FACULTY GUIDE

[Subject to Change Frequently - Last updated 7/22/22]

Blackboard

Ultra

Build a Course in Ultra with the Course Template

Drake Online and
Continuing Education

Build a Course in Ultra Course View
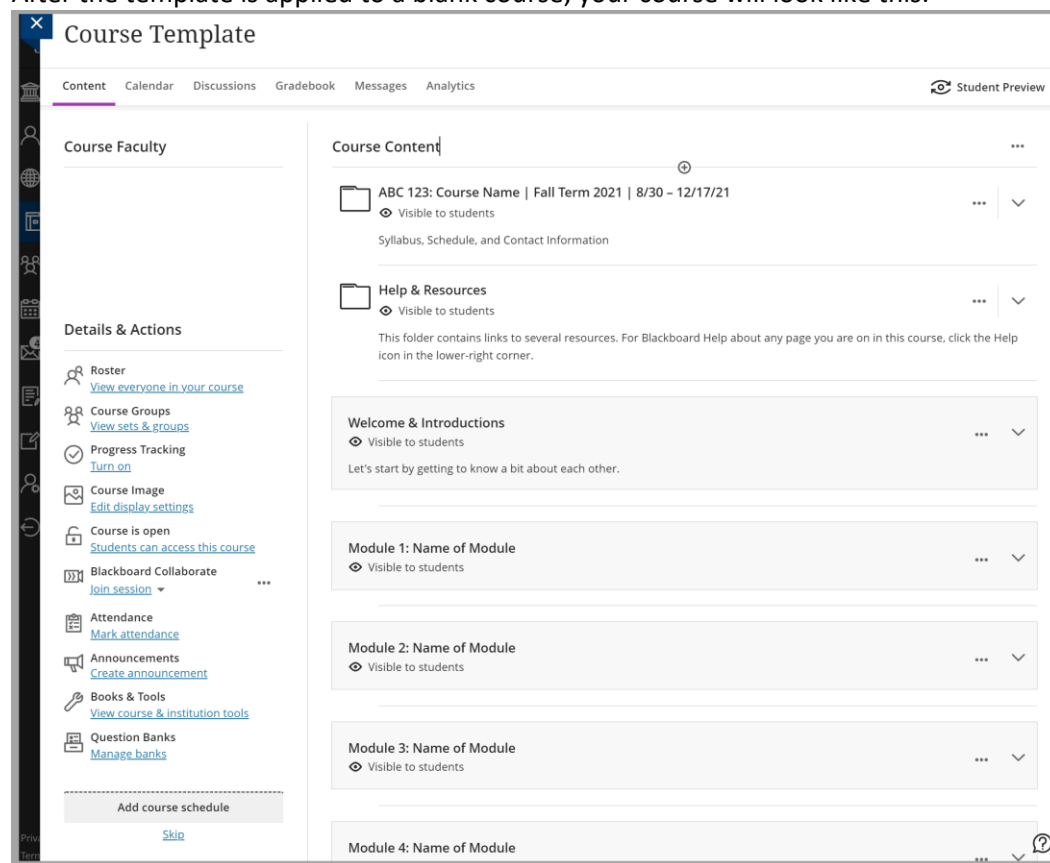
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Overview

This guide is designed to help you develop courses in Blackboard Ultra that utilize the recommended course template available through Drake Online and Continuing Education. If you do not have a course format template applied to your course (or sandbox), you can request one. Click *Request Service* button and then select *Apply course template* when completing the form.

For additional information on using Blackboard Learn Ultra:
- Video Tutorial: Build an Ultra Course from Scratch (17:42 video)
- Look over Drake Online's Faculty Resources website
- Knowledge Base article: Blackboard Learn Ultra Training
- Ticket to Request Assistance (includes template request)

Ultra Course Template

After the template is applied to a blank course, your course will look like this:

If the template is applied to a course with existing content, this template format will display below your content.

Moving Items

If at any point you need to move an item, hover over the item to display the double arrows near the right side. Click and drag the arrows icon to move the item to the desired location. It works best if your browser is sized to fullscreen.

Converting a Course from Blackboard Original

If you are converting a Blackboard Original course to Blackboard Ultra, it is extremely helpful to open two browser windows — one for Original course view, the other for Ultra course view. If you do not have multiple monitors, resize your windows so you can view both courses side by side.

