Assignment. Others, such as new Content Available Notifications do not have an obvious life cycle. These Notifications can be removed, individually or en mass, using the Dismiss option from a context menu.

When Students personalize their Notifications via Edit Notifications Settings, they can also set up an Aging option, which will automatically dismiss older Notifications. Due Date Notifications are not Dismissed by this setting.

Both the System Administrator and individual users can control how long to keep old notifications:

- The System Administrator can set the number of days in which to retain Notifications. This is a good way to clear out Notifications from previous semesters.
- Individual users can choose to dismiss their older notifications by setting their own number of days to retain them. However, a user's setting cannot exceed that of the System Administrator.

Based on these settings, Notifications that are not Due Date specific will be deleted X number of days after creation. Also, any Notification can be dismissed (removed from the users display) manually.

Will too many Notifications pose performance concerns?

Notifications will increase overall load on system, particularly just prior to and early in the semester when Course content, and therefore the Notifications, are being created. After the semester gets underway, expect online performance issues to be limited to a bit of a hesitation when loading pages where the Notifications modules reside.

What options are available to ensure performance?

Administrators can turn off email Notifications all together. They can also force users to get their email Notifications as a daily digest. There is a setting that determines when digest email Notifications are processed. This can be set to a low usage time of day to alleviate some of the pressure on the server. Finally, the display of notifications is cached and each module indicates when the data was last refreshed. Users can choose to manually refresh any time or let the system refresh the display at regular intervals (the default interval is 30 minutes).

What can users modify?

Users can decide on a Course-by-Course, organization-by-organization basis which types of Notifications they want to receive and whether or not they want to receive them by email.

Roster

The Course Roster is a new Course tool that provides a list of users enrolled in the Course. Users can decide, on a per Course basis, whether or not they would like their information displayed in the roster.

Standards Alignment for K-12 Clients

K-12 instruction is based on meeting standards of learning that are determined at the state level. Districts engage in a complex process of associating curriculum resources, lesson plans, and assessment items with specific state standards to ensure that instructional programs (Course, Unit, and Lesson Plans) are in alignment with those standards. Although state learning standards are unique from state to state, there is considerable overlap. Also, standards are hierarchical in nature. That is, each state learning standard has two or more levels of description. In practice, most alignment happens at the deepest level, but this relationship rolls up to inform general alignment at all levels.

The problems encountered by teachers and administrators include time consuming and error prone processes, constrained collaboration because of voluminous paper-based resources and materials, and limited use of web-based and electronic tools.

The problems are exacerbated because state standards change periodically and realignment is often necessary. Districts create their own scope and sequence for teaching to the standards and often identify “power standards” to emphasize priority based on instructional programs and alignment. They must establish a relative priority and consistency must be maintained through standards changes.

Schools and institutions are challenged by not having data available to assist with guiding instructional resource development. Curriculum and instructional resources are often dispersed and inconsistently maintained thereby making it difficult to accurately assess what materials are available and how those materials support the learning of specific standards.

Release 9.1 includes a number of new features that enable learning standards to be incorporated into Blackboard Learn Courses and ultimately to align Course content with specific standards. This is part of an overall effort to support standards-based learning within the Blackboard Learn environment. The following sections describe the major components of this effort.

For more information than is included in this document, see Standards and Alignments for K-12 available on [Behind the Blackboard](#).

Importing Standards into Blackboard Courses

All published Learning Standards from all 50 states and the District of Columbia will be available for use in Release 9.1. The System Administrator can download the desired Standards from [Behind the Blackboard](#) and import them into Blackboard Learn.

Curriculum specialists with system administration privileges can import state learning standard documents into Blackboard Learn and make the standards available at the Course level for the purposes of content alignment. The standards are presented in the system in a structured manner that uses each state’s language, numbering schema, and organizational framework to maintain familiarity to users.

Curriculum specialists can associate specific Courses to a set of learning standards so that during the content alignment process, users may have starting points of standards commonly associated with content used in those specific Courses. This does not limit users in any way to what standards can be aligned within a Course.

Aligning Content to Standards

Curriculum specialists and teachers can browse and search for standards that have been imported into Blackboard Learn. Content items within their Courses or organizations can be specifically aligned to one or multiple standards. Users may also align Grade Center columns individually to standards.

Updating Standards

When users download a new version of any standards document from [Behind the Blackboard](#), it includes a map between the previous version and the current version. This significantly reduces the time spent comparing standards and understanding what has changed.

In addition, a user can create a map between any two standards documents that exist in Blackboard Learn. This enables users to map state standards to national standards and standards from one state to those in any other state that has been imported. Additionally, users can create cross-discipline maps for areas of study that may fall in science and math, for example.

Running Standards Coverage Reports

The data contained in the Standards Coverage Reports help teachers, curriculum specialists, and district administrators to focus curriculum development efforts. This data shows Course content alignments and helps identify gaps in coverage of standards.

Administrators can run a number of reports from the Standards Documents pages on the Administrator Panel that show content alignments for standards across all Courses, all available Courses, or all unavailable Courses. These reports include:

- **Full Standards Coverage Overview:** This report shows coverage across all imported standards for a specific state and document type showing both Covered standards and Gaps in coverage.
- **Discipline Coverage Overview:** This report shows coverage overview of standards for a specific discipline broken out across all its learning levels, such as Math 2004 for Grade 5.
- **Learning Level Coverage Detail:** This report shows detailed coverage information for the standards within a specific Learning Level, such as for Grade 5.
- **Learning Standard Coverage Detail:** This report shows detailed coverage information for a single standard within Blackboard Learn.

In addition, teachers can run a **Course Coverage Detail** report from the Evaluation section of the Course Control Panel that shows detailed coverage information for a single Course.

Creating Custom Standards

Many school districts and institutions incorporate their own learning standards into their respective states' published standards to enhance or extend the state standards and define learning goals and objectives that exceed state expectations of Student learning. With the K-12 Standards feature, school district administrators can create custom standard line items that are integrated into their respective state learning standards.

Note Release 9.1 does not include the functionality to enable a district to create custom sets of standards.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on license level?

The Standards Alignment feature requires a Blackboard Learn for K-12 license.

Where does this feature appear?

System Administrators download the desired Standards from [Behind the Blackboard](#) and import them into Blackboard Learn.

System Administrators manage standards availability, active/inactive status, Course association, and document mapping from the Administrator Panel under **Tools and Utilities** by clicking **Standards Documents**.

Instructors and Course designers align content using content contextual menus and column contextual menus in the Grade Center.

Am I allowed to have standards from other states installed on my Blackboard Learn system?

Yes. All published Learning Standards from all 50 states and the District of Columbia will be available for use in Release 9.1. System Administrators can download the desired Standards from [Behind the Blackboard](#) and import them into Blackboard Learn. There are no limitations on the standards that can be downloaded providing districts and institutions with the ability to integrate standards from multiple states into a single Blackboard Learn environment.

Can I report against performance metrics from my standards alignments?

In Release 9.1, the focus is on integrating the standards with the content created within the Course and allowing both teachers and district administrators to review standards coverage data for a single Course or across multiple Courses. Reports focusing on performance against the state standards are not available in Release 9.1, but the foundation for this kind of reporting has been provided. Performance data is available in the Grade Center (in which columns can be explicitly aligned to state standards), the Early Warning System, the Assessment Statistics reports, and the Performance Dashboard.

Blackboard is continuing to investigate standards performance reporting and the specific needs surrounding it for possible inclusion in a future release. The Blackboard reporting framework also provides the ability for custom report development and can be leveraged to develop additional reports to address specific reporting needs you may have.

Is there any additional cost for getting state standards into my Blackboard Learn system?

No. There are no additional fees for downloading any of the standards available on [Behind the Blackboard](#). All state standards are included in the current Blackboard Learn license fee.

Can I share already aligned content with other schools or districts?

Yes. Alignments can be optionally included in any Course copy, Course export, or Course import operation provided that the specific content items have also been included. All content alignments are automatically included in any Course archive or Course restore operation. The visibility of imported or restored alignments depends on the availability of the appropriate state standards in the destination system.

Can my district develop its own set of standards?

Custom standards line items may be authored and incorporated into the existing state standards framework. There is no capability for creating and incorporating an entirely new set of standards within Blackboard Learn.

Syllabus

The functions included in the Syllabus tool are fairly similar to previous releases. All users will enjoy an improved user experience. Faculty should be educated about the following changes to the Syllabus tool.

Feature Enhancement

+ Create More than One Syllabus per Course

Instructors may create targeted syllabus content by using multiple syllabi in the Course.

+ Track the Number of Times Users Viewed the Syllabus

Instructors can track the popularity of their syllabus content.

+ Design Options

Instructors can design the Syllabus using different templates and style options to match their Course's look and feel.

Feature Change

Default Courses

The Syllabus does not include structured section types such as Course Information, Instructor Information, and Course Goals. All of the information contained in these sections can be replicated using the three default syllabus sections that appear in Blackboard Learn. Faculty can organize the syllabus content in the text fields provided.

Lesson Subsections

The Syllabus does not include Lesson subsections such as Objectives, Topics, Readings, and Assignments. All the information contained in these sections can be replicated using the description field that appears in the lesson section.

Feature Loss

- Syllabus Wizard

The Instructor must create a syllabus without guided help. The syllabus creation process is not as complex as it used to be and, once created, the syllabus can be edited easily.

- Hide or View Individual Syllabus Courses

The Instructor can only show or hide the entire syllabus, not individual sections. Instructors should only create syllabus sections that they are comfortable making public. They may also choose to create multiple syllabi and use adaptive release to make them available at different times.

System-Wide Changes

Feature Enhancement

+ Accessibility Improvements

Improvements to accessibility ensure that all users, including those with assistive technologies, find the product easy to use. These changes are, for the most part, under-the-covers through a combination of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) and well-formed HTML (as well as other semantic markup improvements). There are also a few features that appear to users, including keyboard re-ordering and accepted personal styles.

+ Embedded Help

Embedded help throughout Blackboard Learn helps users with and without disabilities understand how to complete tasks without leaving the user interface workflow. The personal setting to hide or show help until the user chooses to call upon it again helps users from both perspectives: it removes text from the application that may be distracting, or it adds text to the application that helps them without forcing them to leave what they are doing. Institutions also have the option to customize this help text to meet their specific needs through the Language Pack Editor.

+ New User Interface Design

Users will enjoy not only a new look, but advanced user interface features such as drag and drop, inline edit capabilities, and consolidated page layouts.

+ Fewer Clicks Everywhere

Users will enjoy using fewer clicks to navigate the system and complete tasks.

Features Loss

- Student Homepages

The new Blogs tool enables Students to express their thoughts and reflect on learning within a Course. The My Places tool allows Students to post their avatars system-wide (instead of limited to the Course environment) and includes additional functions, such as a customizable set of links to frequently accessed information as well as tools to personalize a user's experience.

- Browser Check Tool

A large number of Java applets have been removed from Blackboard Learn, eliminating the need for the Browser Check tool.

