When it comes to getting your course set up in Canvas there is no-one-size-fits-all solution. As the designer of your course content, you will need to make some decisions about how you will transition your instructional content from Blackboard to Canvas. Should you build your course from scratch or should you migrate your content from Blackboard? If you decide to migrate your content from Blackboard, this guide provides some recommendations on what you can do before and after the migration process.

Starting the Process – Things to Consider

Many of the Blackboard course elements will easily convert to Canvas; however, some elements will need to be edited while others will need to be recreated within Canvas.

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Once you have migrated your Blackboard courses to Canvas, your course content will look very different. The flat structure of Canvas can often expose hidden or duplicated content that was not readily visible in your Blackboard course. Because every course is unique, you will have to decide whether you want to edit the imported content to be usable in Canvas or to start over and build your course from scratch in Canvas.

Reasons Why Your Imported Course May Be Easy to Edit
- If your Course Content area followed the unit/week folder structure in Blackboard
- If your Tests, Surveys, and Pools are text-based (no images as possible answers)
- If your course relied heavily on the Assignment and Discussion tools in Blackboard
- If your course is free of hidden/duplicated folders, items, and gradebook columns

Benefits to Building Your Course from Scratch
- Reduces the amount of time you need to reconfigure a course imported from Blackboard
- Allows you to rethink your course layout with new flexibility in organization content through modules
- Allows you to rethink how you will foster student-student, student-instructor, and student-content interactions
- Allows you to redesign Blog and Journal assignments, which are not available in Canvas
- Allows you to review and rebuild Rubrics, Wikis, and Groups, which work differently in Canvas
- Encourages you to contact your publisher for a Canvas cartridge (Publisher materials)

For help in determining the solution that will work best for your course, email utclearn@utc.edu.
Migrating the Content – Steps to Follow

To ensure a smooth migration from Blackboard to Canvas, the following information will walk you through the steps for exporting your content from your Blackboard course and importing the content into your Canvas Course.

Step 1: Export your Course from Blackboard

To ensure that you do not lose any of your course content in the migration process, you will export your course(s) to your local computer. The steps for exporting content from Blackboard to upload into Canvas are the same as those you completed when moving content from one Blackboard course to another.

Export your Blackboard Course

Step 2: Import Your Content to Canvas

The Course Import Tool makes it easy to import the content from your Blackboard course (course content, assignments, and quizzes) into your Canvas Course.

1. Click on Add Existing Content if you are in a new course shell. If you already have content in your course, Click Settings -> Import Course Content.
2. Click Blackboard 6/7/8/9 export .zip file from the Content Type drop-down menu.
3. Click Choose File to navigate to the saved export file for your Blackboard course from Source.
4. Click to select All Content.
5. Click Import. You will see the progression of the import as the file processes.

Canvas Import Tool

Additional Information: Copying from Canvas Course to Canvas Course

Have you already built content into a Canvas course or sandbox and need to move the content to another Canvas course?

1. Click on Add Existing Content if you are in a new course shell. If you already have content in your course, Click Settings -> Import Course Content.
2. Click Copy a Canvas Course.
3. Click the drop-down menu to Search for a Course and select the course you wish to copy.
4. Choose between importing All content or select specific content you wish to import.
5. ***If you wish to adjust the dates for your course (or strip the due dates from the course completely, click to Adjust events and due dates.
6. Click Import.

Copy a Canvas Course
Editing Your Course

Now that you have imported your content from Blackboard into your Canvas course you will notice that Blackboard’s folder structure will appear differently in Canvas. Like content folders in Blackboard, Canvas Modules help instructors organize content to benefit the flow of the course. Modules allow you to organize your course content by weeks, units, or a different structure. Modules essentially tell the students how to proceed in the course in a linear fashion created by the instructor. Each module can contain pages, files, discussions, assignments, quizzes, and other course content. Module items can be added to the course from existing content or new content shells within the modules. Course content can be added to multiple modules or iterated several times throughout an individual module. Modules can be easily organized using the drag and drop feature.

