



Original to Ultra Post- Conversion Workbook

Welcome to the Blackboard Original to Ultra Post-Conversion Workbook

Welcome,

In this workbook, we're providing you with a systematic approach to the process of getting your course ready after the initial conversion process of moving your course from Blackboard Original to Ultra. We'll guide you through a five-step process to upgrade your content to Ultra.

Along the way, we'll provide links to additional resources and video versions of these steps to make sure you have the resources you need to succeed. Take breaks as you need them. You've got this!

This text only version of the workbook may lose some of the context provided by sample images in visual heavy version of the workbook. AI was utilized in summarizing the visual version of the workbook, then edited by our Instructional Design team.

This workbook and videos were created using the May 2024 release of Blackboard Ultra and updated for the December 2024 release, Version 3900.106.0 ©2024 Anthology Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved.

STEP 1: Get Oriented

- Explore key changes between Blackboard Original and Ultra to ensure a smooth and effective transition.

STEP 2: Organize Content

- Adapt to the Ultra structure by customizing the course content area and utilizing new containers to replicate Original's menu functionality.

STEP 3: Refine and Complete

- Focus on the details and create new content to ensure your course is fully equipped.

STEP 4: Adjust Settings

- Although many settings are preserved during conversion, some may change. Review and verify all settings with a structured approach.

STEP 5: Final Check

- Utilize the Student Preview to conduct your final walkthrough and course revision.

How to Use this Workbook

Transitioning your course materials from Original to Ultra can follow various paths. You can build a course from scratch or gradually copy in content. This workbook focuses on one possible path: using a full course copy or full course conversion process. Regardless of your

chosen method, this workbook provides context and training to support your journey of upgrading to Ultra.

Are you new to Ultra?

Each step in this workbook starts with an informative video link followed by detailed written instructions. To get the most out of each section, we recommend watching the video first for context. In some sections, we provide strategies rather than instructions to help you navigate unique challenges in your course.

You can complete these steps in your course as you follow along or go through the entire workbook before making changes. Remember, it's okay to take breaks and return with fresh eyes if you find yourself stuck. The more you use Ultra, the easier it will be to navigate.

Are you already familiar with Ultra?

Even if you are a pro with Ultra, the videos can reveal more efficient methods and insights. They are worth a watch! For a quick reference to the steps, please see the condensed version included in the appendix of this workbook.

STEP 1: Get Oriented with Blackboard Ultra

1. Convert a course from Original to Ultra
2. Compare course structures
3. Familiarize yourself with the most commonly used icons and buttons in Ultra
4. Explore the differences between folders and learning modules
5. Compare the text editors
6. Discover the automated process for conversion and the effects on converted content
7. Compare old and new page layouts
8. Strategize to maximize the benefits from the exception report

[Step 1 Video](#)

How To Convert

There are a few different ways to convert a course. If your institution is preparing to move to Ultra, they will likely let you know which of these they've chosen. Let's take a quick look at two ways you can get to this important first milestone. Be sure you have a course that has completed one of these options before you begin.

Option 1: A blank Ultra course shell

- For this option, you will need an empty Ultra course shell. Ask your administrator if you don't already have one. For this option, you will complete just one course copy, pulling all your Original content from one course into Ultra.
- Use this [Blackboard help page](#) link to walk you through the step of completing a full course copy.

Option 2: Bulk conversion completed by your administrator

- In this option, your administrator has already completed a bulk conversion. You will likely receive notice that your Ultra course is ready for your review. Nothing else for you to do to prep your course, you're ready to go.

Get Oriented with Ultra

Navigation is going to be our first big hurdle. Things have moved a bit. Let's explore those changes. We'll cover some strategies for organizing our course content page in the next step, so don't worry about your content just yet. Take a little time to click around the Ultra course menus to get acclimated.

Menu Organization

In Ultra:

A set course menu lives at the top. This centralized menu allows for students and instructors to access commonly used course functionalities in the same way in every course:

- Course Content Page
- Calendar
- Announcements
- Discussions
- Gradebook
- Messages
- Analytics
- Groups

In Original:

Your customizable menu lived on the left-hand side. Every item in the menu could be customized. The home page was also customizable. While this method offered a lot of flexibility for instructors, it could also be challenging for students to find what they need or get acclimated since every course could be different.

Original Course Structure

1. **Menu:** The main menu is fully customizable.
2. **Course Management:** Access to settings, grade center, groups, and reports.
3. **Content Area:** Content is displayed here, based on your location in the course.

Ultra Course Structure

1. The top menu now houses the most common course functionalities you and your students will visit.
2. Settings are going to be split into a few different locations.
3. Use the customizable space to build your new menu of items for students to access and to house your course content.

4. Menu
5. Course Settings
6. Content Area

Check out this [Blackboard help page](#) for a detailed walkthrough of navigating your Ultra course.

Exploring Common Ultra Buttons

1. **Plus Icon:** The plus icon indicator will show up between course items when you hover your mouse. Clicking this icon will allow you to add new things. You'll find this icon on the main course content page as well as within documents, tests, and assignments. Anytime you need to add something, click the plus.
2. **Three Dot Menu:** Throughout the course, you will see three dots, often on the top or right-hand side of the item. Clicking this will open a drop-down menu where you can delete or edit.
3. **Expanding and Collapsing Content:** To view items inside a folder or learning module, hover your mouse over the item. This should make a slightly darker box appear around it. Click anywhere within this box or the chevron to open and close containers.

Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#) for more information on creating new content.

The case for learning modules

Learning modules are versatile containers that structure related content and activities in a clear, sequential order, enhancing comprehension and engagement. Learning Modules ensure that each concept is presented sequentially for optimal understanding and retention. Seamlessly navigate through lessons

Rather than clicking into and then closing out of items to move through a lesson, Learning Modules support a progressive learning flow, allowing students to move seamlessly through lessons and course materials with next and previous buttons. This even works for folders inside a module!

Folders have great uses too

Folders are an excellent way to further organize course content inside of a module. You can also use them as containers to hold non-sequential content. In our example, we also use a folder for our a-la-carte collection of course resources at the beginning of the course.

Ultra Text Editor

Streamlined Simplicity, Optimal Accessibility

The Ultra text editor offers a simplified, streamlined interface optimized for mobile use and enhanced accessibility, ensuring content is easy to create, visually appealing on any device, and accessible to all students. Remember, prioritizing clear and easily readable content is crucial for student success.

Wondering what all these buttons do? Find out more on the [Blackboard help page](#).

Unpacking the Conversion

We've explored the Ultra layout and identified key changes we'll encounter. Before rearranging or building anything, let's examine the automated conversion process—essentially, figuring out "What happened to all my Original stuff?"

Menu Item and What Happens in Conversion

In Original, we have all our items organized in our left menu. When you added items to that menu, you clicked the plus icon at the top left of the course. There are a lot of options in this list that won't convert over. Your list may look different from this one. Here's what happens during conversion with each of these basic categories:

1. **Content Area:** The title of your content area will now be the title of a folder or module on your content page in Ultra. Inside that folder or module will be the eligible content you built inside.
2. **Module Page:** A module page, different from a learning module, will not come over.
3. **Blank Page:** The blank page is similar to an item elsewhere in Original. Blank pages will come over as documents in Ultra.
4. **Tool Link:** Will not come over
5. **Web Link:** Comes over as a web link
6. **Course Link:** Will not come over
7. **Divider:** Will not come over
8. **Subheader:** Will not come over

Transitioning Items: A New Look

Content areas in Original allowed you to stack items, containers, assignments, and links on a single web page. Each addition increased the length of the page. To manage page space, you might have used folders, which would take the learner to a new page.

In Ultra, each document, assignment, or discussion has its own dedicated page. This change provides more flexibility in managing how much content a student sees on a single page. If you used many items in Original, your converted course might have too many pieces with very little content on each one. In the next step, we'll reorganize the content, looking for opportunities to combine documents for a better student experience.

Items Become Documents

In Original, items stack visually on one page. In Ultra, those items will come over, but they will each be a new page.

Continue exploring the new terminology in Ultra on our [Blackboard help page](#).

Utilizing the Exceptions Report

We're about to wrap up our tour of Original and Ultra. When we make the transition to Ultra, there will be some things lost or changed in the process. The exception report details will help identify some of those changes. For example, setting changes, formatting, gradebook column issues, and unsupported items.

Don't panic! Sometimes your exception report will have hundreds of items but many of them will be repeats and informational. These are not all action items!

To Access your Exceptions Report

1. Click the 3-dot menu on the same line as Course Content.
2. Select Course Tasks and Logs or Copy Details.
3. Select view report
4. Click a category, like Assignments and Tests, to open and view individual exceptions.
5. Each time you copy content into your Ultra course a log is created so you can always come back to view these exceptions later.

Strategies for Resolving the Exception Report

After looking through your exception report, you may find the amount of information is a little overwhelming, or you don't have a clear sense of how to manage it. Try one of these strategies to keep from getting too bogged down in the details at this stage.

Read then revisit

Skim through your exceptions list once. Then wait to read through the list again at the end of the workbook. When you complete all the steps, you may find that coming back to this list at the end will make a lot more sense. The more comfortable you get with Ultra, the fewer questions you may have at the end.

Find your top 5-10 concerns

Write down specific items or categories from your conversion list that you know will need to be addressed. Keep this list handy and check off items as you get them completed by following the workbook. Anything we don't touch on, you can clean up at the end once you have had a chance to explore Ultra in more detail.

Links that may help you understand exceptions:

- [Help with understanding formatting changes](#)
- [Supported question types](#)
- [Overall grade setup](#)
- [Master table of what does and what does not copy over](#)

STEP 2: Organize Content with a new course structure

Setup and Gathering Materials to Begin:

1. Decide on your desired course structure
2. Create a 'Start Here' module
3. Create learning modules and folders
4. Reorder content to match structure
5. Combine documents
6. Ensure desired discussion boards are visible on the course content page and move to desired locations

[Step 2 Video](#)

Although your course has been converted to Ultra and your images and files are in your new course, you may decide that you want to update your course content or perhaps make adjustments so that your items display correctly. Either way, it's helpful to have your Original course and course files on hand to make the process go smoothly.

Items to have on hand:

- Your Original course and your converted Ultra course:
- Course files, images, links, or any other resource that you want to be sure is included in your course. Consider saving these items to a folder for easy access.
- Any templates, settings, or requirements for your institution (may not apply to everyone).

Helpful Tip:

Use two browsers and split the screen or set up a second monitor so that you can view your Original course and your Ultra course at the same time. This makes it easy to compare the course structure and identify any areas that may need your attention.

Need an easy way to access your course files from Original?

Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#).