- My Progress

Notifications help Students track overall progress. Course Tools have built in features that enable Students to track status, such as changing the review status of content items, to do lists, and marking discussion board posts as read.

- Content Compiler

Students can use the Journal tool to take notes and record their Course experiences. These can be kept private or made public to other Students in a Course.

- Student Tips

Instructors can use Course module pages to make information about the Course available to Students. The embedded help text may also be customized by the institution to meet the needs of their specific users.

- Notes

Students can use Journals to accomplish the same goal as Notes.

- Wizards

The new user interface allows users to navigate through Courses and tools without the need for additional assistance. Interactions are consistent across the product, and tasks are organized so that they can be completed more efficiently and with fewer clicks. Embedded Help, which can be customized by the institution, also reduces the need for additional help tools.

System Administration

Administrators will find that there have been a number of changes to the administrative tools available in previous releases of Blackboard. New features include batch processes available through the GUI and more flexible roles and privileges.

Feature Enhancement

+ Separate Organizations

Institutions may create online areas dedicated to clubs, organizations, and other extracurricular activities independently of Courses. Organizations are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

+ Batch Processes through the User Interface or Command Line Utilities

Administrators can perform a number of batch processes through the user interface or through Command Line utilities. These include:

- Create Users
- Delete Users
- Create Courses
- Enroll Users in Courses
- Import / Export / Archive / Restore Courses
- Copy Courses

+ Language Packs

Language packs can easily be selected at the system, Course, and individual user level. Fourteen languages are supported and shipped with Blackboard Learn, including Right-to-Left interface transposition for the Arabic Language Pack. Educate Administrators about the Language Pack features and best practices.

+ Language Pack Editor

The Language Pack Editor can be used for editing text bundles in a Language Pack to customize it to their institution's specific needs. For example, they can easily change the term "Course" to "class" throughout the system.

+ Flexible Roles and Custom Privileges

Administrators can create and customize System Roles to set up flexible and robust administrative users based on administrator tasks that meet the needs of their institution. They may also edit the privileges granted to Course Roles to set up Course creation and management according to their faculty's needs.

+ Observer Role

Observers are user roles that are attached to other users. They can view the same content as users but cannot modify or interact with content. For example, the Observer role can be used to let parents of a Student or an academic advisor monitor progress. Observers are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

+ Single URL for Administrators and Users

All administrator features are located within the main application in a separate tab. Administrators do not need to go to a separate URL to access administrator functions.

+ Institution Roles

Institution Roles control access to information and services with users being associated with one or more Institution Roles. For example, portal features such as tabs, modules, and brands can be controlled through Institution Roles. Institution Roles are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

+ Course Copy

A number of different Course Copy options are available to meet the institutions needs for copying Course content. These include:

- **Copy into a New Course** to include enrollment information and specific Course materials
- **Copy into an Existing Course** to include enrollment information and specific Course materials
- **Create an Exact Course Copy** to includes users and all Course materials

+ Domains

Domains gather Courses, Organizations, users, tabs, and modules into defined sets called collections. Each domain can have one or many collections. Administration of a domain is controlled by assigning System Roles to users that only apply to that domain.

For example, administration of all the users in the Law School can be assigned to Law School staff and administration of all the users in the Business School can be assigned to Business School staff.

Domains are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

+ Course Export and Import

Administrators and Instructors may use export packages for storing content that may be used to teach the same Course to different Students at a later time. These packages are .ZIP files that contain Course materials, but not user data or interactions.

Feature Change

Course Templates

Administrators can set up a Course template that can be used as a model for multiple Courses. Templates are available when using the Course Creation Wizard. The Administrator can also select a number of design options that will affect all Courses on the system, including:

- Color palettes
- Icon Sets
- Course menu content and layout

Administrators can also use the following tools to achieve the benefits of source or master Courses:

- Course Copy
- Course Restore
- Course Export
- Course Import

SIAPI

The operations available through the SIAPI are very similar to the Snapshot tool within Blackboard Learn. For information about Blackboard's SIS Integration Tool, contact Blackboard Consulting.

Powerlinks

Blackboard Learn includes a new best of breed openness framework of Java APIs and Web Services. Building Blocks are available to extend Blackboard Learn and may be used in any number of ways such as for custom portal modules, new content tools, and new user tools. Most commercial vendors provide a Building Block version of their Powerlink. Custom Powerlinks, including those for authentication or SIS integration, will need to be rewritten to work in Blackboard Learn, either as Proxy Tools over the new Web Services framework, or as Building Blocks.

Course Reset

The Bulk Delete feature is very similar to Course Reset. However, it allows the user to select a greater range of data and materials to remove from the Course.

Course Backup

Course Archive is similar to the Course Backup feature in CE 4. Administrators cannot archive Course categories. The Course Archive feature may be used by Instructors and Administrators to backup Course content, user information, and user interactions. The batch archive command-line tool will archive multiple Courses at the same time, but doing so automatically by category is not available in Blackboard Learn.

Help Desk Management

Creating a set of accounts with limited administrator function is achieved through custom System Roles. Institutions may use System Roles to set up flexible and robust administrator roles that are based on administrator tasks. Multiple System Roles can be assigned to a user granting them the sum of their privileges. Flexible and unlimited System Roles are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed.

Feature Loss

– IMS_API

Administrators are not able to automatically integrate IMS Compliant systems with Blackboard Learn through the IMS_API. Event-driven APIs and Building Blocks APIs are available in Blackboard Learn, but their inputs and outputs are not strictly compliant with IMS packaging formats. If this formatting is required, a services engagement will be required to properly configure Blackboard Learn to integrate with IMS compliant systems. If it is not required, the Blackboard Learn APIs for event-driven integration or Snapshot integration can be leveraged to meet the same needs.

- Terms

Courses cannot be organized and searched by term. Domains can be used to organize Courses into terms. Domains are available only if the community engagement capabilities have been licensed. Also, many schools use the Data Source Management tool that is a part of Snapshot to assign data source keys that reflect the term. This allows for batch processing of Courses by term. Snapshot requires the Enterprise Edition.

- Cross-listing

Courses may not be cross-listed to create parent sections and child sections.

Tasks

The Tasks feature is a new Tool available to all users. Each user can post personal tasks, Instructors can post tasks to users participating in their Courses, and System Administrators can post tasks to all users' Tasks pages. Tasks are also available within Groups. Task information is arranged in columns that display the priority, task name, status, and due date.

Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools (Quizzes/Surveys and Question Database)

Instructors should note that the Tests, Surveys, and Question Pools features (known in CE 4 as (Quizzes/Surveys and Question Database) are missing some areas of familiar use. While a number of options have been removed, some of the functions are less complex so that users, especially novice users, will find test creation and deployment easier to use. Faculty should be educated about best practices for new, changed, and lost features.

Feature Enhancement

+ Random Blocks

In addition to Question Sets, Instructors can use Random Blocks to randomly select Questions from a Pool to be presented each time the test is taken. Unlike Question Sets, each Random Block can only be drawn from a single Pool. Random Blocks of questions cannot be drawn from tests or from more than one Pool.

+ Multiple Feedback Fields

Instructors can include question feedback for Students on correct and incorrect answers.

+ Additional Question Types

The following additional types of questions are now available:

- Calculated Formula
- Calculated Numeric
- Either/Or
- File Response
- Fill in the Blank
- Hot Spot
- Jumbled Sentence
- Multiple Answer
- Opinion Scale/Likert
- Ordering
- Quiz Bowl
- True/False

+ Levels of Difficulty Manager

Questions can be organized and managed by Levels of Difficulty. Levels of Difficulty are used for easier retrieval in searches, creating Question Sets, or using questions from Question Pools or other Assessments.

+ Associated Keywords with Questions

Multiple keywords may be associated with individual questions.

+ No Separate Question Titles

Creating questions is faster and easier because Instructors no longer have to enter additional (often repetitive) text to make up a title for each question.

Feature Change

Question Finder

The functionality that was previously available as the “Question Database” is now available under “Find Questions” when building a Test, Survey, or Pool. The question discovery interface allows searching as well as browsing by keywords, learning level, and other metadata to locate questions to include in the test, survey, or pool. All questions in the Course are included.

Users building a Test, Survey, or Pool can choose to link to the question or to copy it. Linking is the same behavior that existed in CE 4. Copying is a new behavior that creates a completely separate copy of the question in the new place. Changes to the original question do not affect the copy.

Question Topics

Questions can be organized and managed by topic. Topics are used to create Question Sets or to use questions from Pools or other Assessments.

Question Sets

Specific groups of questions may be added to Tests and Surveys as Question Sets, and more options are available when searching for questions.

Feature Loss

– Columns and Sorting Options in Pools

Users cannot add custom columns or reorder columns associated with question pools.

– Prevent Students from Answering Additional Questions if Timed Test Expires

Instructors may set a time limit on a test but they cannot prevent Students from submitting responses to questions once the time has elapsed. However, the test will indicate which answers were submitted after the given time period.

– Select the Time Periods between Test Attempts

Instructors do not have the option of requiring Students to wait a certain amount of time between attempts of a test that may be taken multiple times.

– IP Address Mask

Instructors cannot require that Students taking an assessment use machines that match a specified IP address.

– Submission Message

Instructors cannot create a message for Students to receive upon the submission of a test.

– Options for Releasing Scores

Instructors have fewer options for times scores are released to Students.

– Options for Displaying Results to Students

Instructors have fewer options for giving Students their test results, such as combinations of question feedback and Student responses.

– Customize Test Styles

Instructors cannot customize the test design using page color, background images, banners and upper and lower text blocks. Options to add images and styles to individual test questions are still available.

– Options for Statistics and Analysis

Instructors have fewer options for analyzing and reporting on test results.

Question Options

Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple choice questions do not allow negative scores, feedback for answers, or partial credit by percentage for each answer.

Calculated Questions

Instructors have fewer options when creating Calculated Formula questions. There is no option to ignore spaces in units and there are fewer supported variables for creating questions.

Short Answer Questions are Similar to Fill in Multiple Blanks Question Type

Instructors should use the Fill in Multiple Blanks question type in places where in the past they used to use the Short Answer question type. However, this question type does not include the option to select whether or not the answer is case sensitive or grading options for equals, contains, and regular expressions.

Essay Questions (Paragraph Questions)

Essay questions do not allow the Instructor to pre-fill the answer field or select the size of the answer field. The Instructor may include this information in the question text when creating questions in Blackboard Learn.

Course Conversion Details

What happens to Quizzes and Surveys when moved from CE 4 to Blackboard Learn?

Quizzes in CE 4 become Tests in Blackboard Learn. Surveys in CE 4 remain Surveys in Blackboard Learn. The Question Database is converted to a Question Pool named “Question Database.” This Pool can be accessed through the Find Questions interface.

Assessment questions in CE 4 are stored in a single place, the Question Database. When questions are added to an Assessment, they are added as links that reference the question in the Question Database. When a question is changed, the change occurs in the Question Database and is propagated to every Assessment that links to the question, unless the Instructor saves the changed question as a new question (which is also stored in the Question Database).