Edit the Course Information Folder

To begin, edit the name of the course information folder.
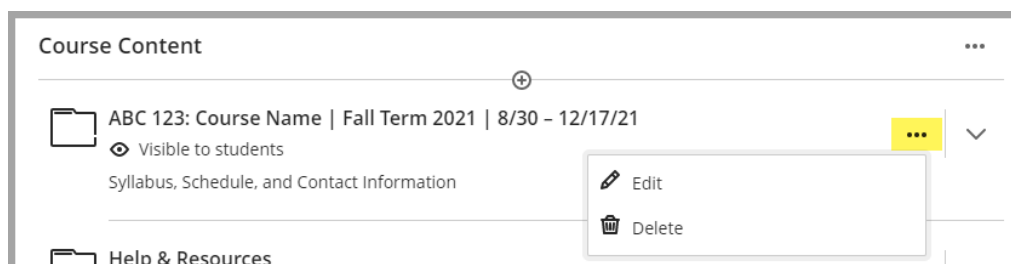
1. Click the *ellipsis* and select *Edit.*
2. Enter the Course ID, Course Name, Term, and Dates.
   a. Use the [Registrar's Academic Calendar](#) to find semester dates. The following are folder name suggestions:
      i. ABC 123: Course Name | Term Year | Semester Start Date – Semester End Date
      ii. ABC 123: Course Name | Term Year | Term Start Date – Term End Date
   b. Edit the folder description. Folder descriptions are limited to 750 characters. This will display on the *Course Content* page. Example: "Instructor contact information, syllabus, schedule, and more…"
   c. Click *Save.*
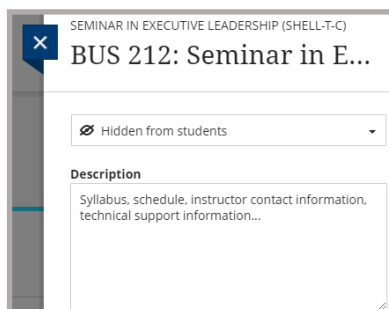
Add Content to the Course Information Folder

The content within the course information folder will look like this:
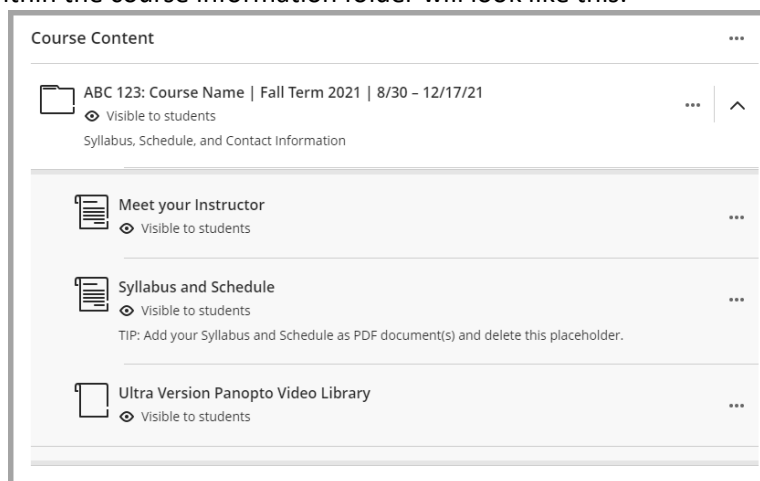
Add Instructor Contact Information

The *Meet your Instructor* Document in the course information folder serves as a template for you to modify with your own contact information.

Update this Document by:
- Editing each block with your own details.
- Editing and/or removing the purple text and deleting blocks you don't want.
- Removing the photo of Griff and replacing it with your own photo or headshot.

You now have access to a Blackboard Collaborate Course Room that can be used for easy virtual meetings. This is referenced in the "Meet your Instructor" document. This Course Room can be found under Blackboard Collaborate in the "Details & Actions" list on the left side of your course. It is always there and available. This tool can be used for office hours and course meetings. If you prefer to use Zoom, you can set up your own virtual meetings and update the Virtual Meetings section to include your Zoom details.
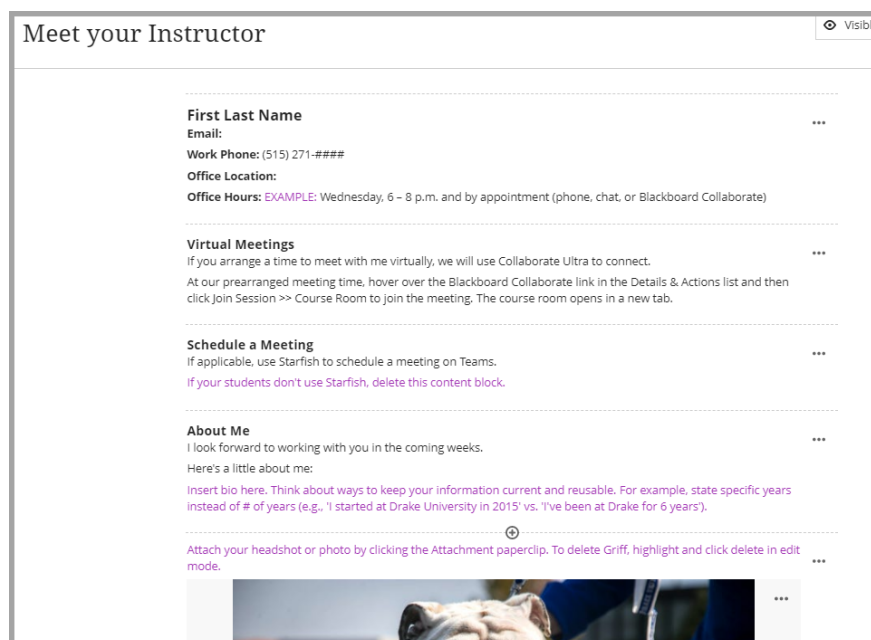
|	
Document Tips	As you edit Documents in Ultra, here are a few tips to consider: • **Heading Styles:** To format text as a title, header, or subheader within the Document (such as Contact Info, Communication Expectations, About Me, Virtual Meetings, etc.), you can choose to apply a Header Style from the Text Style drop-down menu on the text editing toolbar. Text Styles chunk the content for learners and make the text more accessible. • **Adding Images:** To add your photo, refer to the Blackboard Help page ULTRA: Insert images in the editor. In the example above, the image is set to display inline. • **Alternate Methods:** There are several ways to build your document. For more details, review ULTRA: Create a Document.

