Coastal Bend College

Learn Blackboard 9.1

Faculty Instructional Handbook

Distance Education

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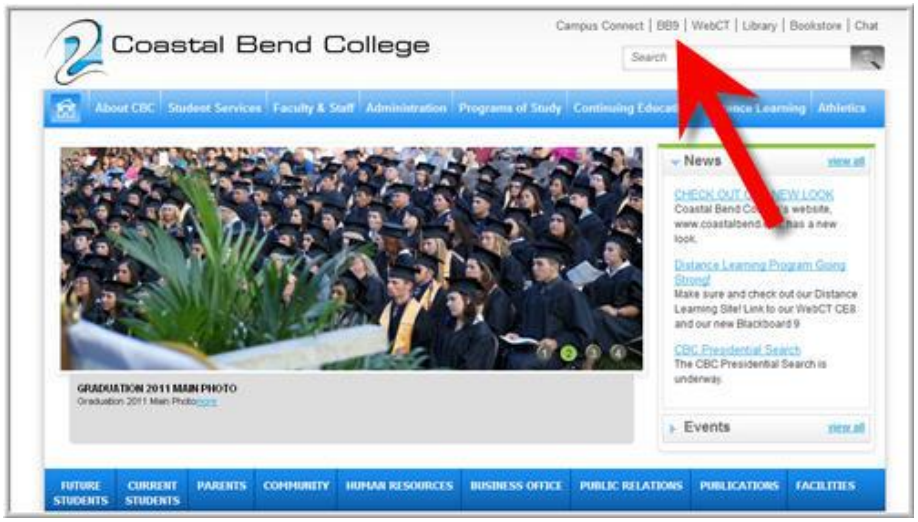
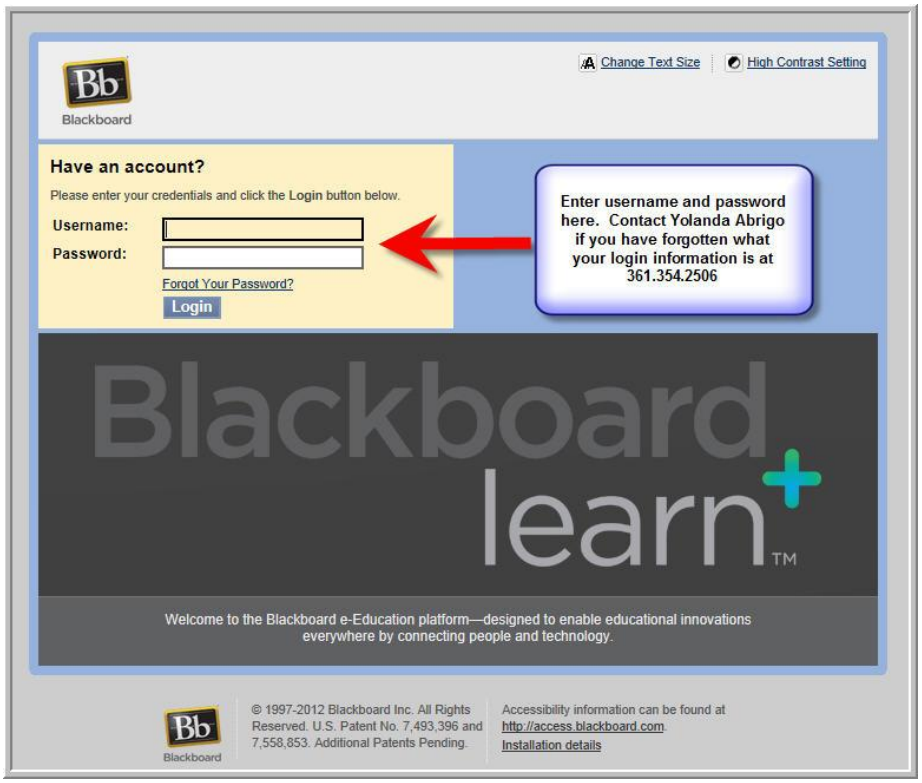
LOGGING IN TO BLACKBOARD

- Go to our main Coastal Bend College website at www.coastalbend.edu
- Click on the Blackboard Login link located at the top right of the page.

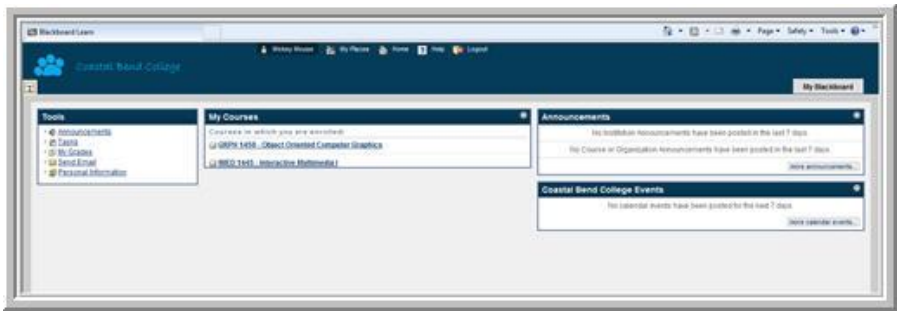


- The following screen appears. Enter your ***Username*** and ***Password*** as assigned to you by Coastal Bend College Distance Learning Department and click ***Login***.
    - If you have forgotten your username and/or password, please contact Yolanda Abrigo at 361.354.2506 or via email to ycharles@coastalbend.edu

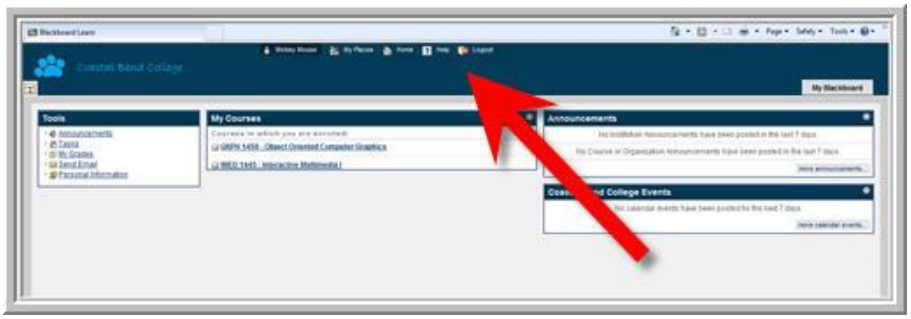


EXPLORING MY BLACKBOARD

When you login to Blackboard, the first screen that appears is the ***My Blackboard*** screen. My Blackboard provides you with a single point of access to the courses in which you are enrolled.



Let's review the ***My Blackboard*** screen. Beginning at the top, you have the ***Control Frame*** which contains navigation elements that allow the user to access the institution homepage, My Places, Help, and Logout.



Let's explore the ***My Places*** link. When you click on ***My Places***, the following screen appears.

- ***Change Text Size*** – provides instructions on how to change your text size for Internet Explorer, FireFox, and Safari
- ***High Contrast Setting*** – defaults to use Blackboard styles versus your operating system's high contrast setting

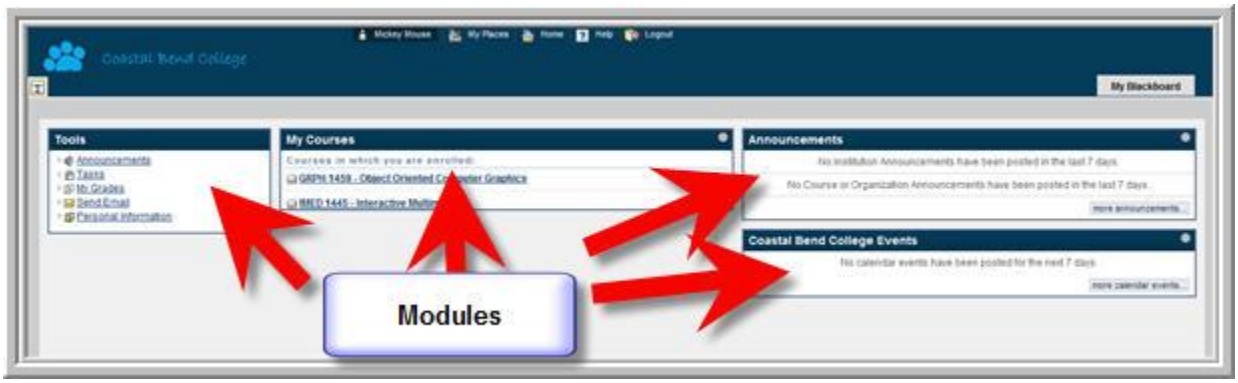
- ***Personal Information*** – allows you to edit your personal information, change your password, personalize ***My Places***, change personal settings, and set privacy options
    - ***To change your password click on Change Password and type your new password in the two boxes provided***
- ***Edit Notification Settings*** – allows you to control the notifications for the following:
    - ***Edit General Settings*** – defines the general notification settings such as email format, deletion schedule, and reminder schedule for courses and organizations.
    - ***Edit Individual Course Settings*** – displays the current notification settings for courses in which you are enrolled. Changes to the notification settings for a specific course can be made on this page.
    - ***Bulk Edit Notification Settings*** – allows you to select a set of courses or organizations to update and change the notification settings for them in one step.
    - ***Edit Individual Organization Settings*** – displays the current notification settings for organizations in which you are enrolled. Changes to the notification settings for a specific organization can be made on this page.

WARNING! If the Blackboard Administrator at your school has defined the notification settings, those settings will take precedence over your settings.

Now that we have explored the ***My Places*** link, let's move on.

- Clicking on the ***Home*** link will direct you to the Coastal Bend College website.
- Clicking the ***Help*** link will allow you to chat with a live person
- Clicking ***Logout*** will log you out of the course management system (CMS)

The ***My Blackboard*** screen contains modules that contain links that allow you to view information and navigate to your courses.



Let's explore these modules.

- ***Tools*** – this module is the area that contains tools to manage information and communicate with other users
    - ***Announcements*** – Use this tool to view important information, reminders, or updates posted by your instructor. For example, your instructor can use announcements to provide corrections and clarifications of materials, assignment due dates or exam schedules, or reminders or helpful tips.
    - ***Tasks*** – Add personal tasks using the ***Tasks*** tool. You can also use this tool to keep track of work that must be completed.
    - ***My Grades*** – shows the status of gradable items such as tests, assignments, journal, and blog entries, and Discussion Board posts.
    - ***Send Email*** – allows you to send email messages to other course member's external email addresses
    - ***Personal Information*** – Use this link to access and edit the same personal information found in the ***My Places*** link located in the header.
- ***My Courses*** – this module lists all the courses to which you have access. The list of courses should update based on the courses you are currently enrolled in. ***Simply click on the course title to gain access to your course.***
- ***Announcements*** – this module displays announcements from all courses in which you are enrolled, as well as school-wide announcements. It can also contain announcements from your school's administrator. Announcements communicate important, time-sensitive information. When you click an announcement link, you are taken to the main ***Announcements*** page.
- ***Coastal Bend College Events*** – this module displays calendar events and dates for courses in which you are enrolled in and any personal events you have added.

EXPLORING COURSE TOOLS

Now that we have covered the My Blackboard screen, let's explore the different tools that you might find within your course. ***NOTE: Instructors control which tools are available.***

The tools that you might find in your class include:

- **Announcements**
- **Blogs**
- **Calendar**
- **Collaboration**
- **Contacts**
- **Discussion Board**
- **Email**
- **Journals**
- **Messages**
- **My Grades**
- **Tasks**
- **Wikis**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements post timely information critical to course success. You can add, edit, and delete announcements from the Announcements page. This is an ideal place to post time-sensitive material including:

- When assignments are due
- Changes to the syllabus
- Corrections/clarifications of materials
- Exam schedules

When adding an announcement, you can also send the announcement as an email to students in the course. This ensures that students receive the announcement even if they do not log in to the course.

Announcements are accessed from the **Control Panel** under **Course Tools**.

How to Create Announcements

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the **Control Panel**, click **Announcements**.
2. From the Action Bar, click **Create Announcement**.
3. Provide a **Subject** and **Message**.

4. Set the **Duration**.

   Select **Not Date Restricted** to keep the announcement visible until it is manually removed.

   --OR--

   Select **Date Restricted** to limit the announcement's visibility by date and time.

5. If the announcement is **Date Restricted**, select the **Display After and/or Display Until** check boxes and type the dates and times. Alternatively, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times.

6. Select the **Override User Notification Settings** check box to send students an email containing the announcement. The email will be sent to all students, even those who choose not to receive announcement notifications through email. This can be useful for very important or urgent announcements.

7. Optionally, link to a course area, tool, or item using the **Browse** button.

8. Click **Submit**.

How to Reorder Announcements

1. Announcements appear below the movable bar in the order posted, with the most recent announcement appearing first.
2. However, it is possible to pin an announcement to the top of the list. To do this, drag it above the movable bar reading, "New announcements appear below this line". This will keep the announcement at the top of the list and prevent new announcements from superseding it.

How to Edit Announcements

1. Click **Edit** from the contextual menu of the announcement you want to edit. Make your changes and **Submit**.

How to Delete Announcements

1. To delete an announcement, click **Delete** from the contextual menu of the announcement. Confirm the deletion. This action is final and cannot be undone.

BLOGS

A blog—a shorthand term that means web log—is a personal online journal that is frequently updated and intended for general public access and use. Most blogs also have some kind of commenting system, so that people can respond to and interact with one another. Blogs encourage students to clearly express their ideas and addresses the need to expand various aspects of social learning. Moreover, they are an effective means of gaining insight into students' activities and provide a way to share the knowledge and materials collected.

In Blackboard Learn, blogs are created and managed by instructors, and only enrolled users can view and create entries and comments in them.

How to Use Blogs in Blackboard Learn

In Blackboard Learn, blogs consist of two elements:

- ***Blog entries***: Text, images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments added by course members open for comments.
- ***Comments***: Remarks or responses to blog entries made by other course members, including the instructor.

You can choose to allow students to participate in blogs in three ways:

- ***Course Blogs***: You can create a Course blog and determines the topic to be addressed. All course members can add blog entries and add comments to blog entries.
- ***Individual Blogs***: You can create a blog for individual course members to use. However, only you are able to add blog entries. All other course members can view and add comments.
- ***Group Blogs***: If you enable the blogs tool for a group of users:
  - Group members can add blog entries and make comments on blog entries, building upon one another.
  - All course members can view group blogs, but non-group members can only add comments.

A group blog is different from a threaded discussion in that each entry does not need to continue the discussion of the previous entry, but can be a complete thought on its own.

Note: As the course instructor, you have full control over all blogs in your course and can edit and delete entries in any of the blog types and can delete user comments.

How to create a Blog

- Access the course
- Ensure that **Edit Mode** is **On**
- In the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section
- Select **Blogs**
- On the **Blogs** listing page, click **Create Blog** on the **Action Bar**
- On the **Create Blog** page, type a **Name** for the blog
- Type optional **Instructions** for the blog. Format the text and add images, links, etc. using the *Text Editor*
- Under **Blog Availability**, select the **Yes** option to make it available to users
- Use the **Display After** and **Display Until** date and time fields to limit the availability of the blog. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections
- Under **Blog Participation**, select **Individual to All Students** or **Course**. Select **Allow Anonymous Comments** for individual blogs or **Allow Anonymous Entries and Comments** for course and group blogs, if needed
- Under **Blog Settings**, select **Monthly** or **Weekly Index Entries**
- Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries**
- Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users to Delete Comments**

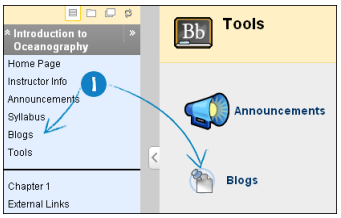
- Select **No Grading** or the **Grade** option and type the number of **Points Possible**. Points possible will apply to one or more entries made by the user to the blog topic. Once a blog is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the **Grade Center**. It is permanently gradable and cannot be set to **No Grading**
- Optionally, select the box and the number of entries required to show participants in **Needs Grading** status. Applying this setting will show the **Needs Grading** icon in the **Grade Center** and place the entries in the queue on the **Needs Grading** page after the specified number of entries have been made
- Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to **Add Rubric**,
- Click **Submit**

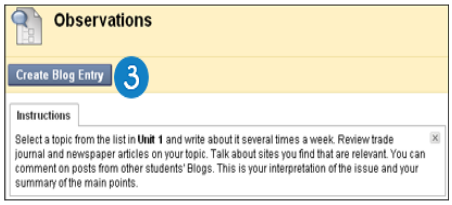
The blog topics appear in alphabetical order on the **Blogs** listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

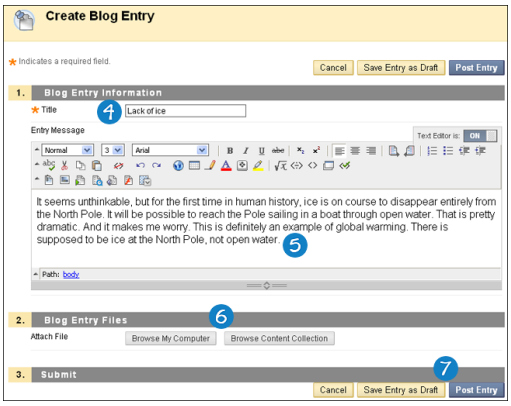
How to create a Blog Entry

- Only the instructor can create a blog, but once created, students can create entries. The blog topics appear in alphabetical order on the Blogs page. On the Blogs page, under each blog title, you can see if the blog belongs to a group, the course, or to individual students. Your instructor can use blog entries to provide structure for discussions on class topics and other issues. If allowed by your school, you can add an avatar which will appear with individual blogs.
  1. On the Course Menu, click ***Blogs***
     --OR—
     On the Course Menu, click ***Tools*** and then click ***Blogs***
  2. On the ***Blogs*** list page, click the name of the blog to open.
  3. On the ***Blog*** topic page, click ***Create Blog Entry***.
  4. On the ***Create Blog Entry*** page, type an ***Entry Title***.
  5. Type the text in the ***Entry Message*** text box.
  6. Alternatively, in the ***Attach File*** field, attach a file using one of the following options:
     a. To upload a file from *your computer*, click ***Browse My Computer***.
     b. To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
        i. If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.
           --OR—
           If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
           NOTE: Files added by students are private and stored in a secure location. These files are not accessible through the course.
  7. Click ***Post Entry***.
     --OR—
     Click **Save Entry as Draft** to save the entry for later posting.

The following images will illustrate the steps outlined above.







You can edit basic properties of a blog topic, including the name, instructions, availability, and other custom settings. Once a blog topic is designated for individuals or the course, it cannot be changed to the other.

You can edit any user's blog entries and can delete blog topics. You can also delete comments, but cannot edit them.

How to Edit a Blog

- Ensure **Edit Mode** is **On**
- On the **Blogs** listing page, click a blog's *Action Link* to access the contextual menu
- Select **Edit**
- On the **Edit Blog** page, make the desired changes to name, instructions, and so on
- When finished, click **Submit**

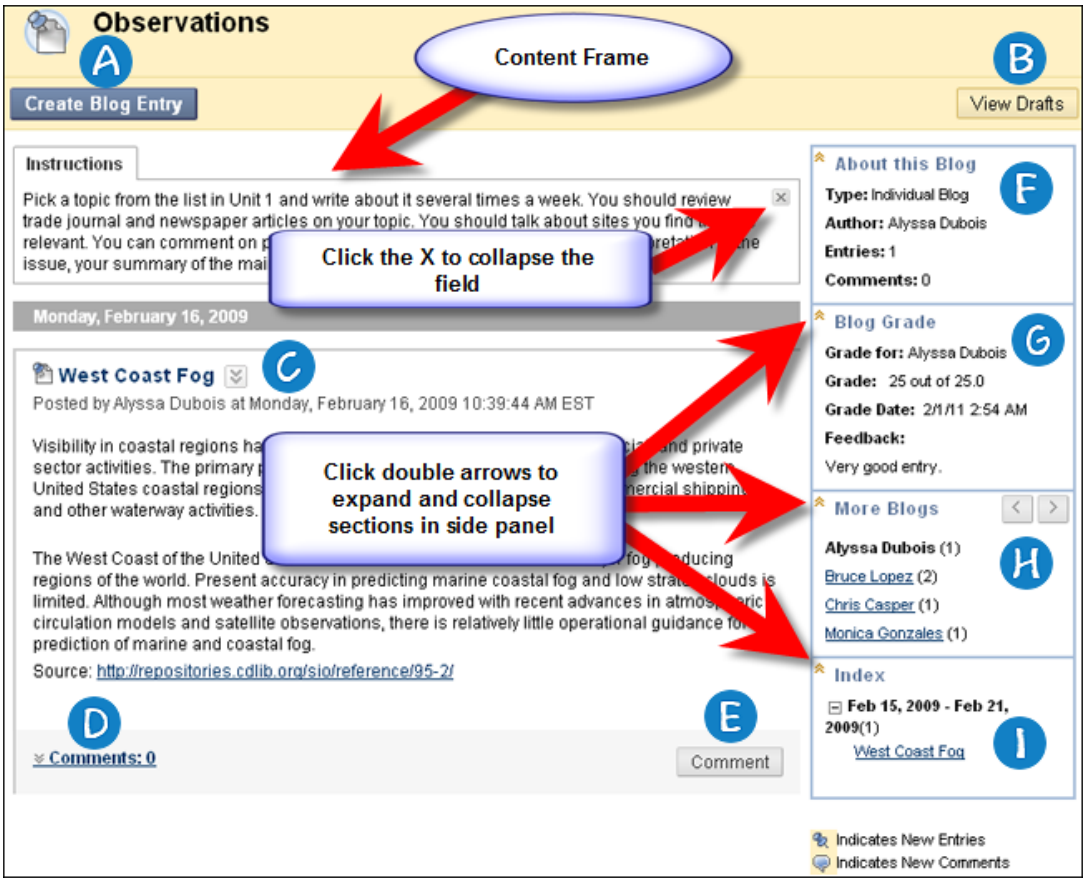
How to Delete a Blog

NOTE: Deleting a blog cannot be undone. Be certain this is what you want to do before confirming the deletion.

- Ensure **Edit Mode** is **On**
- On the **Blogs** listing page, click a blog's *Action Link* to access the contextual menu
- Select **Delete**
- Click **OK** in the confirmation window. All entries and comments are deleted

NOTE: When a graded blog is selected for deletion, a Delete Confirmation page appears. Select the appropriate check box or boxes to delete the blog or the blog and the Grade Center column.

The Blog topic page is divided into two main sections. You can view the Instructions in the content frame. Click the X to collapse the field. In the side panel, you can view information about the blog. You can expand and collapse sections in the side panel using the double arrows.



A. **Create Blog Entry –** Create a blog entry using the **Create Blog Entry** function. You can create another blog entry for a topic at any time. For example, instructors may add a comment requesting that you clarify what has been written before a grade is assigned for suggest a topic for another entry.
B. **View Drafts –** Access any entries saved as drafts. Click **View Drafts** on the Action Bar.
C. **Blog Entry –** Blog entries appear in the content frame following the instructions
D. **Comments –** After posting an entry, you can see if comments were made. Click the link to view comments.
E. **Comment –** Add comments by clicking **Comment**.
F. **About this Blog** – In the side panel, view the blog information in the **About this Blog** section.
G. **Blog Grade** – The **Blog Grade** section appears if a blog is set to be graded. You can see if your blog entries have been graded.
H. **More Blogs** – View other blog entries made by other course members in the **More Blogs** section.
I. **Index** – View the titles of your selected entries for either the week or the month in the **Index** section, determined by the settings your instructor makes during blog creation. The most recent entry title appears first.

CALENDAR

You can use the **Course Calendar** to provide students with dates for course related events. Course Calendar events appear to all members of the course. If students access the calendar while in your course, they will only see the entries you have added. If they access the calendar from the My Institution tab, it includes the following:

- Their personal entries
- Entries for all courses in which they are enrolled
- Entries for any organizations in which they are enrolled
- Institution-wide events

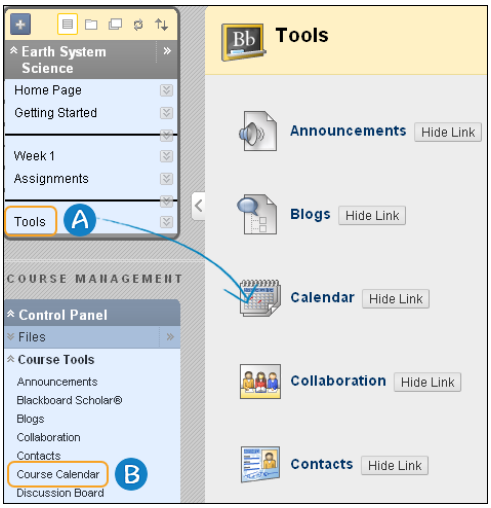
Common entries you may include in the **Course Calendar** are:

- Section meetings
- Assignment due dates
- Exams
- Guest speakers

Accessing the Course Calendar

You can access the **Course Calendar** from the **Tools** link on the **Course Menu** and from the **Control Panel**.

Two Default Options



A Access the Course Calendar using the default Tools link on the Course Menu. On the Tools page, select Calendar.

B Alternatively, in the <begin definition> Control Panel <end definition>., expand the Course Tools section and select Course Calendar.

How to Add a Course Event

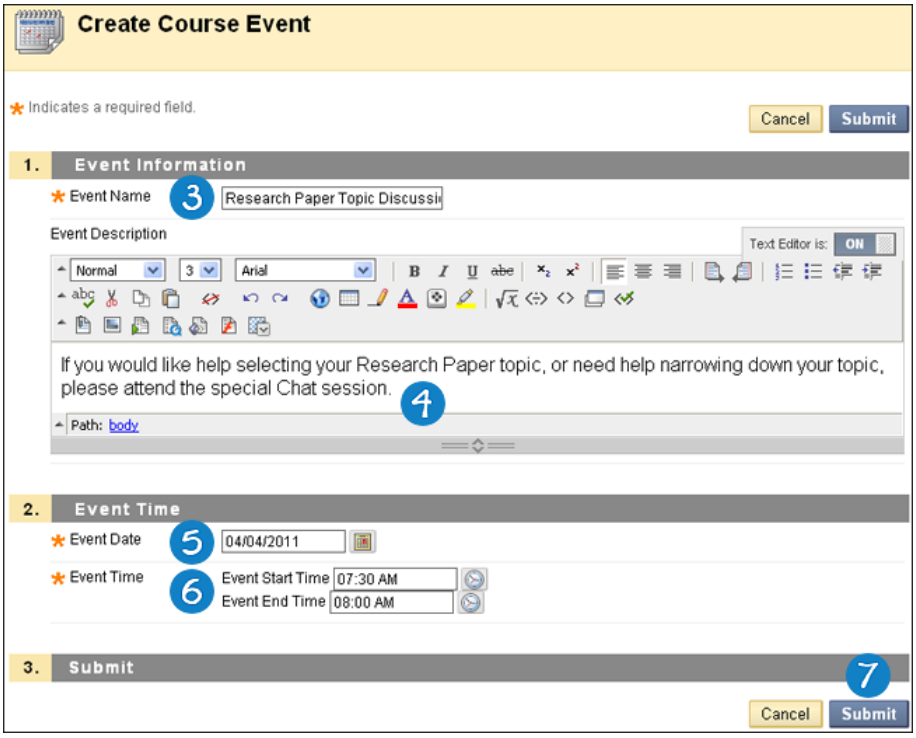
- On **Course Menu**, click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Calendar**.

  -OR-

- On the **Control Panel** expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Course Calendar**.
- On the **Course Calendar** page, click **Create Course Event** on the Action Bar.
- On the **Create Course Event** page, type the **Event Name**.
- Type the **Event Description**. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.

  Note: There is a 4,000 character limit for event descriptions.

- Type the **Event Date**. Optionally, use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** to select the date.
- Type the **Event Start Time** and **Event End Time**. Optionally, use the pop-up **Time Selection Menu** to select the times.
- Click **Submit**.



COLLABORATION

Collaboration tools allow users to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. Examples of these sessions include real-time, online classroom discussions, guest speaker led sessions, teaching assistant sessions, and live question-and-answer sessions. Recordings of sessions can be created and made available for review.

Installing the Required Java Plug-in

The Java 2 Run Time Environment is required to use the Blackboard Learn collaboration tools. The plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when a user joins a collaboration session, or may be found at http://java.sun.com/products/plugin/index.html.

Take care to uninstall any existing Java plug-ins before installing a new version.

How to Find the Collaboration Sessions Page

Follow the steps below to open the **Collaboration Sessions** page.

1. Click **Collaboration** on the **Course Menu** or from the **Control Panel**.

   The following table describes the available functions.