The CE 4 Question Database has Categories and Custom Columns that can be used to classify and label questions for sorting and searching. CE 4 also has a function called Question Sets that can pull a subset of questions at random for a larger set and add them to an Assessment.

In Blackboard Learn, Assessment questions are stored within the Test, Survey, or Question Pool in which they are created. Files attached to questions are not available to be managed within Blackboard Learn. Questions in any Test, Survey, or Question Pool can be exported, imported, and copied or linked to from another Test, Survey, or Question Pool. If a user creates a link to a question in a Test, Survey, or Question Pool, the user can later modify it by updating the original (and all links to it) or the by saving a new version of the question, which breaks the link. After questions are copied to another Test, Survey, or Question Pool, they become new independent questions and belong to the Test, Survey, or Question Pool. If changes are made to the original questions, they do not affect any imported or copied versions. In Blackboard Learn, Instructors use Question Pools as master sets of questions.

In Blackboard Learn, Tests and Surveys can be deployed in any Content Area. As part of the move, the Assessments area in the CE 4 Course is moved to Blackboard Learn as a Content Area named Assessments. After the move, the Instructor can deploy Tests and Surveys to any Content Area, show Assessments next to content, or use the Assessments area to store all Tests and Surveys as in CE 4.

CE 4 self-tests (grades not entered in to the Grade Book) have no equivalent in Blackboard Learn. A self-test can be given and the grade not added to the Grade Center.

Field Map

The following table maps the CE 4 question types to their equivalents in Blackboard Learn.

CE 4 Question Type	Blackboard Learn Question Type
Multiple Choice	Multiple Choice or Multiple Answer
Matching	Matching
Calculated	<p>Calculated Formula</p> <p>Formulas that are not supported in Blackboard Learn are not moved from CE 4. The question will be converted, but an error will be logged. Instructors should review Calculated Questions and make edits before making these questions available to users.</p> <p>Number of significant figures is not supported in Blackboard Learn, but will be converted to number of decimal places, and the answer set will be regenerated.</p>

CE 4 Question Type	Blackboard Learn Question Type
Short Answer	<p>Fill in Multiple Blanks</p> <p>CE 4 Short Answer allows answers to be mapped to multiple answer boxes, while Blackboard Learn uses a one-to-one mapping. As a result, if the number of answer boxes to display is more than number of actual answers, the number of blanks in Blackboard Learn would be equal to the number of actual answers. If the number of answer boxes to display is less than or equal to the number of actual answers, the number of blanks in Blackboard Learn would be equal to the number of answer boxes.</p> <p>In the converted Fill in Multiple Blanks question, the variables will have generic names, such as "Blank1" and "Blank2" because there were no variables for the blanks in the original short answer question.</p> <p>CE 4 Fill in the Blank questions allow spaces in the variable, but Blackboard Learn does not. These spaces will be removed from the variable when they are converted.</p>
Paragraph	Essay
	Multiple Choice
	Fill in Multiple Blanks
	Jumbled Sentence
	True/False
	Calculated Numeric
	File Response
	Hot Spot
	Opinion Scale/Likert
	Ordering
	Quiz Bowl
	Fill in the Blank
	<p>Short Answer</p> <p>This question type requires the Student to enter a limited amount of text, a paragraph, for example.</p>
	Either/Or

Answers with negative scores or 0% will be moved, but they will be marked as wrong answers. If part of a question cannot be converted, the rest of the question will be converted and an error will be logged. When Blackboard Learn requires at least one answer but none can be converted, "X" will be used for the answer and an error will be logged. Regular expressions are not supported in Blackboard Learn, but if they exist in the source question, they will be included in the text of the converted question, and the Instructor will need to fix the question because the regular expression will not work.

Text Editor

The function of the Text Editor is fairly similar to the previous release of the product.

Feature Enhancement

+ Text Editor is Compatible with a Broad Range of Browser Configurations

The text editor is not reliant on a Java Applet. Users will encounter fewer compatibility issues and will see a gain in performance.

+ Accessibility Improvements

Users that employ assistive technologies can easily and quickly access the text area of the text editor.

+ Availability

The text editor appears in several more areas, increasing the number of options for entering rich content.

+ HTML Validation

Users can quickly run a check against HTML entered into the text editor to ensure it is accurate.

+ Additional Administrator Controls

Administrators can turn on and turn off features of the text editor. As well, Administrators can control user access to the tool. The tool can be replaced with a plain-text editor and the administrator can allow or not allow users to opt-in to using the full text editor.

Feature Change

Options to Display Text Editor

The text editor automatically appears to users. There is not a separate option to enable it on a page. Users have a Personal setting they set to determine whether or not the text editor appears to them. This allows them to set it once and not have to do so everywhere. As well, Administrators have functions to control access to the Text Editor and some of its tools.

Text and Multimedia Options

While the main features of the text editor remain the same, some of the available options are different. The following are options are new:

- Attach MPEG content
- Attach Audio content
- Attach Flash content
- Attach QuickTime content
- Preview content
- Undo and Redo
- Clear Formatting
- Subscript and Superscript

- Additional font options

The following options are not available:

- Insert symbol
- Insert bookmark
- Table Wizard
- Add Rows and Columns to Table

Feature Loss

– Reuse Content Created in the Text Editor in Multiple Courses and in Multiple Places within a Course

Instructors cannot use content created using the Text Editor in multiple Courses or in multiple places within a Course. Institutions that have Learning Content licensed may use Reusable Objects to create and manage items that can be used in multiple Courses.

Textbook

A button is available in a Content Area that enables Instructors to add a textbook to a Course. Instructors can manually add textbook information to the Course, or they can locate Textbooks in an external source, searching by title, author, subject, and ISBN.

Tracking Reports

Campus Edition 4 clients will find that there have been a number of changes to the Tracking feature. Faculty should be educated on the features and best practices for each.

Feature Enhancement

+ Number of Active Courses and Users

Blackboard Learn provides a report on the number of active Courses and users per day or per month. Previous versions of CE had this capability.

+ Student Application Access Statistics

Blackboard Learn includes reports on Students' access of each application. Examples include: Glossary, Calendar, Grade Center and Announcements. The report includes the number of hits per application.

+ Individual Discussion Forum Statistics

Blackboard Learn includes reports on the usage of each individual Discussion Forum. These reports include the number of hits per forum, the number of messages per forum, and the number of messages posted by each user. Instructors need to refine their workflow to analyze Discussion Board usage from this perspective and take advantage of the additional functions.

+ Group Usage Statistics

Blackboard Learn provides a report on how often groups are used by tracking the number of hits per group and the number of times each Student accessed a group.

Feature Loss

- Detailed Student Discussion Usage

Blackboard Learn does not provide information regarding how many discussion messages were read by each user, only the number of messages that were posted is tracked. Instructors can approximate the amount of time Students spent in the Discussion tool by the number of page hits per thread. They can also determine each Student's usage of the Discussion Board by changing their workflow to include an analysis of each Discussion forum usage report which includes each Student's participation.

- Course File Size Usage

Campus Edition 4 provided the amount of space consumed by Course Files, Internal Files and Backup Files for a Course. Blackboard Learn does not provide detailed reporting on the amount of space Course files have consumed. Administrators can determine how much space a Course has consumed entirely and clients who take advantage of the Learning Content module can determine how much space has been consumed specifically by Course files.

Web Services, Proxy Tools, and Building Blocks

Institutions moving to Release 9 will be able to write custom integrations that can run remotely and access the system using well-defined Web Services interfaces.

Third parties writing such integrations will be able to negotiate for specific permissions to retrieve data, write data, or execute code on the Release 9 server, which can be approved and monitored by the administrator.

Proxy Tool code and Web Service documentation is available from <http://www.edugarage.com/>.

Clients moving to Release 9 will be able to administer a set of Web Services across all nodes of their system from a single interface, including granular access control (per-service, per-tool, per-operation, and by access IP address or range).

CE 4 users moving to both the Enterprise and Basic Editions of Release 9.1 will have access to the Premier Partner Building Blocks installed with Blackboard Learn:

- **Horizon Wimba-Pronto** - Instant messaging, online collaboration client
- **Acxiom** - Identity verification for use in managing the delivery of tests
- **Echo 360** - Lecture capture
- **NBC** - Rich media content from NBC for use in the Course

Enterprise Edition clients will also have access to hundreds of third-party tools available at <http://www.blackboard.com/Support/Extensions.aspx> that can be uploaded and configured directly to run on Release 9.1 as native tools.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

Yes. Tool Integrations are available only to Enterprise Edition clients. Basic Edition clients cannot integrate tools. The Premier Partner Building Blocks are available to all license levels including Basic Edition, but they are limited to specific market licenses as defined in the following table.

	NAHE	K-12	ProEd	INTL
Wimba-Pronto				
Acxiom				
Echo360				
NBC				

Where do these features appear?

System Administrators manage Web Services from the Administrator Panel under **Building Blocks** by clicking **Web Services**.

System Administrators download Java and .NET sample code from the Administrator Panel under **Building Blocks** by clicking **Building Blocks** and then **Proxy Tools**.

System Administrators manage Building Blocks from the Administrator Panel under **Building Blocks** by clicking **Building Blocks**.

Does Blackboard Learn fully support LTI 2.0?

No. It is currently impossible to support the full LTI 2.0 specification because it is still in draft form and constantly changing. The improvements bring Blackboard Learn closer to what the specification will be when it is complete.

What happens to Powerlinks?

The Blackboard Learn Web Service and Proxy Tool model does not provide backwards compatibility for existing Powerlinks. Clients who are heavily dependent on Powerlink integrations should contact third-party Powerlinks vendors whose products they license. Many vendors can provide an uploadable installed tool version that can be used with Release 9.1.

Why choose a Proxy Tool?

- Remote administration (many NG installations, one central service) or just segregation of service (SIS system stays separate from NG system)
- No Java required
- Data can be hosted remotely
- Potential for access without requiring a logged-in user (once authorized)
- More transparency of administration and less potential to interfere with core

Why choose a Building Block?

- Need to use an API not yet exposed via Web Services
- Need Backwards compatibility to Bb 8 or older
- Easier integration with NG Look and Feel and user/session management
- Need to deploy module content

When do I need Proxy Placements for my tool?

- To place links in the control panel, admin panel or Student or group tools
- To handle content types in Courses
- To have NG users initiate calls out to your service, rather than just having your service initiate

Do Proxy Tools have to be written in Java?

No. Unlike installed Building Blocks, proxy tool code can be written in any language that can support SOAP-based Web Services protocol.

Are there performance concerns?

While Building Blocks run directly in the Java Virtual Machine (JVM) on the Blackboard Learn server, Proxy Tools run on remote machines. As a result, the risk of memory leaks impacting Blackboard Learn performance is minimal, but there is the potential of increased network traffic to the Blackboard Learn server from Proxy Tools. As with any third-party code, if it is poorly written it could impact performance. Proxy tools can be blocked individually, at the service or operation level, or constrained to a particular IP address or range using the administrative interface.

What Services are supported?