Upload Syllabus and Schedule	In the course information folder, you will see a Document entitled Syllabus and Schedule. This is simply a placeholder. Delete the placeholder document and upload your syllabus and schedule.
	
	Before you begin, see the "Tips for uploading files" section below.
	
	To upload a file:
	1. From within the course information folder, click the *plus (+) sign.*
	2. Select Upload.
	    • Browse local computer to locate your PDF(s).
	    • **Important**: Changes made to the version saved to your computer do NOT automatically update the version in Blackboard.
	
	⊕ Create
	🗐 Copy Content
	⬆ Upload
	🛒 Content Market
	☁ Cloud Storage
	🗄 Content Collection
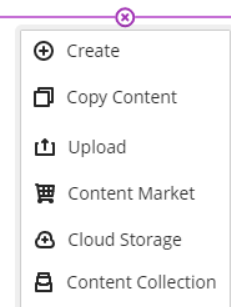
Tips for uploading files	Before you upload your syllabus, here are some tips to consider: • Watch the Blackboard Help video ULTRA: Add content to the course content page • Consider adding a term date or last updated date somewhere in the Word document for clarity. • Always save your source file (e.g., editable Word document) and create a PDF at the same time to avoid version control issues. • A best practice is to provide students with the PDF version because it opens in a browser and does not need to be downloaded, which is particularly helpful on mobile devices. This applies to documents created in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc. • **Important:** For external resources in PDF format, always try to link to the source (if available) versus uploading the PDF to your course in Blackboard. This best practice helps with copyright clearance. If available from Cowles Library, provide the permalink.

Activate the Panopto Video Library

The next item in the course information folder is a link to the Ultra Version Panopto Video Library. Click the link to activate Panopto in your course. This creates a folder within Panopto that is specific to your course, where you can create or move videos. If you make the link visible, students can open the Panopto folder and see all videos associated with the course.
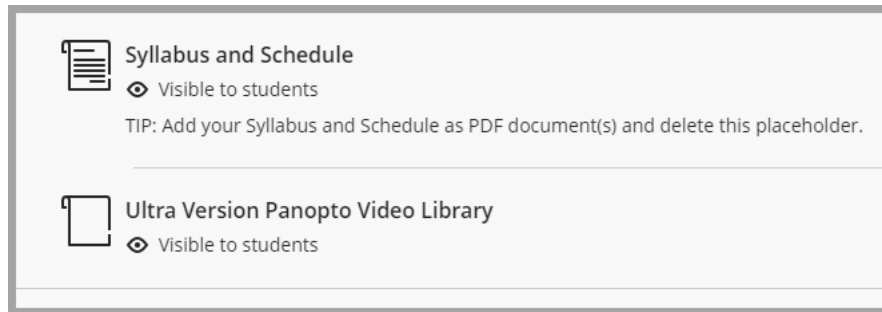
Add an Assignments Folder

If your students will be creating videos to share with you or the whole class, you will need a Panopto Assignments folder, which can be created after you activate the Panopto Video Library folder in your course. Learn more.

If you do not have video assignments and are not planning to add them, you can skip this step.
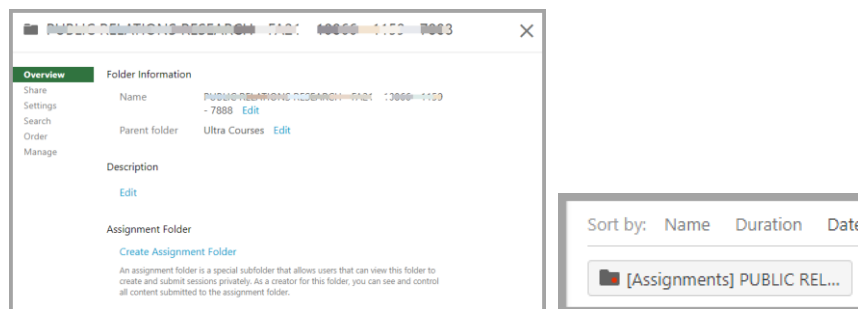
Item Visibility

The course information folder is now complete. Please make sure that all the *items* within the folder are set to "Visible to Students," unless there are specific items you do not ever want students to see. Then, double-check that the visibility of *folder* is also set to "Visible to Students."

The course itself is set to private so students will not see any content as you are developing your course. By default, all items you create in Ultra will be set to "Hidden from Students." As you develop content, be sure to change this setting to "Visible to Students" so you don't overlook it in the future.

Note: if you have an individual item hidden, it will remain hidden even if the learning module or folder is set to visible.

Release Conditions
The availability of items in a course can be controlled using release conditions. These conditions can be applied to a learning module, a folder, or an individual item.