To…	Click…
filter the sessions listed on the page	the arrow next to the drop-down list and select the type of session to display. Click ***Filter***. The filters include: ***Show All*** – The default filter that displays all of the collaboration sessions. ***Available Sessions*** – Displays all of the sessions that are in use. ***Sessions with Recordings*** – Displays completed sessions that have an archive. ***Future Sessions*** – Displays sessions that are scheduled to take place in the future.
search for a session	the ***Session Name, Start Date***, or ***End Date*** option and then enter a value in the field. Click ***Search***.
enter a session	***Join*** from the session's contextual menu.
access the recording for a session	***Recording*** from the contextual menu.
add a new collaboration session	***Create Collaboration Session***

Assigning User Roles

There are two roles available for users in collaboration sessions, passive and active. The session administrator controls user access and functions during a collaboration session by assigning passive or active roles. For example, session administrators determine which users can chat, send private messages, or ask questions during a session by assigning specific access rights to the different roles. The student icon will appear in the **Role** column next to those students who are designated as active.

Student roles can change throughout the collaboration session. Those who are currently set to passive, but would like active rights can signal the session administrator by clicking the hand icon. The session administrator can then make that user active.

About Browser Pop-up Blockers

Be aware that for any browser supporting pop-up window blocking, it must be disabled or your institution's website made a trusted site for the collaboration tool to work properly.

About Collaboration Sessions

Collaboration sessions are real-time lessons and discussions. Two primary collaboration tools are available:

- ***Chat***: Chat is an exchange of text messages online.
- ***Virtual Classroom***: Virtual Classroom is a shared online environment where users can view links, share desktops, exchange files, and chat. Both types of collaboration can be recorded and saved for future review.

The **Collaboration Session** page is used to manage the collaboration tools available in Blackboard Learn. From this page, you can access all of the collaboration sessions for the course, including those that have already taken place and are recorded and those that are scheduled for the future. You can also schedule new collaboration sessions and make changes to those already scheduled from this page.

> ***Before You Begin:*** The Java 2 RunTime Environment is required to use the Collaboration tools. The plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when you join a Collaboration session. You must enable pop-ups to successfully run a Collaboration tool.
>
> For those users that want to use Safari, you must disable the Pop-Up Window Blocking.

Creating or Editing Collaboration Sessions

You can create new collaboration sessions selecting **Virtual Classroom** or **Chat** from the **Create Collaboration Session** page. You can schedule sessions for specific dates and times.

Both the **Create Collaboration Session** and **Edit Collaboration Session** pages function in a similar manner. The **Create Collaboration Session** page displays with empty fields while the **Edit Collaboration Session** page opens with the selected session's current information and details already populated.

Follow these steps to create or edit a collaboration session:

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the **Control Panel**, click **Collaboration**. The **Collaboration Sessions** page appears.

2. To create a new session, click **Create Collaboration Session**. Alternatively, to edit a collaboration, click the contextual menu for the session to be edited and select **Edit**.

3. Complete the fields as appropriate.

About Recording Sessions

Session Recordings allow users to review collaboration sessions and are archived by date. A given session will not appear in the list of saved recordings until the session administrator has stopped recording.

Note: If you do not stop the recording and exit the collaboration session, the recording will not end and no information will be recorded in the recording duration column. Only when the session administrator stops recording or ends the session will the recording actually stop and the duration display. This is why it is important to remember when recording sessions always to end the recording or the session, and not simply exit from it.

How to Find the Recording Sessions Page

Follow these steps to access the **Session Recordings** page.

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the **Control Panel**, click **Collaboration**.

2. Using the contextual menu, click **Recordings** for the session to be accessed.

   The table below describes the functions available on this page.

To…	**Click…**
search for a recording in the collaboration session	the **Recording Name** or creation date option in the **Search by** field. Type the name of the recording or the date it was created in the field and click **Search**.
open a recording	the recording name.
change the name or availability of a recording	**Edit** from the contextual menu. The **Recording Properties** page appears.
delete a recording	**Delete**. ***Note***: Exercise caution because deleting a recording session cannot be undone.

Record Menu

Virtual Classroom and **Chat** sessions are recorded and saved for future playback. You can start, stop, pause, and restart recordings during a session. A session can have more than one recording. If you select End to stop a session, then the recorder will automatically stop recording the session.

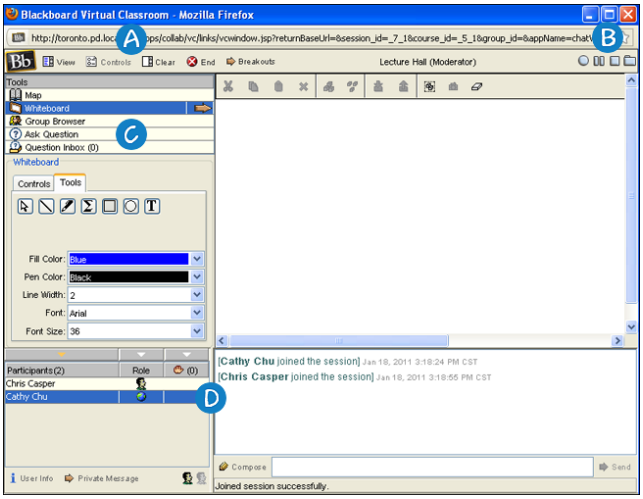
Note: It is important to remember to stop a session recording, or to allow the session to stop it automatically by ending the session. If you simply exit the session, the recording will not stop nor will it be archived.

How to Find the Recording Properties Page

Follow the steps below to open the Recording Properties page.

1. In the **Course Tools** area of the **Control Panel**, click **Collaboration**.
2. Click **Recordings** from the contextual menu of a session.
3. Click **Edit** from the contextual menu for a recording.
4. Complete the fields as appropriate.

Let's take a closer look at the ***Virtual Classroom***. When you launch the ***Virtual Classroom***, it appears in a new window.



A. ***Menu Bar*** – allows instructor to control the ***Virtual Classroom***. This includes managing participation, selecting user access rights, ending the sessions, and monitoring breakout sessions.
B. ***Recording Tool*** – allows you to record ***Virtual Classroom*** sessions.
C. ***Tools*** – includes all the tools used during the Virtual Classroom session. This includes accessing the Course Map, utilizing the Whiteboard, searching for websites, and asking and answering questions.
D. ***Chat*** – allows you to compose messages, raise hand to ask questions, and activate private messages.

Recording the Whiteboard

The **Snapshot** button (shaped like a camera) on the **Whiteboard** tool bar is used to capture the current state of the **Whiteboard** and save it with the recording.

Click the **Snapshot** button to capture an image of the **Whiteboard**. When replaying the session recording, the **Whiteboard** image shown will update according to the time when the snapshot was captured.

Note: The **Snapshot** button cannot be activated unless the session is being recorded.

CONTACTS

Contacts is a place where you can add profile information about yourself and other staff that is distributed to students. This is a good location to provide information about office hours, phone numbers, and other links to help students find the people who have important roles in the course.

Groups of selected contact information can be combined into folders. For example, you could create a folder named Teaching Assistants and assign all TA contacts to that folder.

How to Create or Edit a Contact

You can add or edit contacts through the **Create Contact** or **Edit Contact** page.

Both the **Create Contact** and **Edit Contact** pages function in a similar manner. The **Create Contact** page displays with empty fields while the **Edit Contact** page opens with the selected contact's current information and details already populated.

1. On the **Course Menu** click the **Tools** link. On the **Tools** page, select **Contacts**.

   -OR-

   On the **Control Panel** expand the **Course Tools** section, and select **Contacts**.

2. On the **Contacts** page, click **Create Contact**.

   -OR-

   To edit a profile, click **Edit** from the contextual menu.

3. On the **Create Contact** page, provide the necessary *Profile Information*. The following table describes the available fields.

Field	***Description***
Title	Type the person's title. This title will appear before the first name.
First Name	Type a first name.
Last Name	Type a last name.
Email	Type an e-mail address. This is a required field.
Work Phone	Type a work phone number.
Office Location	Type an office location (Limit is 255 characters)
Office Hours	Type office hours. (Limit is 255 characters)
Notes	Type any additional information about the person. (Limit is 255 characters)

4. Select **Yes** to **Make the Contact Available** to students. If you select **No**, none of the information provided on the page will appear to students.

5. Optionally, for **Attach Image**, click **Browse** to search for a image of your contact. This image will be included next to the profile on the **Contacts** page.

   Note: The image size should be 150 x 150 pixels.

6. Optionally, for the **Personal Link**, type the URL for the contact's home page. When adding a URL, include the full address and protocol. For example, *http://www.blackboard.com*. This link appears with the profile on the **Contacts** page.
7. Click **Submit.**

DISCUSSION BOARD

Building a sense of community among students is crucial for a successful online experience. The **Discussion Board** is an important tool for interpersonal interaction and can replicate the robust discussions that take place in the traditional classroom. Discussions can serve a range of purposes, such as:

- An online meeting place for social interaction among peers.
- An additional medium for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- A medium to pose questions about homework assignments, readings, and course content.
- A way to demonstrate the understanding or application of course material.
- A record of discussion which can be reviewed at a later point.
- A graded activity that demonstrates understanding or application of course material.

Once you have determined your precise needs, you can create forums and threads to organize discussions into units or topics relevant to your course.

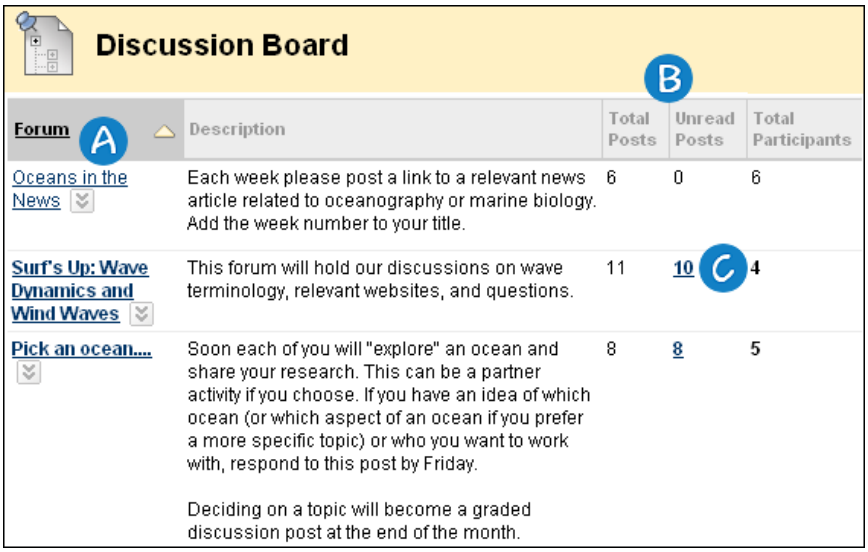
The **Discussion Board** tool allows for asynchronous interactions occurring over extended periods of time. This allows for more flexibility, as well as reflective communication.

Asynchronous communication offers convenience and flexibility to all participants. Some benefits include:

- Participants do not need to be in the same location or time zone.
- Participants can carefully consider and reflect on the initial message before responding and, hopefully, more thoughtful conversations can occur.
- Different learning styles are accommodated. For example, students who are shy about speaking in class may feel more comfortable responding to discussion threads.

The **Discussion Board** is also available as a group tool that is used by smaller groups within a course. **Group Discussion Boards** are available only to the members of a course group.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.



A. ***Forum Title –*** click the forum title to view the messages. Forums containing unread posts appear in bold.
B. ***Total Posts/Total Participants –*** view data on the number of posts and participants.
C. ***Unread Posts –*** provides a one-click access to the forum's unread messages.

Within each forum, users can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and any replies to it. When creating a forum, your instructor has the option of allowing or not allowing you to start threads. Generally, the purpose of the forum will dictate whether or not you can start threads. A moderated, grades forum used to evaluate student performance will be tightly controlled, and you cannot create threads. Other forums are designed for users to share opinions and thoughts on tangential or unrelated topics.

Course groups can have their own ***Discussion Boards*** that can be created using the ***Groups*** tool. *Group Discussion Boards* are available only to users who are members of the group. If a group ***Discussion Board*** is available, access it from the ***Groups*** link in the course menu or in the ***My Groups*** area.

The following steps will guide you in using the ***Discussion Board***.

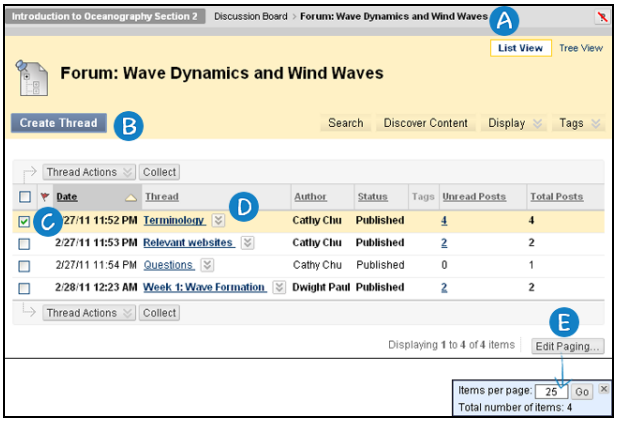
How to Access the Discussion Board

- On the Course Menu, click ***Discussions***
  --OR—
- On the Course Menu, click ***Tools*** and then click ***Discussion Board***

Viewing a Discussion Forum

- When you access a forum in the ***Discussion Board,*** a list of threads appears with the following information:
  - *Date* – Displays the date that the thread was created
  - *Thread* – Displays the name of the thread
  - *Author* – Displays the name of user who created the thread
  - *Status* – Indicates whether the thread is published, locked, hidden, or a draft
  - *Unread Posts* – Displays the number of posts not yet accessed
  - *Total Posts* – Includes both read and unread posts

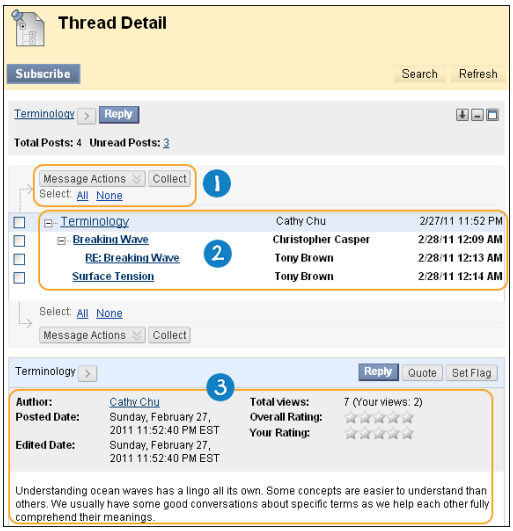
The following image outlines the forum features.



A. Use the ***breadcrumbs*** to navigate to a previous page. Do not use the browser navigation controls; page load errors may occur.
B. Use the Action Bar functions to perform various actions, including:
   - Create Thread – Add a new thread to a forum
   - Search – Search for ***Discussion Board*** content. The search field is collapsed by default to save screen space.
   - Thread Actions – Make a selection from the drop-down list. Edit the status of the selected threads and perform other actions, such as marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.
   - Collect – Gather selected threads onto one page where posts can be sorted, filtered, or printed.
C. Select one or more threads or select the check box in the header row to select all threads for an action, such as collecting.
D. Click a thread title to read the posts. Forum titles containing unread posts appear in bold type.
E. Click ***Edit Paging*** to determine the number of items to view per page. Type a number in the box and click **Go.** Click the **X** to close the pop-up box.

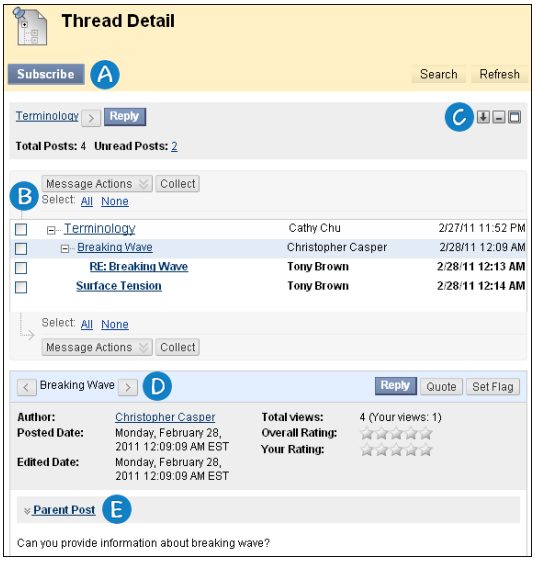
Viewing a Discussion Thread

- When you click a thread, the Thread Detail page appears. The page is divided into three sections:
  - Section 1:
    - The Action Bar contains functions that allow you to select, flag, mark read/unread, and collect posts.
  - Section 2:
    - The Message List contains a list of all the posts in a thread, beginning with the initial post. The selected post is highlighted. Use the plus and minus icons to expand and collapse the posts.
  - Section 3:
    - The Current Post contains the text of the selected post and information about the post.



About the Thread Detail Page

- On the Thread Detail page, you can navigate from post to post, adjust your view of the page, view information about the selected post, and reply to others. The following image is outlined in more detail.



A. On the ***Action Bar***, you can access functions such as *Subscribe*, *Unsubscribe*, or *Search*. When subscribed to a thread, you receive an email alert when a post is updated or a reply is posted. Your instructor must enable this function when creating a forum. The search field is hidden by default to save screen space.
B. Select one or more threads and make a selection in the Message Actions drop-down list. Actions include marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention. You can also use the functions for collecting posts and selecting all posts.
C. Arrange your view using the icons on the ***Action Bar***.
    a. *Swap Up or Down*: Switches the message tree section and the reply section of the screen.
    b. *Hide or Restore to Minimum*: Collapses or displays the message tree section of the screen.

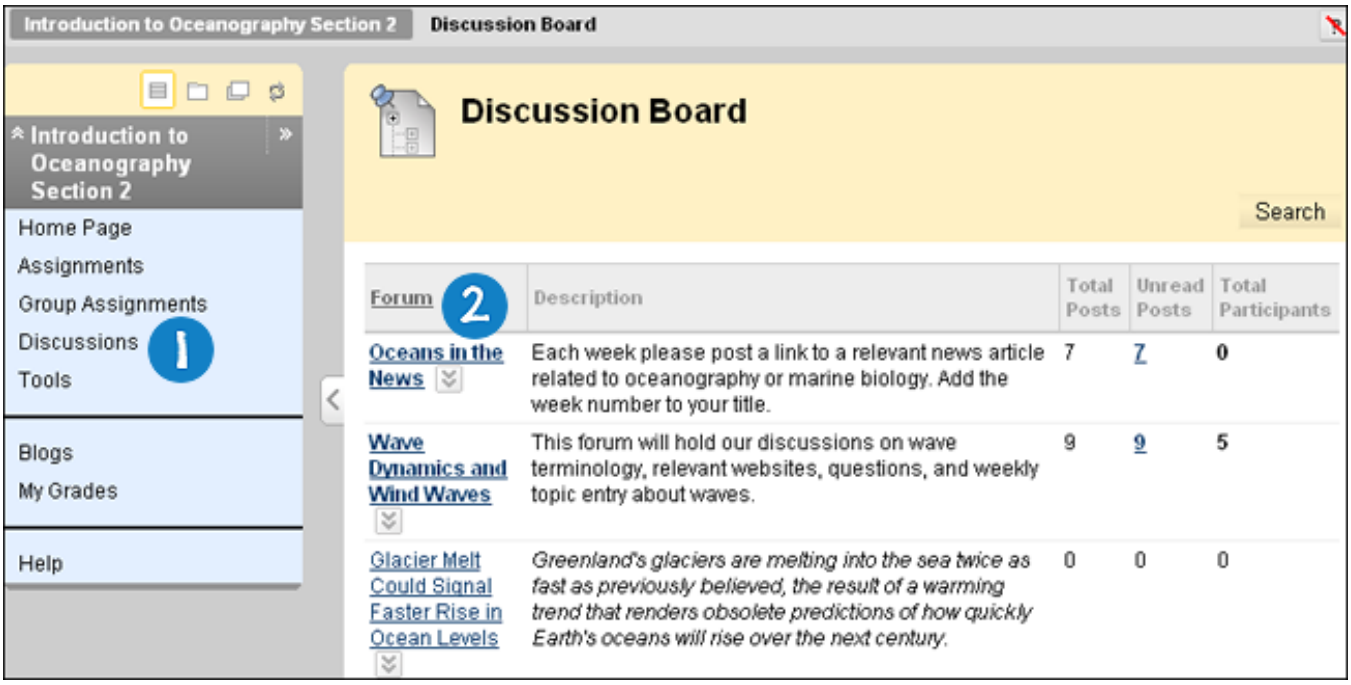
c. *Maximize or Minimize*: Displays the message tree fully or just a portion of the message tree.

D. Use the Move to previous message or Move to next message arrows for navigating between messages in the thread.

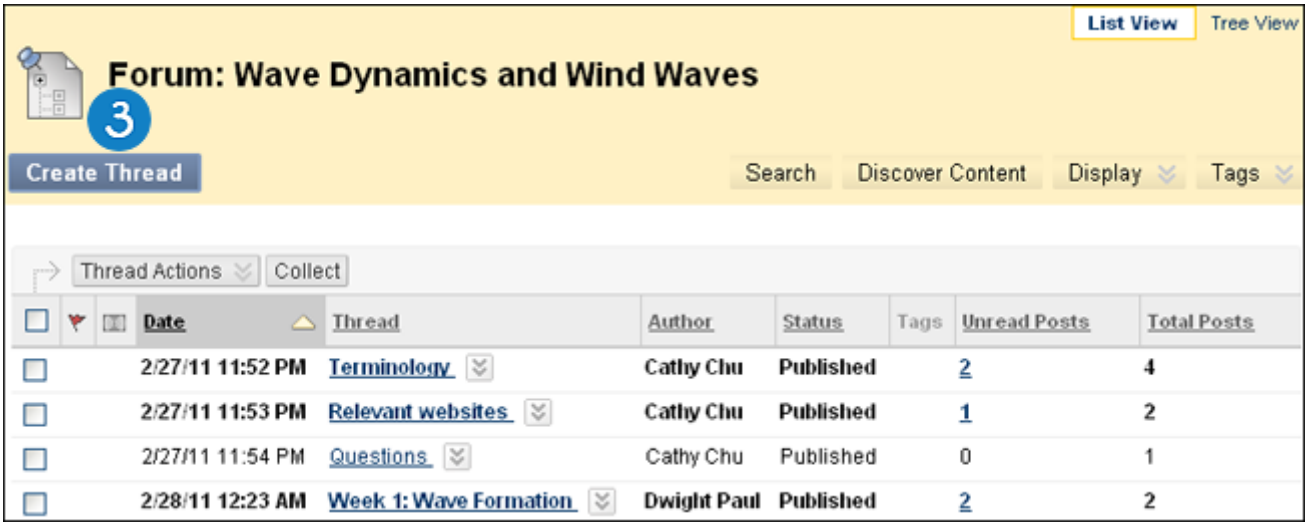
E. Click *Parent Post* to display or hide the parent message in the thread.

Creating Threads in a Discussion Forum

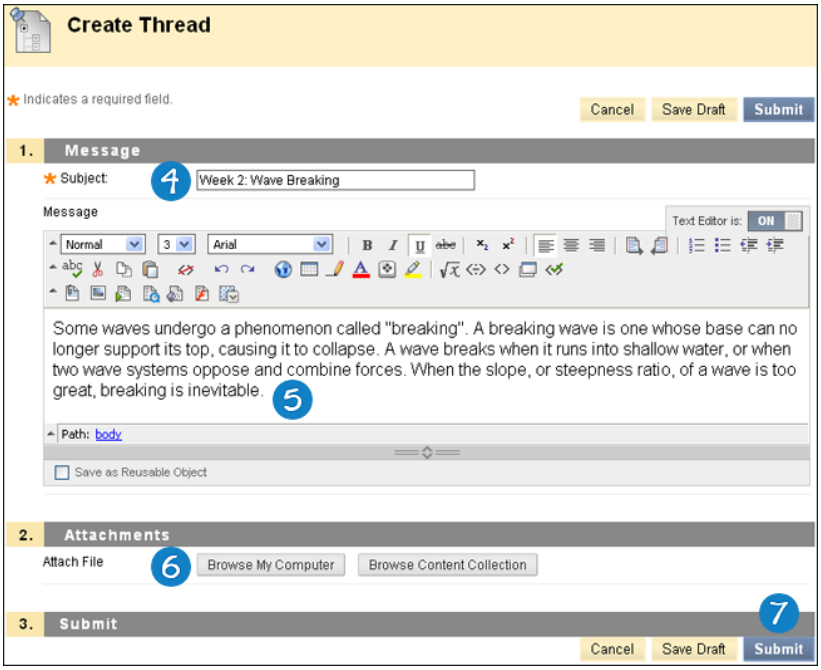
- Forums have many settings that control who can post, and what other types of actions you can take, such as editing your own threads, posting anonymously, or rating posts. Depending on which forum settings your instructor has selected, you may be allowed to create a new thread.
  - On the Course Menu, click ***Discussions***
  - On the ***Discussion Board*** page, click the name of the forum



  - On the **Forum** page, click **Create Thread**



- On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**
- In the **Message** text box, type your reply. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, web links, and multimedia.
- Alternatively, under ***Attachments***, attach a file using one of the following options:
  - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**
  - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**
- Click **Submit** to create the thread



EMAIL

The ***Email*** tool allows you to send email to other people in your course from within Blackboard Learn without launching an external email client, such as Gmail or Yahoo. Emails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users. A copy of this email is sent to the sender by default.

> ***IMPORTANT!*** Blackboard Learn keeps no record of sent or received emails. When you receive or send an email, the email will appear in the Inbox of your external email client. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date.

You can send email to the following people in a course:

- **All Users**: Sends email to all users in the course.
- **All Groups**: Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course.
- **All Teaching Assistant Users**: Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.
- **All Student Users**: Sends an email to all students in the course.
- **All Instructor Users**: Sends email to all of the instructors for a specified course.
- **Select Users**: Sends email to select users.
- **Select Groups**: Sends email to select groups.

Note: Recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

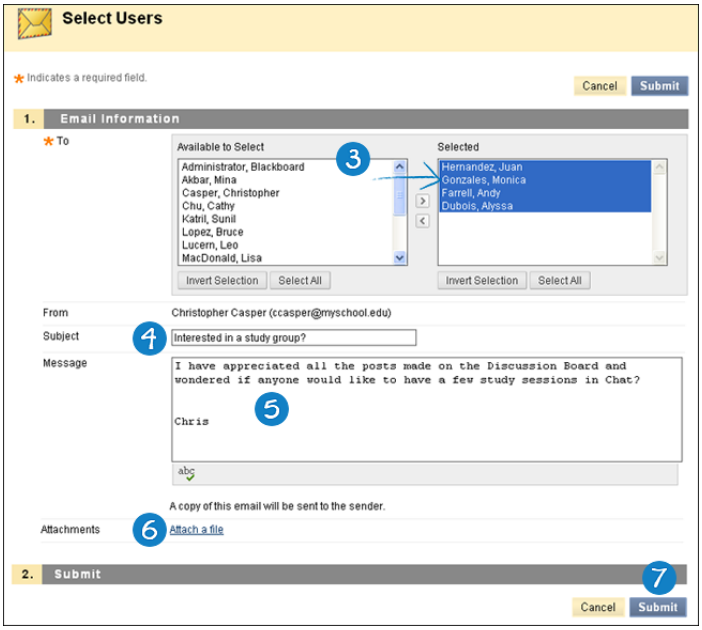
> ***Before You Begin!*** Blackboard Learn will NOT recognize files or email addresses with spaces or special characters, such as #, &, %, and $. In general, use only alphanumeric file names and addresses in Blackboard Learn. Do not send email through Blackboard Learn without content in the subject line. Leaving the subject line blank can prevent the message from being delivered.

How to Send Email

- On the Course Menu, Click ***Tools***
- On the Tools page, click ***Send Email***
- From the **Select Users** or **Select Groups** page, select the recipients in the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the **Selected** box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the recipient list. Click **Invert Selection** and the selected users are no longer highlighted and those users that were not selected will be highlighted.

  Tip: For Windows, to select multiple users in a list, press the **SHIFT** key and click the first and last users. To select users out of sequence, press the **CTRL** key and click each user needed. For Macs, use the **COMMAND** key instead of the **CTRL** key. You can also use the **Select All** function to send an email to all users.

- Type your ***Subject***
- Type your ***Message***. A copy of the message is sent to the sender. A receipt page appears after the message is sent listing all recipients. The receipt page does not confirm that users received the message. It only confirms that the message was sent.
- Click ***Attach a File*** to browse for files from your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.
- Click ***Submit***



JOURNALS

The **Journals** tool offers students the opportunity to reflect on course content and communicate privately with you.

You can use the tool to gauge understanding and guide students in their knowledge acquisition. Your journal comments can help students refine their writing and ideas.

You create the journal topics for individual students to use. Then students submit journal entries in response to the topic and you can comment on the individual entries. As the journal topic is created, you determine if the journal entries will be graded. Students are allowed to create multiple entries for an individual journal topic, whether it is graded or not.

You can choose to make journal entries public, allowing all course members to view all entries. For example, you may choose to make a journal public when asking for opinions on how to improve the evaluation process. Students can read what other students wrote and build upon those ideas. Students cannot comment on other students' entries; only the instructor can add comments.