Release 9.1 ships with a number of services. All operations of each service are documented (and can be enabled or disabled) from the administrative interface.

Blackboard Consulting should be able to provide additional services as needed to expose any operation that can be accomplished by an installed Building Block using the Blackboard Learn Java API.

What protocols do the Web Services support?

Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) is supported. Representational state transfer (REST) protocol is not.

The Services themselves are deployed over the Apache foundation's Axis framework (<http://ws.apache.org/axis/>) with proprietary Blackboard extensions for session management and authorization negotiation.

Wikis

The new Wiki tool allows Instructors to create Wikis for Courses, organizations, and groups to host collaborative content and group projects.

Course and organization Wikis allow the entire Course or organization to participate. Group Wikis allow a subset of the Course or organizations members to work on collaborative projects. Instructors specify whether and when Students are allowed to view or edit a particular Wiki.

For the Wiki feature to be available in Courses, the administrator must enable the Wiki Building Block.

Supporting Collaborative Learning

For clients who have licensed only the Course delivery capabilities, Wikis provide a collaborative area for Course content that allows Student participation and contribution. Both Students and Instructors can easily create content within the Wiki such as study guides and shared notes. For clients who have licensed the community engagement capabilities, Wikis provide organizations with a powerful collaborative editing tool that can be used for any content that requires collaboration and change tracking, such as meeting minutes, by-laws, or simple pieces of content.

Instructors can also use the Wiki for collaborative group projects where the Wiki's history and participation summary tools give the Instructor more in-depth insight when assessing individual contributions of the Students while grading as well as throughout the collaborative process.

Students can use the Wiki to collaborate on content for the Course as well as for group projects. The Wiki's collaborative capabilities and history features help Students see what other Students have contributed and help avoid overwriting each other's work. For groups, the Wiki can be used to simply share ideas or to host the final output of a group project.

Creating and Editing Wikis

Wikis are created and edited using the same Visual Editor (VTBE) that is used throughout Blackboard Learn. Users do not need to learn a special Wiki markup language.

Users can create multiple pages in a Wiki as well as create multiple Wikis. Users can link between Wiki pages to make it easy to interconnect pages. Page navigation is provided to quickly navigate between the pages of a Wiki even if the users do not add links within page content.

Versioning and Comparing Pages

Versioning at the page level allows for complete tracking of content changes in the Wiki. Users can view a comparison of two versions of a Wiki page to see the specific changes that a user made to a Wiki page.

Grading Wikis

Instructors can grade Wikis without having to leave the Wiki and go to the Grade Center. Students can be given group or individual grades to allow grading based on individual contribution.

Viewing Participation Summaries

Instructors are provided with a summary of Student participation in a Wiki that allows them to drill down to detailed views to help assess each Student's contribution. Instructors can view a summary of participation as counts and percentages of words and saves for each Student. Instructors can then drill down for each Student to see a summary and details for that Student's contributions. Instructors also can compare a Student's saved version with the previous version of the page to evaluate that Student's contribution. Grading is integrated at this level to help Instructors grade based on an individual Student's contribution.

Commenting on Wiki Pages

Users can comment on the pages of a Wiki to give feedback and facilitate collaboration.

Creating Wiki Links as Course Content

Instructors can link to a Wiki or Wiki page in Course content.

Using Adaptive Release

Wikis support the standard Adaptive Release options.

Importing and Exporting Content

Wikis support standard Blackboard Learn content exchange to export/import and copy with Courses.

Aligning Wikis with K-12 Standards

Wikis support the K-12 Standards and Alignment functionality available in Release 9.1. For more information, see [Standards Alignment for K-12 Clients](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there any exceptions based on licensing?

Yes. This feature requires an Enterprise Edition license. Wikis are not available for Basic Edition clients.

Where does this feature appear?

The Wiki appears as a tool in Courses and organizations as well as a tool that can be made available for groups. In addition, it is possible to add a link to a Wiki or Wiki page in Course content.

Will the Blackboard Learn Wiki feature affect clients who use third-party Wiki products such as Learning Objects TeamsLX Wiki?

No. Clients may continue to use other Wiki products such as Learning Objects TeamsLX.

Why would someone use the Blackboard Learn Wiki feature versus a third-party Wiki tool?

The Blackboard Learn Wiki feature offers basic Wiki functionality with strong tools for assessing individual contribution and grading Wikis. It has the advantage of being integrated in the Blackboard Learn environment and providing users with a familiar user experience.

Is the Wiki a Building Block? If so, can it work with older releases?

The Wiki is a Building Block, but it will not work in previous releases because it relies on infrastructure that is new to Release 9.1.

What's New Module

The What's New feature functions differently in Blackboard Learn. Icons are no longer used to indicate when new material is added to a Course. Instead, the What's New module displays new Content Areas, providing links directly to the items.

Community Engagement Features

All clients will benefit from the following new branding features if they license the community engagement capabilities of Blackboard Learn.

Feature Enhancement

+ Module Library

There is now the ability to tailor content directly to the users who need it. The extensive library of example modules, including aggregator modules for the Notification System enables Institutions to easily select content that fits their community. Administrators also have the ability to create new modules.

+ Custom Tabs

Institutions may expand the reach of the Blackboard Learn to function as a central place for organizing and gathering information for users by creating additional tabs for modules, external links or tools.

+ Tab Groups

Grouping tabs organizes related content in a way that improves user experience and saves screen real estate.

+ Institution Roles

Using Institution Roles, Administrators can break up user groups so they can be targeted with specific information. By making tabs and modules available only to specific user communities (by role) the institution can organize content and experience appropriate to a user's role on campus. For example, the institution may decide to have specific tabs only made available to incoming Students or alumni.

+ Customize User Communities

Institutions can create a different look and feel for the system for different user communities. For example, Administrators have the ability to brand separate schools, or provide one user experience for faculty (or a subset of faculty), and one experience for Students by applying separate themes, palettes and color customizations.

+ Portal Direct Entry Option

Administrators will be able to choose to have users begin on a module tab page even before logging in, for a potentially more immersive experience.

+ Customize Login Page

A section of the Login page may be customized for each supported host name. This allows the Institution to brand the entry point for separate schools differently by URL.

+ Organizations

Institutions may create online areas dedicated to clubs, organizations, and other extracurricular activities independently of Courses. These areas are structured like Courses and include tools for organization, collaboration, and management.

+ Observers

The Observer role enables people, like parents, to follow specific users in a Course. These users do not interact with the system, but are able to view the Course and track Student progress. Also, the Instructor can communicate Early Warning System notifications to Observers as well as the Student, or just to the Observers of the Student.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do these features appear?

Feature	Location
Tabs	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Tabs and Modules . On the Tabs and Modules page, click Tabs .
Login Page	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes . On the Brands and Themes page, click Customize Login Page .
Themes	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes .
Gateway Page	On the Administrator Panel, under Security , click Gateway Options .
Announcements	On the Administrator Panel, under Tools and Utilities , click Announcements .
Themes	On the Administrator Panel, under Communities , click Brands and Themes .

Do I have to know CSS to customize Blackboard Learn?

No. Administrators who are comfortable with the Blackboard Learn interface can use the theme and palette library that ships with Release 9.1 to choose one of more than 100 combinations of theme and color palette for their system. If the community engagement capabilities have been licensed, Administrators can apply distinct combinations to any campus community they choose, by institution role, hostname, or both. Furthermore, with the new Blackboard Learn color picker, more than 16 million color choices are available for any of the 21 commonly used color elements in the system.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 1 (SP1)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE 4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 1 (SP1).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 1 (SP1) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [Course Delivery](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Content Management](#)
- [Outcomes Assessment](#)
- [System Administration](#)

Course Delivery Features

Assessments

Creating and taking Tests have several enhancements to reduce errors and increase efficiency.

- Test-takers are reminded to submit answers before they are allowed to leave a test.
- Random Blocks and Question Sets are both available for instructors to add groups of questions to tests. Random Blocks pull questions into a test from a pool based on certain criteria. They are dynamic and reflect changes to the question pool. Question Sets are static and are made up of specific questions selected to be in the Question Set used in the Test.
- Question and response statistics are displayed for each question on the Tests Statistics page. For K12 licensed clients, Standards that are aligned to test questions are viewable from this centralized location.

Copying and Moving Items

Move and Copy are now two distinct options for content items. This allows items that cannot be copied such as Tests, Surveys, and Assignments to be moved to another location.

Course Links

When Course Links are created, the link and the location are automatically populated, providing consistency across the link name and location.

Discussion Board

The Discussion Board has two enhancements to streamline grading and create consistency across all collaborative tools.

- Instructors can clearly identify and grade users who are members of Groups participating in group discussions.
- Instructors can enter grades, comments, and feedback when viewing Discussions similar to the experience in Wikis Blogs, and Journals.

Grade Center

The Grade Center has been enhanced to improve grading efficiencies and reduce errors.

- Instructors are prompted to save or delete specific Grade Center columns when deleting a Group with gradable Blogs, Journals, Wikis, or Discussion Forums or Threads.
- Instructors navigating away and then back to the Grade Center in one login session are returned to the last scroll point they viewed or graded in the grid.
- Instructors can color code Grade Center cells that meet certain criteria such as grade threshold, exempted grade and so on. This new feature helps instructors spot trends and action areas in large Grade Centers.

Learning Modules

Items hidden in the table of contents in Learning Modules are made unavailable so they cannot be accessed directly. Additionally, Learning Modules have been enhanced so that when they are copied, links to any tests, assignments, or surveys, are created.

Mashups

Mashup links are now visible when the Text Editor is off.

Standards and Alignments

Standards that have been aligned to test questions can be viewed from the Test Statistics page, providing teachers with a centralized location to view question and response statistics as well as alignments.

Text Editor

The text editor allows users to select right-to-left or left-to-right language orientation of text.

Community Engagement Features

Modules

Availability and role settings, as well as custom layouts for modules and tabs, are preserved upon upgrade. The following user defined settings are preserved:

- Tabs
- Tab Groups
- Modules
- Tab Modules – default layouts
- Tab Modules – user layouts

Administrators have the ability to fix modules to the top row of a page, ensuring high-priority modules will always appear in the desired location. Fixed modules cannot be moved or deleted by users, even on user-customizable tabs.

Administrators can control the availability of modules by date and time, allowing for time sensitive content to be scheduled for release, removing the need to set availability manually.

My Organizations Module

The My Organizations module now has all the same customization features as the My Courses module.

Users have the ability to re-order their courses or organizations in the My Courses and My Organizations modules, adding another level of personalization to the modules.

Notifications

Notifications are now processed in priority order. For example, Due or Past Due notifications are sent before the thousands of "new content" notifications. The priority of a notification is determined internally based on factors such as due date and message type.

RSS Support

Blackboard Learn now supports updated RSS infrastructure including support for contemporary, as well as legacy syndication formats including RSS 1.0, RSS 2.0, Atom 0.3, and Atom 1.0.

User Identification and Avatars

When logged in, users now have a visual indicator that displays their name and avatar if avatars are available in the system.