Course Templates: Ensuring Course to Course Consistency

If you are not using a template, the following pages will explore a few different ways of organizing your content that we have found to be useful. Ultra can be used in many different ways: simple supplementation for a face-to-face course, a fully online course based on a typical semester schedule, or even as a competency-based course. Each of these uses may require a bit of a different layout to be most effective for students.

Your institution may have a desired structure already. If there is a course template or guide available to you, or one already in your course, be sure to use that as your guide for re-organizing your material.

Choose your Course Structure

Decision point!

How you organize content is one of the most important decisions you will make in the post-conversion process.

While you may no longer have the left-hand menu, you still have lots of options for organizing the content page in Ultra.

The content page is your new menu space! It may take a little trial and error to get it just right so be patient with this step.

Let's explore three distinct organization methods to optimize your course's effectiveness:

- Folders
- Learning modules
- Subfolders in learning modules

Detailed examples and guidelines are provided to help you understand and apply each method effectively. Already have a template? Skim or skip this section.

Sample Course Structures

While you may no longer have the left-hand menu, you still have lots of options for organizing the content page in Ultra.

Organize with Folders

Sample 1: Synchronous Course with Folders for Course Information, Assignments, Tests, and Discussion Boards

This course uses a simple folder structure to organize course content. This layout can work well for courses that are synchronous; using Ultra to house rarely accessed content that is better organized by topic than by a timeline. The content is well organized through containers to manage the course's vertical space. This course could also be organized using learning modules instead of folders; that choice is up to you. Try both and see which you prefer. You can also place individual items at the top level. Great for vital links, virtual office discussion boards, or final assessments.

Organize with Learning Modules

Sample 2: Structured Learning Modules to Sequentially Guide Learners Through Content

This course utilizes learning modules to organize all the content for a week. The content within the module is meant to be consumed in order. The students start with an overview, then explore learning content before moving on to assignments for that week. This chronological layout helps to ensure that students do not need to go searching for what they need elsewhere in the course. Using the learning module allows students to use the previous and next buttons to navigate content.

Organize with Learning Modules & Subfolders

Sample 3: Modules with Subfolders to Organize and Sequence Content

If you have a course that has a lot of content that needs to be grouped together, consider adding subfolders within your modules. This allows your students to progress through the content in the order that you determine and provides a way for content to be grouped under a common heading.

In this sample, the unit contains three different chapters utilizing subfolders. Subfolders will inherit the previous and next button navigation from the learning module. This unit also includes an assignment and discussion that live outside of the subfolder structure but still within the unit.

Sample Use Cases

- **Folders Only:** Synchronous courses with limited content, content organized by assignment type (tests, discussions, assignments).
- **Learning Modules without Subfolders:** Course can be organized well chronologically, a small amount of content in each module, content in each module is centered around a single topic, course with a shorter-term (6-10 weeks).
- **Learning Modules with Subfolders:** Course contains subtopics within each module (Unit with multiple chapters), course with a longer-term (10+ weeks) with logical organization points.

Helpful Tip: If you do not add a title, 'New Folder' and the date appear in the content list. If you add no content, an empty folder with the placeholder title appears on the Course Content page.

The Start Here Module

One recommendation for any type of course is to create a 'Start Here' module or folder. This module often appears at the top of the course and serves to introduce students to the course and to inform them of expectations and guidelines to be followed throughout the semester. Your institution may have a template for you to follow. If not, explore a few sample items below to see if you want to add them to your own welcome or starting container.

Welcome Document

- Welcome message or video
- Tips for being successful
- Course tour: how to navigate, explain course structure and resources

Meet Your Instructor Document

- Instructor bio and picture
- Instructor's contact information

Syllabus Document

- Upload document

Course Overview Document

- Course description
- Course objectives
- Required material
- Course schedule

Policies and Requirements Document

- Institutional policies
- Technology requirements

Student Support Links Document

- Links to library, tutoring center, technology center, etc.

Introduce Yourself Document

- Discussion Board for students to become acquainted with one another

Time to Build Your Course Structure

Write an outline. It can be helpful to outline your desired learning module, folder, and subfolder structure on paper before you start creating them in the course. Once you've identified your needs, examine the existing content in your course to see if you can use any of your existing containers. This sample showcases the new learning modules and folders I need to create in bold.

Sample Course Outline: ENG 210

1. Start Here (new Learning Module)
 - Use items from existing Start Here Folder
2. Resources (new Folder)
 - Use items from existing Start Here Folder
3. Unit 1: Storytelling (Change Folder to Learning Module)
 - Week 1: Introduction to Literature (existing Folder and contents)
 - Week 2: Narrative Elements and Plot Structure (existing Folder and contents)
 - Week 3: Characterization and Development (existing Folder and contents)
4. Unit 2: Exploring Literary Options (Change Folder to Learning Module)
 - Week 4: Poetry and Poetic Devices (existing Folder and contents)
 - Week 5: Drama and Performance (existing Folder and contents)
 - Week 6: Genre and Literary Criticism (existing Folder and contents)
5. Final Project (new Folder)

Links that may help you decide how to organize

- [Getting started with creating Course Content](#)
- [Help with selecting the right Content Container](#)
- [Create Containers with AI Design Assistant](#)

Build Your Course Structure: Switch Learning Modules or Folders

Note that you can swap one top-level container type for the other, turning learning modules into folders and folders into learning modules with just a few clicks. If you have a subfolder you want to convert, drag it out of its current container first.