The **Group Journal** tool functions differently, as it allows all members of a group to view all group journal entries. A group journal has no journal topics, but is instead created by the journal entries submitted by group members. A group journal can be edited to add instructions for the members. Both you and group members can add comments.

How to Create a Journal

1. Access the course.
2. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
3. In the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section.
4. Select **Journals**.
5. On the **Journals** listing page, click **Create Journal** on the *Action Bar*.
6. On the **Create Journal** page, type a **Name** for the journal.
7. Type optional **Instructions** for the journal. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the *Text Editor*, if needed. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.

8. Under **Journal Availability**, select the **Yes** option to make it available to users.

9. Use the **Display After and Display Until** date and time fields to limit the availability of the journal. Select the **Display After and Display Until** check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.

10. Under **Journal Settings**, select *Monthly* or *Weekly Index Entries*.

11. Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users to Edit** and **Delete Entries**.

12. Optionally, select the check box to **Allow Users** to **Delete Comments**.

13. Optionally, select the check box to **Permit Course Users to View Journal**. If selected, the journal becomes public. All users can view all journal entries made to the journal topic.

14. Select **No grading** or the **Grade option** and type the number of **Points possible**. Points possible will apply to one or more entries made by the user to the journal topic. Once a journal is set to be graded, a column is created for it in the **Grade Center**. It is permanently gradable and cannot be set to No grading.

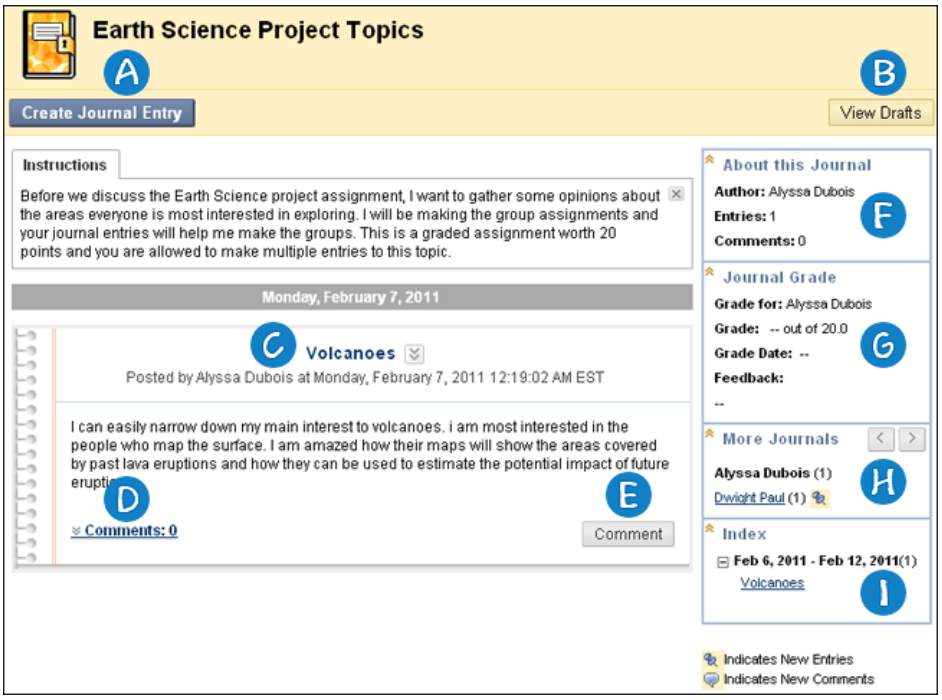
15. Optionally, select the box and the number of entries required to show participants in **Needs Grading** status. Applying this setting will show the **Needs Grading** icon ( ) in the **Grade Center** and place the entries in the queue on the **Needs Grading** page after the specified number of entries have been made.

16. Optionally, associate a rubric by pointing to **Add Rubric**.

17. Click **Submit**.

The journal topics appear in alphabetical order on the **Journals** listing page. Columns can be sorted by clicking the column title or caret.

You can also provide links to journals in course areas such as *Content Area*, *Learning Modules*, *Lesson Plans*, and *folders*.



A. ***Create Journal Entry*** – Create a journal entry using the ***Create Journal Entry*** function. You can make another journal entry for a topic at any time. For example, your instructor may add a comment requesting that you clarify what has been written before a grade is assigned or suggest a topic for another entry.
B. ***View Drafts*** -- Access any entries saved as drafts. Click ***View Drafts*** on the Action Bar.
C. ***Journal Entry*** – Your journal entries appear in the content frame following the ***Instructions***
D. ***Comments*** – Following an entry, you can see if comments were made. Click the link to view comments.
E. ***Comment*** – You can add comments by clicking ***Comment.***
F. ***About this Journal*** – In the side panel, view the journal information in the ***About this Journal*** section.
G. ***Journal Grade*** – The ***Journal Grade*** section appears if a journal is set to be graded. You can see if your journal entries have been graded.
H. ***More Journals*** – View other journal entries made by other course members in the ***More Journals*** section.
I. ***Index*** – View the titles of your selected entries for either the week or the month in the ***Index*** section, determined by the settings your instructor selects during journal creation. The most recent entry title appears first.

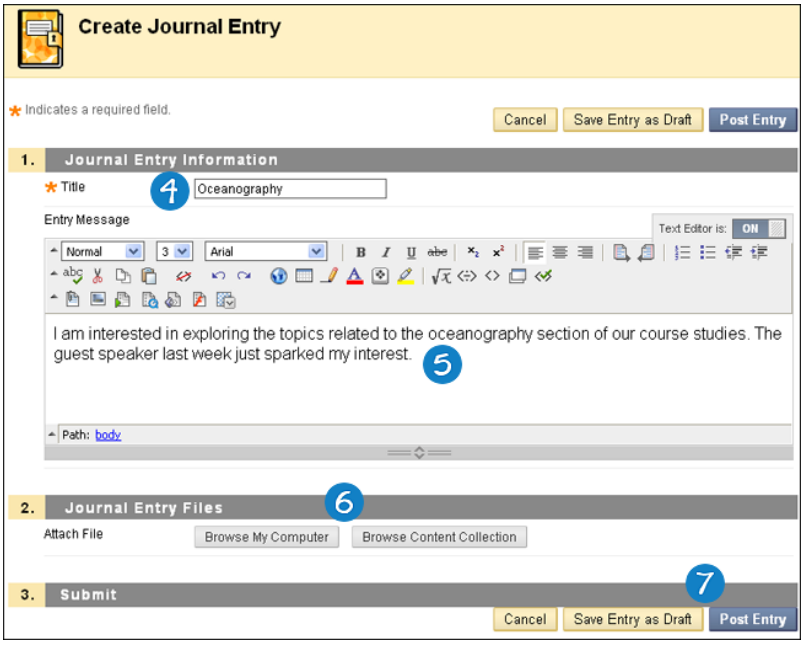
How to Create a Journal Entry

- On the ***Course Menu***, click ***Journals***
  --OR—
- On the ***Course Menu***, click ***Tools*** and then click ***Journals***
- On the ***Journals*** listing page, select a journal to open
- On the ***Journal*** topic page, click ***Create Journal Entry***
- On the ***Create Journal Entry*** page, type an ***Entry Title***
- Type the text in the ***Entry Message*** text box
- Alternatively, in the ***Attach File*** field, attach a file using one of the following options:
  - To upload a file from your computer, click ***Browse My Computer***

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

    NOTE: Files added by students are private and stored in a secure location. These files are not accessible through the course.

  - Click ***Post Entry***
    --OR—
    Click ***Save Entry as Draft*** to save the entry for later posting

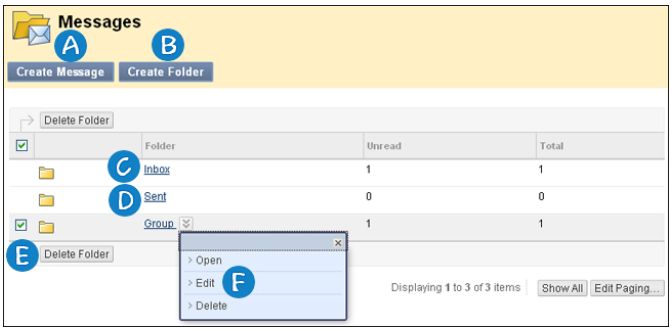


MESSAGES

The Blackboard Learn ***Messages*** tool provides you with a familiar, email-like environment that you can use for course communication. Accounts are automatically created for each member of the course, and messages are sent and received using that account. This provides additional privacy because external email addresses are not used, so external factors will not affect course communication.

You cannot receive messages outside your course and you are not notified if you receive a new message, so make routine checks for new messages.

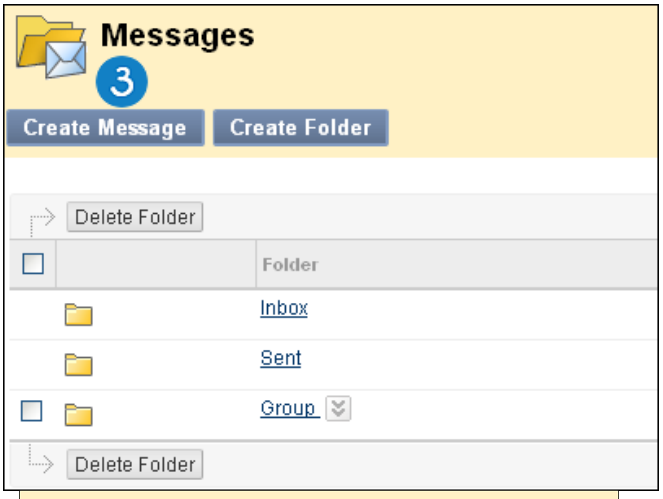
Messages are usually accessed through the tools area of a course. However, your instructor can restrict access or create a link on the ***Course Menu*** so that messages are directly accessible.

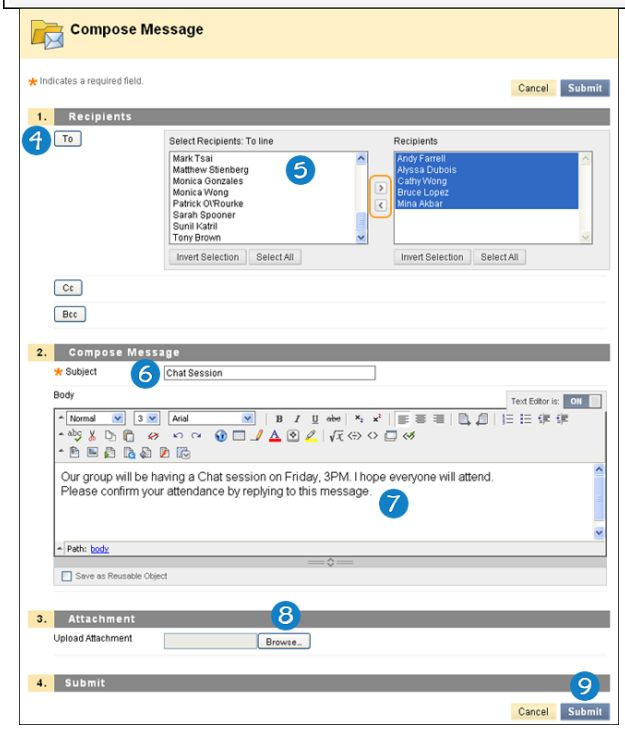


A. ***Create Message --*** Use the ***Create Message*** function to create new messages.
B. ***Create Folder --*** Use the ***Create Folder*** function to add a new folder. You can use folders to organize messages.
C. ***Inbox*** – The ***Inbox*** folder opens with a list of messages received.
D. ***Sent –*** The ***Sent*** folder opens with a list of messages that you sent.
E. ***Delete Folder/Delete –*** The ***Delete Folder*** or ***Delete*** function in the folder contextual menu removes the folder. To delete personal folders, select the check box next to each folder to delete. Then, click ***Delete Folder*** on the Action Bar. The folders, and any messages in the folders, are deleted.
F. ***Edit –*** The ***Edit*** function changes the name of a personal folder. It is not possible to modify the name of the ***Inbox*** folder or ***Sent*** folder.

How to Create a Message

- On the **Course Menu**, click **Tools**
- On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**
- On the **Messages** page, click **Create Message**
- On the **Compose Message** page, click **To**, and a list of course members appears.
- In the **Select Recipients: To** line box, select the recipients and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the Recipients box. You can use the **Cc**, and **Bcc** functions to send the message to those users that may be interested in the message, but are not the primary recipients. When using **Bcc**, other recipients do not know that the users listed in the **Bcc** field are receiving the message.
- Type a **Subject**
- Type a message. Optionally, you can use the *Text Editor* to format the *Body* text.
- Click **Browse** to select a file to attach to the message. If the message is a reply or a forward, you have the option of including the original attachment.
- Click **Submit**





MY GRADES

The ***My Grades*** page shows the status of gradable items, such as tests, assignments, journal and blog entries, and discussion posts.

The ***My Grades*** page may include item names, details, due dates, student and instructor dates of activity, posted grades, points possible, links to rubrics used for grading, and your instructor's comments about the items.

How to Access My Grades

- On the Course Menu, click Tools
- On the Tools page, click My Grades

How to View Grade Details

- If your assignment has not been grades, the ***Grade*** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your assignment has been submitted and grades, the grade appears in the ***Grade*** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's ***Review Submission History*** page. This page includes:
  - ***Instructor Feedback*** – this section lists your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor
  - ***Attached Files*** – this section provides links to open or download any files attached by you or your instructor. For example, your instructor might provide comments in a file that you submitted with your assignment.

Note: If you see feedback for an item but do not see a grade, contact your instructor.

The following table describes the symbols appearing on the ***My Grades*** page.

Symbol	Description
-	Item has not been completed. No information is available.
✓	Item is completed, but will not have a grade (for items such as surveys)
!	Item has been submitted. This item is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor. --OR— Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review this item but may not be provided a grade (for items such as surveys)
Grade	Item has been graded. Click the grade to view detailed feedback.
	Attempt is in progress. This item has not been submitted.
	Grade is exempted for this user. If you do not complete this assignment, it will not affect your grade.
!	Error has occurred. Contact your instructor.

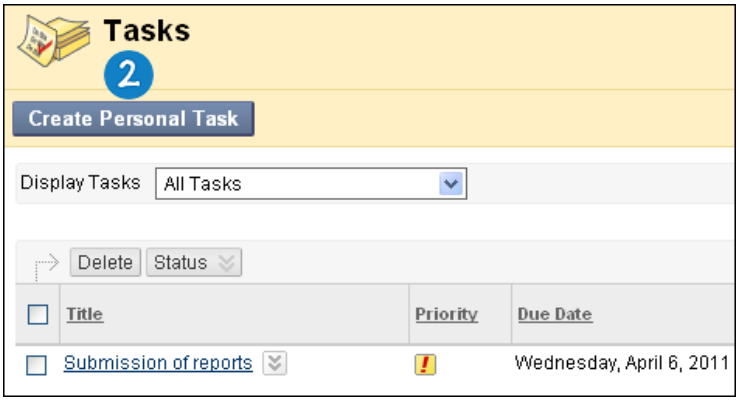
TASKS

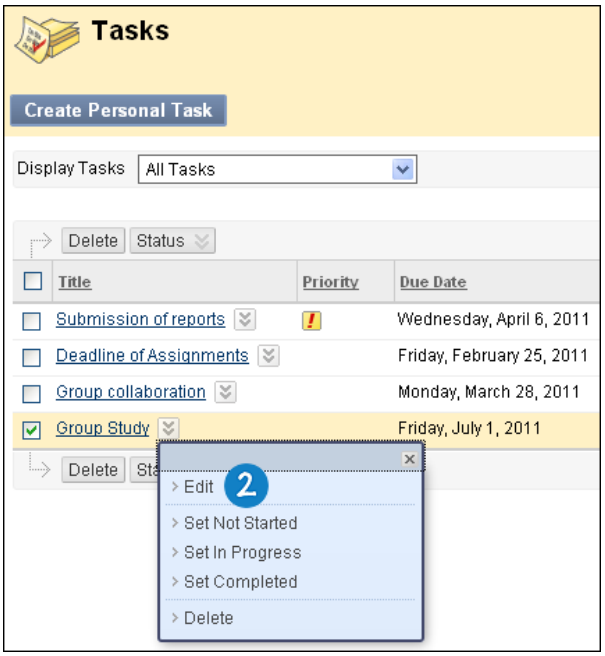
The ***Tasks*** page organizes projects (referred to as tasks), defines task priority, and tracks task status. Your instructor can assign tasks to users participating in their course. Tasks can also be assigned to all members of a course group.

From the ***Tools*** panel you can view all of your tasks, including those from the courses you are participating in, tasks posted by the Blackboard administrator at your school, and your personal tasks. You can create your own tasks and post them to the ***Tasks*** page. When you access tasks through the course, you view tasks for that specific course.

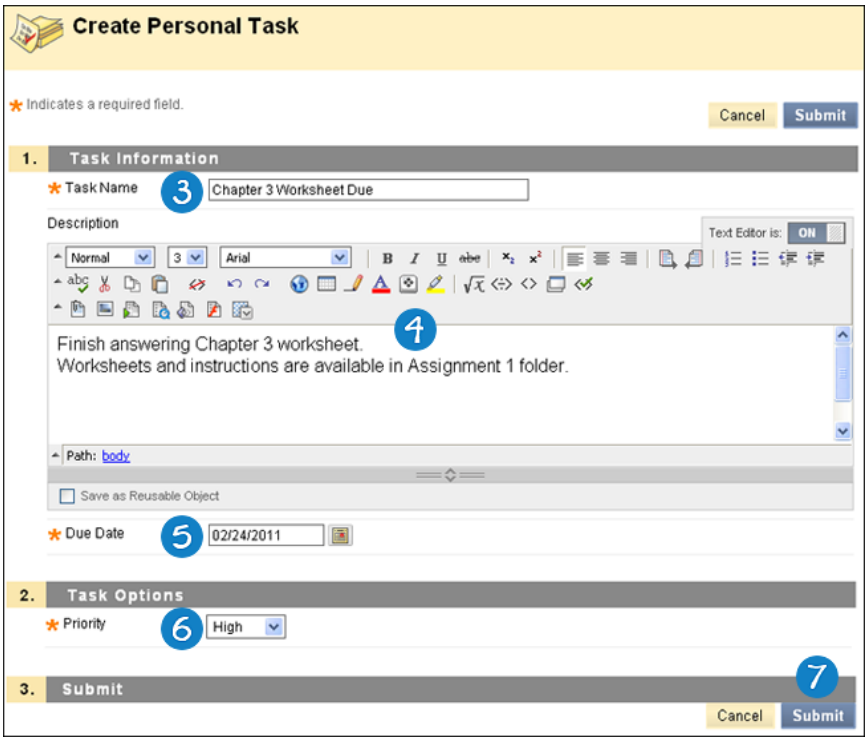
How to Create or Edit a Personal Task

- On the ***Course Menu***, click ***Tools***
- On the ***Tools*** page, click ***Tasks***
  --OR—
  On the ***Tools*** panel, click ***Tasks***
- To create a task, on the Tasks page, click Create Personal Task
  --OR—
  To edit an existing task, click Edit from the contextual menu for a particular task





- On ***Create Personal Task*** page, type your ***Task Name***
- Type a ***Description***
- Type a ***Due Date*** or use the ***Date Selection Calendar*** to set the due date
- Select the level of priority for your task from the ***Priority*** drop-down list
- Click ***Submit***

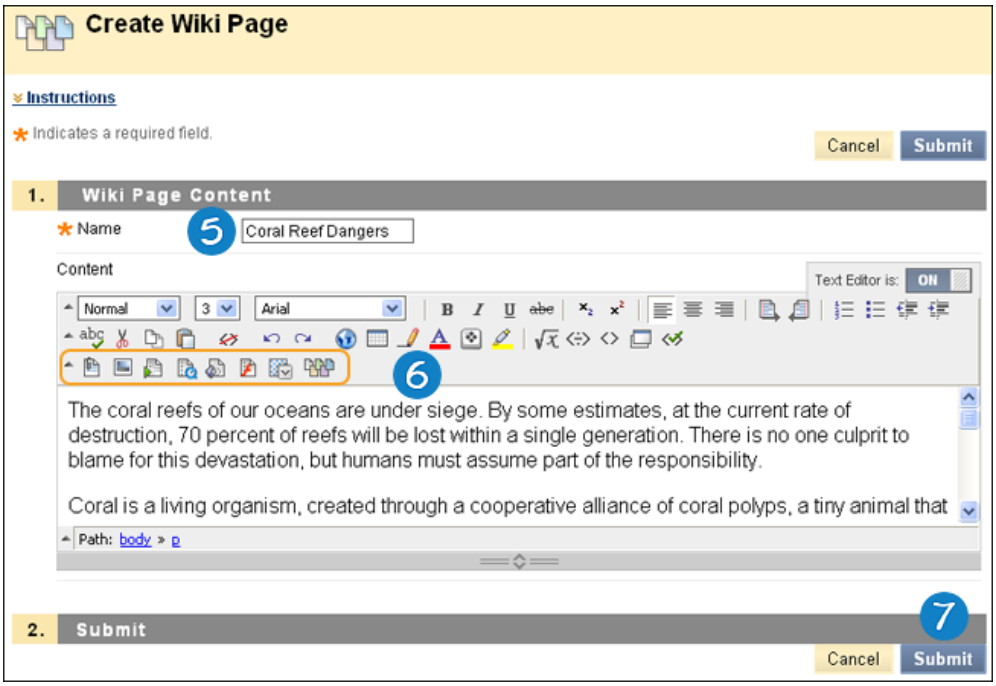


WIKIS

A wiki is a collaborative tool that allows you to contribute and modify one or more pages of course related materials. The wiki page is an area where users can collaborate on content. Users within a course can create and edit wiki pages in the course or within a course group. Instructors and students can offer comments and your instructor can grade individual work.

How to Create a Wiki Page

- On the ***Course Menu***, click ***Tools***
- On the ***Tools*** page, click ***Wikis***
- On the ***Wikis*** listing page, select a wiki title
- On the ***Wiki*** topic page, click ***Create Wiki Page***
- On the ***Create Wiki Page***, type a ***Name*** for the wiki page
- Type text in the ***Content*** text box. You can use the *Text Editor* functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, and multimedia.
- Click ***Submit***.

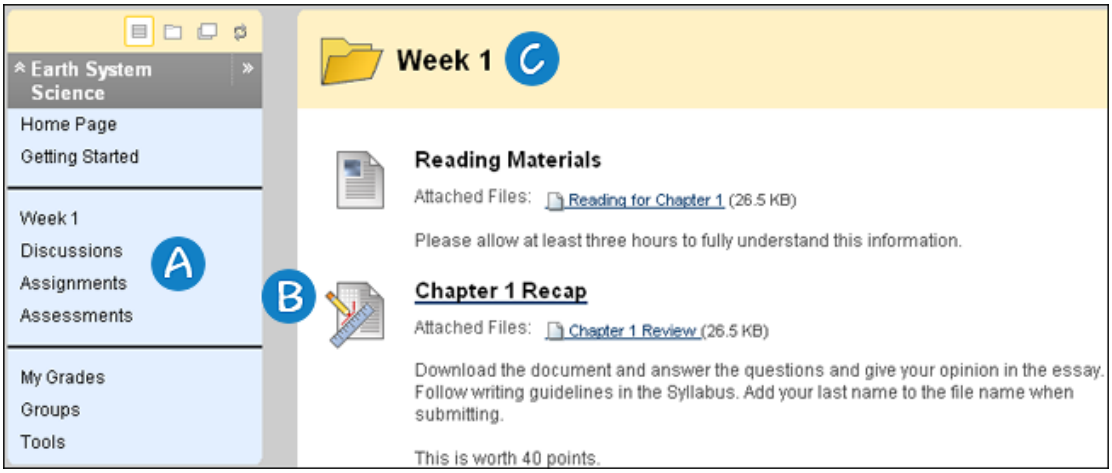

Create Wiki Page
Instructions
Indicates a required field.
Cancel
Submit
1.
Wiki Page Content
Name
5
Coral Reef Dangers
Content
Text Editor is:
ON
Normal
3
Arial
6
The coral reefs of our oceans are under siege. By some estimates, at the current rate of destruction, 70 percent of reefs will be lost within a single generation. There is no one culprit to blame for this devastation, but humans must assume part of the responsibility.
Coral is a living organism, created through a cooperative alliance of coral polyps, a tiny animal that
Path: body » p
2.
Submit
7
Cancel
Submit

COURSES AND CONTENT

About Courses

Courses contain content and tools for your learning experience. Your instructor manages the course through the ***Course Menu*** and ***Control Panel***. While your instructor has control over the course, the Blackboard administrator at your school can set defaults that can restrict or require specific features and tools.

A course consists of the ***Course Menu*** and a content frame. The ***Course Menu*** links to content and tools and the content frame will display the feature you select.



A. ***Course Menu*** – The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course and contains links to materials and tools within the course.
B. ***Content Frame*** – The content frame occupies most of the screen to display the current view. You will interact with content from this screen.
C. ***Content Area*** – Content Areas are top-level containers that organize and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. The content appears in the content frame.

About Course Content

A ***Content Item*** is any type of file, text, image, or link that appears to users in a *Content Area*, *Learning Module*, *Lesson Plan*, or *folder*. Your instructors can add a number of different types of content to these course areas.

You can view different types of content in a ***Content Area***. All content shares a few similarities. Each piece of content has a name and description. Many types of content allow your instructor to set options, such as availability and date restrictions.

Icon	Content Type	Description
	Item	A general piece of content, such as a file, image, text, or link. A description and other items may be attached.
	File	An HTML file to be used in the course. These files can be viewed as a page within the course or as a separate piece of content in a separate browser window.
	Audio	Audio file that can be played in a page. If **Autostart** and **Loop** are both set to **Yes**, the audio file plays when you open the page and continues to play until you stop it or navigate away from the page.
	Image	Image file that can be shown on the page.
	Video	Video file that you can view. The video player appears directly on the page.
	URL	Link to a website or resource to provide a quick access point to relevant materials.
	Learning Module	A set of content that focuses on a specific subject that you can navigate at your own pace. Instructors can set the path so students must view content in a specific order, or permit users to view the content in any order. All types of content, including items, assignments, and tests can be viewed in a Learning Module.
	Lesson Plan	A Lesson Plan is a special type of content that combines information about the lesson itself with the curriculum resources used to teach it.
	Syllabus	An outline of a course of study. It can contain course information, objectives, instructor contact information, assignments, class meeting dates, and textbook information.
	Course Link	A shortcut to an item, tool, or area in a course. A Course Link provides a quick access point to relevant materials and tools.
	Content Folder	A Content Folder is a way of organizing content items. Content folders and subfolders set up a hierarchy to group related material together. Content folders can be used to group material based on a theme, such as media clips. Content folders can also be used to group material based on a schedule, for example, placing all items for "week 1" together. Using folders to organize content items can make materials easier to find and reduce the length of a Content Area page.
	Blank Page	A Blank Page can be added and customized based on the needs of the course..
	Module Page	Module Pages are specialized content pages that present content in a module box. The modules that appear on this page can be arranged in any order. Module Pages can be personalized by students if the instructor permits it.
	Tool	A shortcut to a specific tool in the course, such as the Discussion Board or Blogs. The link brings students to that tool and away from the content they are viewing. Instructors can also link to the Tools page, which provides links to all available tools.
	Flickr® Photo	A link to a site for viewing and sharing photos and images.
	SlideShare Presentation	A link to a site for viewing and sharing Microsoft® PowerPoint®, Microsoft® OpenOffice, or Adobe® PDF presentations.
	YouTube™ Video	A link to a site for viewing and sharing online videos.

Your instructors can limit the availability of content items based on date, time, individual users, course groups, and performance on graded items. This means that the content displayed in the ***Course Menu*** or ***Content Areas*** can change over time. For example, your instructor restricts access to a piece content until you complete a unit test. The content appears after you complete the test. There are further settings that can be added such as only making the item appear after you complete the test and score at least a 70 percent. If you have questions about content that your instructor mentions should be available, make sure to ask them if it has been made available to everyone or based on specific criteria.