One option is to use Release Conditions to open a module per week on a certain day and time. For example, you can set each module to open every Monday at 6:00 a.m. As a matter of preference, some instructors find that this increases student engagement as all course members are working on the same material.

For more information about item availability, see ULTRA: Release Conditions.

Help & Resources

The Help & Resources folder comes after the course information folder and support documents for students and faculty.

Take a moment to get familiar with both sets of resources. Your role will be to help answer student questions related to Blackboard Ultra course view.
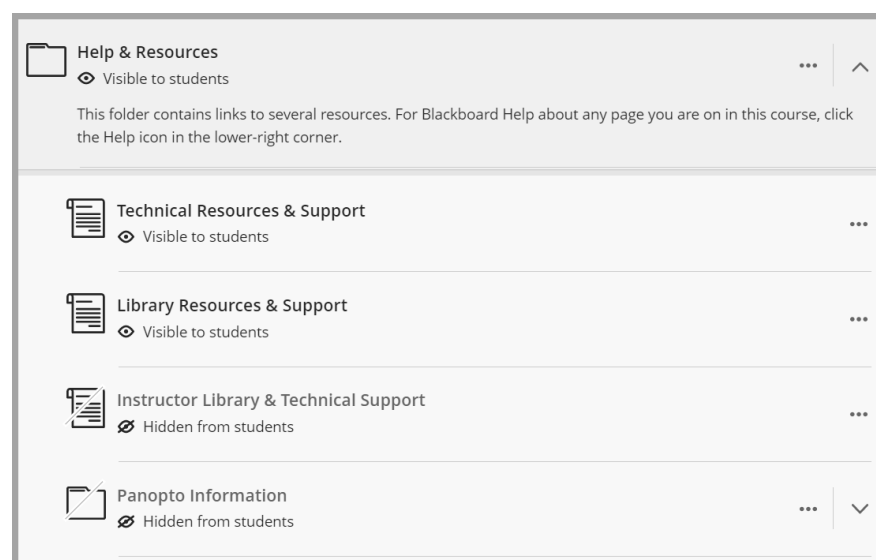
Learning Modules

After you have finished adding the desired information to the course information folder, you are ready to begin adding content to the Learning Modules.

Learning modules are used to house the core content of your course (e.g., learning materials, assignments, quizzes, discussion forums, etc.). Learning modules can be organized by Module, Week, Topic, etc. They are like folders; but designed to provide students with a superior experience through easy navigation and content immersion. Learning modules are the recommended format for posting course content.
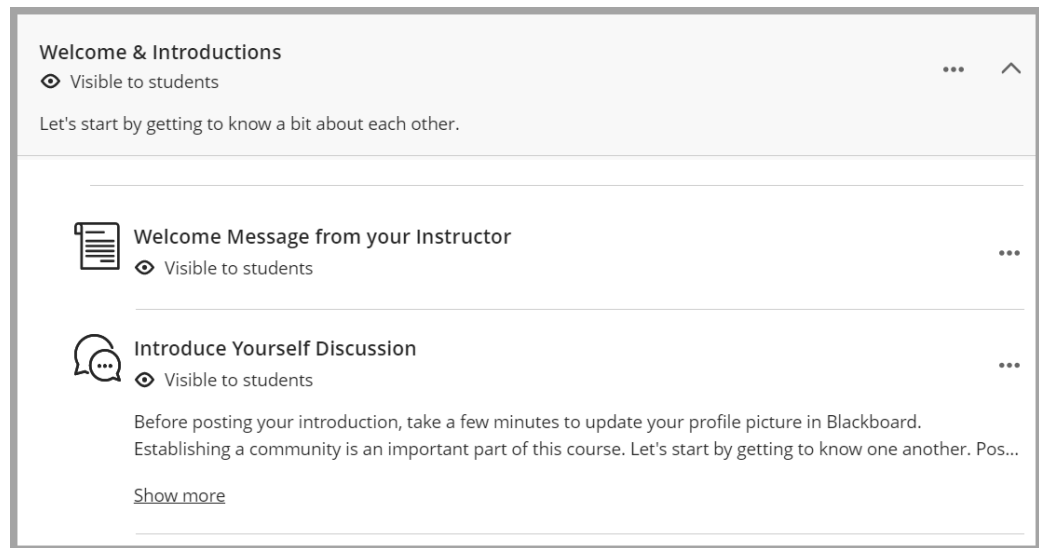
Learning modules provide students with navigation arrows that allow them to move forward and backward through the content within the module. Folders do not provide the navigation arrows and require the students to close the current page before they can continue to the next item.

Note: if you ever copy a course from Learn Original to Learn Ultra, your content will come over as folders. In this case, you would need to drag the content out of the folder and into a learning module. You may need to create additional learning modules to house all the content.

Welcome and Introductions Learning Module

"Welcome & Introductions" is the first Learning Module in the template. While building community within your class happens organically in courses taught in person, it is important to be intentional about building community from the start of class for those delivered online or virtually.

In this module, you will find a welcome message document and an Introduce Yourself discussion.

Welcome & Introductions

👁 Visible to students

Let's start by getting to know a bit about each other.

📄 Welcome Message from your Instructor
👁 Visible to students

💬 Introduce Yourself Discussion
👁 Visible to students

Before posting your introduction, take a few minutes to update your profile picture in Blackboard. Establishing a community is an important part of this course. Let's start by getting to know one another. Pos...