To do the conversion:

Select the three-dot menu of a learning module or folder then select the “change to” option. You’ll see a pop-up alerting you of any possible changes and asking you to confirm your choice.

Build Your Course Structure: Add Learning Modules or Folders

Before creating containers, review your course materials and outline. These instructions will assist you in creating those new containers. We'll then start to move content around in the next step.

1. On the Course Content page, select the Plus icon (+) where you would like to add an Item.
2. Choose Create in the dropdown menu.
3. Select the container you would like to add (Learning Module or Folder) from the Create Item list.
4. Repeat this process until you have the correct number of Learning Modules and/or Folders to organize your content.

Reorder Content on the Course Content Page

Once you have created your containers, you can begin to sort and move items into their final order. The process is as easy as clicking and dragging an individual item or even a whole container to the new location. You can click and drag on the six-dot icon or from any blank space. When you are done moving content, delete containers and content you no longer need. Be careful when deleting folders or learning modules, as any content inside is also deleted and you can't undo it.

Helpful Tip: Expand containers before you drag and drop your items inside. This helps ensure you can drop the item exactly where you need it.

Drag-and-Drop Keyboard Shortcut

With your keyboard, you can move an item to a new location and move an item into a folder:

1. Tab to an item's move button (6 dots in a grid).
2. Select Enter to activate move mode.
3. Use the arrow keys to choose a location.
4. Select Enter to drop the item in the new location.

Combining Documents in Ultra

Items in Original are converted into individual Ultra documents. Depending on the amount of text found in each item, it is possible that you will end up with several documents in Ultra that contain short paragraphs or just a few sentences. To avoid students having to click through multiple pages or editing hassles for instructors, consider merging related items into a single Ultra document.

Combine Documents to Group Content Together

To combine documents, highlight the desired content, then copy (CTRL+C on a PC or Command+C on a Mac) and paste (CTRL+V on a PC or Command+V on a Mac) the content into your desired document. Experiment to see if copying from the Original course or the Ultra course is easier for you. After combining, you can delete the extra pages.

Don't Forget your Discussions

As you review your Ultra course, you may find that your Discussion Boards are not visible in the course content area.

Create New Discussion Boards

Discussions have been significantly updated in Ultra. Converted discussions are located in the discussions tab and can also be added to your course content page for easier student access. However, discussions with groups or threads may not transfer as expected. To address this, compare your Original and Ultra discussions, and refer to the links and steps provided on the following pages for guidance on creating, editing, and displaying discussions on your Ultra course content page.

Links that may help you decide how to set up Discussion Boards

- [Discussion Forums and Threads Conversion](#)
- [Create New Discussion Boards](#)
- [Create a Group Discussion Board](#)

Create, Edit, and Organize Discussions

Compare your Original and Ultra discussions, make edits or create new activities as needed.

Make a discussion board visible

As you review your Ultra courses you may find that your Discussion Boards are not visible in the course content area.

To make these visible, follow these steps:

1. Click on the title of the discussion board you want to add to the course content area.
2. Click 'Discussions' from the top of the course content area.
3. Check the box marked 'Display on Course Content Page' and then click 'Save.'

This will place your discussion board at the very bottom of your course content page. Be sure to move your newly visible discussion boards into the appropriate locations.

Edit a discussion board

If you find that your discussion boards are visible in the course content area, but the prompts are incorrect, you will need to edit the prompts. To do this, you will want to go to your Original course and copy/paste the prompts into your Ultra discussion board.

To edit a discussion board:

1. Click on the title of the Discussion Board you'd like to edit. You can also do this from the discussions tab.
2. Once the Discussion Board is open, click on the ellipsis (...) found under the Discussion Topic heading. Select Edit to open the content editor.
3. Make your changes by typing in the content editor box or pasting your prompt. When finished, click 'Save.'

STEP 3: Refine and Complete – let’s fill in the gaps

Refine and Complete

1. Modify description fields
2. Sync LTI content utilizing the Content Market
3. Examine and edit test questions
4. Take charge of finding alternatives

[Step 3 Video](#)

Time to Refine and Ensure the Course is Complete

Those first two steps are tough! By now you’ll likely be getting the hang of things in Ultra. Take a moment to celebrate all the changes you’ve made so far.

After organizing your content, hopefully, you have a good indication of what in your course doesn’t feel complete. We won’t be able to catch every possible missing thing in this step, but we do hope to give you the strategies you will need to close any remaining gaps.

Description Field Design Changes

Another area that changed significantly from Original to Ultra was how descriptions were handled. In Original, you could write a description on a folder with as much detail as any other area; it utilized the same content editor. In this sample, I used the description space on the folder to provide students with my overview of the week and a list of learning objectives. Notice how the same description quickly loses its meaning in Ultra because of the formatting change.

Important Description Field Design Notes

- Descriptions are just plain text in Ultra. You can’t add line breaks, color or any type of text formatting.
- Descriptions have a maximum of 750 characters. Anything after that is deleted in the conversion process.
- The descriptions on journals and discussions are pulled directly from the content, these are not editable at this time.

A New Description Strategy

Let’s decide what to do with your descriptions.

What should I do with my content if it doesn’t work in the description field now?

A great alternative is to create a document to display this information instead.

1. Create a new document in Ultra inside the folder or module.
2. Copy and paste your content from your Original course.
3. Edit the existing description in your Ultra course to remove it.

Descriptions on assignments can be placed inside the assignment content instead.