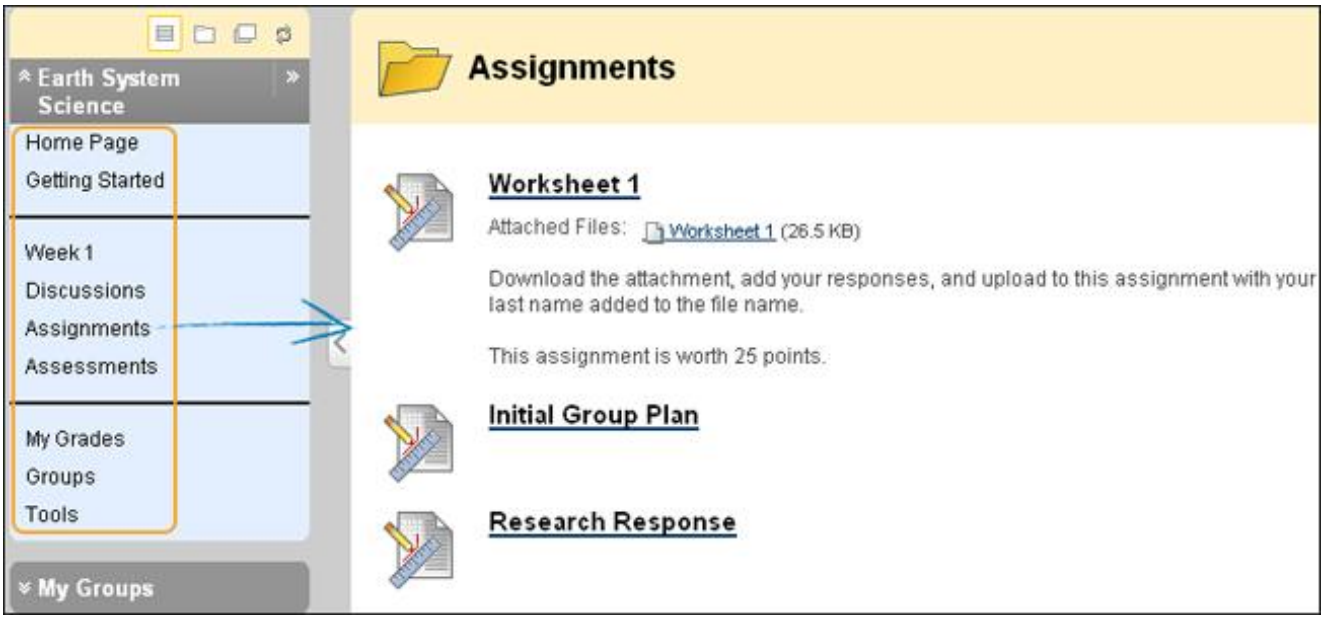
Review Status allows your instructor to track interaction with specific content items and may affect the release of additional content. For example, your instructor enables ***Review Status*** for an article added to a ***Content Area*** and made the release of a quiz contingent upon you reviewing the article. After you mark the article ***Reviewed***, the quiz appears.

A ***Mark Reviewed*** option appears on the item when it is opened. After reviewing the item, select the option to mark it as ***Reviewed***.

Note: You can switch between Reviewed and Mark Reviewed. Use this option if you want to go back to a content item and review it again. Your instructor only views the current setting. If the item is marked Reviewed, then switched to Mark Review, your instructor does not see that the item was marked Reviewed at any time.

Course Content Areas

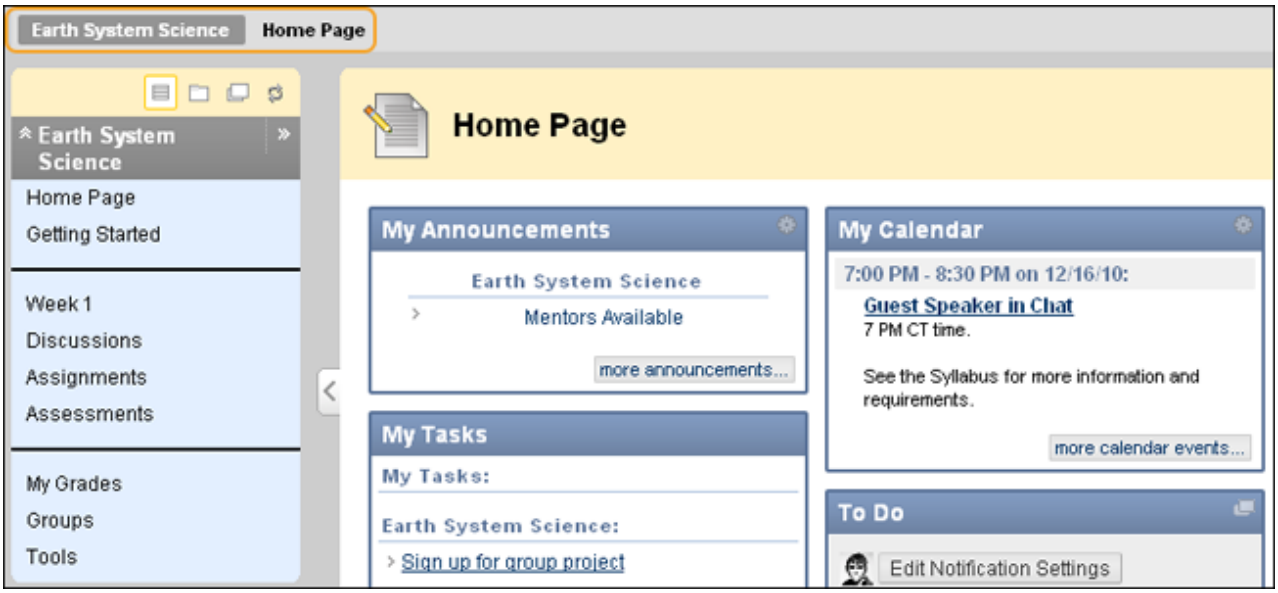
Content Areas are top-level containers that organize and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. ***Content Areas*** that are available to users make up the ***Course Menu*** that appears as links in the frame on the left side of the course. To access a ***Content Area***, click its name on the ***Course Menu***. The content appears in the content frame. Typical ***Content Areas*** that you might see are *Instructor Info, Assignments, Tests, My Grades*, and the names of units that correspond to the work you will complete throughout your course.



Your instructor or administrator creates the names of the areas in a course, which may differ from the names shown in this section. The ***Content Area*** names can also change course by course within your institution.

You can access a ***Content Area*** item by clicking its link in the course menu, such as a Discussion Board or a file. Your instructors can further organize content using folders, subfolders, Learning Modules, or Lesson Plans.

As items and links are viewed in a ***Content Area***, use the breadcrumbs to navigate to previous pages.

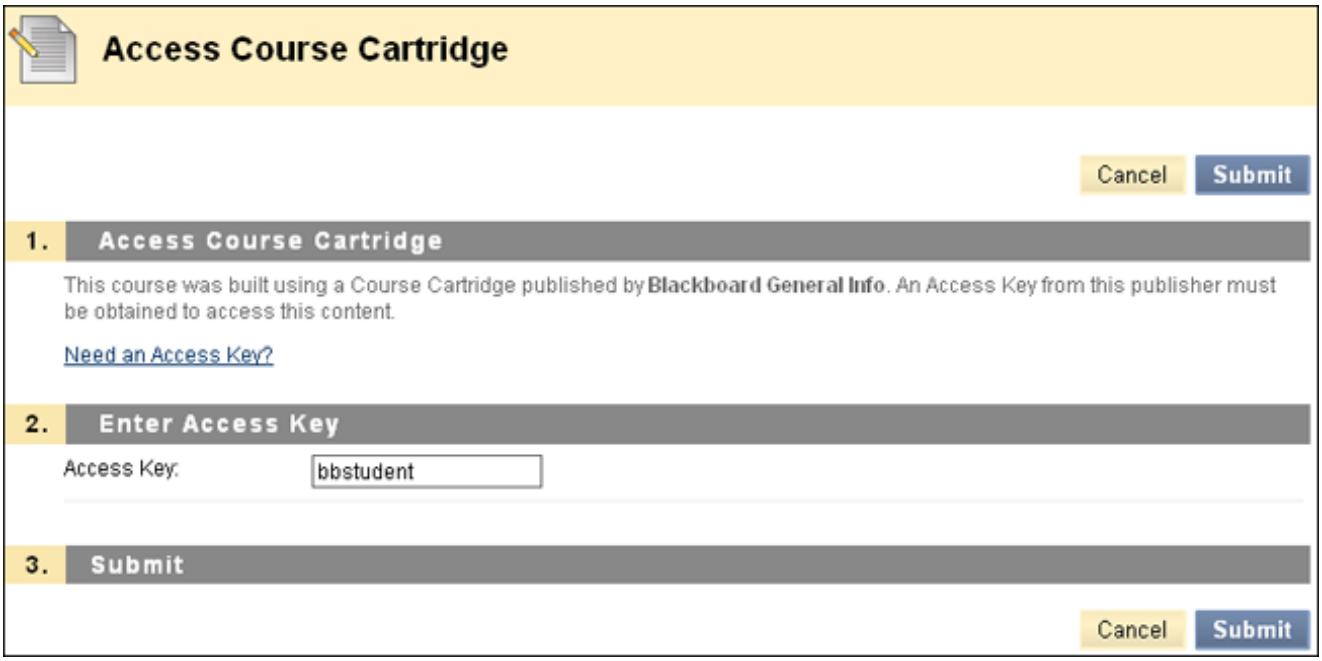


Course Cartridges

Your instructors have the option of using ***Course Cartridge*** content in their courses. This content is created by third party publishers and is available for instructors to download. When you access this content within a course, you are prompted for an ***Access key***. Cartridge content often includes:

- Slides
- Documents
- Quiz questions
- Lists of relevant links

To access a ***Course Cartridge***, you must be enrolled in the course and have an ***Access Key*** to open the course material. When you attempt to access ***Course Cartridge*** content the first time, you will be prompted for a key. The publisher of the ***Course Cartridge*** provides the ***Access Key*** for a course. The ***Access Key*** for a ***Course Cartridge*** may be found in the course text book or on the publisher's website. After you enter the key, you can open any content in the course that comes from that ***Course Cartridge***.



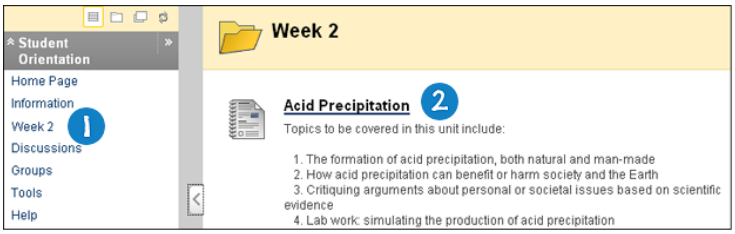
LESSON PLANS

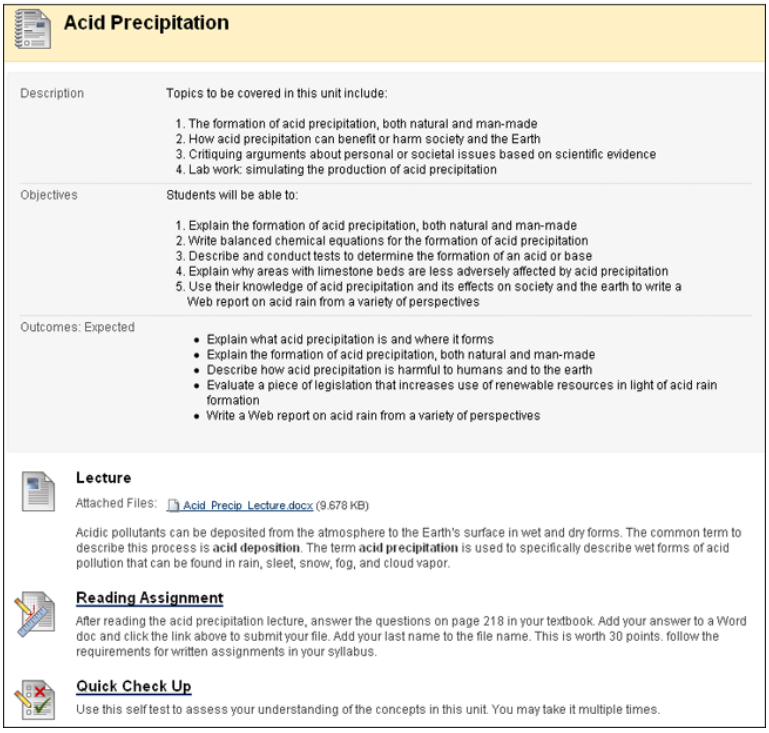
A ***Lesson Plan*** is a container for content similar to a ***Content Area*** or folder. This allows you to view the lesson profile, objectives, and content items you need to complete a lesson. Your instructor can provide you with information on how your knowledge will be measured, the needed materials, the duration of the instruction, and what you should have learned after the instruction.

Typically, ***Lesson Plans*** are added to ***Content Areas***, but they can be added to ***Learning Modules*** and folders.

The ***Lesson Plan*** appears first in the content list and has its own unique icon. If a description was added to the ***Lesson Plan*** when it was created, it appears following the title.

1. Select the ***Content Area*** from the ***Course Menu*** that holds the ***Lesson Plan***. For example, Week 2.
2. Click the name of the ***Lesson Plan***.





The ***Lesson Plan's*** general information and content items are organized following the title. The top portion contains general information about the lesson, while the bottom contains content items.

In this example, the content items for the lesson are shown with icons and text. Your instructor can select Icons Only, Text Only, or Icons and Text for the content view. By default ***Lesson Plans*** have four sections:

- Instructional Level
- Instructor
- Subject Area
- Objectives

Your instructor may customize the sections in the ***lesson plan***, so you may see different sections.

LEARNING MODULES

A ***Learning Module*** is an organized collection of content presented together. ***Learning Modules*** are shells in which other content items such as files, folders and tools are added. It can support a course goal, a course objective, a subject, a concept, or a theme. ***Learning Modules*** enable you to follow a structured path for progressing through content.

The sequential path may be enforced or you may be allowed to access any item at any time. For example, your instructor may set up a ***Learning Module*** on Astronomy. This unit walks you through a series of articles about Astronomy, displays media files, and finally presents an assessment about the information covered. You must move through the contents in this order if the sequential path is enforced. You will know if there is a set path because only the link immediately following the page you are viewing is available. If the sequential path is not enforced, all the links will be available.

To move from page to page within a module, click the right and left arrow buttons on the top right of the content area.

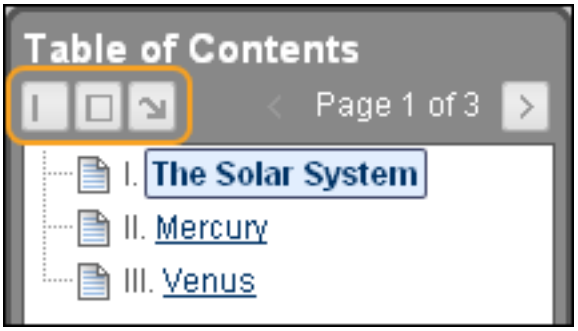
Example: The button will appear next to the "Page 1 of 3" text.

Note: The name of a folder or subfolder will count as a page. For example, if the ***Learning Module*** contains two folders, each containing one file, there will be a total of 4 pages.

It is also possible to navigate by clicking the name of the page in the ***Table of Contents*** instead of clicking the forward or back arrow buttons.

The ***Table of Contents*** displays next to the ***Course Menu*** on the left-hand side of the page. It can also be moved below the ***Learning Module*** content area.

There are three display options available on the header of the ***Table of Contents***:



- Minimize
- Maximize
- Move to the bottom or the left

Click the button with the arrow pointing down (↘) to move the ***Table of Contents*** to the bottom of the page. To move the ***Table of Contents*** back to the left, click the left-facing arrow (↖). The move to the left option will reposition the ***Table of Contents*** to the left of the content area.

Note: Your instructors can organize the ***Table of Contents*** however they see fit. The ***Table of Contents*** can be displayed using roman numerals, numbers, letters, or any combination of the three.

MASHUPS

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

A ***Mashup*** combines elements from two or more sources. When you view a YouTube™ video in a Blackboard Learn course as part of the course content, you are experiencing a ***Mashup***. ***Mashups*** can also include Flickr® photos and SlideShare presentations.

You can use this content in a variety of ways within a course: a standalone piece of content, part of a test question, a topic in a ***Discussion Board***, or as part of an assignment. For example, you can include a clip of your favorite movie in a journal entry.

Mashups are displayed in the following ways:

- ***Embed***: The ***Mashup*** displays directly on the page.
- ***Thumbnail***: A small picture of the ***Mashup*** displays on the page with controls to launch it.

- ***Text Link with Player***: A link to the ***Mashup*** is displayed on the page. Click the link to launch the ***Mashup***.

Mashups are added through ***Text Editor***.

DEFAULT MASHUP TYPES

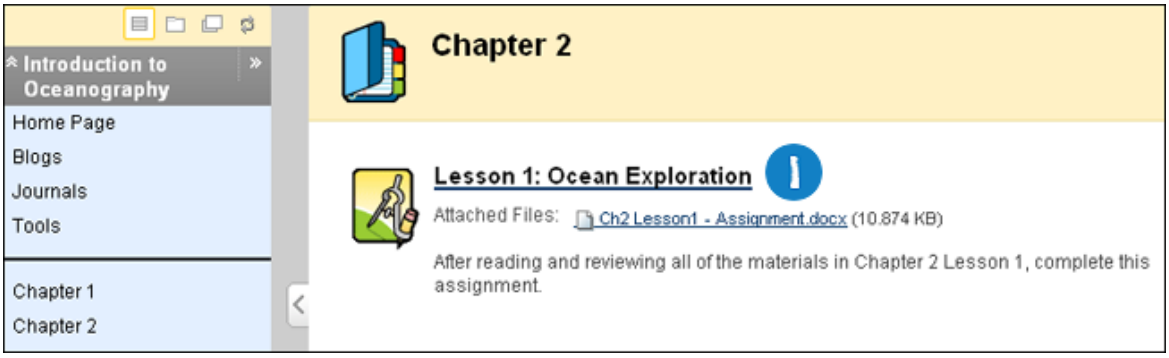
Blackboard Learn supports any file type available on the following websites:

- ***Flickr***: A website for viewing and sharing photos and images.
- ***SlideShare***: A website for viewing and sharing slide presentations and documents.
- ***YouTube***: A website for viewing and sharing online videos.

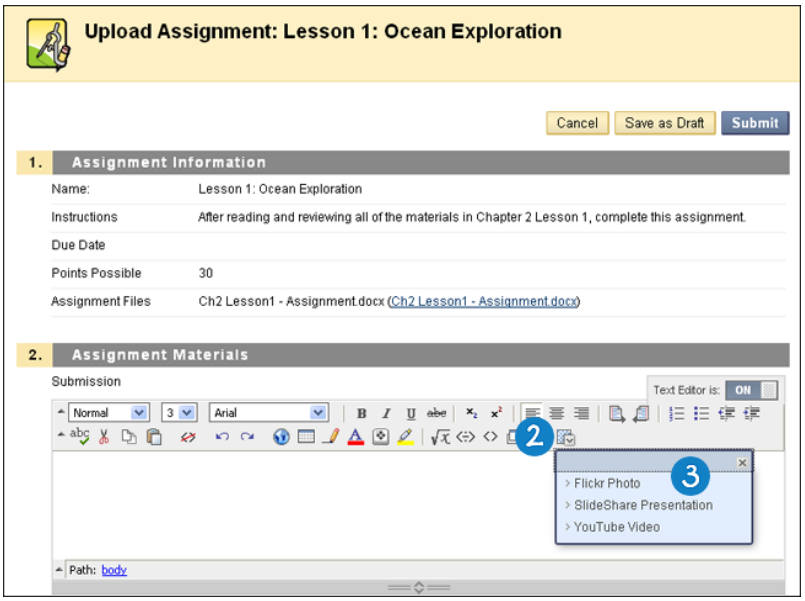
The Blackboard administrator at your school may enable other types of ***Mashups***.

How to Create a Mashup Item Using the Text Editor

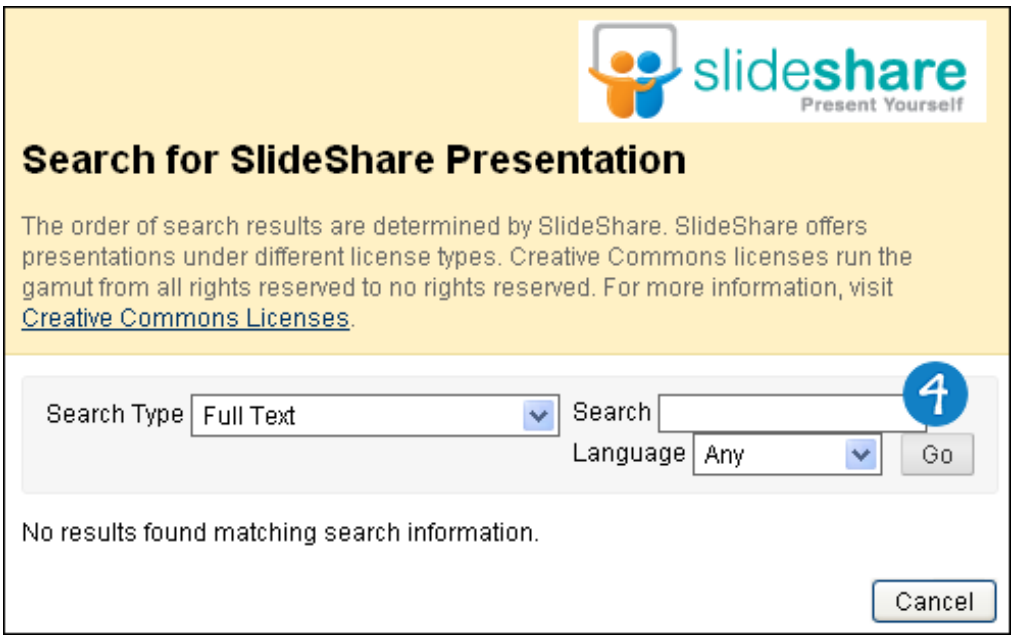
- Navigate to an assignment, journal, or other piece of content, for example, Lesson 1: Ocean Exploration.



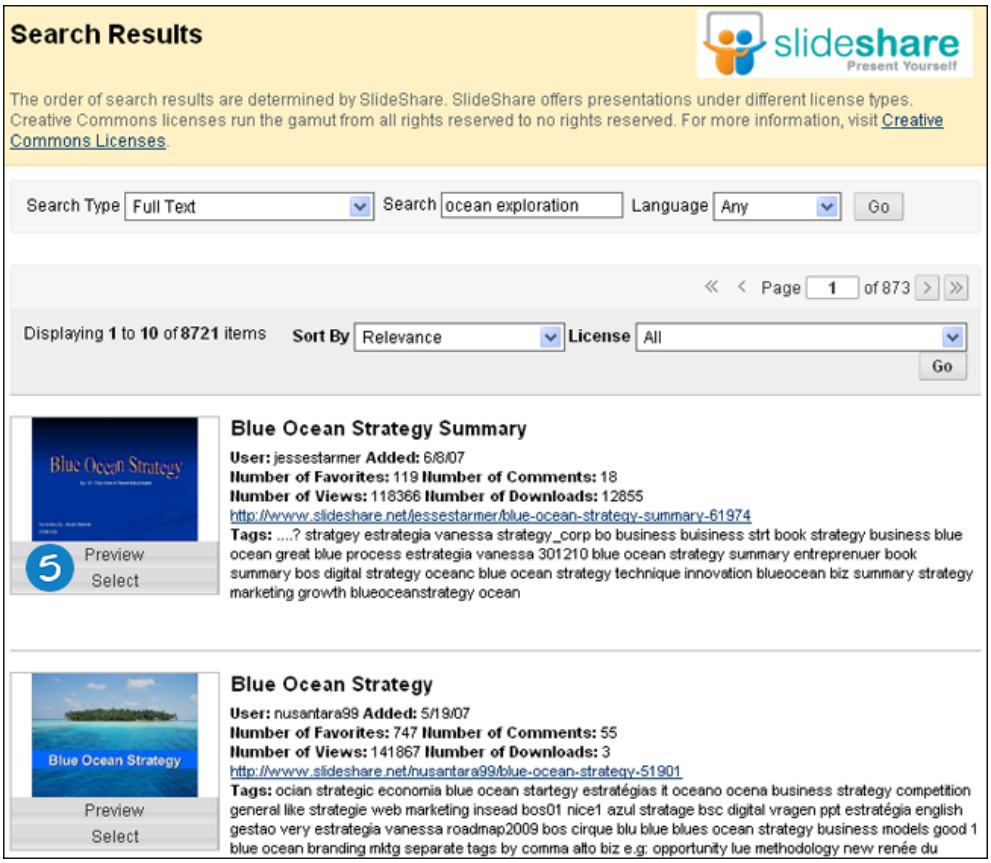
- On the ***Upload Assignment*** page, click ***Add Mashup*** in the third row of ***Text Editor*** functions.
- Select Flickr Photo, SlideShare Presentation, or YouTube Video.



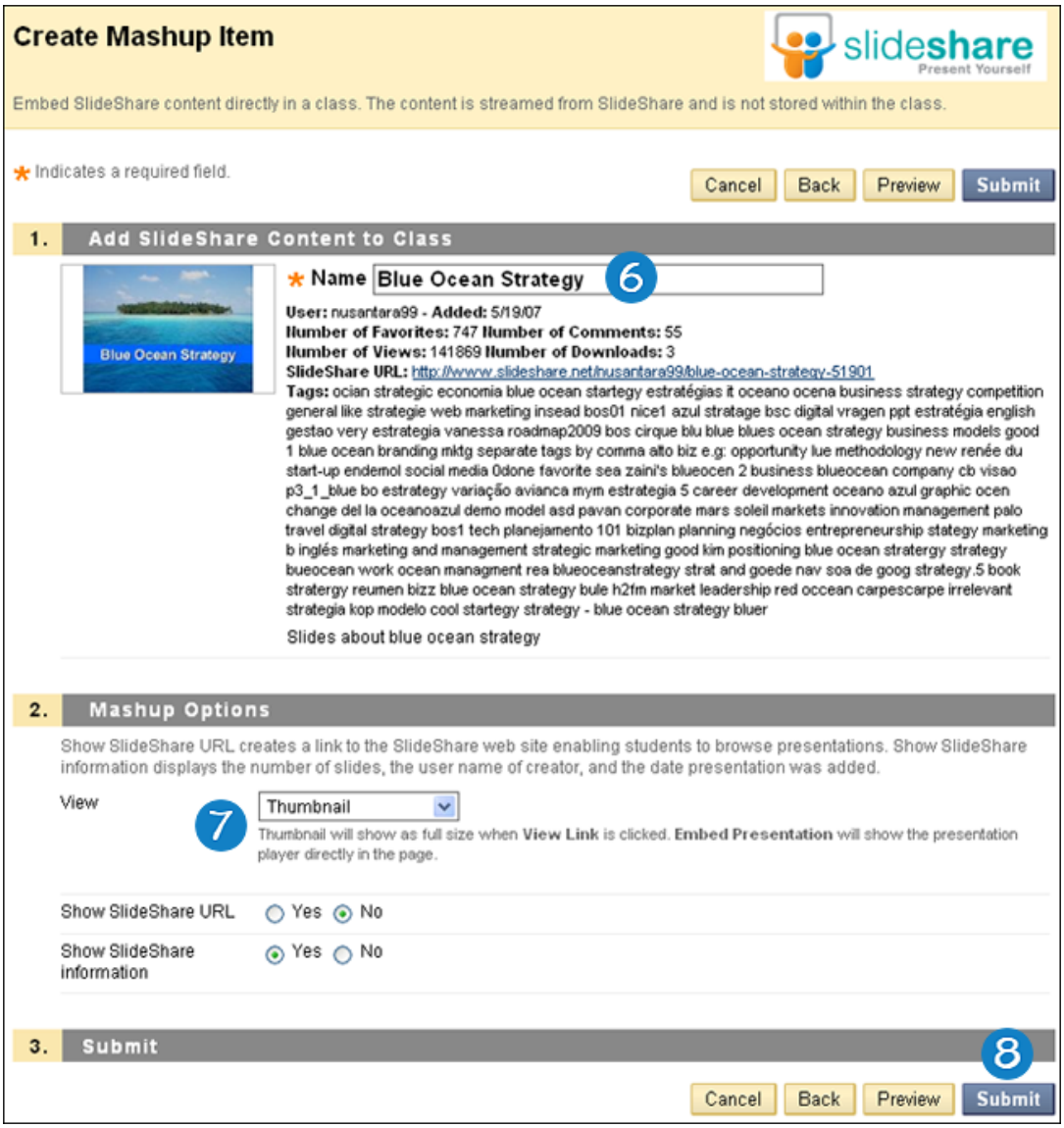
- On the Search for ***Mashup*** pop-up window, search for content. Type the content name in the Search box and click ***Go***.