Step 1: Reorganize Files/Delete Old Files

Imported course files will appear under Files on the course navigation menu in Canvas. You may want to create new folders with meaningful names and drag the appropriate files into these new folders. Then, delete the residual Blackboard folders from your Canvas course.

Step 2: Reorganize Modules

Pages, Modules, and Files are new terms to most Blackboard users. Pages are similar to Content Items in Blackboard. Modules are similar to content areas or folders in Blackboard. You will need to review the organization, naming conventions, and page content within the modules for any necessary alterations or deletions. Delete unnecessary modules such as UTC Bookstore or Academic Acknowledgement. You may need to revise or relocate information from other modules, such as Start Here or Course Information. Review all content for any reference to Blackboard and tools such as SafeAssign (now Unicheck) or Respondus Lockdown Browser (now Proctorio).

To mimic the hierarchical structure of Blackboard folders, you have the option to create Text Headers or to indent elements within a Module. Common organizational structure for Modules is to group content by type (i.e., readings, assignments, quizzes) or sequence. Other Module settings include customized availability and controlled release by pre-requisites and requirements.

Step 3: Review Announcements

Course announcements that were created in Blackboard import with the course content into Canvas. Any imported Announcements will appear to be from an unidentified user (US). Therefore, consider starting fresh with your announcement rather than copying and editing previous Announcements. If you wish to use previous announcements, consider copying them to a Word document to reference for future use when in posting the fresh announcements. Review each announcement carefully to make sure you remove any reference to Blackboard, SafeAssign, Respondus Lockdown Browser, or other steps and information that refer to the Blackboard system.

Step 4: Review Course Links

As an instructor, you can verify all internal and external links throughout your course to ensure they are valid. You can check these links using the course link validator, which searches through course content and returns invalid or unresponsive links in both published and unpublished content.
Step 5: Review Assignments, Discussions, and Quizzes

Assignments, Discussions, and Quizzes should easily import into Canvas, but you will need to review their content, add due dates, select options for delivery, and publish them to ensure their availability to students. Imported quizzes may need to be edited and saved to work properly in Canvas. If you had images as part of your quiz/test questions, you will need to relink the image to the question.

Other considerations for imported Quizzes include:
- Redesign question types that are not supported in Canvas such as Quiz Bowl, Hotspots, questions with images as possible answers, and questions with rubrics for grading
- Add missing feedback for: True/False, Short Answer, and Essay questions
- Add letters to choices that rely on the A, B, C, D indicators (e.g., A and C are correct)
- Review extra credit questions and redesign in needed
- Adjust Question Set point values (if different than 1 point each)
- Add missing images back into questions that had images as possible answers
- Adjust File Response questions to the File Upload question type.
- Assignments, Discussions, and Quizzes do not appear to the students unless they are published.

Step 6: Redesign and Rebuild

Assignments using the Blog, Journal, Wiki, and Group tools in Blackboard will not appear in your imported course(s). Canvas does support similar activities, but you will need to redesign and rebuild these assignments in Canvas.

For instructional design assistance, email utclearn@utc.edu.

Step 7: Prepare Gradebook

The Grades section provides access to your course gradebook for entering student scores and feedback, but you will need to set up grading schemes, categories, and weighted totals under Assignments. You will need to review the grouping of assignments for any necessary alterations or deletions. You can also create custom columns by creating a new Assignment that has “No Submission.”

Step 8: View Course as a Student

You can use the Student View on the Home screen to review how students will see and interact with your course content.

Additional Information: Creating a Front Page

You can choose to create a customized entry page for your course that provides you more control over the content displayed to the students as they enter your course. Use the guides listed below to create a course front page and set the front page as the course home page.

Training Opportunities

Attend one of our workshops to learn more about Canvas, online course, design, pedagogy, and so much more!

Contact Us

If you have any questions or need assistance, let us know! Email us at utclearn@utc.edu or give us a call at 423-425-4188! Find links to handouts, tips and tricks, and more on our website (utc.edu/learn)

Portions of content used in this document were used from the Tidewater Community College Blackboard to Canvas Migration Guide.