1. Open the item.
2. Copy and paste your description from your original course.
3. Delete the existing description.

How do I edit a description?

For learning modules, folders, documents, links:

1. Click the three dot icon.
2. Type your content into the description box.
3. Scroll down in the side panel menu until you find the description box.
4. Click save

For assessments:

1. Open the item.
2. Click the gear icon to open the settings.
3. Scroll to the bottom to find the description box.
4. Edit the existing description in your Ultra course to remove it.
5. Type your content into the description box.
6. Click save.

Set up your LTI's using the Content Market (Optional)

External sources (LTIs) may not transfer automatically when copying from Original to Ultra.

Check with your institution for support on integrating this content into your Ultra course.

1. Browse the list of tools to see if it has already been made available. You may see a list of providers and then a section of institutional tools below that.
2. Select your desired external tool.
3. Click the Plus (+) Icon on your Course Content page.
4. Select Content Market.
5. Follow the prompts to synchronize your course or add content to your course.

Helpful Tip: You can also choose Books & Tools from the Details & Actions menu.

Need more information about integrating content from external sources and LTI's? Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#).

Examine Your Test Questions

Tests can be stressful for students. Let's take the time to closely examine the test questions.

Complete steps described below for each test in your course.

1. Click on a Test to open it.
2. Review and edit any text appearing at the top of the test.
 - The top area of your test may include instructions from your Original course. These directions won't show until the student begins the test.
3. Check each question and points value for accuracy. Edit as needed.
 - Questions are easy to edit. Simply scroll up and down to view your questions, edit points, or use the three-dot menu to delete or edit an individual question. If you utilized a pool of questions instead, you'll see your pools and can click view questions to see all the questions in that pool and to edit accordingly.

Conversion Question Help

Some question types from Original are no longer supported, and some questions require more careful examination. Here is a chart of some of the most likely conversion errors or rough spots to look out for as you review your test questions.

Question Type Adaptation Ideas:

- **Either/or:** Try rewriting the question with the multiple-choice question type.
- **File response:** Essay questions allow students to attach files in the content editor. Be sure to clearly write your directions so students know to upload a file.
- **Jumbled sentence:** Not supported, try a different question type.
- **Quiz bowl:** Not supported, try a different question type.
- **Ordering:** Creative rewriting of the question could lead to the same outcome utilizing a multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank question type.
- **Likert Scale:** These are available in forms (what used to be surveys) but not for graded tests.
- **Hotspot:** Ultra has more options for hotspots than Original. You may want to explore if these new options could enhance your test.
- **Math question types:** Carefully check any questions that utilized the math editor. Sometimes questions that worked okay in the Original course may no longer act as expected in your Ultra course.
- **Questions with images** (possible in most question types): Be sure that the images in your test are still functioning as designed. You may need to re-add or adjust images.

Find Alternatives

Did your Original course have Blogs or Wikis? Did you have unsupported test question types? When you encounter something that didn't come over in the conversion, try one of these strategies to help you move forward.

1. Check in with other instructors or your LMS team to see if others have run into the same trouble. Together you can look for solutions to fill those gaps.
2. Are you a member of the [Anthology Community](#) yet? You can use the community site to ask questions and get answers from other Ultra users as well as the Anthology product team.
3. Note the things still missing. Categorize them as essential, important, or minor. Try to find an alternative for each of your essential missing pieces first.
4. If your institution has the [AI Design Assistant](#) turned on, try having it create a new authentic assessment with you or generate some new test questions.
5. Keep your eyes open for new opportunities as you become more comfortable with Ultra. This is a great time to refresh assignments and activities within your course.

STEP 4: Adjust Settings so they are right for you

1. Choose a strategy for reviewing settings
2. Discover possible setting locations
3. Review settings and adjust as desired

[Step 4 Video](#)

Course Content Settings

From our exceptions list, we noticed a pattern that many exceptions were related to settings. There are a number of settings that have changed from Original to Ultra. Rather than focusing on comparing our settings back and forth, let's take this opportunity to instead just focus on our desired settings based on what we have available.

Changing Course Settings

- Determine your preferred review style (chart on this page).
- Explore the settings locations and list of links on the following pages in this step. This will help you know where to go to find settings and what settings are available to you.
- Complete a thorough review and update to settings for all course content.

Reviewing Items How To

Option 1: Review Items in the Order they Appear in the Course

- Use this option to methodically review and adjust settings for your course content, starting from the top of the content area and working through each module or folder. Carefully check the settings for each assignment and assessment to ensure nothing is missed. Since it can be easy to forget the settings of previous items, taking notes as you progress will help maintain consistency across the course.

Option 2: Review Items According to Type

- Using this option allows you to review all similar types of assignments or assessments together, such as all tests, followed by discussions, assignments, and links. While this approach might lead to moving between folders or modules, it facilitates consistency and reduces the effort needed to recall preferred settings for each item type.

Finding the Settings

Settings for course content items can be found in slightly different locations depending on the items type.

For folders, learning modules, links, embedded files, and SCORM packages start by clicking the three-dot menu and selecting edit.

- This will open a peek panel so you can see and adjust settings.
- For Tests, Assignments, Forms, Discussions, and Journals, the right side of the page will display active settings.

- Click on any of the underlined settings or the gear icon to open the peek panel to view all settings.