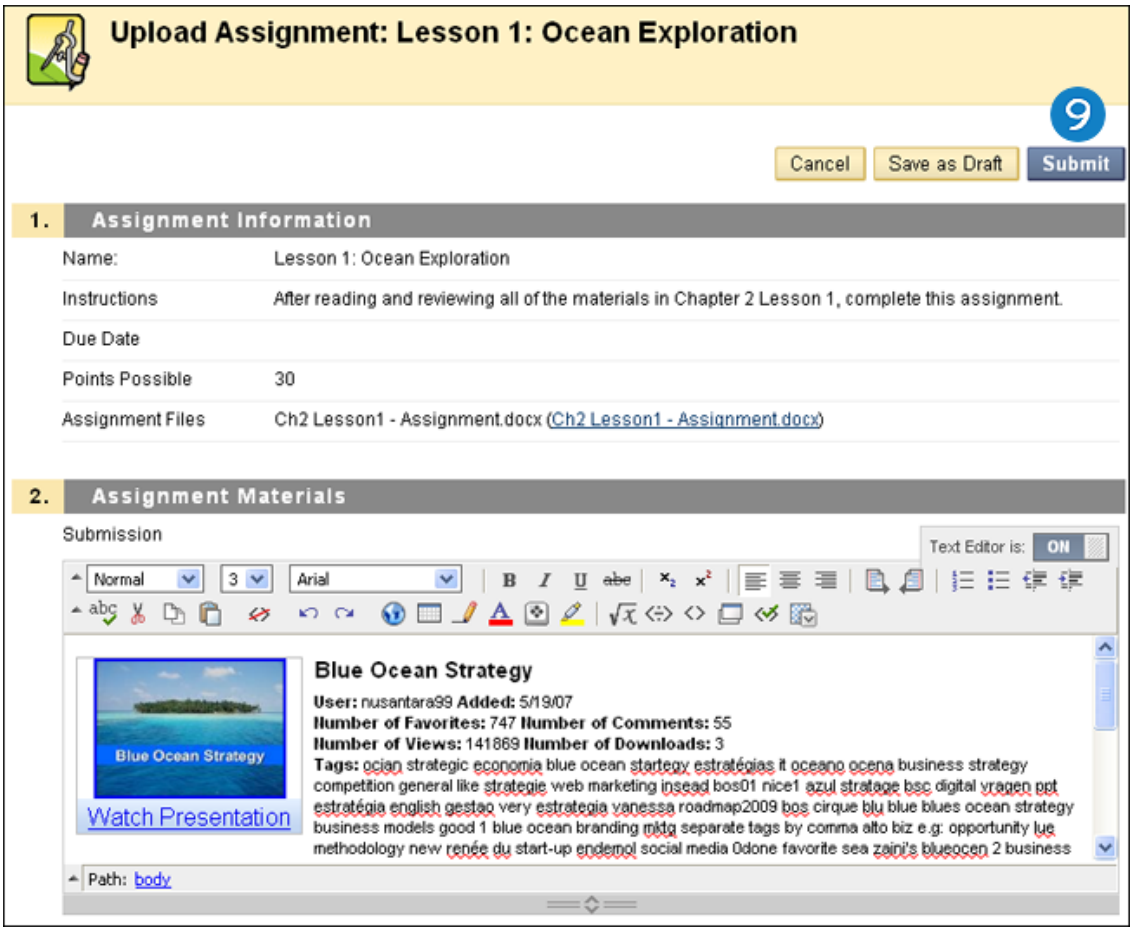
- On the ***Search Results*** page, you can click ***Preview*** to examine the items, or click ***Select*** to include the appropriate item.



- On the ***Create Mashup Item*** page, change the ***Name*** of the item. This is a required field.
- Set the ***Mashup Options***.
- Click ***Submit***.



- On the ***Upload Assignment*** page, click ***Submit***.



The ***Mashup*** appears with your content.

If the ***Mashup*** does not appear or displays an error after initially appearing, it is possible that the URL has changed or the item was deleted from Flickr, SlideShare, or YouTube.

ABOUT COURSE GROUPS

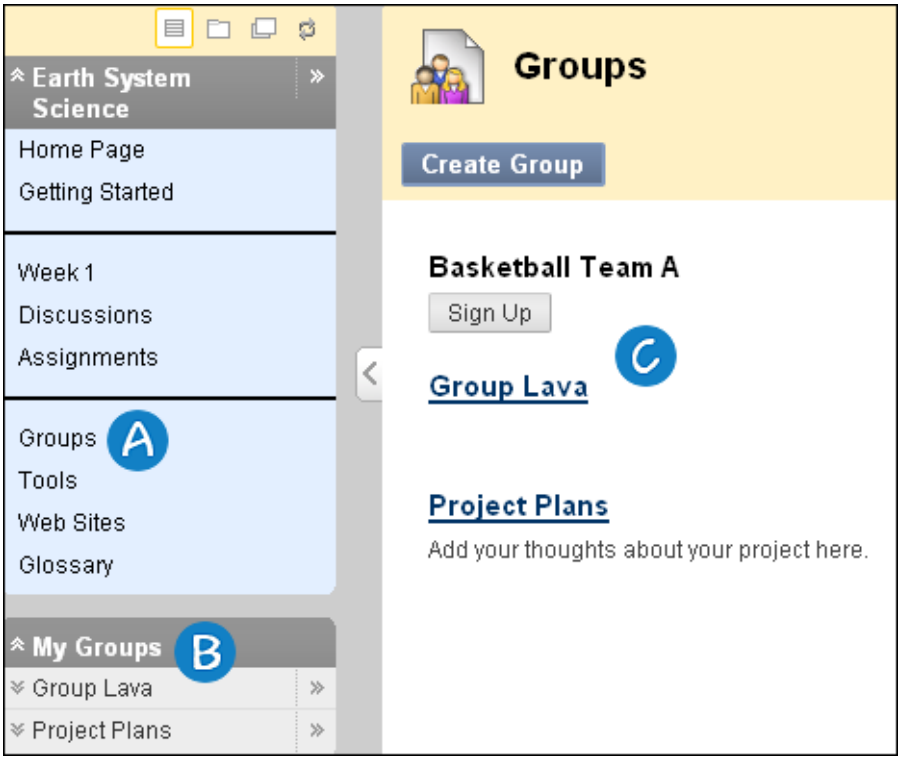
Your instructor can create groups of students within a course. ***Groups*** usually consist of a smaller group of users in a course, such as study groups or project groups. These course groups have their own area in the course to collaborate. These spaces are equipped with tools that can assist each group member. Within ***Group*** page, you may:

- Send email
- Exchange files
- Enter discussion forums
- Enter collaboration sessions
- Change the position of individual modules by dragging and dropping

Your instructor can provide ***Communication and Collaboration*** tools that only group members can access, such as a private ***File Exchange*** area, a ***Group Discussion Board***, and a ***Group Journal***.

Your instructor will either place you into a group by selecting your group for you, assigning students in random groups or allowing you to select the group you want to join.

You can only access a group within a course, and there are several ways to access a group.

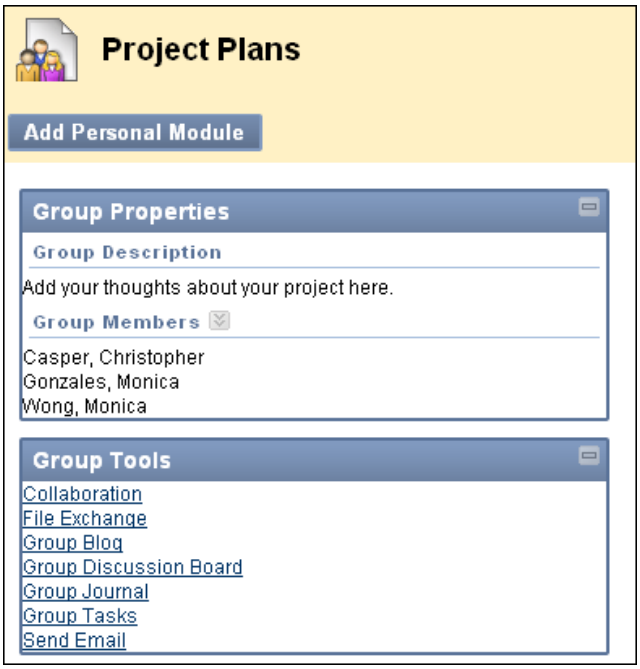


A ***Groups page link***: The ***Groups*** page link appears on the ***Course Menu*** or in a ***Content Area***. The ***Groups*** page lists all available groups and sign-up sheets for self-enroll groups.

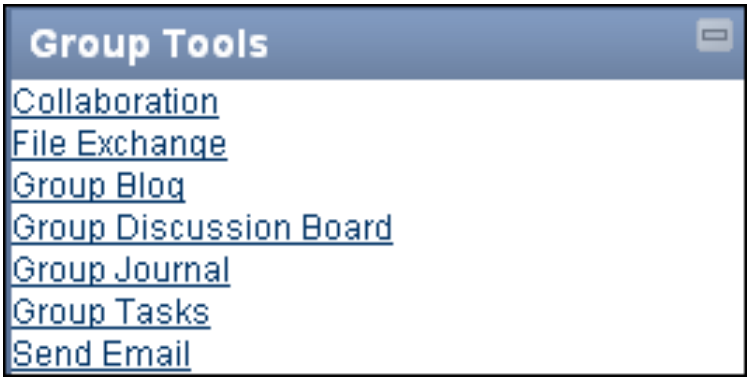
B ***My Groups panel***: The ***My Groups panel*** appears following the ***Course Menu***. The ***My Groups panel*** provides direct links to the group space for each group you belong to. You can expand the panel to reveal all the tools that are available for the group to use. If you are enrolled in a group, the panel appears automatically.

C ***Group Link***: A ***Group Link*** is a link to a single group, sign-up sheet, or the ***Groups*** page made available in a course area.

The ***Group*** homepage is the center for group activity and can contain a description of the group, a list of members, and tools. If your instructor permits, this page can be customized by adding a banner, selecting a color scheme, and adding *Personal Modules*, such as *My Calendar* or *Report Card*, which are visible only to the member who added the modules. Access ***Group Tools*** and ***Group Members*** here.



Each group has its own space in the course to work together. When inside your group, you will find the tools your instructor has made available to you. Your instructor may not turn on all the available tools. Be sure to ask about any tools you want to use but do not find on your groups page. Review any instructions provided by your instructor on how to use these tools to complete group work. Tools that can be made available to a group include:



- ***Collaboration***: Users within the group can create and attend chat sessions and virtual classroom sessions.
- ***File Exchange***: Group members and your instructor can share files in this area. All members, as well as your instructor, can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them.
- ***Group Blog***: In the group area, all members of a group can create entries for the same blog, building on one another. Any course member can read and comment on a group blog, but cannot make entries if they are not a member of the group. Your instructor can select the grade option for group blogs.
- ***Group Discussion Board***: Users within the group can create and manage their own forums and discuss topics with only the group members.
- ***Group Journal***: When used in the group area, all members of a group can view each other's entries, but the group journal can only be viewed by the group and your instructor. Your instructor can select the grade option for journals.
- ***Group Task***: Users within the group can create tasks that are distributed to all group members.

- ***Group Wiki***: Users within the group can edit, and view their group wiki. Your instructor can view and edit a group wiki and can select the grade option for group wikis.
- ***Send Email***: Users within the group can email individual members or the entire group.

Submitting Group Assignments

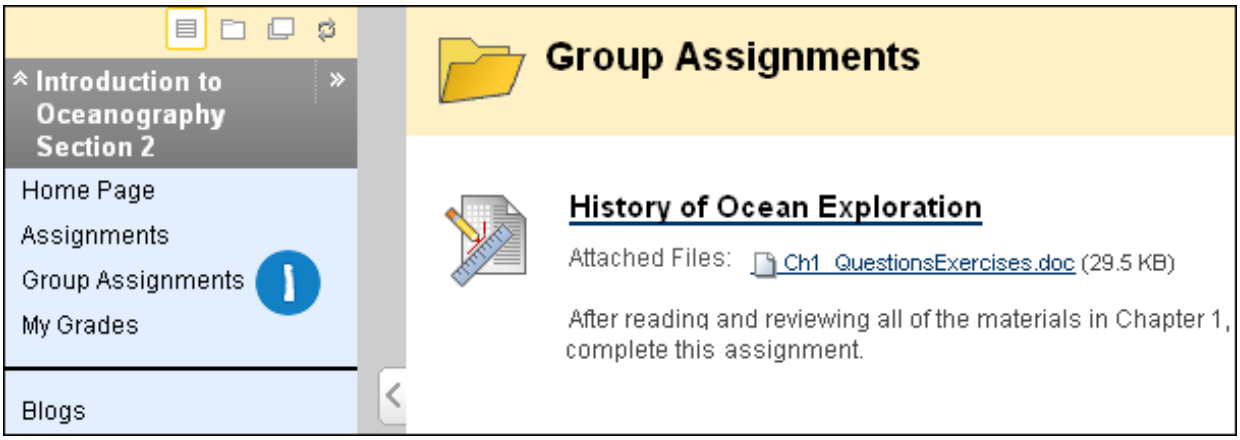
You can submit your work to complete group assignments in the following ways:

- Text typed on the ***Upload Assignment*** page.
- Files attached from your computer or from the ***Content Collection***
- A combination of both text and attached files.

Assignments list the name, description, and attachments for course work. You can also choose to include comments for your instructor.

The grade provided by your instructor for the final assignment is given to every member of the group.

- On the ***Course Menu***, select the ***Content Area*** that holds the group assignment, for example, the ***Group Assignments Content Area***. Click the name of the assignment.



--OR—

- In the ***My Groups*** panel, select your group name. On the group homepage, click the name of the assignment in the ***Group Assignments*** section.

- On the ***Upload Assignment*** page, review the instructions and download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
- In the ***Submission*** box, type your response. You can use the *Text Editor* functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.
- If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click ***Browse My Computer*** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a *Link Title*. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

  Note: The *Do not attach* option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, ***history_assignment(1).doc.***

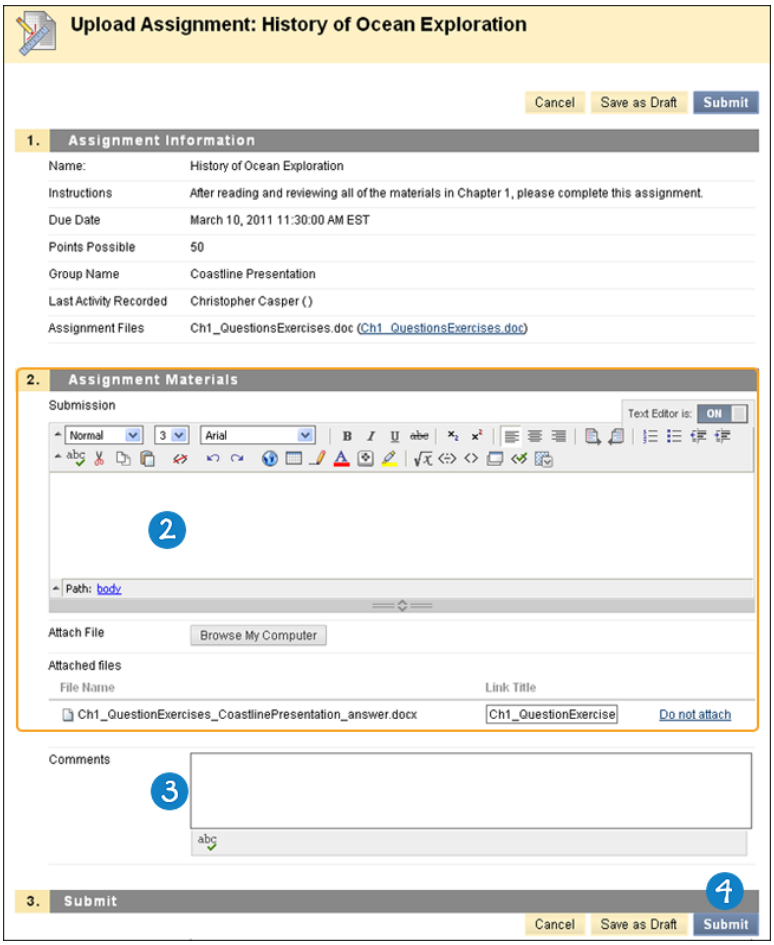
  Note: If your instructor is using a rubric and has made it available to students, click the ***View Rubric*** button to view grading criteria.

- Optionally, in the ***Comments*** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has not allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click ***Submit***.

- Click ***Submit***

WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click ***Submit***. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.



EXPLORING TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Tests and Surveys

You can find tests and surveys (referred to collectively as assessments) in any Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder

Tests are used to assess your knowledge. Your instructor assigns point values to questions. Your answers are submitted for grading, and the results are recorded in the ***Grade Center***.

Surveys can be used for polling purposes and evaluations. This type of assessment is not graded.

> ***WARNING!*** Do not refresh the page, close the window, or click the browser's back button while taking an assessment. If you experience problems during a test or survey, **please contact your instructor**.

Once a test or survey is built, questions are created or added from existing questions in tests, surveys, and pools.

About Question Settings

On the **Test Canvas**, click **Question Settings** on the **Action Bar** to change settings for different aspects of a test or survey. **Question settings** include options for the following:

- Enabling the feedback option for questions
- Adding images, files, or web links to questions and answers
- Adding metadata to questions
- Determining default point values for questions in tests
- Designating questions as extra credit, and enabling negative and partial credit scoring
- Specifying display options, such as numbering options for answers

How to Build a Test or Survey and Add New Questions

Follow these steps to create a test and begin adding questions to it:

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section.
2. Select **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools**.
3. On the **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools** page, select **Tests**.

4. On the **Tests** page, click **Build Test** on the **Action Bar**.

5. On the **Test Information** page, type a name, and optional description and instructions.

6. Click **Submit**.

7. On the **Test Canvas**, point to **Create Question** on the **Action Bar** to access the drop-down list.

8. Select a question type.

9. On the **Create**/**Edit** page, provide the necessary information to create a question.

10. Click **Submit**.

11. On the **Test Canvas**, you can change a question's point value.
    1. Click a question's current point value.
    2. In the **Update Points** pop-up, edit the points.
    3. Click **Submit**.

12. Repeat **Step 7** through **Step 11** to add more questions.

13. Click **OK**. The test is added to the list on the **Tests** page and is ready to deploy in a course area.

Surveys are created the same way, except that points are not assigned to survey questions:

1. On the **Control Panel**, expand the **Course Tools** section.

2. Select **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools**.

3. On the **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools** page, select **Surveys**.

4. On the **Surveys** page, click **Build Survey** on the Action Bar.

5. On the **Survey Information** page, type a name, and optional description and instructions.

6. Click **Submit**.

7. On the **Survey Canvas**, point to **Create Question** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

8. Select a question type.

9. On the **Create**/**Edit** page, provide the necessary information to create a survey question.

10. Click **Submit**.

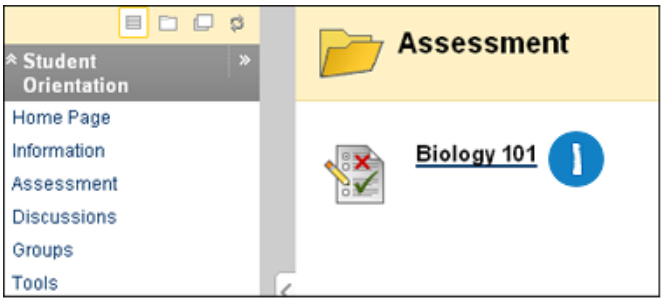
11. Repeat **Step 7** through **Step 10** to add more questions.

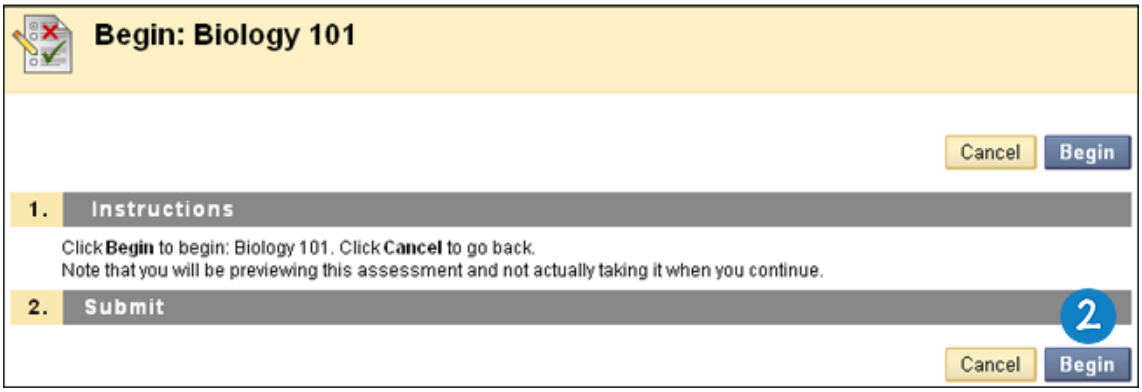
12. Click **OK**. The survey is added to the list on the **Surveys** page and is ready to deploy in a course area.

How to Take an Assessment

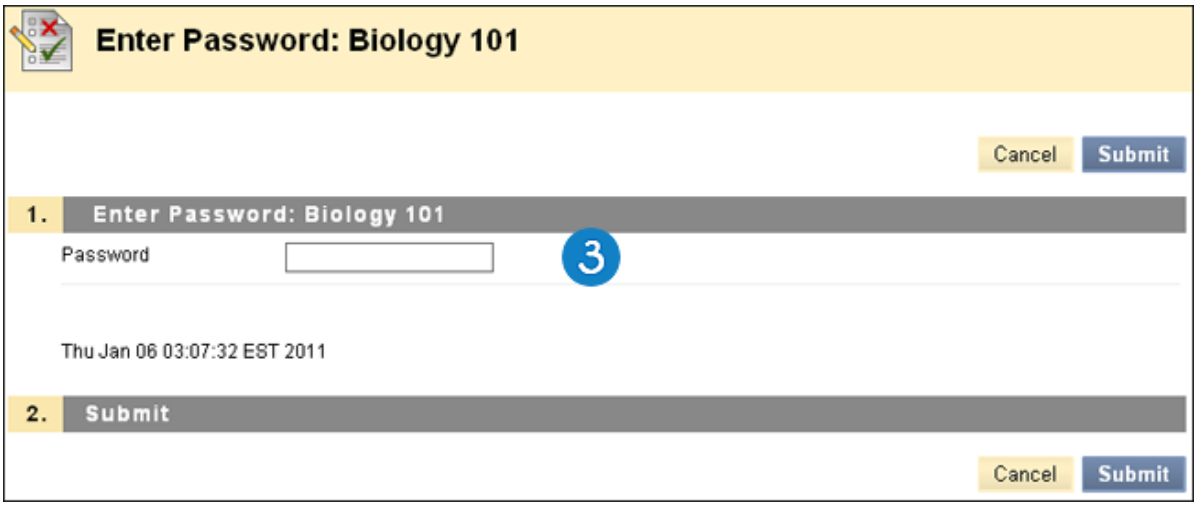
Assessments are located within ***Content Areas*** in a course. Contact your instructor if you encounter issues or problems while taking your assessment.

- Navigate to an assessment and click the link associated with it.
- Click ***Begin*** to take the assessment

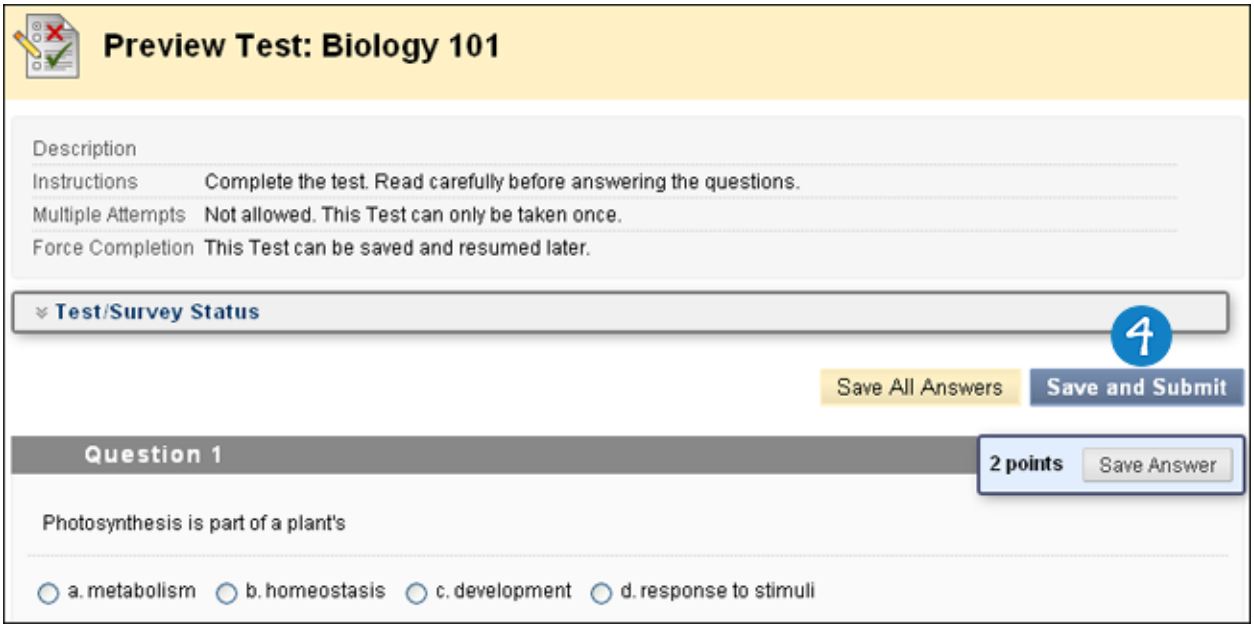




- Your instructor may choose to have you type a password to begin taking an assessment. If necessary, type the valid password and click ***Submit*** to begin the assessment. The assessment continues to prompt for a valid password until the correct one is provided.



- As you work, answers will be saved automatically, or you can click the ***Save*** button by each question or the ***Save All Answers*** button at the top or bottom of the page as you work.
- Click ***Save and Submit*** when you complete the assessment.



> ***WARNING!*** Do not use the browser's ***Back*** button during an assessment. This may cause loss of data. If you have difficulties while taking an assessment, contact your instructor.

Note: If your instructor has associated a rubric with an Essay, File Response, or Short Answer question on a test, click ***View Rubric*** to display grading criteria.

Timed Assessments

If your instructor chooses a timed assessment, the scheduled time is included in the instructions before you begin.

You will also be notified of the instructor's choice of *Timer Setting*, which determines whether the assessment saves and submits automatically when time expires, or if you have the option to continue beyond the time limit.

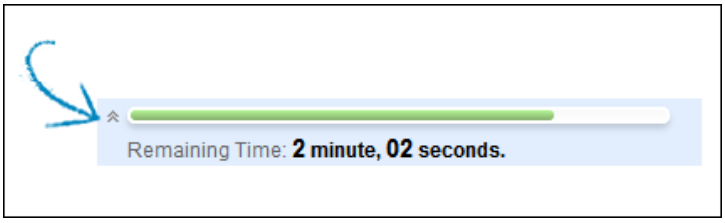
There is no automatic penalty for continuing beyond the time limit, however, final scoring decisions are made by your instructor. Talk to your instructor if you have questions about this setting.

The total time you spend on the assessment is recorded and available to the instructor when the test is submitted.

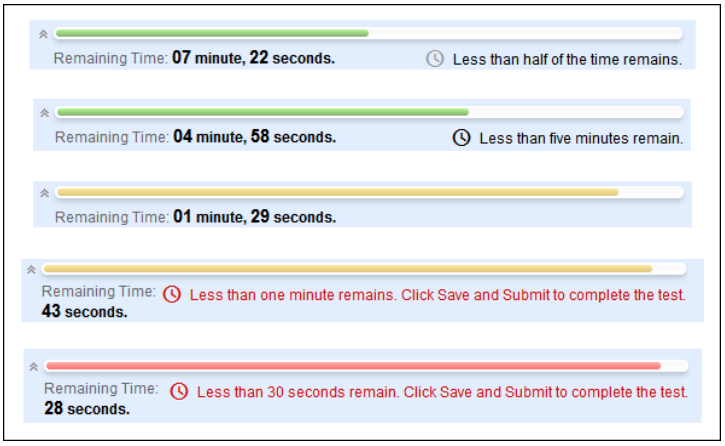
Note: If you save and exit the assessment, the timer continues running. If you start your test on Tuesday, save and exit it, then complete it on Thursday the timer will show that it took you 48 hours to complete the assessment.

If the auto-submit feature is selected, when the timer runs out, the test saves and submits and the *Test Submitted* page displays. If the option is not selected, a pop-up window will appear with the choice to submit or continue.

The remaining time appears on the assessment page. Click the ***chevron*** next to the timer to collapse or expand it.



Timer warnings will appear when half the time, five minutes, one minute, and thirty seconds remain. When the remaining time reads 1 minute, 30 seconds, the status bar will turn yellow. At 1 minute, the warning will be red, and at 30 seconds, both the status bar and the warning will be red. If the timer is collapsed, the color changes will not be visible.



Feedback and Grades

The performance results you receive after completing a test depend on the options selected by your instructor. For example, your instructor may only show the final score for one test, while for another test the final score and correct answers are displayed. ***Feedback*** includes one or more of the following:

- Final score for the test
- Answers submitted
- Correct answers
- Feedback for the questions

To access ***Feedback and Grade*** information, select the test in the ***Content Area*** or use the ***My Grades*** tool.

Note: If your instructor has used a rubric for grading an *Essay*, *File Response*, or *Short Answer* test question and has made it available to students, click ***View Rubric*** while viewing the graded test to display detailed information.

Multiple Assessment Attempts

You may be allowed to take an assessment multiple times. If multiple attempts are allowed, this is noted at the top of the assessment. Your instructor may also set a limit on the number of attempts, which will also be noted at the top. A link to take the test again appears if the test is re-opened. Your instructor determines if one or more of the test attempt scores are recorded in the ***Grade Center***.