Content Management Features

Navigation and Shortcuts

The Shortcut View takes up less space vertically to reduce scrolling. A Bookmark link has been added for immediate access to bookmarks. Jump To... and Search Content have also been added to the left side for consistency and improved access.

Breadcrumb Navigation uses the separator between folders as an active button to open a drop-down menu. Items in the drop-down include all the folder's associated subfolders, making navigation in the folder hierarchy much faster. The Content Collection breadcrumb brings users to the "top" folder where they can select any of the content areas.

The current folder name is not displayed in the title with the content area name, and basic operations such as edit, set permissions, and bookmark can be performed from a contextual menu on the current folder.

Sharing Content using Email

When emailing content to users has the To, CC, and BCC labels are now buttons that allow selecting individual users, courses or organizations, a group, or roles within the course or organization.

The system will now check that recipients have access to the emailed files or folders. Users will be warned if recipients do not have access to read the files. If recipients do not have access to read the files, the system can automatically set read permissions after confirmation with the user.

WebDAV

Instructions for setting up and using WebDAV have been improved to be clearer and give specific operating system instructions where possible.

Automatic Web Folder opening has been restored for Windows Internet Explorer on Windows XP and Windows Vista with SSL (HTTPS). Users may have to re-authenticate in the Web Folder client. Users with Windows 7 cannot open Web Folders due to a Microsoft bug. Users that are not connecting with SSL have instructions provided in the user interface.

Outcomes Assessment Features

Batch Uploading

Course-to-program associations can be made using a batch file. Standards, objectives and goals can be aligned using a batch file.

Adding and modifying system data can be done with the same batch file operation.

Curriculum Maps

Curriculum Maps are now easier to navigate and edit. A warning appears to users if they attempt to navigate away from an open curriculum map before saving their work. Curriculum Maps can now be moved and copied. Comments entered in Curriculum Map cells now appear in 360° Reports.

Evaluation

The evaluation process is now much easier for users who rate artifacts and portfolios. The list of submissions now has contextual information about existing evaluations including how many evaluations there are, who last evaluated the submission, when it was last evaluated and on in progress evaluations. The Evaluate page includes the rubric directly on the page along with the artifacts being assessed.

Improvement Project Templates and Modules

Improvement Project templates can be more fully customizable, putting all aspects under users' control.

Improvement Projects and Initiatives listed on Unit pages link to their respective project and initiative pages.

Moving

Users can copy and move improvement initiatives to locations to which they have permission to do so.

Users can copy and move improvement projects to locations to which they have permission to do so.

System Administration

Building Blocks

Developers can improve Building Block performance and data persistence by adding requests for installing Building Block specific database objects to their Build Blocks. A tool which allows the System Administrator to approve or deny installation of Building Blocks which request creation of database objects is also provided.

Administrators experience improved dialog notification for Build Block management actions and retention of persisted data and location of upgraded Building Blocks.

Improved Disk Storage Information

System Administrators are provided with an improved display of disk storage information.

Open Database Schema

Database Schema information can be automatically generated by the Learn application allowing system administrators to perform more effective troubleshooting, reporting and analytics on their institutional data. For more information see the System Administrator Manual available from Behind the Blackboard.

Search

Administrators can more easily find users and courses using two new search fields, Student ID and Data Source Key.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 2 (SP2)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 2 (SP2).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 2 (SP2) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [System Administration](#)
- [Partner Integration](#)

System Administration Features

New fields “Suffix” and “Other Name”

To improve the usability of sorting for countries where a last name prefix (e.g. “van der”) is common but should not be used for sorting, additional user information fields, `suffix` and `other name`, have been added.

In some locales, the `suffix` might be used for {Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.}, while in other locales it will be used for last names which contain multiple words like Van der Waals where “Waals” is the last name and “Van der” is the suffix (a.k.a Last Name Prefix).

The `other name` field provides for additional flexibility and freedom. Administrators can use this field to indicate a user's nickname, additional id, or an entirely different purpose which meets their needs.

Renaming the fields

To change how these new fields are displayed on the user creation screen, administrators must use the Language Pack Editor to modify the `user_column_access.properties`. Each new field has two properties that can be edited:

- Suffix (`suffix.default_display_title`, `suffix.display_title`)
- Other Name (`othername.default_display_title`, `othername.display_title`)

This can also be done from **System Admin** tab, under **Customize User Information**.

Sorting

The administrator can modify the `LocaleSettings.properties` file in each Language Pack to modify the sorting and display order of user names. Using this file, names can be sorted in any order necessary for the locale. For example, a Dutch administrator might use

```
LOCALE_SETTINGS.COLUMN_ORDER=title,givenName,middleName,suffix,familyName,otherName
```

to display the last name prefix correctly in a student search. The same administrator might also use

```
LOCALE_SETTINGS.SHORT_SURNAME={6} {3}, {1}
```

to do the same thing in the Grade Center and related screens. These examples use the conventions set forth in the comments of the `LocaleSettings.properties` file.

Snapshot, Building Blocks, Web Services

If your institution adopts `suffix` or `other name`, and currently utilizes the snapshot utility or integrations through Building Blocks and web services, these integrations must be updated to include this new data. For reference, the six name fields (plus UserInfo getter function names) are included below:

- title (`getTitle`)
- firstname (`getGivenName`)
- middlename (`getMiddleName`)
- lastname (`getFamilyName`)
- othername (`getOtherName`)
- suffix (`getSuffix`)

Installer enables /Courses content area when upgrading to 9.1.

In 9.1 SP1 HF1 an improvement was added that enables the “/courses” content area during installation. This particular improvement is also included in 9.1 SP2. The improvement prevents failed upgrades and other undesirable behavior when coming from Learn 9.0 installations. After running the updater, the administrator has the ability to disable the “/courses” content area again. Instructors are then prompted to choose a default Course Directory when trying to add course content for the first time.

CaféScribe Building Block

Powered by Follett Higher Education

The CaféScribe Blackboard Building Block™ enables professors to assign and students to acquire CaféScribe digital textbooks with a single click within the Blackboard Learn environment. Once there, students and professors can read, highlight, annotate, share notes and perform other activities.

The Building Block is available for all markets.

After installation, the Building Block is “Unavailable” by default. It is free to all eligible clients, so any adopting school would simply need to make the Building Block “Available” and agree to the Term & Conditions to begin using it. The integration enables instructors to create links to specific eBook content as a new content type within a Blackboard course, so the “create content” drop down box is the only location within the user interface where this option is viewable. To verify that the Building Block was installed properly, make sure that “Add CafeScribe Content” is an option under “Add Interactive Tool”.

More information is available at <http://www.blackboard.com/CafeScribe/Resources/FAQ.aspx>

Other Building Blocks

NBC Archives on Demand Building Block updated to version 3.0.6 and has been bundled with Service Pack 2.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 3 (SP3)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 3 (SP3).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 3 (SP3) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [Course Delivery](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [System Administration](#)

Course Delivery Features

Adaptive Release

Instructors can now set Adaptive Release rules using a calculated column. Categories for each item in the Grade Center appear in the **Select a Grade Center column** drop-down list. This helps instructors better use adaptive release rules for teaching and learning such as a scenario of deploying selected remedial content to students that do not pass 70% threshold in a calculated column.

Announcements

New Announcements now appear directly below a repositionable bar. Priority Announcements can be moved above the bar so they always appear first in the list. Students do not see the bar.

Assessments

Instructors now have the ability to view question numbers while building and editing assessments. Questions can be referenced by number throughout the assessment and can be used to sequence questions in an assessment.

Early Warning System

Instructors can now set Early Warning System rules using a calculated column. Categories for each item in the Grade Center appear in the **Select a Grade Center column** drop-down list. This helps instructors better use Early Warning System settings for teaching and learning by using calculated columns for measuring groups of gradable items or monitoring specific progress points in a course.

Grade Center

Several features in the Grade Center have been enhanced to improve communication between the instructor and students and make navigation easier.

Feedback and Comments

To augment the existing ability to download columns from the Grade Center and grade offline, Instructors can now include comments in the download. Comments can be added or edited offline, and are associated with the grade when the column information is uploaded to the Grade Center.

The full features of the Text Editor are now available for feedback to users and Grading Notes from the Grade Details page and within the Grade Center. The Text Editor can also be used for feedback on Tests, Assignments, Group Assignments, Blogs, Wikis, Journals, and posts to the Discussion Board. Incorporating all the features of the Text Editor allows instructors to leverage the full range of functions for formatting text and adding external links, attachments, images, Mashups, and multimedia to Feedback and Grading Notes.

Students are able to view the feedback added using the Text Editor on their My Grades page.

Needs Grading Page

Instructors can access assignment and test attempts that need grading from a new Needs Grading page accessed in the Grade Center section of the Control Panel. On the Needs Grading page, instructors can view how many attempts are ready for grading and sort and filter the items. Attempts are placed in a queue for easy navigation among items when grading or reviewing. Once an attempt is graded, it no longer appears on the Needs Grading page.

Smart Views

Smart Views added as Favorites appear as an indented list in the Grade Center section of the Control Panel.

Column Delete Alert

When groups with graded Blogs, Journals, Wikis, or Discussion Boards are deleted, an alert appears prompting the instructor to save or delete the corresponding Grade Center columns. Managing columns for groups becomes part of the same process as deleting groups.

Text Editor

The symbol font is removed from the Text Editor and a symbol picker has been added.

Community Engagement Features

Modules

Users can browse and search for modules to add to their My Institution Page and Notifications Dashboard.

System Administration

Course Quota Updates

Course Quota changes can now be made through the Quotas page accessed from the contextual menu next to a course name in the Courses list on the Administration Panel. Options are now available for Course Quota and Legacy Files.

Different values can be entered for Courses and Legacy Files. The value will also appear in the Content Collection or Course Content Quota page for each course. The value can be changed from those pages and the change will appear from both the Course page and the Administration page. The value entered from the Administration panel is the default for newly created courses once the value is set.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 4 (SP4)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 4 (SP4).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 4 (SP4) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [Course Delivery](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Outcomes Assessment](#)
- [Blackboard Connect](#)
- [System Administration](#)

Course Delivery

Support for Common Cartridge

Common Cartridge 1.0 and 1.1 are integrated into Blackboard Learn. Course content packages saved in this standard can be imported into Blackboard and course content created in Blackboard can be exported as Common Cartridge packages.

Important Note: Cartridges exported from Blackboard are automatically exported in Common Cartridge 1.0 unless the **Export as Common Cartridge 1.1** box is checked. In which case, the export is saved as Common Cartridge 1.1.

Learning Tools Interoperability

The Basic Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) is an IMS derivative of the full Learning Tools Interoperability specification that provides a simple integration for instructors to install external learning tools and applications anywhere within their courses. Users do not have to sign in to multiple tools. External content and tools are added to a course the same way a URL is added. The tool or content is launched by clicking the link.

Developers can add Basic Learning Tools Interoperability extensions to their Building Blocks, increasing their market value.

Assessments

Feedback for each answer is now available for Multiple Answer questions.