Show more

Welcome Message from your Instructor

The "Welcome Message from your Instructor" document serves as a template for your own message. We highly recommend recording a welcome video to connect with students. If you do not wish to create a welcome video, consider adding a welcome message in this space instead.

Update this Document by:
- Editing the block to include your own welcome message.
- Editing and/or removing the purple text.
- Adding a link to your video message (instructions on next page).

Instructor-Created Videos

Panopto, or other recording software, can be used to record a welcome video, mini lectures, demonstrations, podcasts, etc.

Warning: Due to space constraints, do NOT upload media files directly to Blackboard.

Panopto is the best tool at Drake University for *sharing* self-produced recordings. Access all Knowledge Base articles on Panopto here.
- If you create the recording in Panopto, you can easily share it with students in your course.
- If you used other recording software, upload the mp4 to Panopto and then share the recording with students in your course.

Add a Welcome Video

Click the Panopto Video Library link, located in the course information folder, and select *Create* to record a new video or upload an existing video file to the Panopto Library.

After you have created or uploaded your welcome video, add it to the "Welcome and Introductions" learning module. We recommend embedding your video inside the Welcome Message document.

1. From within the document, click the *plus (+) sign* and select *Content Market*.
2. Scroll down and click *Panopto Video Embed*.
3. Select the recording you want to add from the folder that displays or from another folder to which you have access.
4. Near the bottom of the screen, click the action arrow above the Insert button to expand the *Video Embed Options*.
5. Review and update the Video Embed Options.

Introduce Yourself Discussion

To build community and help your students get to know each other, an *Introduce Yourself Discussion* is in the Welcome & Introductions folder.

For blended or in-person classes, consider adding a more reflective discussion to supplement an in-class icebreaker or discussion. For example, students can share what they want to be able to do after the class is finished, an image that reflects them and why, or what their expectations for the class are.

Update the discussion by:
- Editing the discussion to include your instructions and discussion prompts.
- Removing the purple text.
- Updating the discussion Settings.

Tip: For more details, refer to ULTRA: Create Discussions. Use the links on the right side of the page to quickly explore the information and find answers.

Discussion Settings

Click the *Settings* (gear) icon to update the Discussion settings.

Details & Information
- Select "**Display on Course Content page.**" This streamlines the process for students by providing access to the discussion in context. Alternatively, all discussions are available by clicking the Discussions icon in the navigation bar.
- Selecting "**Post first**" requires students to submit their initial response before seeing their classmates' initial posts.
- Decide whether to "**Grade discussion**". If you select the Grade Discussion box, the Participation & Grading settings appear.

Participation & Grading
- Putting a date in "**Participate by**" serves as a communication tool for students on the Course Content page and in the Activity Stream.
    - You can only set one due date per discussion. If you want students to post their first response by a certain date, include that in your instructions.
- You can choose to "**Grade using**" points, letter, or percentage.
- **"Maximum points"** is set by default to 100 points.

- If you decide not to grade the discussion but still want to enter a due date, set the maximum points to zero (0).
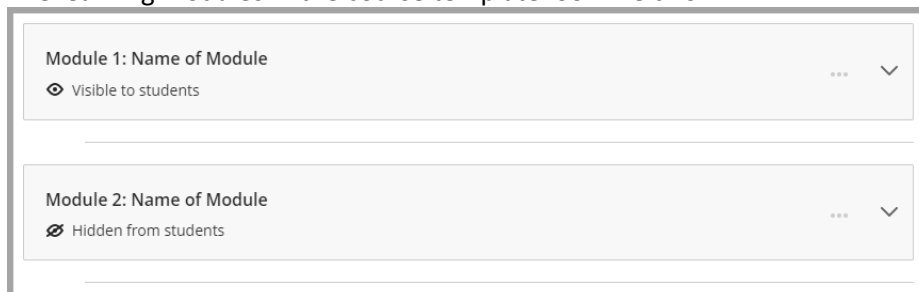
Additional Tools
- Decide whether to add a **Grading rubric**. For help on rubrics, refer to ULTRA: Rubrics.
- If you want this to be a **Group discussion**, click Assign to groups. For more help on groups, refer to Ultra: Groups.

Course Content Learning Modules

Now you are ready to add content to the learning modules. The template contains six learning modules. Modify learning modules to fit your needs. For clarity, use consistent and concise naming conventions throughout your course (i.e., use the same titles in the syllabus, learning module, rubric, etc.).

The learning modules in the course template look like this:

Module 1: Name of Module
👁 Visible to students

Module 2: Name of Module
🚫 Hidden from students

The course template is organized by "module," but you can choose how you want to organize your course. Here are three examples:

Example 1 By Module	Example 2 By Unit or Chapter	Example 3 By Week
• Module 1: Topic • Module 2: Topic • Module 3: Topic	• Chapter 1: Topic • Chapter 2: Topic • Chapter 3: Topic	• Week 1: Topic • Week 2: Topic • Week 3: Topic

Within each learning module, you can create documents, assignments, discussion forums, and more.