Force Assessment Completion

If ***Force Completion*** is enabled, you must complete the assessment the first time it is launched. If ***Force Completion*** is enabled, this is noted at the top of the assessment. You may not exit the assessment and continue working on it at a later date. The ***Save*** function is available for you to save the assessment as you work through it, but you may not exit and re-enter the assessment.

Backtrack Prohibited

You may not go back to questions you have already answered if backtracking is prohibited. If backtracking is prohibited, this is noted at the top of the assessment. When you take an assessment that does not allow backtracking, an error appears if you attempt to use the ***Back*** function within the assessment.

Assessment Presentation

Your instructor has two different options for presenting ***Assessments***: all-at-once and one-at-a-time.

All-at-once assessments present all of the questions at the same time. The following options are available while taking this type of assessment:

Function	*Action*
Store answers	Select ***Save All Answers***. A Saved icon appears in the Question Status Indicator. Answers may be changed after they are saved.
Finish the assessment	Select ***Save and Submit***. You receive a confirmation followed by a receipt page stating that the assessment has been completed.

One-at-a-time assessments present questions separately, only one question appears on the screen. You decide when you are ready to move onto the next question. The following options are available while taking this type of assessment:

Function	*Action*
Navigate through questions	Use the navigation arrows (<<, <, >, or >>). The Question/Section Indicator describes the current location in the assessment and the overall number of questions. If backtracking is prohibited, these arrows do not appear.
Save answers	Select ***Save All Answers***. Questions answered up to this point are saved.
Finish the assessment	Select ***Save and Submit***. You receive a confirmation followed by a receipt page stating the assessment has been completed.

Question Completion Status

The ***Question Completion Status*** indicator provides you with a quick up-to-date look at complete or incomplete questions in an assessment at all times.

The status of which questions have been answered is displayed at the top of the page. Click the ***chevron*** next to the ***Question Completion Status*** to collapse or expand it.

When you answer a question and move to the next question in a question-by-question assessment, the status box is edited on the next page to show that the previous question was answered. If you do not answer a question and move on to the next page in a question-by-question assessment, the status box will show on the next page that the previous question was not answered. Navigate between questions by clicking on the question number in the status indicator.

When you take an all-at-once assessment (an assessment where the questions all appear on the same page), click ***Save Answer*** to save a specific question without scrolling to the bottom of the page to save. Saving either a single question or all of the questions that have been answered (with the ***Save All Answers*** at the top or bottom of the page) changes the status indicator to show which questions have been completed.

Importing Tests, Surveys, and Pools

You can import previously exported tests, surveys, and pools. This is an effective way to share them with other instructors, as well as to save and archive tests, surveys, and pools for later use.

Tests, surveys, and pools are exported by Blackboard Learn as .zip file packages, and then can be imported by you or another instructor for use in other courses.

How to Import a Test, Survey, or Pool

1. From the **Control Panel** in the **Course Tools** area, click **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools**.

2. Click **Tests**, **Surveys**, or **Pools**.

3. Click **Import**.

4. Locate the appropriate file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from a local drive, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If course file is in the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.

       -OR-

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

5. Click **Submit**.

Exporting Tests, Surveys, and Pools

You can export tests, surveys, and pools. This is an effective way to share them with other instructors, as well as to save and archive tests, surveys, and pools for later use.

Tests, surveys, and pools are exported by Blackboard Learn as .zip file packages, and then can imported by you or another instructor for use in other courses.

How to Export a Test, Survey, or Pool

1. From the **Control Panel**, in the **Course Tools** area, click **Tests**, **Surveys**, and **Pools**.

2. Click **Tests**, **Surveys**, or **Pools**.

3. From the contextual menu next to an test, survey, or pool name, click **Export**.

4. Click **OK** in the pop-up window to save the file.

Note: If your school licenses *Content Management*, two export options will appear in the contextual menu. To save the file to a local drive, choose *Export to Local Computer*. To save the file within content management, choose *Export to Content Collection*.

ASSIGNMENTS

The ***Assignments*** tool is used to present a variety of learning activities to you as a student, allowing you to view and submit assignments from one location. You can submit assignments in the following ways:

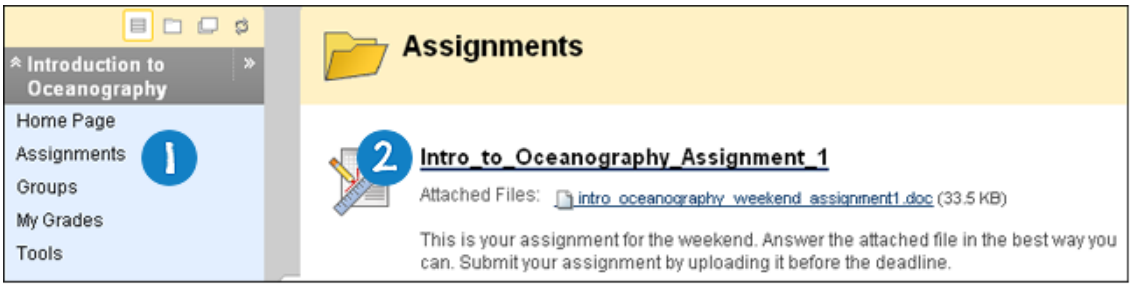
- Provide text on the ***Upload Assignment*** page.
- Files attached from your computer or from the ***Content Collection.***
- A combination of both text and attached files.

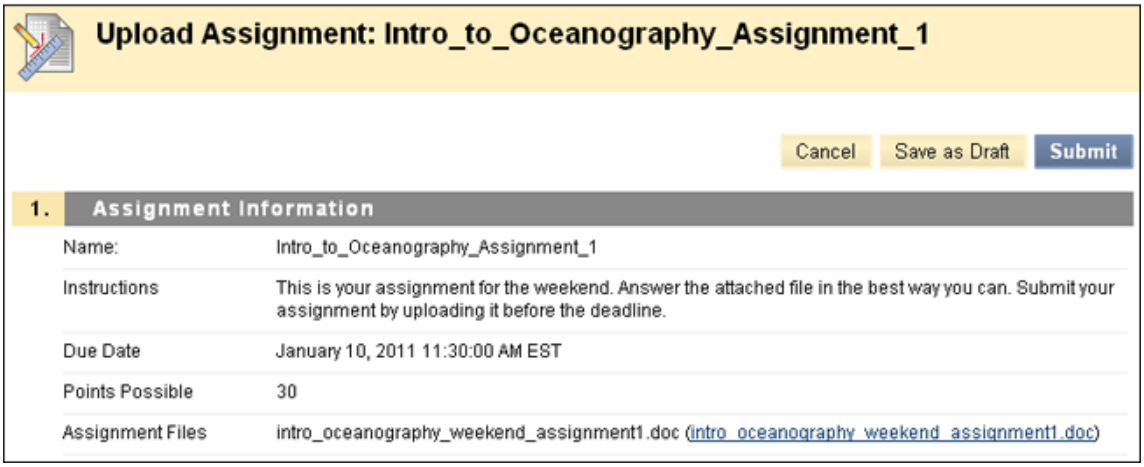
Assignments list the name, description, and attachments for class work. Your instructor will provide you all the information you need to complete the assignment. You can also choose to include comments for your instructor before you submit your work.

How to Submit an Assignment

When you finish your assignment, you must click ***Submit***. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

1. On the ***Course Menu***, select the ***Content Area*** that holds the assignment, for example, the ***Assignments Content Area***.
2. Click the name of the assignment.





3. On the ***Upload Assignment*** page, review the instructions and download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:

   - In the Submission box, type your response. You can use the *Text Editor* functions to format the text and include files, images, web links, multimedia, and Mashups.
   - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click ***Browse My Computer*** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a *Link Title*. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

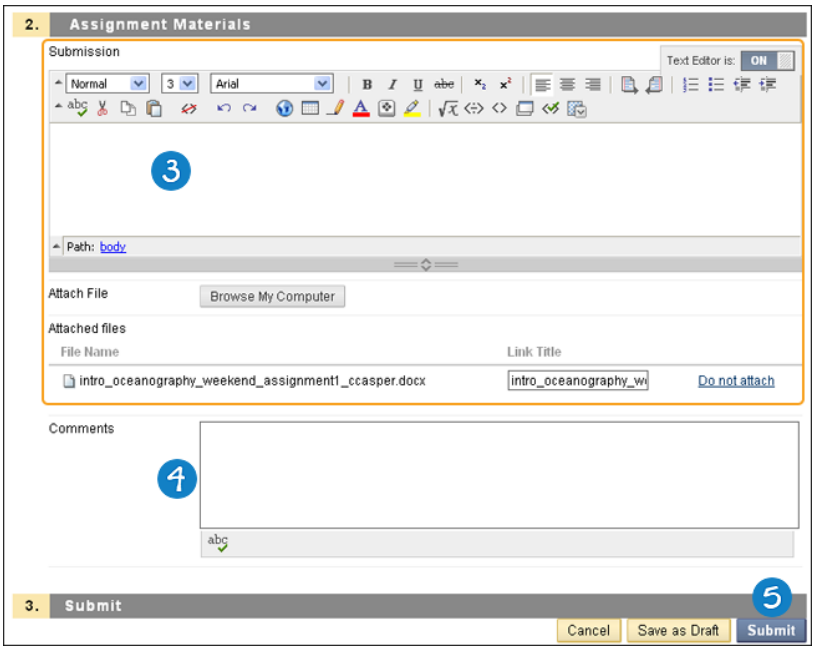
   Note: The ***Do not attach*** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, history_assignment(1).doc.

   Note: If your instructor is using a rubric and has made it available to students, click the ***View Rubric*** button to view grading criteria.

4. Optionally, in the ***Comments*** box, type comments to your instructor.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has not allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click ***Submit***.

5. Click ***Submit.***



6. A success message appears, confirming the assignment submission.

ABOUT SAFEASSIGN

SafeAssign compares submitted assignments against a set of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. ***Safe Assign*** is used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. ***SafeAssign*** is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool.

How Safeassignments Work

SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm capable of detecting exact and inexact matching between a paper and source material. ***SafeAssignments*** are compared against several different databases, including:

- **Internet**: Comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform database**: More than 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access)
- **Institutional document archives**: Contains all papers submitted to ***SafeAssign*** by users in their respective institutions
- **Global Reference Database**: Contains papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism

Global Reference Database

Blackboard's Global Reference Database is a separate database where students voluntarily donate copies of their papers to help prevent plagiarism. It is separated from each institution's internal database, where all papers are stored by each corresponding institution, and students are free to select the option to check their papers without submitting them to the Global Reference Database. Students submit their papers to the database voluntarily and agree not to delete papers in the future. Submissions to the Global Reference Database are extra copies that are given voluntarily for the purpose of helping with plagiarism prevention. Blackboard does not claim ownership of submitted papers.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

After a paper has been processed, a report will be available detailing the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources. It also shows the suspected sources of each section of the submitted paper that returns a match. Instructors can delete matching sources from the report and process it again. This may be useful if the paper is a continuation of a previously submitted work by the same student.

Because ***SafeAssign*** identifies all matching blocks of text, it is important to read the report carefully and investigate whether or not the block of text is properly attributed.

Interpreting SafeAssign Scores

Sentence matching scores represent the percentage probability that two phrases have the same meaning. This number can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90 percent means that there is a 90 percent probability that these two phrases are the same and a 10 percent probability that they are similar by chance and not because the submitted paper includes content from the existing source (whether or not it is appropriately attributed).

Overall score is an indicator of what percentage of the submitted paper matches existing sources. This score is a warning indicator only and papers should be reviewed to see if the matches are properly attributed.

- **Scores below 15 percent**: These papers typical include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other documents. These papers typically do not require further analysis, as there is no evidence of the possibility of plagiarism in these papers.

- **Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent**: These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism. These papers should be reviewed to determine if the matching content is properly attributed.

- **Scores over 40 percent**: There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and should be reviewed for plagiarism.

Grade Center Integration

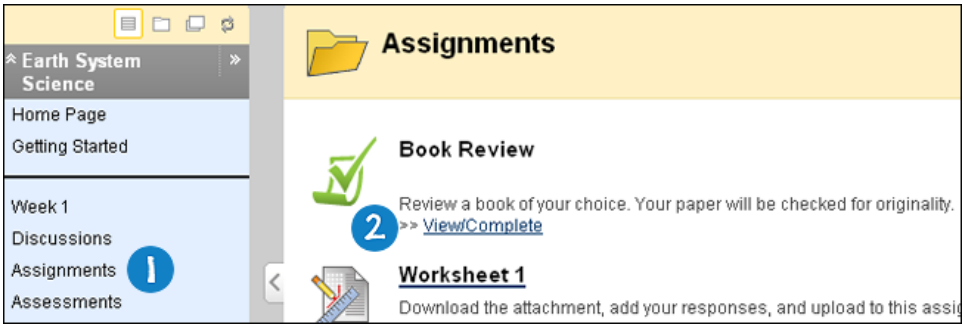
SafeAssignments are created with associated ***Grade Center*** items. The score is then recorded in the ***Grade Center***.

How to Submit a SafeAssignment

Note: You can only submit a ***SafeAssignment*** once. If you would like to edit, delete, or resubmit a ***SafeAssignment***, contact your instructor and request that they clear your first submission.

1. On the ***Course Menu*** select the ***Content Area*** that holds the ***SafeAssignment***, for example, the ***Assignments Content Area***.

2. On the ***Assignments*** page, look for the ***SafeAssignment*** and click ***View/Complete***.



3. On the ***Upload SafeAssignment*** page, optionally, type your comment in the ***Comment*** box.

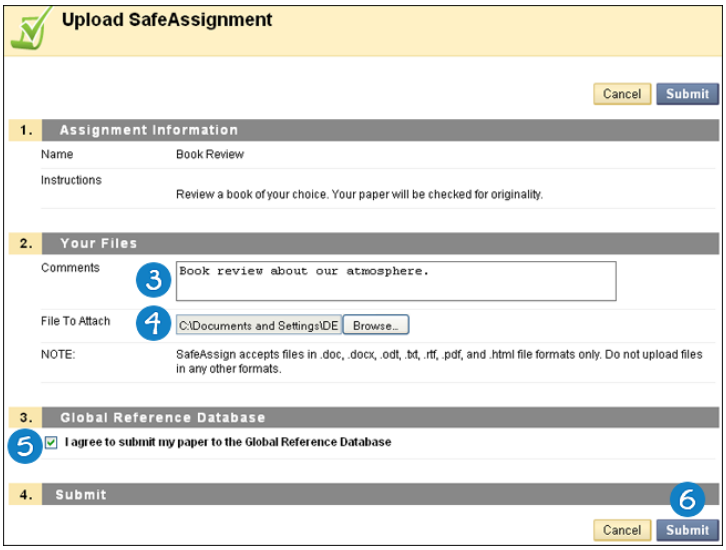
4. Click ***Browse*** to select a file to attach as your submission.

5. Optionally, select the *Global Reference Database* check box to upload your paper to the *Global Reference Database*.

   Note: Submitting to the ***SafeAssign*** *Global Reference Database* allows papers from other institutions to be checked against your paper to protect the originality of your work across institutions.

6. Click ***Submit***.

   Note: After you submit ***SafeAssignments***, there is a slight delay between the upload and the availability of the ***SafeAssign*** report. Results are normally available within 10-15 minutes.



How to View Safeassignment Submissions

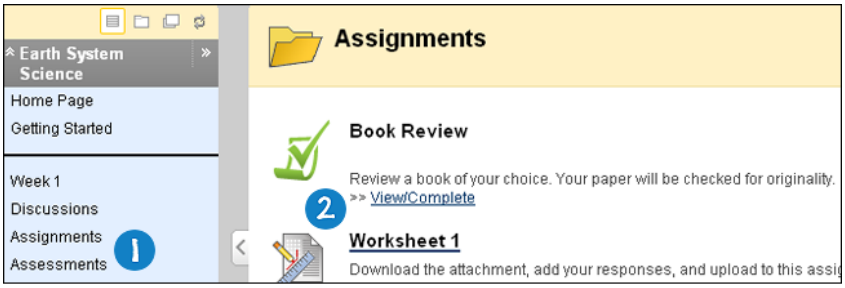
Your submissions and the ***SafeAssign*** reports associated with submissions are viewable by accessing the ***SafeAssignment*** after submitting your paper.

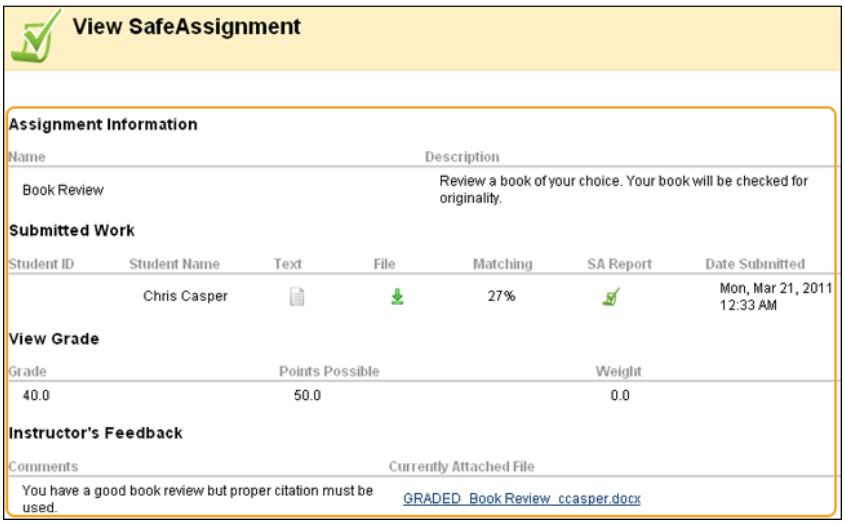
Note: This option is only available if allowed by your instructor.

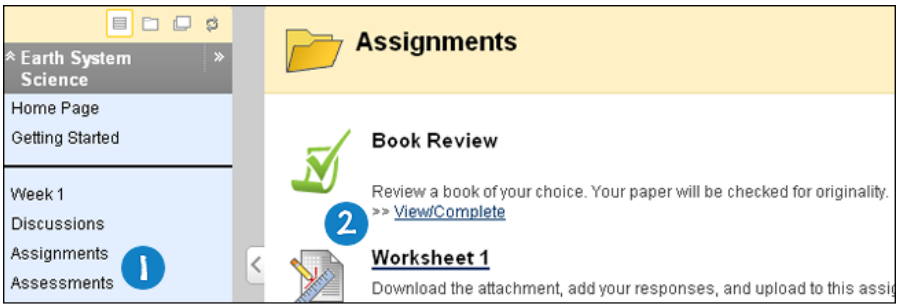
Viewing a SafeAssignment Submission

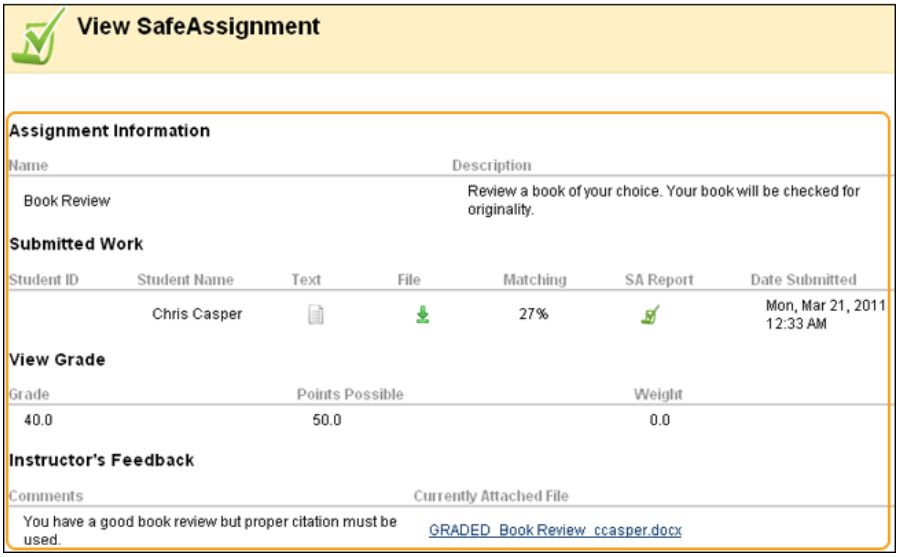
1. Return to the assignment link in the ***Content Area*** that holds the ***SafeAssignment***, for example, the ***Assignments Content Area***.

2. On the ***Assignments*** page, look for the ***SafeAssignment*** and click ***View/Complete***. The ***View SafeAssignment*** page appears. This page includes:
   - ***Assignment Information***: This section displays the name of the ***SafeAssignment*** and its description.
   - ***Submitted Work***: This section provides link to the following :
     - ***Text***: Select this option to view your paper and comments.
     - ***File***: Select this option to download the submission.
     - ***Matching***: The percentage listed is the percentage of your paper that matches other sources. Read the full report to determine if the matching is properly attributed.
     - ***SA Report***: Select this option to view the full ***SafeAssign*** report.
   - ***View Grade***: This section lists the grade given by your instructor.
   - ***Instructor's Feedback***: This section lists any feedback, and provides links to open or download any files attached by your instructor..









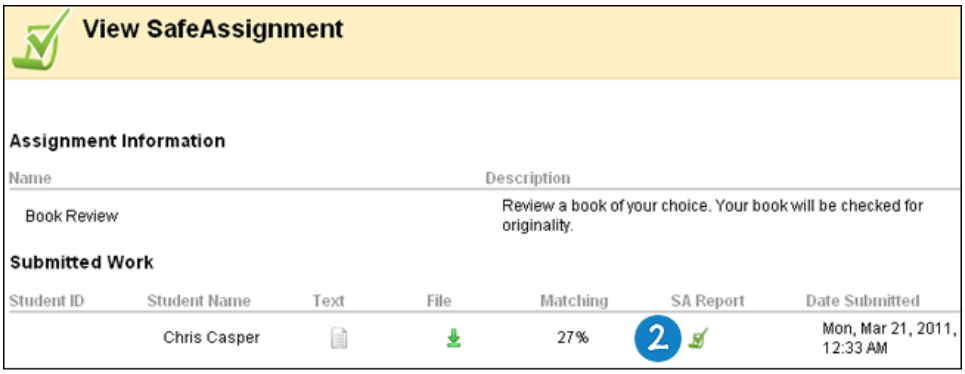
Viewing a SafeAssign Report

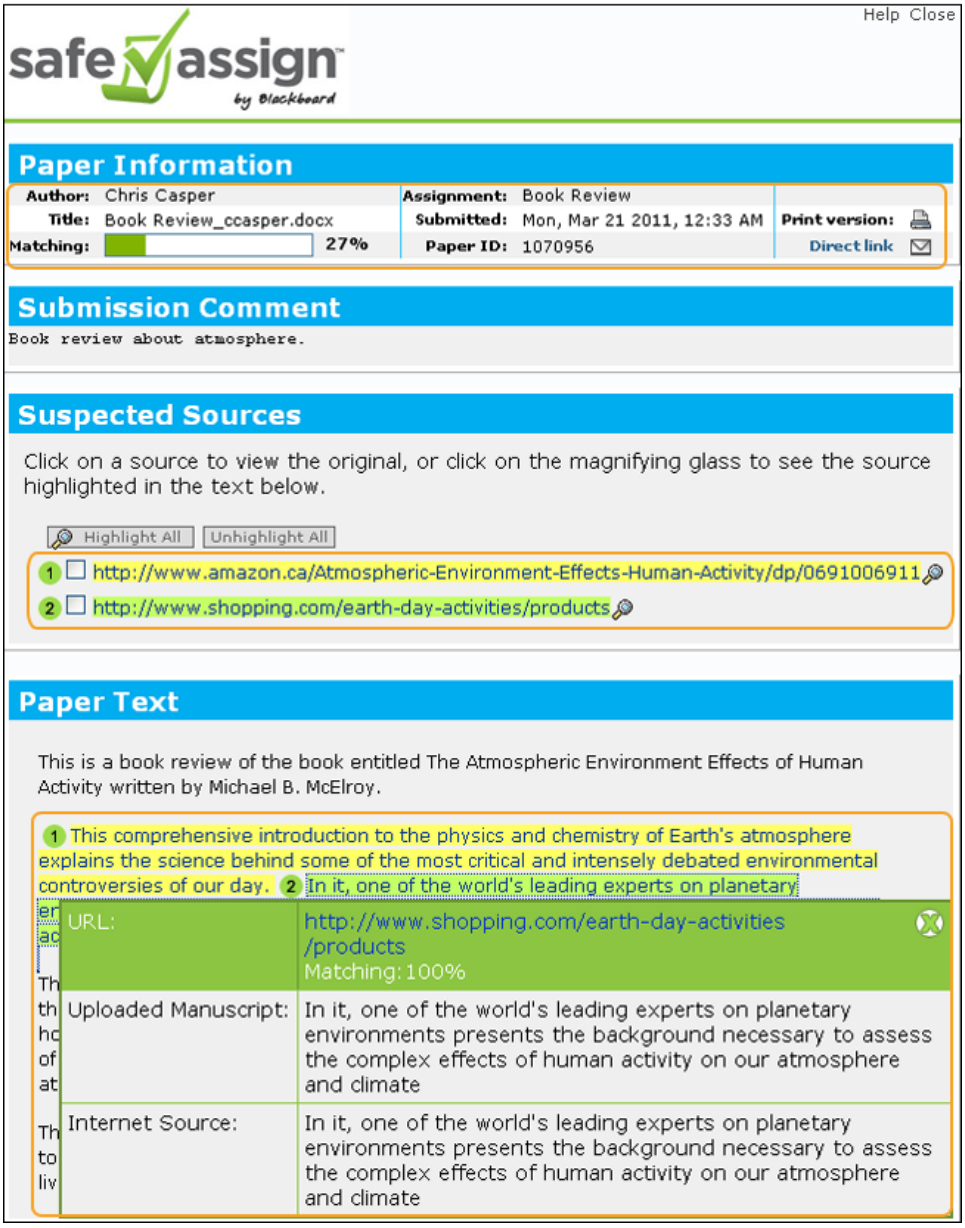
SafeAssign Report provides detailed information about the matches found between your submitted paper and existing sources. The ***SafeAssign Report*** identifies all matching blocks of text. It is your and your instructor's responsibility to investigate whether the matching text is properly referenced or not. Detailing every match prevents detection errors due to differences in citing standards.

1. Return to the ***View SafeAssignment*** page.

2. On the ***View SafeAssignment*** page, click the green check mark link under ***SA Report***. The ***SA Report*** provides extensive information to help you determine whether you are appropriately citing your works. This page includes:
    - ***Paper Information***: This section lists data about the paper, such as the author, percent matching, and when it was submitted. This section also includes options for downloading the report, emailing the report, or viewing a printable version. Note that the printable version may be the most effective view of the report for those users that rely on assistive technologies to access Blackboard Learn.
    - ***Suspected Sources***: This section lists the original sources that match sections of the submitted paper.
        - To display the original work, click on the source title.
        - To display the related phrase within your paper, click the magnifying glass.

- ***Paper Text***: This section shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified and numbered. Click a phrase to display the *Source Comparison Window* which provides a direct comparison between your paper's phrase and the source document it matches.





View SafeAssignment

Assignment Information

Name	Description
Book Review	Review a book of your choice. Your book will be checked for originality.

Submitted Work

Student ID	Student Name	Text	File	Matching	SA Report	Date Submitted
	Chris Casper			27%	2	Mon, Mar 21, 2011, 12:33 AM

Help Close

safeassign by Blackboard

Paper Information

Author:	Chris Casper	**Assignment:**	Book Review		
Title:	Book Review_ccasper.docx	**Submitted:**	Mon, Mar 21 2011, 12:33 AM	**Print version:**	
Matching:	27%	**Paper ID:**	1070956	**Direct link**	

Submission Comment

Book review about atmosphere.

Suspected Sources

Click on a source to view the original, or click on the magnifying glass to see the source highlighted in the text below.