Learn More About Settings

As you wrap up this section, take some time to explore the various settings and options available in Blackboard Learn Ultra to further enhance your course. From creating and editing assignments to managing content availability and release rules, there are numerous features designed to optimize your experience. For more detailed guidance, check out the Blackboard Help site links below.

1. [Assignment Settings](#)
2. [Discussion Settings](#)
3. [Document Settings](#)
4. [Course Settings](#)
5. [Control the Availability of Content](#)
6. [Content Release Conditions](#)
7. [SCORM Creation and Settings](#)
8. [Test Settings](#)

STEP 5: Final Check using student preview as a guide

1. Review announcements
2. Explore the functionality of the batch edit tool
3. Organize the gradebook
4. Set gradebook settings
5. Review the course utilizing student preview

[Step 5 Video](#)

You've made it to the final step!

Congratulations!

While we've focused on the course content page, there are a few other areas that also need your attention. In this final section, we'll set up any remaining items and conduct a comprehensive course review from the student perspective. By addressing these areas, you'll ensure a smooth transition.

Let's Explore Announcements

Course announcements are essential for keeping students informed about important updates and deadlines. Announcements are presented to students in a variety of places: the activity stream, the course's announcements page, as a popup the first time a student enters the course after posting, and as an optional email copy.

Pop-up Window Announcements.

- The student will see a pop-up window the next time they log in to the course after you post it.
- There is a limited amount of text in the pop-up window itself. Students must click on the message or "View All Announcements" to read the entire message.
- Using precise language in your title and a clear first sentence ensures your intended message is received.

Want to learn more about creating and posting Course Announcements? Check out this

[Blackboard Help page](#).

Manage Your Announcements

1. **Announcements Tab:** Announcements from Original will appear in the Announcements tab. Notice posts marked as drafts and the status is set to a greyed-out "Post."
2. **Edit:** To edit for future posting, click the three-dot menu and select edit or delete if longer needed. The copy option will allow you to duplicate the selected announcement.
3. **Add New Announcement:** To create a new announcement, click the plus icon in the top right.

4. **Post:** Announcements can only be posted in courses that are open to students. Follow your institution's guidelines for when to open your course to students.

Edit an Announcement

1. **Announcement content:** Edit your title and message.
2. **Video announcement:** In addition to the normal buttons you can find in the content editor, you'll also see a camera icon that will allow you to add audio or webcam video to your announcement.
3. **Publishing Settings:** You cannot select both options; you will need to choose one or leave both unchecked.
4. **Send an Email Copy to Students:** A very popular option for announcements that you want to send right away. The course will need to be open to students to select this.
5. **Schedule Announcement:** This will let you schedule an announcement for a future date. This option is useful if you know when this announcement should go live.

Batch Editing

There may be times when you want to edit several items at once. Dates, visibility, and deletion can now be done in bulk utilizing the batch edit tool.

1. On the Course Content page, open the three-dot menu on the right side above the content list.
2. Select Batch Edit.
3. On the Batch Edit page, check the box next to the item(s) you want to update. You can select entire containers or expand them to view items inside.
4. After selecting your desired items, use the menu options at the bottom of the page to edit dates, change visibility, or delete items.

Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#) for more information on batch editing course content.

Organizing the Gradebook

The order of items in your gradebook is a small detail, but one that also affects your students.

- **Explore the views:** Open the gradebook tab in your course. There will be three view options. The gradable items view lists all assignments, a grid view with students and assignments, and student view allows you to see grades by student.
- **Move a gradebook item:** Ensure the list of items on the Gradable Items page is in the order you would like it to be. The default order of items on this page is also the order of items in the Grades view and how students will see their grades. Click on the up/down arrow of an item and drag it to its new location.

Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#) to learn more about the Ultra gradebook.

Gradebook Settings

The gradebook houses several categories of settings. To access the gradebook settings, click gradebook in the top menu on the course content page, then select the gear icon to open the gradebook settings. From here, you can view the settings available to you and make

adjustments as you see fit. Not sure what each setting is or how to utilize it? Visit the Help Center: Overall Grade Calculation and Navigate the Gradebook.

1. **Grade Schema:** Calculates letter grades.
2. **Student Performance:** Set and manage performance activity alerts.
3. **Automatic Zeros:** NEW Feature! Support for managing the grading workflow.
4. **Overall Grade:** Customize letter-based grades for special circumstances.
5. **Grade Categories:** Select or create new categories to organize your gradebook.
6. **Course Rubrics:** Create and manage your rubrics.

Final Pre-Flight Check: Student Preview

It's time for the final checks! To get a true feel for your course, view it from a student's perspective. Student Preview creates a student account, called the Preview User. You'll be logged in as the Preview User and enrolled in the current course. The Student Preview bar will appear at the top of each page.

What to do in Student Preview mode:

- Take your course from start to finish.
- Open all assignments and click on links to test them.
- Submit a few assignments to understand the grading workflow and how your settings work.
- Click "Exit" to return to the Instructor View.
- Upon exiting Student Preview, you can choose to save or delete the preview student and data. For this exercise, we recommend saving the preview student and data until your final check, then deleting it.

Pre-Flight Student Preview Checklist:

- Do the start-of-course items make sense?
- Do any of your directions need to be rewritten to match Ultra?
- Are there instances where there is too much or too little information on a page?
- Are your directions clear and placed where students will read them?
- Does the order of items make sense?
- Is it clear when a section begins and ends?

Check out this [Blackboard Help page](#) to learn more about Student Preview mode.