Community Engagement

Discovering Modules

Users can locate modules to add to their My Institutional page more easily using categories and search. Modules can be categorized by the system administrator. Search is based on key words in the module title and description.

Outcomes Assessment

Curriculum Maps

The workflow for creating and building a Curriculum Map has been improved to reduce the number of clicks so that users go directly to the build tasks from the creation page.

Distribution Lists

The workflow for creating a distribution list and adding criteria to it has been combined into one workflow.

Blackboard Connect

Country Codes Available

Blackboard Learn and Connect are now integrated and support international phone codes. Integration automatically populates email addresses and phone numbers from Learn to Connect. A default country code can be used in the event that no code is provided from Blackboard Learn.

System Administration

Data Sources

System Administrators can navigate to **Administration Panel > System Reporting > Data Sources** to create new data sources and open existing data sources to view details about each type of record currently associated with that data source. Existing keys can also be modified or deleted. Records can be disabled and purged as well.

Search and Select All

A large list of items, such as users or courses, is often returned from a search that uses the filter Not Blank or a generic character in the filter Contains. This list is displayed on multiple pages, the number of which is based on the setting of number of items to display on a page. Checking the top Status box selects all the items displayed on the page, but now gives you the additional option of selecting all items returned in the search. This option allows you to select the entire set so you do not have to go to each page and select all, or set the number of items displayed on the page to a very high number, causing performance problems.

Support for Google Analytics™

Google Analytics™ is a free service offered by Google for mining web traffic data to a website or application. The process for setting up Google Analytics is the same for each Blackboard Learn codeline including 9.0 SP5 and 9.1 SP4 and beyond.

1. Register with Google Analytics (<http://www.google.com/analytics/>)
 - Identify a test server outside your firewall and note its domain name
 - Create a Google Analytics Account
 - Register the domain name of your server through the Google Analytics setup pages
 - Save the script provided by Google Analytics
2. Open `sharedDir"/web_analytics/googleAnalyticsSnippet.vm` (For example `c:/blackboard/content/web_analytics/googleAnalyticsSnippet.vm`), paste your script, and save the file.
3. You can restart Blackboard Learn Services for the changes to take effect immediately or wait until the .vm file cache is refreshed, once every 12 hours.

For information on Secure and Non-Secure sites, visit

<http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=55483>

Resource Governor

A new command line feature that allows certain performance intensive database operations to run at a lower priority so that they do not consume CPU resources is shipped with SP4. This feature, a resource governor, is turned off by default.

To Activate

First contact Blackboard support. Next, navigate to the main configuration file:

`/blackboard/config/bb-config.properties` and locate this property:

`bbconfig.database.query.prioritization.enabled`, which is set to `False`. Follow the instructions from support to activate.

Once activated the resource governor is added to the Blackboard database. The resource governor regulates the CPU utilization of connections configured to run at a lower priority. Until activated, there is no impact on the system.

The resource governor is only installed on systems that use the following databases:

- Oracle 10 Enterprise Edition
- Oracle 11 Enterprise Edition
- SQL Server 2008 Enterprise Edition

It will **not** be installed for any other versions, and the low-priority connection feature will not take effect on those systems, even if enabled.

To Disable

Set the `bbconfig.database.query.prioritization.enabled` property to `False`. The resource governor can also be turned off at the database level. This does not remove the resource governor from the database, but disables it. It can be enabled at any point.


For Oracle:

1. Log on as the sys dab
`sqlplus "/ sysdba"`
2. Turn off the resource manager by setting it to an empty plan
`alter system set resource_manager_plan = ''`

For SQL:

Bring up the SQL Server Manager.

1. Navigate to Management > Resource Governor
2. Right click on Resource Governor and select Properties
3. Change Classifier Function Name to "None"

 The 9.1 SP4 uninstaller does **not** remove the resource governors. This will be addressed in future service packs. Until it is, the follow artifacts will be left behind after the uninstaller executes:

Oracle

1. A resource plan, called **BB_PLAN**
2. Two consumer groups: **OLTP**, and **BATCH**
3. The database's RESOURCE_MANAGER_PLAN will be set to **BB_PLAN**

SQL Server

1. A workload group, called **groupLowPriority**
2. A classifier function, called **get_priority_workgroup**
3. The resource governor is updated to point to the **get_priority_workgroup** function

To Delete

Delete the Resource Governor if you think it is causing issues on your system that disabling it will not address or if you uninstall your SP4 Learn environment and want to remove the resource governor as well.

For Oracle:

1. Log on as the sys dab

```
sqlplus "/ sysdba"
```
2. Disable the BB_PLAN resource plan
3. Remove the plan and all its descendants by executing the following code:

```
alter system set resource_manager_plan = '';

exec dbms_resource_manager.create_pending_area();
exec dbms_resource_manager.delete_plan_cascade('Bb_plan');
exec dbms_resource_manager.validate_pending_area();
exec dbms_resource_manager.submit_pending_area();
```

For SQL:

In a production environment, wait for all sessions that are using low-priority connections to complete or simply kill those sessions before attempting to uninstall the resource governor. Otherwise, the drop will fail.

1. Delete the low priority resource group
2. Disable the resource classifier
3. Delete the resource classifier function

```
DROP WORKLOAD GROUP groupLowPriority;

GO

-- Update the Resource Governor in-memory configuration
ALTER RESOURCE GOVERNOR WITH (CLASSIFIER_FUNCTION=null);

GO

ALTER RESOURCE GOVERNOR RECONFIGURE;

GO

DROP FUNCTION dbo.get_priority_workgroup;

GO
```

Global XSS Filtering

To prevent cross-site scripting (XSS) attacks, Blackboard Learn now can globally filter user HTML input. The filtering changes the greater-than sign, ">" to ">" and the lesser-than sign, "<" to "<". This applies to all data entered using HTML forms, such as submitting a Create Discussion Board Forum Message form. Global XSS filter is also applied to file uploads, and will be apparent when rendering the contents of a form submission back to the screen.

Global XSS filtering only occurs for un-trusted user roles such as students. Trusted users, such as course instructors are allowed to post data and will not have their HTML filtered.

Global filtering can be turned on and off for the entire server using the `bbconfig.global.xss.enable` property in `bb-config.properties`. This property is ON by default starting with 9.1 SP4. This property is OFF by default in 9.1 SP1 through 9.1 SP3.

Global filtering can also be turned on or off selectively by URL. When global xss filter is ON for the entire system (`bbconfig.global.xss.enable=true`), filtering can be turned off for specific URLs. This option could be used in the case of a Building Block that allows any user, with trusted role or not, to submit HTML content. To prevent the global xss filter from changing the HTML, the developer can modify the code to get the unfiltered data using the new APIs, or create an exception text file.

To create an exception file, add the URL prefixes, one per line, in a text file named in the `config/internal/bb-xss-global-filter-exceptions.txt`.

For building blocks, the BBUID is embedded in the URL (and is VI specific), so the placeholder `{bbuid}` can be used in the prefix. This will get replaced by the actual BBUID when URLs are being compared against the prefix.

For example `/webapps/bb-my-b2-{bbuid}` would get changed to `/webapps/bb-my-b2-BBLEARN`

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 5 (SP5)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 5 (SP5).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 5 (SP5) focuses on bug fixes, course files, and security.

Default Maximum Upload Limit

The default size limit for content uploaded through the user interface has been raised from 250 MB to 2.5 GB. When attempting to upload files larger than 2.5 GB, Web Folders must be used.

Known and Resolved Issues

Many critical client-reported issues have been resolved. For a detailed list, see the [Resolved Issues Page](#) of the Maintenance Center.

The list of known issues in Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 is available on the [Known Issues](#) page of the Maintenance Center. The Known Issues page provides a list of the issue ID, description, and resolution path. This page is updated regularly with new client-reported issues.

Course Files Move Utility

Course Files migration is an integral part of the recommended upgrade path to Blackboard Learn 9.1. Full support and a renewed recommendation for using the Move Files Utility for all customers upgrading has been restored.

With the release of Learn 9.1, file management and storage was fundamentally changed. A new file storage system was implemented through the Control Panel of a course and is called "Course Files". Course Files gives users a way to manage their content files, file uploads, and attachments. It also provides a way for users to manage who has permission to see and change files stored here. Course Files provides a very basic file management interface.

For clients with a Content Collection license, Course Files is a window into their Content Collection files through the course Control Panel. All the functions of the Content Collection remain, but easy navigation to and from a course is available.

The Move Files Utility was created to populate the new file storage system with the course files from a legacy course. Since Blackboard Learn 9.1 GA was released, problems related to files moved using the utility after upgrading to 9.1 were discovered. With this release, we have holistically addressed this key area and can renew our recommendation for use of the Move Files Utility for all customers.

Restoring legacy courses in Blackboard Learn 9.1 without using the Move Files Utility places the files in a legacy storage area that is not revealed to users, although the files remain accessible in the course. New material developed after the course is upgraded is stored in the Files or Content Collection area. This does not give a consistent user experience managing files for a course. By using the Move Files Utility to move course files during an upgrade, legacy files are placed in Course Files, providing a consistent way to manage files in a course.

Security

Service Pack 5 addresses three key security vulnerabilities.

- **Cross-site Request Forgery** – Cross-site Request Forgery is an attack that attempts to execute actions on behalf of a user authenticated into Learn. SP5 provides further hardening of Learn Release 9.1 from cross-site request forgery by protecting key parts of the application such as the Grade Center.
- **Cross-site Scripting Attacks** – Cross-site Scripting is an attack where malicious scripts are injected into Learn. This occurs when specially crafted values are entered into a variable of a web page or stored and displayed by the application. Oftentimes, an attacker would need to convince an authenticated user to access a malicious web page or record in order for the attack to occur. Key parts of the application are now protected.
- **Authorization Vulnerabilities** – authorization vulnerabilities in the Address Book, Calendar, Grade Center, Portfolio Comments and Display, and Tasks have been eliminated.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 6 (SP6)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard CE4 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 6 (SP6).

The list of issues resolved in Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 SP6 is available on the [Resolved Issues Page](#) of the Maintenance Center.

The list of known issues in Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 is available on the [Known Issues](#) page of the Maintenance Center. The Known Issues page provides a list of the issue ID, description, and resolution path. This page is updated regularly with new client-reported issues.

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 6 (SP6) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [Course Delivery](#)
- [Content Management](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Outcomes Assessment](#)
- [Partner Integration](#)
- [System Administration](#)

Course Delivery

Needs Grading

Gradable Blogs, Journals, Wikis, and Discussion Board activity can appear in Needs Grading status in the Grade Center and on the Needs Grading page. When an instructor chooses to make an interactive tool gradable, they will also have the option to choose how many interactions will place the item in needs grading status. A Discussion Board forum, for instance, might be set to only appear in Needs Grading status after a student has made three posts, rather than with each individual post.

Timed Assessments

Attempt information for timed assessments includes details on how much time the student spent on the attempt versus how much time was allotted.

Instructors can choose to make the timed assessment save and submit automatically when the timer expires, or to allow the assessment to continue beyond the allotted time.