Highlight All | Unhighlight All

1 http://www.amazon.ca/Atmospheric-Environment-Effects-Human-Activity/dp/0691006911

2 http://www.shopping.com/earth-day-activities/products

Paper Text

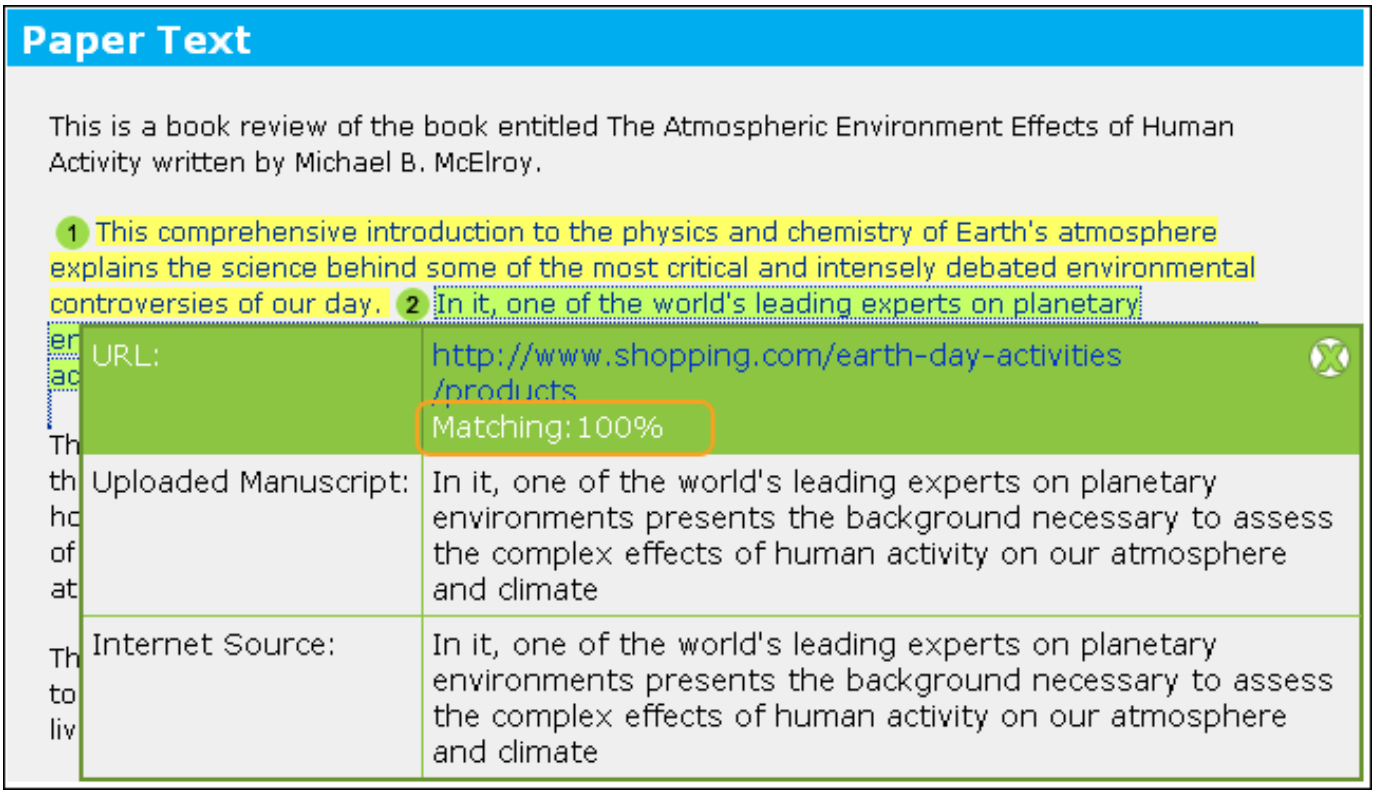
This is a book review of the book entitled The Atmospheric Environment Effects of Human Activity written by Michael B. McElroy.

1 This comprehensive introduction to the physics and chemistry of Earth's atmosphere explains the science behind some of the most critical and intensely debated environmental controversies of our day. 2 In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary

URL:	http://www.shopping.com/earth-day-activities/products Matching: 100%
Uploaded Manuscript:	In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate
Internet Source:	In it, one of the world's leading experts on planetary environments presents the background necessary to assess the complex effects of human activity on our atmosphere and climate

Interpreting the Overall SafeAssign Score

The overall ***SafeAssign*** score indicates the percentage of the submitted paper that matches existing sources.



- ***Scores below 15 percent***: These papers typically include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text matching other documents.
- ***Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent***: These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism.
- ***Scores over 40 percent***: There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess.

USING THE TEXT EDITOR

Entering Text

By default, Blackboard Learn formats text to 12-point, left-justified Arial font. Any other formatting must be done with HTML tags or using the ***Text Editor***.

Text boxes may appear using the ***Text Editor*** or with the options shown below.

Smart Text, *plain text*, or *HTML* may be used in the ***Text Editor***. Options at the bottom of the box allow you to switch the text entry format at any time.

Format Option	*Behavior*
Smart Text	Smart Text automatically recognizes a link entered in the text box. Smart Text should be used if the intent is to display the text in the exact way that it is typed. Line breaks, tabbing, and other keyboard formatting will be retained with Smart Text. Smart Text recognizes the ENTER key as a paragraph tag and accepts HTML tags as well. Smart Text will also prompt you to load images if an image source tag appears. Web addresses entered as URLs are converted to links. The URL must begin with "http://" and there must be a space before the "http://" to distinguish it from the previous word. If an image tag, <IMG>, is entered in Smart Text, Blackboard Learn will automatically prompt you to upload the image.
Plain Text	Plain text displays text as it is written in the text area. Plain text does not render HTML code. HTML code will appear as text. Plain text strips any formatting from the text, except for line breaks. The result is completely unformatted text. This may be useful if you need to do a lot of copy and pasting of the content, or if the intent is to display code information. For example, if you want to show how to write something in HTML, plain text should be used to retain the HTML tags in the content. Plain text does not work with MathML or the equation editor. Changing a text box that includes a mathematical formula to plain text will make the formula unreadable.
HTML	Displays text as coded by the user using Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML) tags. The HTML option should be used only if you know how to use HTML. The result will be content formatted by the HTML tags used.

Preview shows you how the formatted text appears when rendered in the browser.

Note: The *Smart Text* and *plain text* options are only available if your Blackboard administrator has turned off the ***Text Editor*** or if you do not have a Windows Operating System and Internet Explorer Version 5.x or a later.

Note: It is not possible to display a file in a content item and add a *Smart Text* or *plain text* description. Add the description as a separate content item and then add the file in the next content item.

Copying and Pasting Text to Prevent Loss

To protect against losing work if a network connection loss or software error occurs, you may choose to type in an offline simple text editor, such as Notepad, and copy and paste your work into Blackboard Learn. Copying and pasting from fully-featured word processing programs such as Microsoft Word may insert hidden formatting that can cause display issues. You can add the desired formatting after the text has been pasted into and saved in Blackboard Learn's text editor.

Alternately, you can select and copy all of the text typed in Blackboard Learn before submitting or saving. Use the mouse to select the text and then and right-click to copy the text, or press Ctrl+A to select all of the text and then press Ctrl+C to copy the text. On Mac systems, use the COMMAND key rather than CTRL.

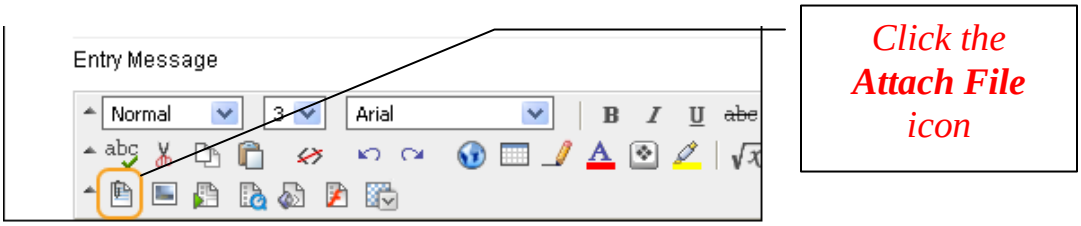
Permitted File Names

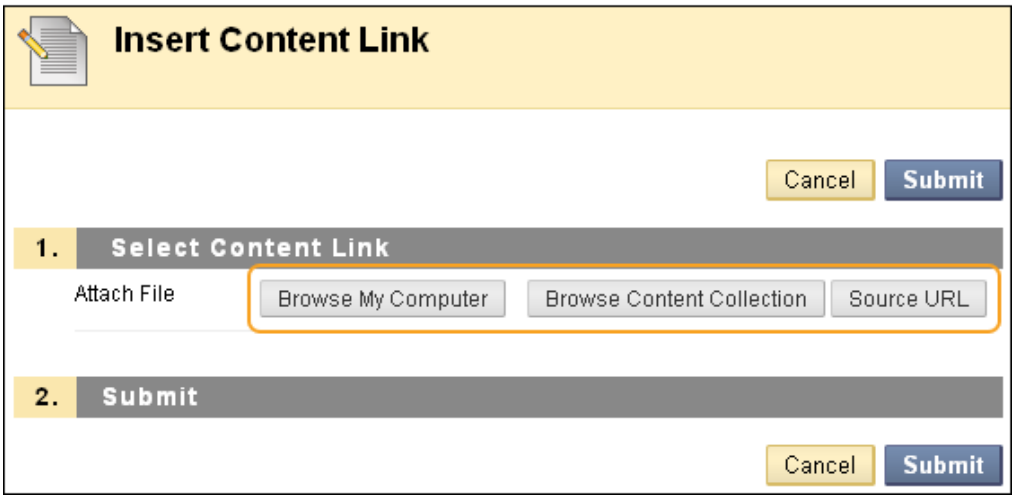
Blackboard Learn allows the use of all characters in file names. However, your operating system and browser may limit the types characters accepted. For example, some browsers do not accept multi-byte characters, and some do not support extended character sets.

Linking to File Attachments through the Text Editor

One important feature in Blackboard Learn is the ability to attach files from inside the Text Editor. This enables both instructors and students to exchange text and other content within a course. Files can be attached from the local computer or as a URL link.

You can include a link to a file attachment by clicking the ***Attach File*** function from the ***Text Editor***. You can select a file from *your computer* or from *Content Collection*, or insert a file as a URL link.





The following table details the fields on the ***Insert Content Link to File*** page.

Field	***Description***
Select Content Link	
Browse	Click Browse to locate a file
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system. For example: http://blackboard/images/picture1.jpeg.
Content Link Options	
Name of Link to File	Enter the name of the link that users click to access the attached file.
Alt Text	Enter text that appears when a pointer hovers over the link. Alternate text is important for accessibility.
Launch in New Window	Select Yes to have the file open in a new separate window. Select No to have the file open in the content frame.

USING THE GRADE CENTER

The **Grade Center** in Blackboard Learn is more than just a way to record students' grades. It is a dynamic and interactive tool, allowing you to record data, calculate grades, and monitor student progress. You can generate reports to communicate information to parents, administrators, and other stakeholders. You can determine which assigned grades to show to your students on their **My Grades** pages, including columns displaying performance results.

In the **Grade Center**, you can provide and manage your students' grades for assignments, tests, discussion posts, journals, blogs, and wikis, and for ungraded items, such as surveys or self tests. You can also create grade columns for any activities or requirements you want to grade, such as special projects, participation, or attendance.

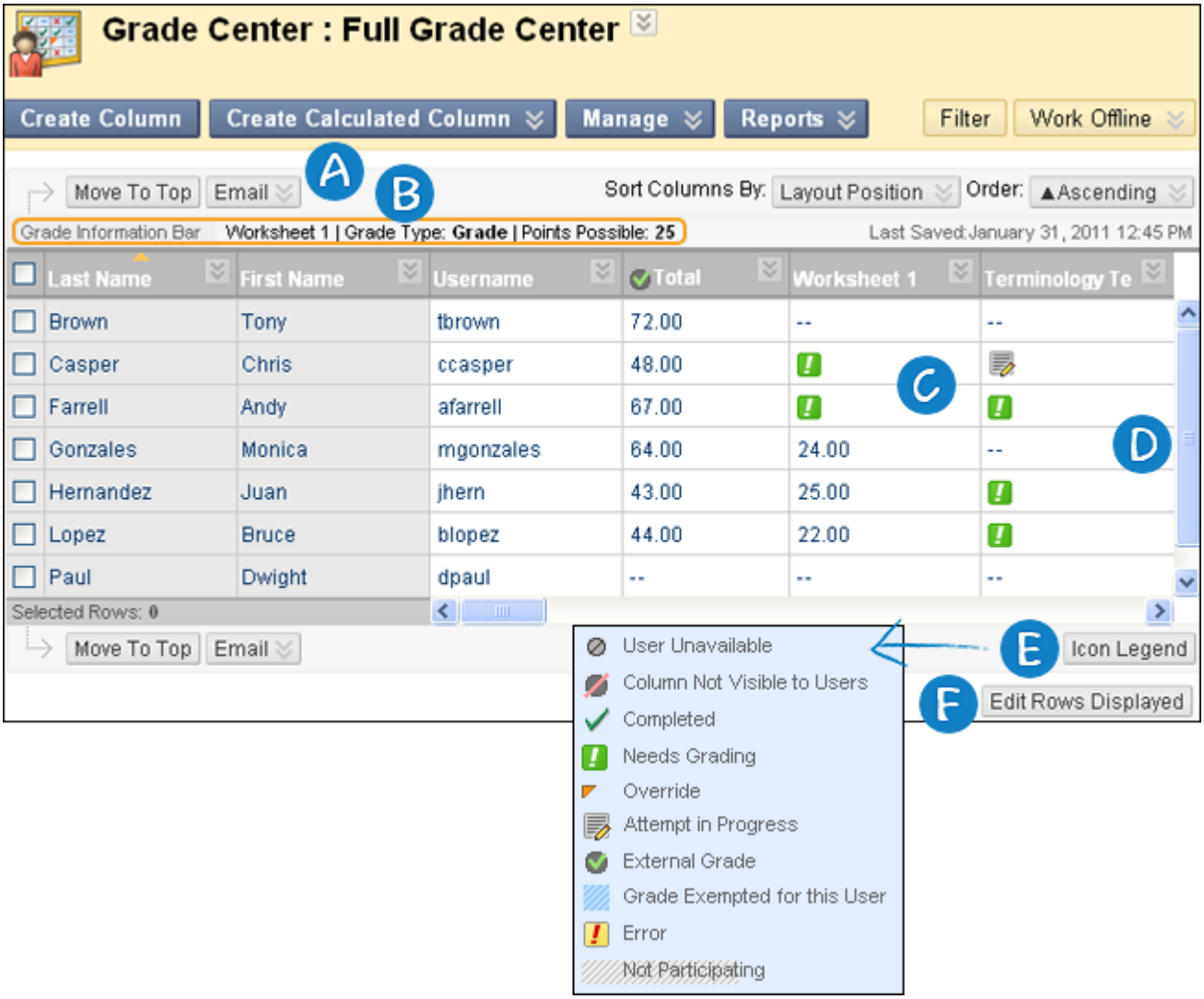
Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

Note: If the **Grade Center** is not loading or you are receiving error messages, please contact your school's computing help desk. They can help you determine the cause of the issue, including making sure you are using a compatible browser for your school's version of Blackboard Learn and checking to see if Javascript is enabled.

Exploring the Grade Center Interface

The **Grade Center** resembles a spreadsheet. Each row is populated by a user in your course and each column includes information for an item, such as an assignment, test, graded blog entry, or survey. You can also use columns to calculate grades. You can provide grades and comments directly on the **Grade Center** page, on the **Grade Details** page, and from a tool, such as the **Discussion Board**.

You are able to customize your view of the **Grade Center** and create grading schemas, Grading Periods, categories, and columns to present and gather the information you need.



A ***Action Bar***: Rows preceding the grid information containing functions and drop-down lists specific to the current page, such as *Create Column, Manage, Filter, Email, Sort Columns By, and Order*.

B ***Grade Information Bar***: Information about a selected column, such as type of grade and points possible. Point to a *Grade Center* column title and details appear in the area preceding the grid and following the *Action Bar*. In this same row, you can view when data was last saved.

C ***Grid/spreadsheet***: Columns, rows, and cells that make up the current view of the *Grade Center* data.

D ***Scroll bars***: The horizontal and vertical scroll bars are used to navigate through the *Grade Center* columns and rows. When you navigate to another course area and return to the *Grade Center*, you will see the same rows and columns on the page from the last visit. The view remains in effect until you use the scroll bars again or log out.

E ***Icon Legend***: Explanation of the symbols used in the columns and cells.

F ***Edit Rows Displayed***: The number of rows appearing in the grid can be changed. In the box, type a number between 5 and 50, and click ***Go***.

About the Grade Center Action Bar

You can perform many actions in the **Grade Center** using the functions appearing in two rows on the **Action Bar**.

The following functions appear in the first row of the ***Action Bar***.

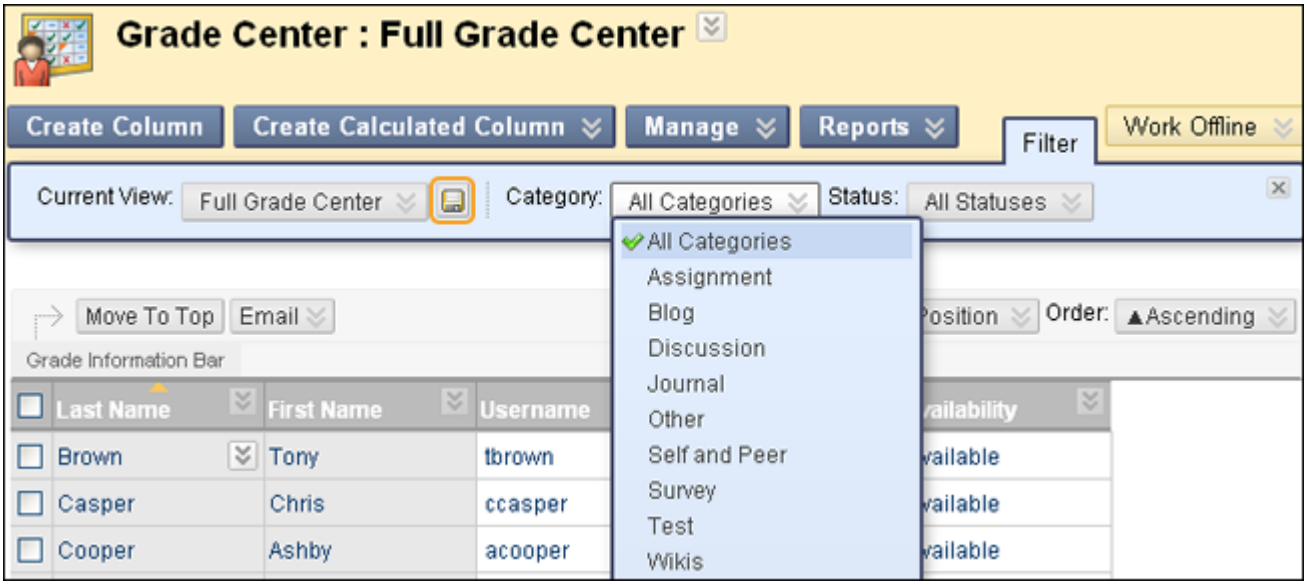
- ***Create Column***: Click to create a grade column.
- ***Create Calculated Column***: Access a drop-down list with options for creating calculated columns.
- ***Manage***: Access the drop-down list with options for managing the *Grade Center*. The options include:
    - ***Grading Periods***: A set of *Grade Center* columns that have been grouped based on a shared characteristic, such as a period of time.
    - ***Grading Schemas***: A grading schema takes the actual points scored on a graded item and compares it to the total points possible for that item to derive a percentage. This percentage is mapped to a range of scores for grade displays, such as A, B, and C or Pass/Fail.
    - ***Grading Color Codes***: User-defined rules to apply color to the cells in the *Grade Center* grid, either by grade or status. *Color coding* the *Grade Center* provides visual indicators to help you interpret information quickly.
    - ***Categories***: Classifications of columns containing similar items, such as "*Tests*" or "*Assignments*," used to organize and view *Grade Center* data.
    - ***Smart Views***: Custom made views of *Grade Center* data created by instructors and saved for continued use.
    - ***Column Organization***: Table view of the *Grade Center* with functions to change the order and visibility of columns. From this page, you can also assign columns to *Grading Periods* and categories. Changes made on this page are for your view of the *Grade Center* only and does not change which columns appear to students on their *My Grades* pages.
    - ***Row Visibility***: You can hide user rows to reduce the number of rows in the *Grade Center* grid and help you focus on specific data.
    - ***Send Email***: The *Send Email* page appears.

- ***Reports***: Create reports from *Grade Center* data and access the grade history for all students.
- ***Filter***: To narrow your view of the *Grade Center* data, click *Filter* to expand the field and select an option from the following drop-down lists:
    - ***Current View***: Includes the *Full Grade Center view*, *Smart Views*, and *Grading Periods*. You can select one of the views to use as the default view by clicking *Set Current View as Default* ( ) next to the *Current View* drop-down list. When you log out and return to your course later, the view you selected as the default appears in the grid. You can select other views from the *Current View* drop-down list at any time.
    - ***Category***: Includes all default categories and any you have created.
    - ***Status***: Includes the following grading statuses:
        - All Statuses
        - Completed

- Edited Manually
- Exempt
- In progress
- Needs Grading
- Not attempted

In some instances, you can make another selection in an additional drop-down list to further narrow the columns and users that appear in the grid. For example, after selecting the *Assignment* category, you can select the *Needs Grading* status and only view the columns and users containing assignments that need to be graded. The category or status you choose to view in the grid remains in effect until you change it or log out.

Click the **X** to close the **Filter** field.



- **Work Offline**: Access features that allow you to work with *Grade Center* data outside of Blackboard Learn.

The following functions appear in the second row of the **Action Bar**.

- **Move to Top**: Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click *Move to Top* to move the rows to the first positions in the grid.

- **Email**: Select one or multiple check boxes for users and click *Email* to display the options of sending to users, observers, or users and observers. After selecting an option, the *Send Email* page appears.

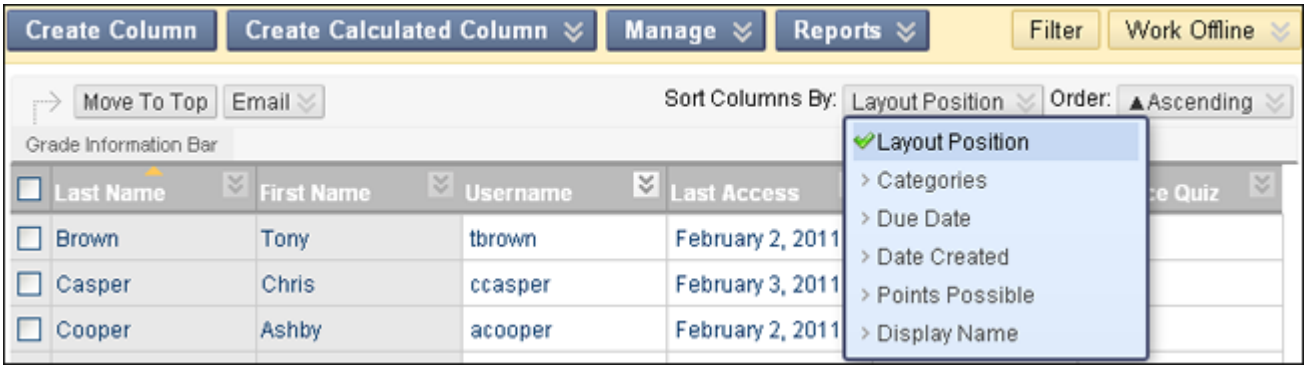
  Note: The observer role is not available with a Basic License.

- **Sort Columns By**: Access a drop-down list that allows you to sort the *Grade Center* items. You can sort by:
  - Layout Position (default)
  - Categories
  - Due Date
  - Date Created

- Points Possible
- Display Name

- **Order**: Sort the data in *Ascending* or *Descending* order.

  Note: The view remains in effect until you sort columns again or log out.



How to Make the Grade Center Accessible

To make the **Grade Center** accessible to as many people as possible, the **Grade Center** has two different modes, **Interactive** and **Screen Reader**.

- **Interactive Mode**: *Grade Center* default setting. You can freeze columns and type grades directly in the cells—called inline editing.

- **Screen Reader Mode**: *Grade Center* data appears in a simplified grid. The table is static and you type grades on the *Grade Details* page accessed from the cell's contextual menu. You cannot freeze columns or edit inline, making it easier to navigate by keystroke and accommodate screen readers. When the *Grade Center* is first accessed by users with screen readers, users are immediately given a choice whether to use this non-interactive view before progressing any further.

In both modes, you can do the following:

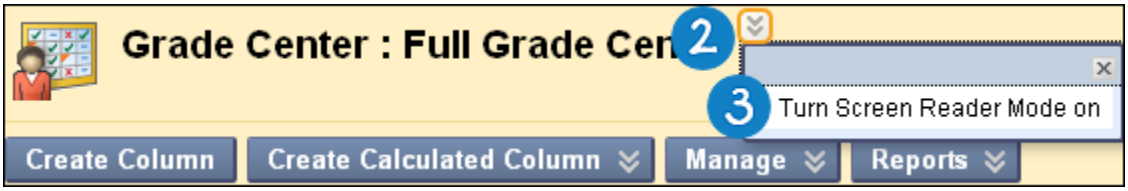
- Move the mouse pointer from column to column using the tab key.
- Navigate the cells using the up, down, left, and right arrow keys on a standard keyboard.

Use the following steps to change to ***Screen Reader Mode***.

1. Access the **Grade Center**.

2. Click the **Action Link** ( ) for the **Grade Center** heading to access the contextual menu.

3. Click **Turn Screen Reader Mode on**.



This setting is not saved across sessions. It lasts only as long as the current session. Once you log out, the view defaults back to **Interactive Mode**.

Creating and Managing Grade Center Columns

In the **Grade Center**, three types of columns appear: **user**, **grade** and **calculated**. Each column has a contextual menu with options. The options that appear vary depending on the type of column. When you create or edit grade and calculated columns, you can select the appropriate settings to configure the **Grade Center** to calculate and display the data most useful to you. You also have the abilities to hide and show columns, associate columns with categories and **Grading Periods**, and view columns in any order.

Grade Center columns are utilized by course functions outside of the **Grade Center**. For example, when you create **Adaptive Release** and **Early Warning System** rules, you can select **Grade Center** grade and calculated columns as rule criteria.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school controls whether this tool is available. If this tool is not available, you can contact your administrator to discuss its status.

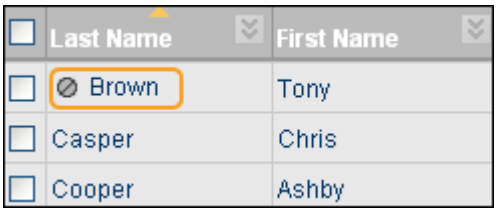
About User Columns in the Grade Center

In a new course, six default user columns appear in the **Grade Center** grid:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Username
- Student ID
- Last Access
- Availability

You cannot delete or edit default user columns. You can hide all but the first user column in the grid. If you need to hide the first column, you can rearrange the user columns on the *Column Organization* page, but at least one user column must show. You can also freeze user columns so they remain in place as you scroll in the grid.

On the *Users* page, you can make a user unavailable. In the *Grade Center*, the *User Unavailable* icon ( ) appears in an unavailable user's column. However, the user's row is not hidden in the grid. Unavailable users cannot access your course.



To sort any column, click the column heading or caret. For example, you can sort the **Last Access** column so users who accessed the course most recently appear first in the list. The sorted list remains in effect until you change it or log out.

About Grade Columns in the Grade Center

When you create gradable items in your course, grade columns are created automatically in the **Grade Center**. You can edit a grade column to rename it, associate it with a different category or **Grading Period**, change the grading schema, determine if students will see the results on their **My Grades** pages, and include or exclude the column in calculations. The grade columns created automatically include:

- **Assignments**: You can deliver assignments to individuals or groups. When an assignment is ready to grade, the **Needs Grading** icon ( ) appears in a student's cell in the **Grade Center**, and you must grade the attempt manually.

- **Surveys**: Surveys are scored automatically by the system. When a student completes a survey, a check mark ( ) appears in the student's cell in the **Grade Center**. To view survey results, access the column's contextual menu and select **Attempts Statistics**. On the **Survey Statistics** page, you can view the percentage of students who selected each answer. You cannot view individual results.

- **Tests**: Most test questions are scored automatically by the system. If you create a test that is comprised only of questions scored automatically, the grades appear in the students' cells in the **Grade Center**. If you create a test that contains questions that need to be scored manually, such as essay or short answer questions, the **Needs Grading** icon appears in students' cells for completed tests. You must grade those questions before the test results appear in the students' cells.

- **Discussion Board**: If you have enabled grading for forums or threads, you must manually grade submitted posts. After a student submits a post, the **Needs Grading** icon does not appear in the student's cell in the **Grade Center**. If you start the grading process in the **Discussion Board** tool, you can view who has posts that require grading. On the **Grade Discussion Forum** and **Grade Discussion Thread** pages, the **Needs Grading** icon appears next to users who have submitted one or more posts.

  Note: When a group member submits a post in a graded **Group Discussion Board**, the grade you assign is only for the individual member.

- **Blogs**, **Journals**, and **Wikis**: If you have enabled grading, you must manually grade submitted entries and wiki contributions. After a student submits work, the **Needs Grading** icon does not appear in the student's cell in the **Grade Center**. If you start the grading process in the appropriate tool, you can view who has work that requires grading. On the topic page in the side panel, the **Needs Grading** icon appears next to users who have submitted work.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the **Grade Center** displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

How to Create Grade Columns in the Grade Center

If a grade column is not created automatically, you can create grade columns for any student work you want to grade. For example, you can create a column to record participation grades.

Example:

Last Name	First Name	Participation	Chapter 1 Tes
Akbar	Mina	24.00	-
Brown	Tony	22.00	50.00
Casper	Chris	19.00	40.00

In the preceding image, two grade columns are shown:

- **Participation**: Created manually by an instructor to record participation grades.
- **Chapter 1 Test**: Created automatically by the system when an instructor created and deployed the test.