What's Next?

These steps are just the beginning of your Ultra journey. There are going to be things that we didn't cover in this series that you'll still have questions about. Then there's also the next step of running your course for the first time. Here's a few strategies on where to go from here.

More Questions?

- Check the **Appendix** of this workbook for troubleshooting tips.

- Search the [Blackboard Help site](#).
- Check out the forums on the [Anthology Community page](#) to start a discussion or read what others have questions about.

Want to add more to your course?

- Watch or listen to webinars and recordings on [Anthology Community](#)
- Dive into videos and additional content in [The Anthology Academy](#).
- Try a general internet search. Many schools post learning materials for Ultra publicly. ***“How do I do ____ in Blackboard Ultra”*** is a good place to start.

Think local!

- Connect with other instructors in your department to collaborate and share ideas.
- Reach out to your institution’s Blackboard support team with questions.
- Attend trainings that your institution hosts or recommends.

Appendix A: The Master Checklist

Step 1: Get Oriented with Blackboard Learn Ultra

- **Convert a course** from Blackboard Learn Original to Ultra use copy course, bulk conversion or Ultra preview.
- Investigate the layouts in Original and Ultra. **Get to know** the new menu structures and content locations.
- **Explore commonly used buttons** in Ultra such as the plus icon, three dot menu and gear icons.
- Identify the **differences between folders and learning modules**, particularly from the student perspective, to determine which will work best for your course.
- Create a new document or edit an existing one to **get acquainted with the new content editor**.
- Review the content that was converted. **Observe how menu items are handled and how pages are split into individual items**, leaving significantly less content on each page.
- **Review the exception report** to recognize patterns or identify specific items that differ from Original to Ultra.

Step 2: Organize Content with a New Course Structure

- **Decide on the layout** of course materials. Use learning modules, folders, and sub folders to organize materials into either chronological or logical order. Follow any templates or guidelines provided by your institution.
- **Establish a “Start Here” module** if applicable for your course. This area can centralize all introductory course information, or links to resources.
- **Create learning modules and/or folders** to match the desired course layout.
- **Arrange course content** into the appropriate containers and into the desired order.
- **Merge items** as needed to maintain the desired amount of content on a page.
- **Recreate or modify any discussion boards** that did not transfer. **Ensure each discussion board is visible** on the course content page if desired and move into preferred locations.

Step 3: Refine and ensure the course is complete.

- **Inspect description fields closely.** Adjust or relocate existing descriptions to maintain formatting or context.
- **Integrate LTI content** (Optional).
- **Thoroughly review test questions** and develop or modify test questions as needed.
- **Replace content and assessments that did not convert.**

Step 4: Adjust settings so they are right for you.

- **Examine settings for all course content and customize as desired.** Assessing content by category, such as all discussion boards together, can help ensure consistency across the course.

Step 5: Final check using student preview as a guide

- **Evaluate announcements.** Edit or remove as necessary.
- **Utilize the batch edit tool** to update course dates or modify visibility.
- **Organize the order of items in the gradebook** utilizing the gradable items view.
- **Configure overall grade and gradebook settings.**
- **Employ the student preview** to view the entire course as a student would. Use this insight to **finalize settings and content.**

Appendix B: Troubleshooting and common questions for the post-conversion process

For general troubleshooting, head to [this article on the Blackboard help site](#).

Problem or Question	Solution and more information
What assignment types don't come over?	Wikis and blogs do not have direct replacements. Try journals, collaborative documents, or discussions.
What test question types don't come over?	Either/Or File response Jumbled sentence Quiz bowl Ordering Likert Scale (Are available in forms) Hotspot Questions
Is there a concise list of everything that won't come over?	Yes, head to this Blackboard help page for more information about conversion and what won't come over.
How do I keep up with all the changes?	Blackboard Ultra gets updates once a month. These additions provide new tools and improvements. Head to the release notes page for all the latest info.
What happened to Adaptive Release ?	These are now Release Conditions . Find the release conditions menu by clicking the visibility drop down on an item. There are fewer release conditions available as of the May, 2024 release but this is an area with rapid development.
What happened to Contacts ?	The contacts tool is no longer available in Ultra. Create a document with your instructor information instead.
I can't find the Content Collection	While some institutions may not make the content collection available to instructors, you will usually be able to find this in the tools menu on the main Blackboard landing page. You can also pull from your content collection using the plus icon.
Can I still use Course Links ?	Yes and no. Not everything will be available as a course link. Head to this Blackboard help page for more information on course links.
What happened to Course Reports ?	You'll want to head to the new Analytics tab or use the gradebook to navigate to an individual student where you can choose Progress or Student Activity for more data.
What happened to Date Management ?	The new Batch Edit tool takes the place of date management. You will still need to edit dates on your announcements individually as of the May, 2024 release.
What happened to the Glossary ?	This tool is no longer available. Utilize an external web page or document to contain glossary items.
How do I set up Groups ?	Groups are much easier to manage in Ultra but will take a little getting used to. If you plan to use groups in your course definitely read through these Blackboard help pages .

What happened to Portfolios ?	As of the May, 2024 release, portfolios are not available in Ultra courses directly. Students can still access them from the tools menu on the main homepage.
What happened to Self and Peer Assessment ?	You can turn any assignment into a peer assignment with two due dates in the settings of an assignment. Self-assessment is no longer available. Try a form or journal instead to elicit reflection.
What happened to Smart Views ?	You won't have specific views that you can set up, but with the filter button in the grid view , you can narrow the information displayed to exactly what you need: Students, Groups, Gradable items, Assessment type, or Categories.
Can I convert my course back to Original ?	No, once you've completed a conversion there is no way to move courses out of Ultra into Original. Always be sure to keep a copy of your Original course should you need it.