We strongly encourage using a document as the first item in each learning module to share course and module objectives. This is also an opportunity to share a mini lecture setting the stage for the module. The course template includes this document as a starting point for you.

Edit the Module Objectives Document

From within the learning module, click the Module 1 Introduction & Objectives document title to open. Edit the content blocks to fit your needs.

Click the *ellipsis (…)* next to any block and select *Edit*.

Update the document by:
- Editing the Course and Module Objectives to include measurable objectives or outcomes for the module.
- Editing and/or removing the purple text.
- Adding a module introduction or mini lecture.

Some tips to consider:
- **Module Introduction** – Here you can add a video lecture or detailed text introduction/summary of the module. Think about how you introduce content at the start of a face-to-face class or transition to a new topic. A document can set the stage and help students make connections.
- **Mini Lecture** – To add a video from Panopto, select *Insert Content >> Insert LTI item >> Panopto Video Embed*. Panopto videos can be added from the course Panopto folder, uploaded from your hard drive, or recorded here.
- **Objectives** – If available in an Original course, try copying and pasting it into the text block.
  - **Tip:** Use measurable verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy to prompt higher levels of critical thinking.

Module 1 Introduction & Objectives

Module 1: Title

Introduction
Module summary statement/hook, video introduction, or both

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Apply …
- **Analyze …**
- **Evaluate …**
- Create, present and defend…

Module Objectives
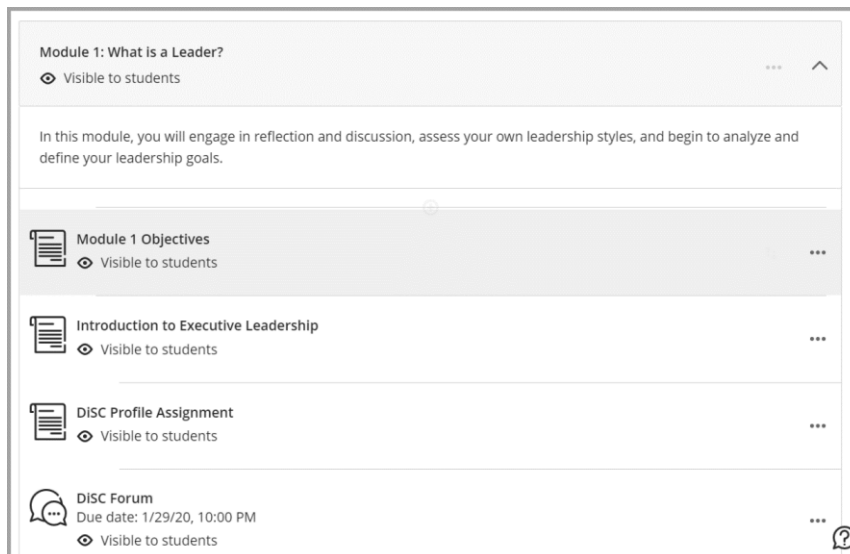*Module objectives align with **bolded** course objectives.*
Upon completion of this module, you will:

- Differentiate between …
- Identify…
- Describe …

Adding Your Own Content

Now you are ready add your own content to each learning module.
Continue adding content (documents, assessments, discussions, etc.) to each module using the appropriate tools in Blackboard. This is an example of what a module might look like:

Module 1: What is a Leader?
👁 Visible to students

In this module, you will engage in reflection and discussion, assess your own leadership styles, and begin to analyze and define your leadership goals.

Module 1 Objectives
👁 Visible to students

Introduction to Executive Leadership
👁 Visible to students

DiSC Profile Assignment
👁 Visible to students

DiSC Forum
Due date: 1/29/20, 10:00 PM
👁 Visible to students

Documents

You can think of "Documents" in Ultra as a HyperDoc that immerses students in a topic.

As you build a document, add different types of course material related to the topic — links, images, file attachments, videos, mini lectures, etc.

You can then add contextual information to help make connections for the students:
- Explain *why* you selected the content and *how* the piece of content aligns with course and module objectives.
- Explain how various pieces of content relate to each other.
- Tie back to content from earlier in the course.
- Set expectations for how the content relates to future content.

Document Example 1	The example document below includes five blocks related to the topic, "Learn about Research and Its Management."
	• The document starts with an attached PDF of instructions on how to use it throughout class. The instructor clicked "Add Content" to add a text block and then attached the PDF.
	• In the next text block, the instructor typed content to explain the reading assignment and why it is important to the course outcomes.
	• The third text block is a mini lecture recorded by the instructor. It was added through Insert Content >> LTI Item >> Embed Panopto video.
	• The instructor then added text to explain why the mini lecture is important to watch and set expectations regarding the length of the recording.
	• The instructor added a line of text to the same content block after the video letting students know about an attached PDF they can download for reference and taking notes.
	• Below the mini lecture, the instructor created another text block and attached a PDF of the PowerPoint used in the lecture.
	• The last text block sets expectations about what is next in the course.

Document Example 2

The document example below includes three text blocks related to the topic, "More about Ethics in Strategic Communication."

- The first text block introduces the topic and the learning materials that follow in the document.
- The second text block includes a YouTube video that was added through Add Content >> YouTube Video. The instructor selected the video to display inline if allowed by browser. The instructor also added a question to get students thinking more about the topic before watching the video.
- In the third text block, the instructor added a hyperlink to an external website, along with instructions for completing the activity and submitting their work in the next assignment.