The data in the "*Participation*" column is populated when an instructor manually assigns the grades. The data in the "*Chapter 1 Test*" column is populated when students complete their tests and the test is scored automatically by the system. If the test includes questions that need to be graded by an instructor, such as an essay or short answer question, the **Needs Grading** icon ( ) appears in the students' cells after the tests are submitted.

When creating **Grade Center** columns, you can do the following:

- Choose how the grade appears. You can display the grades in the **Grade Center** grid and on students' **My Grades** pages as a score, letter, text, percentage, or as complete/incomplete.
- Associate it with a category and **Grading Period**.
- Exclude or include the column in any potential **Grade Center** calculations, such as when creating a calculated column.
- Determine whether the column's results appear on students' **My Grades** pages.

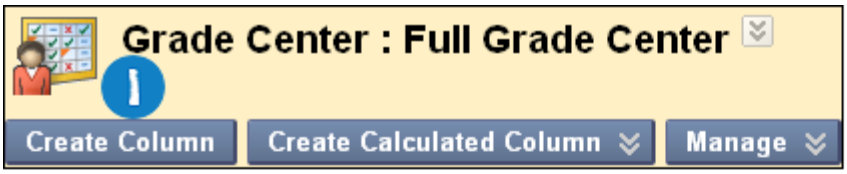
Use the following steps to create a grade column.

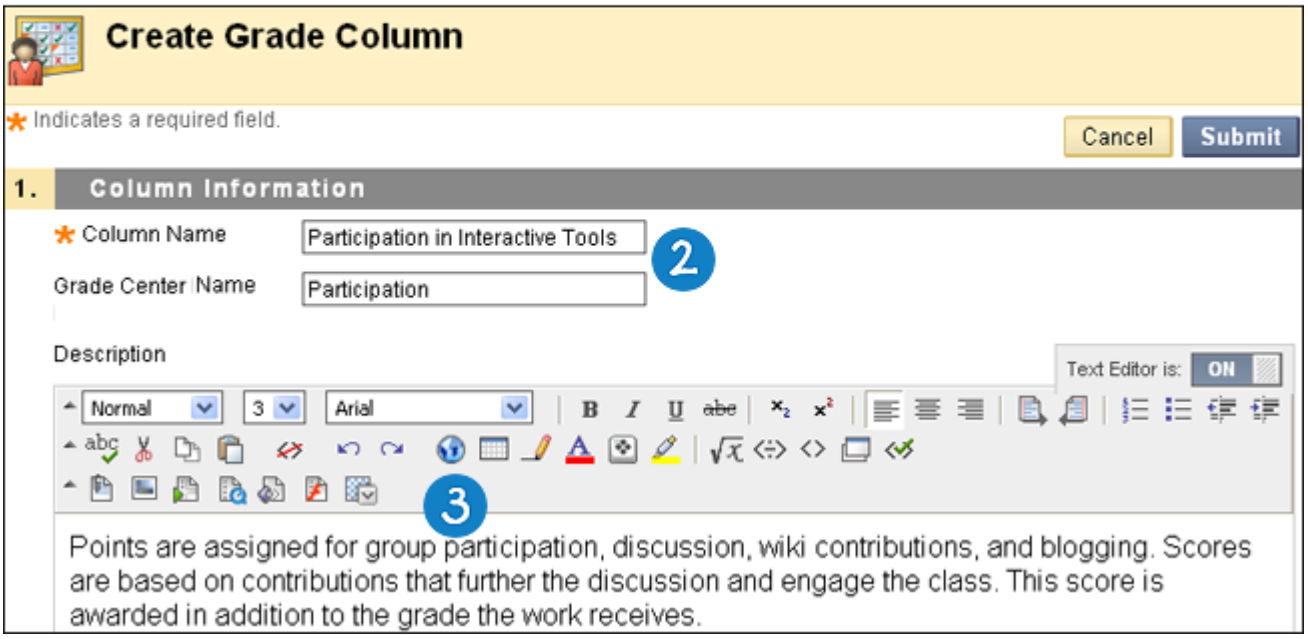
1. In the **Grade Center**, click **Create Column** on the **Action Bar**.

2. On the **Create Grade Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column Name**. This name becomes the column name in the **Grade Center** and on students' **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the **Grade Center**, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

   Note: Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the **Grade Center** grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on **Grade Information Bar**. The entire name appears on students' **My Grades** pages.

3. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the **Text Editor** functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their **My Grades** pages.

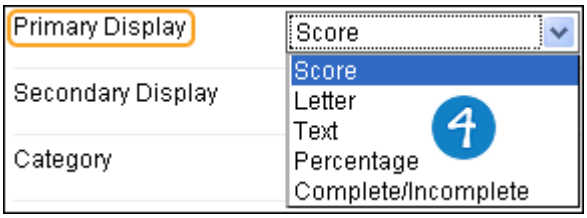




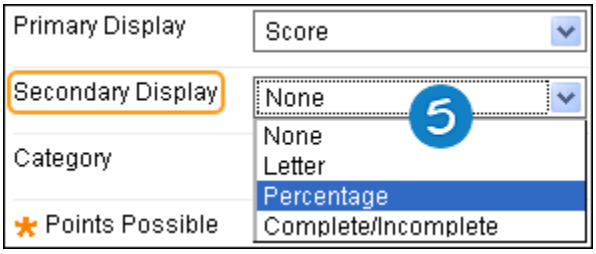
4. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the **Grade Center** and to students on their **My Grades** pages. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:
   - **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
   - **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
   - **Text**: Text appears in the column when a custom text grading schema is created. Examples of text values include: *Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor –OR- Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory*. If no custom text grading schema is created, and the *Text* option is selected, you are allowed to type text in the column's cells. If you choose to share the column results with students on their *My Grades* pages, they will see the text values for their grades.

     Note: When you convert a numeric score to text without creating a custom text grading schema, and then return to numeric scoring, values that cannot be converted display a zero after conversion. Therefore, if you want to include text as grades, Blackboard recommends creating a custom text grading schema and associating it with the columns.

   - **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.
   - **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.

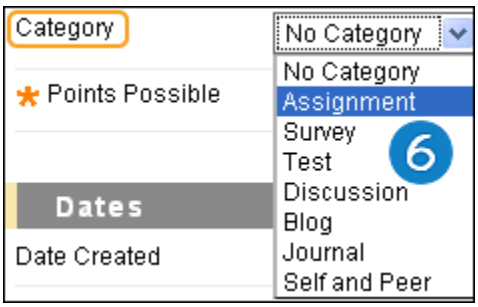


5. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display** and **Text**. The default **Text** option does not appear as you cannot edit a secondary value from a column's cell. If you create a customized grading schema based on text and have not used it as the **Primary Display**, it appears in the list. In the **Grade Center** column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students.



Tip: If you choose *Percentage* as the *Primary Display* and type the achieved numeric score into the *Grade Center* grid directly, the number you type is interpreted as a percentage and not the score. Therefore, if you want the system to calculate percentages when you type a score, select *Score* as the *Primary Display* and select *Percentage* as the *Secondary Display*. Scores you type directly in the grid will display a percentage in parentheses.

6. Optionally, you can associate the column with a category by making a selection in the *Category* drop-down list. The default setting is *No Category*. You can use categories to filter *Grade Center* data, create *Smart Views* that focus the view of the *Grade Center* data, and create calculated columns.



7. In the **Points Possible** box, type the total points. Entries must be numeric.

8. If **Grading Periods** exist, you can associate the column with a **Grading Period** by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no **Grading Periods** have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use **Grading Periods** to filter **Grade Center** data and create calculated columns.

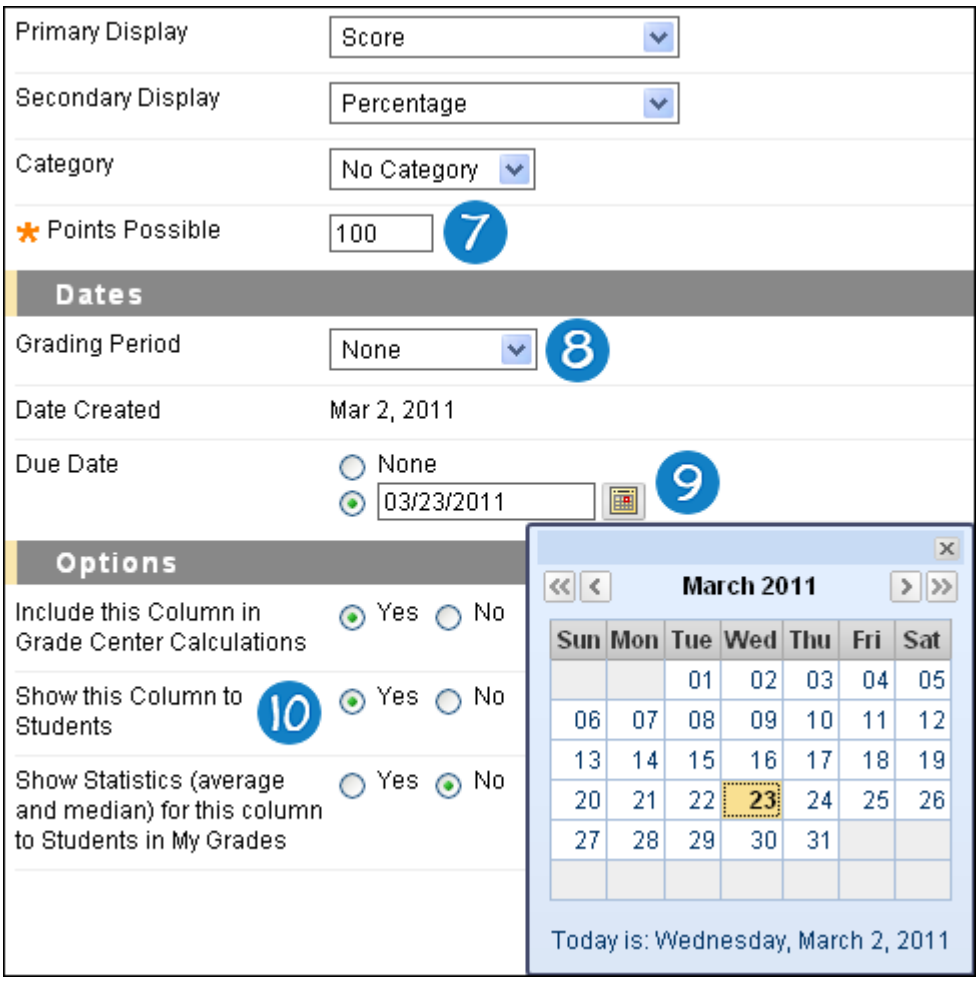
9. Optionally, select the option next to **Due Date** and type a date (mm/dd/yyyy) or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar**. Columns that are assigned a due date are associated automatically with a **Grading**

Period if the due date falls within the date range of the **Grading Period**. The option to automatically associate columns with a **Grading Period** is set when creating or editing the **Grading Period**. You can use due dates with the **Early Warning System** to generate an alert if a test or assignment is not submitted on time.

10. Select the **Options**.
    - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select Yes to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
    - **Show this Column to Students**: Select Yes to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
    - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select Yes to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

    Note: When editing the **Grade Center** column for a test, the options to *Include this Column in Other Grade Center Calculations and Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades* are not available if you select the option to **Hide Results** for this **Test Completely** from **Instructor** and the **Grade Center** on the **Test Options** page.

11. Click **Submit**.



Result

Once you have created the grade column, you can:

- Associate a rubric with it to make grading easier and less subjective.
- Assign grades.
- Include the column when creating calculated columns.

About Calculated Columns in the Grade Center

In the **Grade Center**, you can calculate grades using calculated columns. Calculated columns combine data from multiple columns to attain performance results. You can share these results with students and your school.

You can use calculated columns to do the following:

- Calculate the total grade.
- Weight grades by column, category, or both.
- Calculate the average grade.
- Calculate a minimum or maximum grade.
- Set criteria when creating **Adaptive Release** rules and **Early Warning System** rules.

You can include a calculated column when creating another calculated column. *For example, if you created a calculated column that weighs quiz grades, you can include the column when creating a final grade column.*

Two calculated columns are created by default and appear in new courses—the **Total** and **Weighted Total** columns. You can rename, change the settings, determine which columns are included, or delete these default columns.

Default Total Column

- Sum of all grade columns.
- Calculated columns are not included.
- Ungraded items are not included. You can change this by editing the column and selecting **No** for **Calculate** as **Running Total**.
- Included in **Smart Views** > **Final Grade View**.
- Set as the **External Grade** column. This is the column used for the final grade. It is shared with the school as the student's grade for the course. Set any column as the **External Grade** column by clicking the **Action Link** ( ) in the column header and selecting **Set** as **External Grade**. You must set another column as the **External Grade** before you can delete the **Total** column.

Default Weighted Total Column

- No default settings. You must edit the column to select the columns to include in the weight calculation.
- Included in **Smart Views** > **Final Grade View**.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the **Grade Center** displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

About Total Columns in the Grade Center

The **Total** column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns and categories are included in a **Total** column's calculation. When creating a **Total** column, you can include other calculated columns.

A **Total** column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column. The following list includes the settings for the default **Total** column.

- All grade columns are included in the calculation.
- Calculated columns are not included.
- Ungraded items are not included. You can change this by editing the column and selecting **No** for **Calculate** as **Running Total**.
- Included in **Smart Views** > **Final Grade View**.
- Set as the **External Grade** column, which is the grade reported to your school. You cannot delete the default **Total** column until you set another column as the **External Grade**. Set any column as the **External Grade** column by clicking the **Action Link** ( ) in the column header and selecting **Set** as **External Grade**.

Note: Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a **Total** column's calculation. For example, if you set a column to display text, such as *Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory*, you cannot use it in grade calculations.

Total Points Formula

Add the points possible of all selected columns to find the total points. Then, add a student's earned scores for all selected columns. This is the total earned out of the total points possible. Exempted items are ignored. The results display according to the **Primary** and **Secondary Display** options.

Column 1 points earned + Column 2 points earned + Column 3 points earned + Column 4 points earned = Total Points Earned out of Total Points Possible

<u>Example: Student A</u>

Eight values: 8/10, 3/5, 2/2, 3/7, 47/50, 20/25, 88/100

Earned Points Value: 171

Points Possible Value: 199

Total Points: 171/199

<u>Example: Student B</u>

Eight values: 9/10, X (exempt), 1/2, 5/7, 45/50, X, 22/25, 90/100

Earned Points Value: 172

Points Possible Value: 194

Total Points: 172/194

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the **Grade Center** displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

How to Create Total Columns in the Grade Center

The **Total** column is a type of calculated column that generates a grade based on the cumulative points earned, related to the points allowed. You can select which columns, *Grading Periods*, and categories are used in the calculation for a **Total** column. You can change your selections at any time and the calculation updates automatically.

Note: A **Total** column is created by default and appears in new courses. You can rename, change the settings, change which columns are included, or delete this default column.

When creating a **Total** column, you can include:

- **All Grade Columns**: Include all individual grade columns in the *Grade Center*.
- **All Grade Columns in Grading Period**: If *Grading Periods* exist, include only the grade columns associated with a *Grading Period*.
- **Selected Columns and Categories**: Include specific grade columns and categories (and the associated columns).

Note: Columns with text as the grade display are not included in a **Total** column's calculation. For example, if you set a grade column to display text, such as *Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory*, you cannot use it in calculations.

Example: Selected Columns

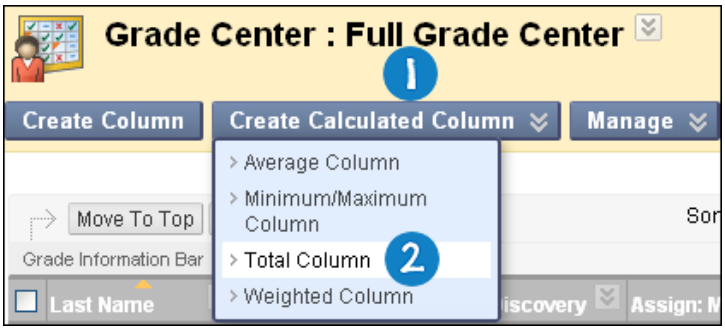
You create a **Total** column to determine the final grade for the first quarter that includes all of the columns in the first quarter **Grading Period**.

Example: Selected Columns and Categories

You want to provide students with a percentage score showing their effort on assignments and participation. When creating a **Total** column, you select the *Assignment* category and two participation columns. Students can view their percentage scores on their *My Grades* pages.

Use the following steps to create a **Total** column.

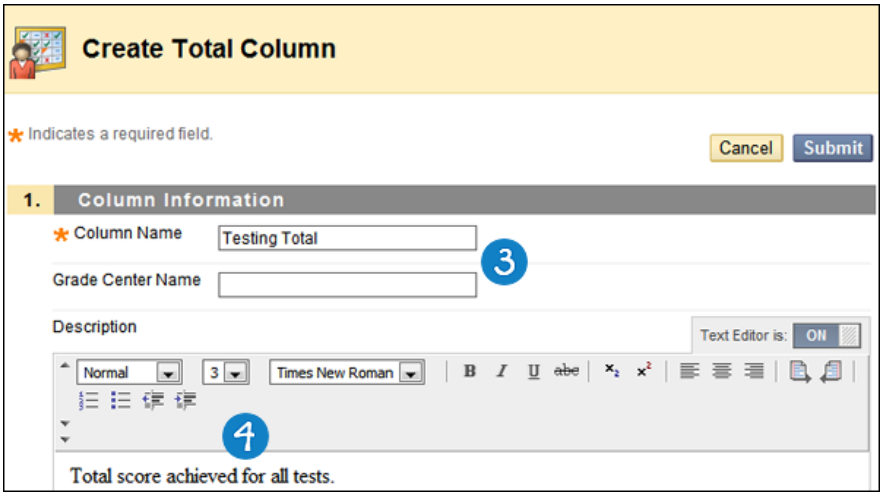
1. In the **Grade Center**, point to **Create Calculated Column** on the **Action Bar** to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Total Column**.



3. On the **Create Total Column** page, type a brief, descriptive **Column** Name. This name becomes the column name in the **Grade Center** and on students' **My Grades** pages. If this name is too long to display clearly in the **Grade Center**, you can type a short, descriptive name in the **Grade Center Name** box.

   Note: Only the first 14-15 characters typed in either name box appear in the column heading in the *Grade Center* grid. If you point to the column heading, you can see its full name on the *Grade Information Bar*. The entire name appears on students' *My Grades* pages.

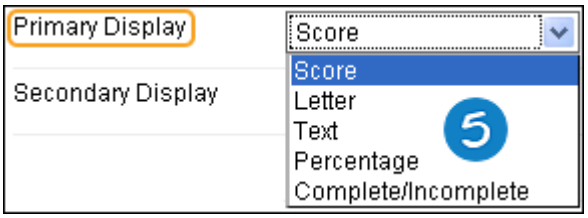
4. Optionally, type a **Description**. You can use the *Text Editor* functions to format the text. Information provided here appears to students when they click the item name on their *My Grades* pages.



5. Make a selection in the **Primary Display** drop-down list. The selection is the grade format shown in the **Grade Center** and to students on their **My Grades** pages. If you created any custom grading schemas, they appear in the list. Five default options appear:

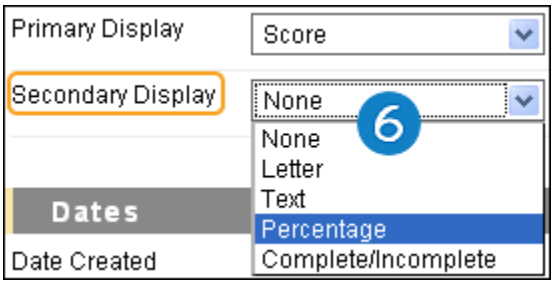
   - **Score**: A numeric grade appears in the column. This is the default setting. If you do not make a selection, the score appears in the grid.
   - **Letter**: A letter grade appears in the column. The default grading schema is used to assign letter grades. For example, a score of 21/30 equals 70% and appears as a C.
   - **Text**: This default display option does not display text for a Total column or allow you to type directly in the column's cell to edit it. If you select Text, the numeric score appears in the column. If you want to display text values, you must create a custom text grading schema. Examples of text values include: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor -OR- Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. If you choose to share the column results with students on their My Grades pages, they will see the text values for their grades.

- **Percentage**: A percentage appears in the column. For example, a score of 21/30 appears as 70%.
- **Complete/Incomplete**: When an item is submitted, a check mark (✔) appears in the column, regardless of the score achieved.



6. Optionally, make a selection in the **Secondary Display** drop-down list. The default setting is **None**. The same options appear in this drop-down list except for the option chosen as the **Primary Display**. In the **Grade Center** column, the secondary value appears in parentheses. The secondary value does not appear to students, and you cannot manually edit the secondary value from a column's cell.

   Note: If you select the default *Text* option, text will not appear. If you want text values to appear, create a custom text grading schema.



7. If **Grading Periods** exist, you can associate the **Total** column with a **Grading Period** by making a selection in the **Grading Period** drop-down list. If no **Grading Periods** have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. You can use **Grading Periods** to filter **Grade Center** data and create calculated columns.
8. In the **Select Columns** section, select what to include in the **Total** column's calculation. The following table lists the options.

Option	Description
All Grade Columns	Include all individual grade columns in the Grade Center.
All Grade Columns in Grading Period	Select a Grading Period from the drop-down list to include only those columns associated with the Grading Period in the calculation. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear.
Selected Columns and Categories	Select grade columns and categories individually. Select the columns in the Columns to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the Selected Columns box. When you select a column, you can view information about the column in the Column Information area below the Columns to Select box. Note: A column that is set to No for Include this Column in Grade

Center Calculations does not appear in the selection list.

Tip: For Windows, to select multiple items in a list, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last items. To select items out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each item needed. For Macs, press the COMMAND key instead of the CTRL key.

Select the categories in the Categories to Select box and click the right-pointing arrow to move the selections to the Selected Columns box. When you select a category, you can view which columns are included in the category in the Category Information area below the Categories to Select box. Other options appear after you move the category to the Selected Columns box:

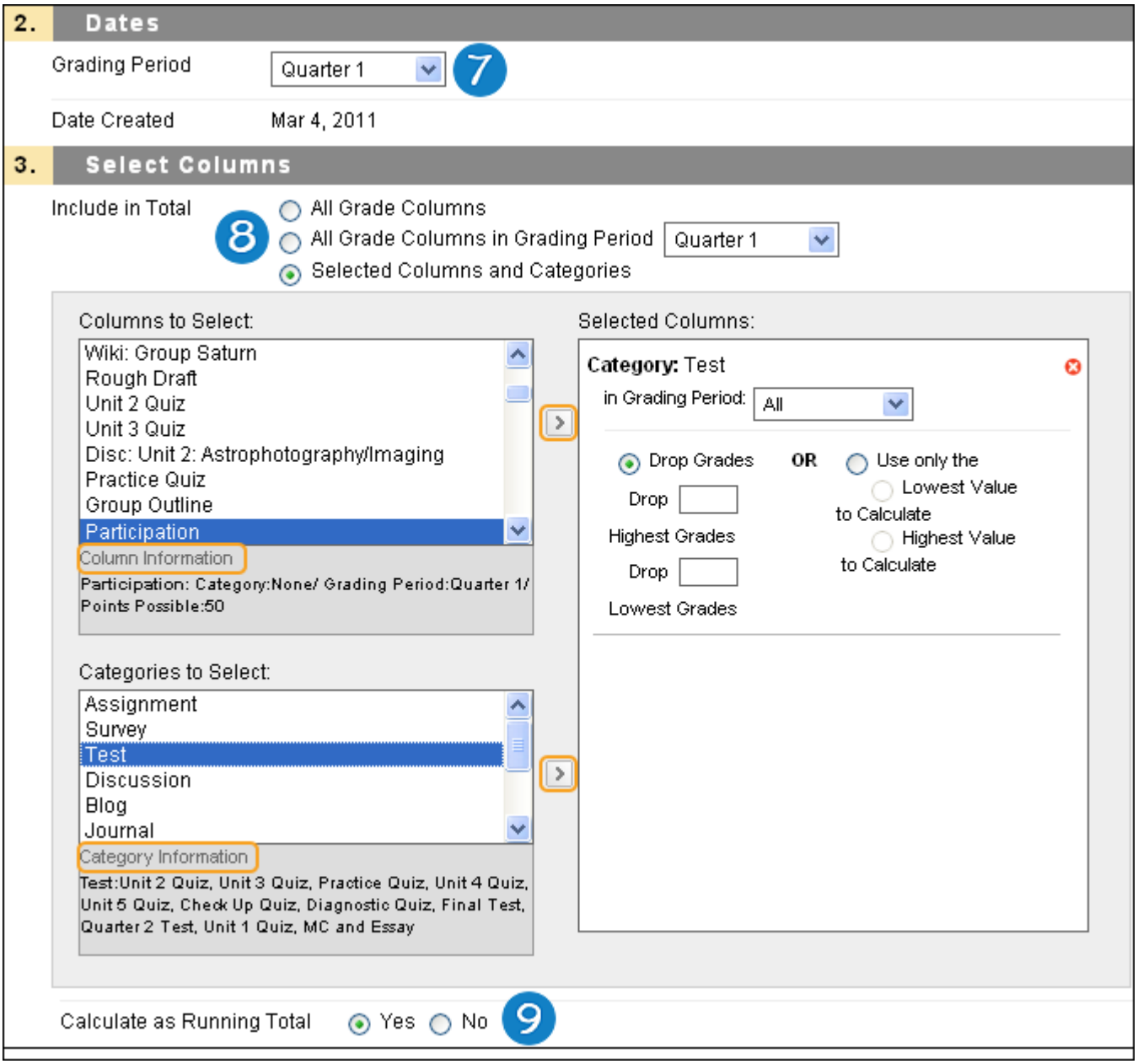
- If Grading Periods exist, make a selection in the Grading Period drop-down list. If no Grading Periods have been created, the drop-down list does not appear. If you have selected a category for the calculation, you can limit the columns used by selecting a particular Grading Period.

- Drop Grades removes a number of either the highest or lowest grades for each category from the calculation. If you do not type numbers in the boxes, no grades are dropped.

- Use only the Lowest -OR- Highest Value to Calculate removes all grades from the calculation except for the best or worst score.

Note: To delete a selection in the **Selected Columns** box, click the red **X**.

9. **Calculate as Running Total**: Select **Yes** to calculate as a running total. Running totals exempt cells that do not contain data. Select **No** to include all selected columns in the calculation, using a value of 0 if no grade exists. This can make grades appear artificially low.



10. Select the **Options**.
    - **Include this Column in Grade Center Calculations**: Select **Yes** to make the column available for potential inclusion when creating calculated columns.
    - **Show this Column to Students**: Select **Yes** to display the column to students on their My Grades pages.
    - **Show Statistics (average and median) for this Column to Students in My Grades**: Select **Yes** to include statistical information with the grade value when shown to students.

11. Click **Submit**.

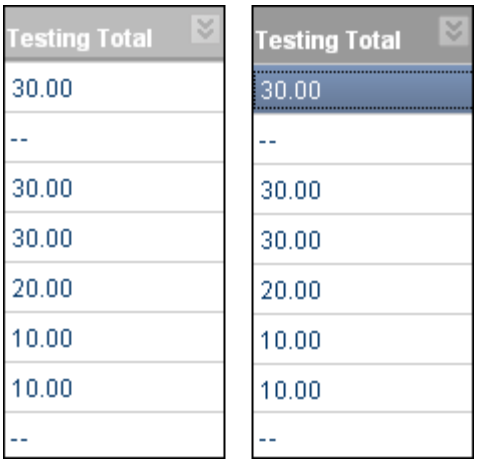
Note: If a column is deleted from the **Grade** Center that is included in a **Total** calculation, it is also removed from the calculation.

Result

The new **Total** column appears last in the **Grade Center** grid unless you associated it with a **Grading Period**. All **Grading Period** columns appear together in the grid until you reorder them.

You can change the column's settings at any time and change which columns are included. Once edited, the calculation updates automatically.

You are not allowed to type directly in a **Total** column's cell to edit the calculated grade. Therefore, no **Action Link** ( ) appears when you move your mouse pointer over an individual cell in a **Total** column.



To keep a **Total** column in view, despite the addition of other columns, move the column and freeze it.

Note: You can assign a grade to a maximum of four decimal places, but the *Grade Center* displays only to a maximum of two decimal places. Grades to three or four decimal places are rounded up. For example, 45.4357 is rounded up to 45.44. Calculated columns also display to a maximum of two decimal places.

BLACKBOARD HELP DESK CONTACT INFORMATION

Yolanda Abrigo, CMS Administrator/Media Specialist/CBC Help Desk
Distance Learning Department
Phone: 361.354.2506
Toll Free: 866.722.2838 ext. 2506
Fax: 361.354.2577
ycharles@coastalbend.edu
helpdesk@coastalbend.edu
http://www.coastalbend.edu ***(click Chat for live chat support)***