Appendix C: Ultra Resources by Category

Course Content	
Activity Stream - [1:23] video	The up-to-the-minute activity stream lets you jump directly into course actions. Learn how to use this valuable resource.
Announcements	You can add, edit, and delete announcements from the Announcements page.
Calendar	From the global calendar in the list where your name appears, you can see all your upcoming due dates and meetings across your courses—all in one place.
Batch Edit Dates	You can use Batch Edit to update common settings across all content, such as visibility and due dates. You can also use the tool to delete a group of selected course content. With Batch Edit, you can control content settings in one place and all at once.
Progress Tracking	You can turn on this function to give your students an easy way to keep track of what they've done in your course and to gain important analytics information.
Create Content	Your course creation starts on the Course Content page. You'll find it's easy to discover features and complete actions.
Content Editor - [2:06] video	The content editor appears wherever you need to add text in the platform. This video explains how to use the content editor.
Create Ultra Documents	You can create content that combines a variety of materials to view together, such as text, multimedia, and attachments.

Assignments, Discussion Boards, & Tests	
Create and Edit Assignments	You can create assignments alongside other content. Students can access their work next to the content they need, right when they need it. You can also create a group assignment and release it to one or more groups in your course.
Rubrics	You can create multiple rubrics in your course. Rubrics consist of rows and columns. The rows correspond to the criteria. The columns correspond to the level of achievement that describes each criterion.
Group Assignments	You create a group assignment nearly the same way you create assignments for students to complete individually. Gradebook items are created automatically.
Managing Groups	After you create a group or a group set, you can add or delete individual groups, and manage student membership. You can also edit group names, add or edit group descriptions, and send messages to your groups to kick off collaboration.
Create a Discussion Board	You can create course and group discussions. You can also make discussions count for a grade and organize discussions in folders.
Manage a Discussion Board	On the Discussions page, you can help students find what they need and keep the area organized.
Discussion Board Analytics	Discussion analytics provide you with insights to forum participants and activity. This information can help you identify students who are participating or may need help and encouragement.
Respond to Discussions	<p>From the activity stream: Select a discussion in the list and a layer opens. New responses and replies are highlighted so you can see what's changed since you last visited the discussion. Close the layer to return to the activity stream.</p> <p>In a course: You can access a discussion from the Course Content page or from the Discussions page.</p>
Create Tests	You can create tests alongside the other content students need as they prepare. On the Course Content page, select the plus sign wherever you want to add a test. In the menu, select Create to open the Create Item panel and select Test. The New Test page opens.
Edit Tests and Questions	After you create a test, you can easily alter the settings and test questions.
Reuse Questions	In the Ultra Course View, you can reuse questions and other content from all existing tests, assignments, and question banks in your course. You can also copy question banks from other courses and import questions into your course to add to your assessments.

Question Pools	The Master course for Step 1 has question pools in the quizzes for the pre-reading. This link will show you how to add, delete, and edit those question pools.
Test Options	This link provides an explanation of the various test options you can set.
Student Overview	Use the Student Overview as a single place to get relevant information on a student and personalize your communications with them. You can see how your students have performed over time with analytics. You can also use the message feature to quickly follow-up with a student about any of the information on the Student Overview.

Grading and Managing the Gradebook	
Gradebook Views	The gradebook is populated when students are enrolled in your course. From there, you can grade coursework, manage items, post grades and much more.
Navigate the Gradebook	See what you need to grade in all your courses. Or, drill right into a course and get started. You can find grades through the left-hand navigation or from the Gradebook tab in a course.
Assign Grades	There are a few different ways that you can access the activities that need grading. This resource will walk you through how to access and assign grades.
Grading Assignments	Watch this short video to learn how to grade assignments.
Grade Discussions	Learn how to enable grading for discussions and then grade your students' contributions.
Override Grades	Override grades are grades you assign manually, for example, if you type in the grade pill in the gradebook. An override label appears next to the grade.
Flexible Grading [5:55] Video	This groundbreaking update enables grading by question or student and even mix-and-match approaches. The enhanced experience extends to assignment submissions, ensuring a comprehensive and cohesive grading journey.
Attempt Management	Sometimes students face situations or events that make it difficult or impossible for them to undertake an assessment, such as submitting coursework or taking a test. Depending on the circumstances, you may need to extend their due date for the assessment, grant them an additional attempt, or excuse them from the assessment altogether.
Grading with a Rubric	You can create a rubric, associate it to an assignment or discussion, and use it for grading. The rubric will appear on the assignment or discussion page you chose. Please note that you can currently only associate one rubric to each item. You

	can't associate a rubric to an assignment with questions at this point.
Grading Submission Receipts	When a student submits an assignment or test, a window appears with a submission confirmation number. Students can download a copy of the receipt directly from the window. They also receive a copy of their submission receipt via an automatic email confirmation. Students are encouraged to save their submission receipts to verify they submitted their work.
Student Overview	Use the Student Overview as a single place to get relevant information on a student and personalize your communications with them. You can see how your students have performed over time with analytics. You can also use the message feature to quickly follow-up with a student about any of the information on the Student Overview.