Document Tips

For additional help with documents, refer to ULTRA: Create Content Items or Documents.

- Use the functions in the content editor to format text, add links, and attach files.
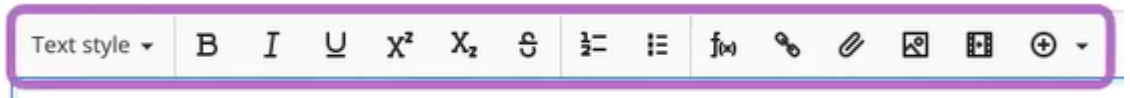
- Hover over each item in the editor to see what it does.
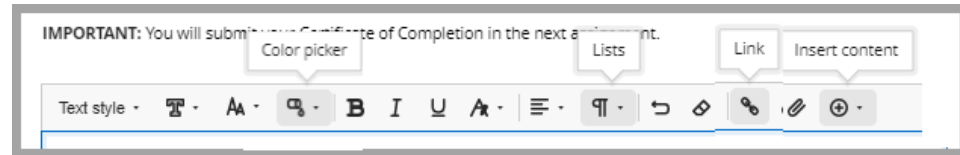
  - Use the *Color picker* to change the text color.
  - Click *Lists* to format a bulleted or numbered list.
  - Highlight the text you want to make clickable and then click *Link* to add the details. By default, the hyperlink will open in a new tab.
  - Select *Insert content* to add a YouTube video or LTI item, such as a Panopto video.

Documents are best when they are approximately one page long. A document should have more than just one or two sentences; there is not enough contextual information describing your content. If a document requires significant scrolling to view all the content, consider breaking into two documents.

Assessments

When creating an item in Ultra, you have two options under the Assessment heading: Test and Assignment.

When you create either assessment type, a gradebook item is created automatically. After you post grades, students can view their scores on their Grades pages or in the Activity stream. They can also access an assessment, associated rubrics, their submissions, your feedback, and their grades from the link on the *Course Content* page.

For information about question types available in Learn Ultra, refer to [ULTRA: Question Types](#).

Tests

To create a Test:
1. Click the *plus (+) sign* and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, scroll down to the Assessments section and select *Test.* The *New Test* page opens.
   a. Note: When you create a test, a gradebook item is created automatically. A test's score is the sum of all the questions' points.
2. Name the test something meaningful to you and students.
3. To build your test, select the *plus (+) sign* to open the menu and select the type of question to add. You can add text, files, questions, or a combination of these options.
4. Multiple Choice, Fill in the Blank, and True/False are automatically graded. You will need to add both the questions and their corresponding answer options for the *Save* button to appear.
5. Select the *Settings* icon to open the panel where you provide the Test Settings.
6. Save your changes along the way. Close the test when you are finished.

For more information on creating tests, refer to [ULTRA: Create Tests](#), which includes how to:
- Create a test
- Build your test
- Select Test Settings
- Add files and text blocks
- Reorder items

Assignments	To create an Assignment: 1. Click the *plus (+) sign* and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, scroll down to the Assessments section and select *Assignment.* The *New Assignment* page opens. a. Note: When you create an assignment, a gradebook item is created automatically. 2. Name the assignment something meaningful to you and students. 3. Select the *plus (+) sign* to add content to your assignment. You can include text, attach files, and add questions. An assignment can include a combination of these options. 4. For question types, Multiple Choice, Fill in the Blank, and True/False are automatically graded. You will need to add both the questions and their corresponding answer options for the *Save* button to appear. 5. Select the *Settings* icon to open the panel where you provide the assignment's details and information. 6. Save your changes along the way. Close the assignment when you are finished.
Assignment Tips	There are numerous settings available for assignments. This list provides a few tips as you get started. For additional information, refer to [ULTRA: Create and Edit Assignments](#). • **Due date and time** – Due dates appear on the calendar and in the activity stream. Encourage students to review what is due soon so they can ask questions in advance. • **Allow class conversations** – This option enables students to ask questions in the context of the assignment. • **Randomize questions and answers** – This option supports practice/drilling activities and helps students avoid academic dishonesty. To prevent confusion, don't add numbers to reference other questions. • **Collect submissions offline** – This option enables you to collect assignments without requiring students to upload a submission. • **Attempts allowed** – Consider using multiple attempts (e.g., 2 or 3) to account for student upload errors. Choose how the final grade is calculated. • **Grading rubric –** Rubrics can help increase clarity for students and efficiency for instructors when assessing student performance (i.e., grading) by clearly describing what performance looks like at various levels for each criterion. • **Assigned groups** – Click Assign to Groups to select or create groups. • **SafeAssign** – This is a tool that checks for potential plagiarism in student submissions when SafeAssign is enabled. You can use the results as a teaching tool, an evaluation tool, or both.
Discussions	To create a Discussion: 1. Click the *plus (+) sign* and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, scroll down to the Participation and Engagement section and select *Discussion.* The *New Discussion* page opens. a. Note: When you create a discussion, a gradebook item is created automatically. 2. Name the discussion something meaningful to you and students.