Test Announcements

If announcements are created for a Test, the date and time of the most recent announcement appears on the Test Options page.

Interactive Rubrics

When creating a rubric, instructors can assign weights to categories, allowing the same rubric to be used across multiple items with different possible points. Rubrics can be imported and exported for use across courses. Existing rubrics in ANGEL and CE8 courses will be converted as part of the course conversion process.

Instructors can associate rubrics when creating gradable content items, including Blogs, Journals, Wikis, Discussion Boards, Assignments, and short-answer, file-response, or essay questions in tests and pools. Rubrics can be associated with multiple items, and all associations can be viewed from the Rubric tool. Multiple rubrics can be associated with an item. The rubrics can be visible to students at any time, or only after grading has been completed.

Instructors can interact with any associated rubric for grading in a grid or list view, and Feedback can be typed for each criteria as well as the entire assessment. Grades calculated using rubrics can be overridden. When a rubric has been used for grading, a report is available to view the results of all content graded with that rubric.

SCORM Engine Integration

Through a co-development partnership with Rustici Software, a new SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) content player is integrated into Blackboard Learn. This feature will provide users a stable and reliable platform for SCORM content. Along with the new content player is a new report available through the Control Panel to show activity and progress.

Content Management

Adaptive Release Rules Work on Content Collection Items

Adaptive Release now works on Content Collection items that are created within a course and accessed through the Content Collection. Instructors (or those users creating course content) are no longer prompted to give Read access to newly created items. Items that are released at a later date will not show up in a search before they are released.

Important Note: To ensure that adaptive release rules are functioning correctly, courses created prior to Blackboard Learn Service Pack 6 need to be copied, imported, or restored after upgrading. This process updates all links to content within a course and removes specific read permissions from students. Updating the links provides students with access to all files they had previously been granted access to. Removing specific read permissions prevents students from accessing content that they are not allowed see while honoring adaptive release rules.

Desktop Integration

BbDrive must be installed to engage in desktop integration. Once installed, files will automatically open without download. Updates are saved and re-uploaded after a refresh of a Course Content page. Any files that a user has access to will open within their native application. If users have set specific files to open with a specific program, they can open the contextual menu and select open in browser to view the file in a new tab or window. Entire folders can also open right on the desktop to manage files, making deleting multiple files easy for example.

Automatic Student Access to Linked Files

Links to files within courses do not rely on students having read permissions. If a file is linked in a course students enrolled in that course will be able to see it. They will not need explicit read permission.

Community Engagement

Institutional Hierarchy

Administrators can create and manage a hierarchy that reflects institutional organization in order to share and delegate administrative duties. Multiple organizational units within an institution can be given varying degrees of independence in order to manage their courses, organizations, and users. Institutions can support multiple organizational units on a single instance of Blackboard Learn.

Administrators with appropriate privileges can create new Nodes in the hierarchy. Courses, organizations, and users are then associated with the node, and an administrator can be assigned with privileges to manage just those associated objects.

Although Administrators can manually create Nodes and associate objects through the user interface, all of the creation and management of Nodes and the association of courses, organizations, and users to Nodes can be managed through data integration with the student information system.

Flexible System Roles can be used in combination with the hierarchy to create a robust delegated administration that reflects the real-world organization of any institution.

NOTE: The resource bundle properties file `multiinst.properties`, used for customized language packs, is scheduled to be renamed in Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 8.

Outcomes Assessment

Evidence Collection

Outcomes Assessment users such as assessment coordinators can automatically collect assignments and the related student submissions directly from Blackboard Learn course sections. Once collected, student artifacts of learning can be randomly sampled, evaluated in Outcomes Assessment using a rubric, and reported against. The collection of these student work products in a more automated way greatly eases the burden of assessment on faculty and students, promoting “double-duty” of course work for the purpose of program or institution level assessment.

Evidence is collected into manageable sets and is controlled by Outcomes Assessment users at any level: institution, unit/program, or course. This multi-level approach provides a great deal of flexibility and permits users with different purviews to collect and sample evidence appropriate to their role.

Standard, Objective, and Goal (SOG) Alignment to Course Delivery Content

This enhancement will make it easier for instructors, curriculum designers, and other staff to align content items directly to the appropriate learning outcome. This change will work seamlessly for current Outcomes Assessment clients who have already aligned content to course objectives.

Standard, Objective, and Goal (SOG) Coverage Reports

This new capability will enable users to analyze the extent to which certain standards, objectives, or goals have (or have not) been aligned to the relevant course curriculum. These reports require the alignment of learning outcomes to Blackboard Learn course section content items.

Partner Integration

McGraw-Hill Connect and Create Integration

Instructors will benefit from one-stop teaching and learning through the integration of McGraw-Hill Connect and Create directly within Blackboard Learn. This combination of content and learning tools is easy to use and provides instructors one destination for creating and accessing dynamic online course materials.

McGraw-Hill's solutions, Connect and Create, are now integrated and available directly within Blackboard Learn. Customizable, dynamic educational content and tools from McGraw-Hill enhance and enrich teaching and learning experience. Single sign-on and Grade Center synchronization deliver centralized, immediate access to course content and grades. Compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that student privacy is protected.

System Administration

Software Updates

Software Updates is located in the System Admin Panel and provides updates specific to your Blackboard Learn installation. If a newer version of Blackboard Learn is available, an indicator will display the number of versions, and you can select which version to download. This includes Service Packs as well as Major Releases. In addition to Blackboard Learn updates, new releases of installed Building Blocks will also be displayed in Software Updates on the System Admin Panel.

To use Software Updates, Blackboard Learn needs to make a secure HTTP access OUT using port 443 to the following servers:

handle.blackboard.com

softwareupdates.blackboard.com

If you are blocking secure HTTP access OUT from your Learn instance, you will need to configure your firewall to enable access to these servers.

The Batch UID Can be Used as a Context Identifier for a Basic Learning Tool Interoperability (LTI) Tool Provider

Previously, the only available option for sending context identifiers was to provide the primary key from within the database BBLEARN. You now have a second option, sending the Batch UID, as a context identifier. The Batch UID is a unique number within the Blackboard Learn installation.

Sending the primary key guarantees that no identifying information about the user or course is being exchanged. Sending the Batch UID guarantees that even if the course or user is deleted and re-added, the same identifying information is being sent to the tool provider. However, depending on the usage of the Batch UID at an institution, it is possible that identifying information, such as a student ID number, may be sent to the tool provider. To determine the best method for your institution, contact the tool provider.

Custom Parameters in Basic Learning Tool Interoperability (LTI) Configuration

An XML configuration is no longer necessary in order to add custom parameters for Basic LTI providers. A new field has been added to the Basic LTI Configuration screen, which permits the Administrator to enter the custom parameters.

Web Services Enabled Automatically for Building Blocks

When using Building Blocks that are bundled, or manually installed and depend on Web Services APIs, permissions are automatically enabled.

Page Scroll Location Maintained During Refresh

The page scroll location is maintained on screens that contain scroll bars if a user scrolls before the page finishes loading. For example, if a user deletes the last item in a content folder with numerous items, and scrolls before the page has finished loading, instead of being returned to the top of the page when the page finishes loading, the user maintains the current page scroll location.

Select All

To prevent potentially huge numbers of items being selected, when a user chooses Select All for a list that has multi-select capability, all of the current items on the page are selected. An option is provided that allows all of the items in the list to be selected.

Student Information System Integration Building Block

The Student Information System (SIS) Integration Building Block was designed to help Administrators create courses and authorize users for the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS). Information provided by the institution is used to create the required entities within the LMS database. The information may come from various sources in varying formats. Once this information is written in an appropriate format, it is loaded into the LMS using the Building Block. This Building Block is intended to provide a simplified alternative to the Blackboard Snapshot tool.

Upgrading to Blackboard Learn from another LMS such as WebCT or Vista is now easier than ever. The Application Administrator has the ability to manage user and course data directly from the UI, whereas the Snapshot tool requires System Administrator access to the application server.

There are three types of Integration available. Although there are three types of Integration, there is not a limit to the number of Integrations a system may have. It is unusual, though possible, to have a variety of Integration types on a single system.

- IMS Enterprise 1.1
- IMS Enterprise 1.1 - Vista
- IMS Learning Information Services

Blackboard recommends that Integrations begin in the Testing status. Selecting this status will allow you to test the Integration, and fix any issues that may arise before committing to the Integration. Once the testing is complete, the status may be set to Inactive or Active. Setting the status to Inactive will bring the data in, however, it will not be visible to users. Setting the status to Active will bring the data in, and it will be visible to users. The status can be changed at any time.

Logging capabilities in an intuitive format are provided as part of the Student Information System Integration Building Block. Logs can be filtered using an advanced search method that includes the type of error, the Integration, and a date range. New log entries are easily visible, with a count attached to the type of log entry. The logs can be refreshed to retrieve the latest count, and details of each type of log.

Note: Creating Organization associations to Institution Nodes using the Institutional Hierarchy SIS Data Integration framework is not supported in SP6. Any attempt to do so will be ignored, and an error logged.

Blackboard Learn Release 9.1, Service Pack 10 (SP10)

This addendum is designed to supplement Understanding the Change from Blackboard Academic Suite 8.0 to Blackboard Learn 9.1 in order to provide information on the features and functions of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, Service Pack 10 (SP10).

Known and resolved issues now populate a dynamically-generated list on each Release Article and each Service Pack article. They will update in real time as "Target Fix Releases" (the Service Pack where the issue will be fixed) and "Affects Versions" (what Service Packs have the issue occurring). For more information, visit [Behind the Blackboard](#).

Blackboard Learn 9.1 Service Pack 10 (SP10) includes enhancements and innovations that are grouped in the following categories:

- [System Administration](#)
- [Course Delivery](#)
- [Content Management](#)
- [Partner Integration](#)

System Administration

Cloud Settings

Cloud settings control the connection of an individual Blackboard Learn instance to Blackboard cloud services. Cloud settings are available on the System Administration panel under Cloud Management. Settings include:

- **Cloud Connector** – Creates the connection between Blackboard Learn and centrally located cloud services.
- **Cloud Profiles and Tools** – When the Cloud Profile and Tools option is enabled, users have access to create basic profiles and search for users by profile information. The cloud connector must be turned on first.
- **Cloud Settings** – Controls how cloud features display in Blackboard Learn and in third party networks like Twitter and Facebook. Cloud settings only appear if cloud services are enabled.
- **Reported Items** – Displays a queue of profiles that have been reported by users as inappropriate. Administrators can take action to remove items or block users based on school policies and procedures.

New Content Editor

The newly designed content editor vastly improves the user experience for adding text and other forms of digital content to Blackboard Learn. The new content editor is based on the industry standard TinyMCE WYSIWYG editor. The new content editor is delivered as a building block extension for optimal maintenance and integration.