3. Include guidelines and expectations. You can use the options in the editor to format text, attach files, and embed multimedia.
4. Select the *Settings* icon to open the panel where you provide the assignment's details and information.

Tip: For more details, refer to [ULTRA: New Discussion Page](). Use the links on the right side of the page to quickly explore the information and find answers.

Journals

Journals are a personal space for students to communicate privately with you. Journals cannot be made public in the Ultra experience. Use Discussions for a collective "Journal" activity.

To create a Journal:
1. Click the *plus (+) sign* and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, scroll down to the *Participation and Engagement* section and select *Journal.* The *New Journal* page opens.
2. Name the journal something meaningful to you and students.
3. Create a prompt to get students started with their journal entries.
4. Select the *Journal Settings* icon to open the panel where you provide the journal's details and information.

Tip: For more details, refer to ULTRA: Journals. Use the links on the right side of the page to quickly explore the information and find answers.

Adding more Learning Modules

To create a Learning Module:
1. From the *Course Content* page, click the *plus (+) sign* wherever you would like to create a new Learning Module and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, select *Learning module.*
2. Click the pencil icon next to the title to rename the module.
3. Choose whether the learning module is hidden or available.
4. Click the gray area to access the description field. Click the pencil to add an optional description.
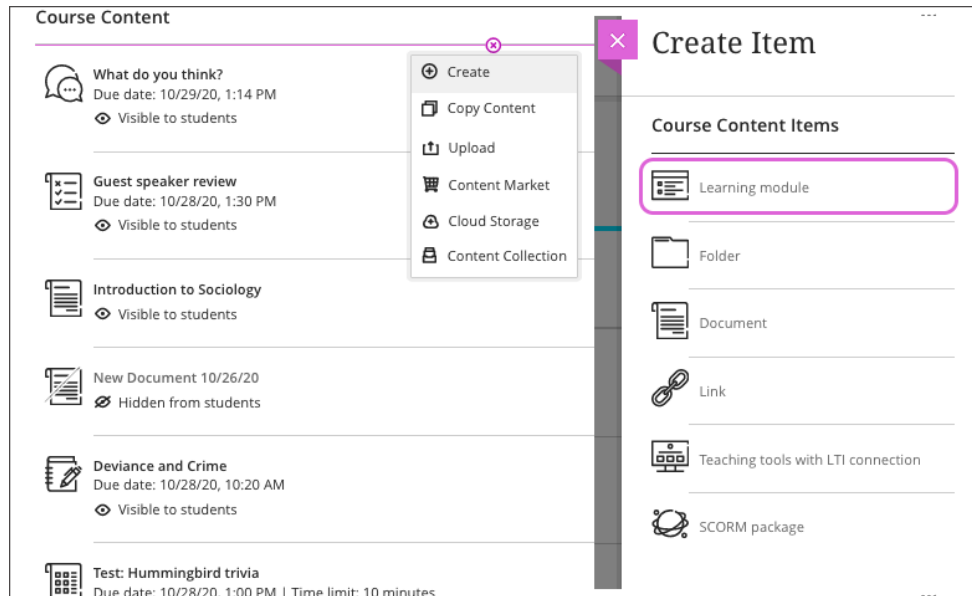
Folders

Folders are best suited to organize course documents such a syllabus, instructor contact information, course schedule, resources, etc. Folders can be created inside a learning module or directly on the *Course Content* page.

To create a Folder:
1. Click the *plus (+) sign* wherever you would like to create a new Folder and select *Create*. From the *Create Item* panel, select *Folder.*
2. Click the pencil icon next to the title to rename the folder.
3. Choose whether the folder is hidden or available.
4. Add an optional description, to display on the *Course Content* page.

Visibility Reminder

As you put the final touches on your course, remember to double-check the availability of your individual items, learning modules, and folders. Remember that if you have an individual item hidden, it will remain hidden even if the learning module or folder is set to visible.

We recommend setting availability at the learning module or folder level to provide students access to the course content at the appropriate time. This supports student engagement. Release conditions allow you to control availability by date, group membership, and/or performance.

Finally, when you are ready to open your course, click "Students can't access this course" from the Details & Actions list. A pop-up window will appear where you can choose to open the course to students.

Details & Actions

Roster
View everyone in your course

Course Groups
Create and manage groups

Course is private
Students can't access this course

Course Design

"A course map is a visual representation of your course that lists the components of your course and the alignment of the components with your learning objectives." (NM State University)

The poster Map your Way to a Quality Course: Course Mapping (2017 NMSU Board of Regents), explains the benefits of course mapping and shares tips, templates, resources, and helpful steps to try with your course.

Drake Online and Continuing Education provides this Course Map as a course-mapping template.

Gradebook

There have been many significant changes to the Gradebook. Gradebook usage and settings can vary greatly from course to course and instructor. Blackboard Support offers tutorials and videos on a wide range of topics, including the Gradebook, and is a great resource for the most up-to-date information from Blackboard.
- Navigating Grading
- Blackboard Ultra Help for Instructor – Home Page

Questions?

Drake Online and Continuing Education has a team of instructional designers and technologists ready to assist you. For support, please submit an Online Course Request and select from the options after clicking the *Request Service* button.