- Collapsed and expanded views help users control screen space.
- A new math equation editor is included mathML (WIRIS).
- The content editor is always on for users so they no longer have to explicitly opt in or opt out.
- Spell check and the math editor options are controlled separately at the administrator level. They can be set at the system, course and organization levels.
- Administrators can control the spell check dictionaries from the Tools page. There are three dictionaries included in Learn. Additional open source dictionaries can be downloaded from the internet and installed.
- Administrators can control the math editor image service settings from the Tools page.
- The create reusable object option has been removed from the content editor but users can still create reusable objects from course files or the Content Collection.
- Administrators can extend the existing font family in the content editor to include non-system fonts such as Hellenistic Greek. Two resource bundles, `font.override`, and `font.addition`, allow you to override the set of default fonts or include additional fonts in the default set.
- Additional editing capabilities have been added including:
 - For text:
 - Correct copy and paste from Microsoft Word
 - Align Full
 - Find/Replace
 - Blockquote
 - CSS editing
 - Insert non-breaking spaces
 - Symbols
 - Emoticons
 - For tables:
 - Setting row and cell properties
 - Insert and delete rows and cells

- Splitting and merging cells
- For media
 - Consolidation of media selections under a single toolbar
 - Automatic HTML validation

File Picker

The file picker is the window that opens when users click Browse Content Collection or Browse Course. The file picker is available everywhere users attach files.

The file picker can

- Display a file or folder's name, last modification date, versions (files only) and size.
- Sort on each column being displayed.
- Change the number of items being displayed, editing the table's paging.
- Search across all folders and files with a single search input.
- Toggle between a list view and a thumbnail view. The interface for thumbnail view does not change.
- Go to the current folder listing's parent folder in one click.
- Quickly switch between the top-level content areas (My Content, Courses, Organizations, Institution, and Library), Bookmarks and the Learning Objects Catalog.
- Navigate the folder hierarchy using breadcrumbs.
- Switch to a more advanced search.
- Upload a file.

Learning Tools and Interoperability (LTI 1.1)

Note: The IMS has merged the Basic LTI and the LTI specifications with the release of LTI 1.1. Use of the term "Basic LTI" refers to Basic LTI 1.0.

Blackboard is certified to support LTI 1.1. This includes support for outcomes (grading of LTI based assignments) and support of additional launch parameters. Blackboard also supports custom parameters that may include Learn template variables that are resolved to Learn data (@X@ variable interpolation).

LTI 1.0 support in 9.1 SP10 has not changed.

LTI 1.0 is supported on 9.1 SP4 and above.

LTI 1.1 is supported on 9.1 SP10 and above.

Security

Blackboard is committed to improving security features and resolving security vulnerabilities quickly and carefully. Such security vulnerability resolutions may lead to the release of a Security Advisory as well as any needed product update for our customers based on the context, severity and timing of confirmed vulnerabilities. Below we have outlined the security enhancements and security vulnerabilities resolved in this release.

For more information on each of the features and improvements, please see the System Administrator documentation.

Input Validation Filter

The Input Validation Filter is the new first line of defense to confirm data coming into Blackboard Learn is safe. It verifies that user requests coming in to the system are safe by sanitizing the data through a default ruleset. Administrators can create a custom ruleset to override a rule in the default ruleset and to decide which building blocks to apply the filter.

The Input Validation Filter is fast, providing cross-site scripting fixes much faster than the traditional patching process. Traditional patches can have various dependency issues or may need to be rolled back. Providing fixes through the Input Validation Filter is a much cleaner and faster way of delivering patches, as they are provided directly through the Software Updates Center.

The Input Validation Filter is installed and enabled by default for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1 Service Pack 10 and later. Access the Input Validation Filter feature on the Administrator Panel.

Alternate File Domain Settings for Serving Content

This security control forces files uploaded by users to open from another web domain. It is a defense-in-depth compensating control against potentially malicious files. It helps protect from Cross-site Scripting attacks performed through malicious files by leveraging the internet browser's existing security control, the "same-origin policy."

For example, your institution's main Blackboard site is "https://blackboard.myinstitution.com" and content is served from "https://blackboard-content.myinstitution.com". By using an alternate domain, the user's cookies and session information is further protected from potentially malicious scripts in uploaded HTML files.

This security control is not enabled by default since it requires administrators to configure an alternate domain and its corresponding SSL certificate. Blackboard strongly recommends all customers enable this setting.

Cookie Disclosure Building Block

Blackboard is committed to ensuring that the collection, protection, use and storage of private information follows all legal and industry best practices by proactively supporting European Union regulations that help ensure privacy and security on the web. Blackboard is providing all Blackboard Learn clients with the Blackboard Security Management Cookie Disclosure building block. This building block allows schools to comply with the European Union's e-Privacy Directive. The building block can be downloaded and installed easily into Blackboard Learn instances.

The Blackboard Security Management Cookie Disclosure building block is intended to support the European Union Privacy Data Directive and laws implemented in the United Kingdom and other member states related to this directive. Specifically, this building block implements features that require users to provide consent prior to data collection and provides information about the nature and extent of data collection within Blackboard software and services to end users.

Related Security Advisories

Many of the security fixes related to the following security advisory are available in this release.

- Authorization Vulnerabilities in User Directory and Assignments of Blackboard Learn Could Allow Information Exposure
- Cross-site Scripting Vulnerabilities Course Delivery and Content Collection in Blackboard Learn Could Allow Elevation of Privilege
- Cross-site Scripting Vulnerability in Visual Text Box Editor of Blackboard Learn Could Allow Elevation of Privilege
- Cross-site Scripting Vulnerability in Spell Checker Could Allow Elevation of Privilege
- Cross-site Scripting Vulnerabilities in Blackboard Learn Could Allow Phishing
- Invalid Session Management in Legacy Content Upgraded to 9.1 Could Allow Session Hijacking

Course Delivery

Assessment Item Analysis

Item analysis provides statistics on overall test performance and on individual test questions. This data helps you recognize questions that might not adequately discriminate between students who understand the material and those who do not. You can use this information to improve questions for future tests or to adjust credit on current attempts. Ineffective or misleading question are identified easily, corrected in the Test Canvas, and are re-graded automatically.

Assessment Fill-in-the-Blank Question Enhancement

Fill in the Blank and Fill in Multiple Blanks questions now offer **contains** and **pattern match** (using regular expressions) as grading options for answers. Instructors no longer have to rely only on exact match for grading and manually enter every possible correct answer. Instructors can also make the answers case sensitive.

Delete Course Files with Course Delete

Users are now allowed to delete all course files when they delete their courses. This option eliminates orphaned content for courses. Without orphaned content in the course's home folder, reusing courseIDs is more efficient since you don't first have to use the orphaned content report to delete the course's home folder.

360° View Report Enhancement

A new column indicating if a file or subfolder is linked to course content, and if a subfolder contains files that are linked to course content has been added to the 360° View Report.

Enterprise Surveys and Course Evaluations

Enterprise surveys and course evaluations are integrated in Blackboard Learn making it easy to send surveys to courses, departments, institutions or the public. This does not replace the course surveys tool available to teachers inside their course to poll their students. Rather this tool is made available to survey administrator and survey manager accounts to create, send, and analyze surveys on an institutional level.

Survey reports can display aggregate results, analyzing data across courses and business units. Survey reports can display longitudinal results, analyzing data across time periods such as terms or years.

Global Navigation

Global navigating refers to the set of links that appears at the very top of Blackboard Learn. This set of links has been streamlined and becomes the entry point to My Blackboard and social learning tools. Access points to critical academic information is organized in one place to provide a consistent quick and easy way to find information.

When users first log in to SP10, they see an overlay that highlights the new features. After the first login, when users click on the global navigation link, a drop-down menu appears. The items that populate the menu are dependent on whether the cloud is turned on or off and if community engagement capabilities are licensed.

New components of global navigation include:

- The user menu – Provides access to settings that previously were accessed through My Places. My Places has been eliminated. Home and Help links reside here. Clients who license community engagement capabilities will find global links here as well.
- My Blackboard – Provides icons and links to various areas of Blackboard. The icons signal the presence of new information, such as new messages and new posts.

My Blackboard

My Blackboard aggregates information from across the Blackboard Learn system for users. Access My Blackboard using Global Navigation at the top of the screen.

My Blackboard has a navigation panel that quickly connects to different tools in the system. The tools you have access to depend on whether the cloud is turned on and if your school licenses community engagement capabilities. These features are available in My Blackboard:

- **My Blackboard Profile** – Users have access to view and edit their profiles as well as to post to their profile wall.
- **Profile Cards** – Information in profiles is shared when users post to blogs, journals, wikis, and the discussion board. Profile cards are shared in the roster tool and people tool.
- **My Blackboard Posts** – Aggregates posts and comments from blogs, journals, wikis, and discussion boards in courses.
- **My Blackboard Updates** – Aggregates all notifications that users have elected to receive.
- **My Blackboard Grades** – Displays recent grades for all courses users are enrolled in.
- **My Blackboard People** – Provides access to a person's academic network.

Feature	Course Delivery only Cloud off	Any license Cloud on
Login Overlay	Available	Enhanced. Includes prompting to create profile from the overlay. Options to link Facebook and Twitter accounts.
Global Navigation	Available	Enhanced. Includes Profile and People in the menu.
My Blackboard	Available	Enhanced. Includes Profile and People in the menu.
My Blackboard Profile	N/A	Available. Profile shows avatar, name, what I'm studying, about me, and primary email address.
Profile Cards	N/A	Available. Profile Cards limited to showing avatar, name, What I'm studying, About Me, and report.
My Blackboard Posts	Available	Enhanced. Includes avatar and profile cards in posts.
My Blackboard Grades	Available	Available
My Blackboard People	N/A	Available. Basic profiles of my academic network and search within the institution.
My Blackboard Updates	Available	Available

Content Management

Set Default Course Files Properties for Course Copy, Export, and Archive

Administrators can now control the default setting for copying course files or linking to course files during a course copy, export, or archive. This setting only affects courses created after upgrading to SP10.

Copy Course File Attachments

To cut down the number of file attachments that are duplicated during a course copy, a new option has been added to the course copy function for course files. Previously the entire course files directory was included in the package when users elected to include copies of course files. With this new option, users can decide to take the entire folder of files or only those files that are actually linked to course content.

File attachment selections are:

- **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** – This will only make copies of linked files. 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.

New User Warnings for Deleting or Moving Linked Folders or Files

Two new warnings help users avoid inadvertently creating broken links to files in their courses.

A warning occurs when a user deletes a folder that is directly linked to course content or that contains files that are linked to course content.

A warning occurs when a user moves a file linked to a course content, a folder that is directly linked to course content or that contains files that are linked to course content, to the recycling bin. This helps prevent broken links because most users are unaware that the recycling bin may be set to automatically purge.

Partner Integration

ConnectTxt

This building block is bundled in for SP10. When installed and configured, teachers can engage students using two-way text messaging. Students can opt-in to receive text alerts from their courses. Teachers can send text messages to students enrolled in their courses and receive their replies.

NBC Learn

The NBC Learn building block will no longer be bundled with Blackboard Learn SP 10. If you have this build block installed on your system, it will continue to function normally. If you would like to install it, visit the [Blackboard extensions catalog](#).