University of Houston ◢ Clear Lake

Blackboard to Canvas

Import Guide

UHCL Office of Information Technology – Instructional Design & Technology

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NOTE: This document is an adaptation of the document [Blackboard to Canvas Import Guide](#) by Texas A&M University's Office for Academic Innovation and is used with permission from that organization. Changes include information that reflects differences between the two institutions' technical configurations, rewriting some passages to better reflect UHCL-specific practices, and adding original materials where needed.

When it comes to course migration, 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. This guide provides some recommendations on what you can do before and after the migration process.

Preparing Your Course for Migration

To ensure a smooth migration from Blackboard to Canvas, the following guide will walk you through the steps for preserving the integrity of your course materials.

1. **Back Up Your Course**
   To ensure that you do not lose any of your course content in the migration process, you can back up your course(s) to your local computer as an export file of your original content.

2. **Evaluate and Organize Your Existing Content**
   Blackboard's folder structure will appear differently in Canvas, which uses Modules for course organization. The unit/week folder structure appears to convert to Canvas in the same sequence but any text descriptions of folders and items become unique pages within a Module.

   If you organize your content by a non-sequential identifier, you should make sure that your naming conventions of the content clearly identify association and order because the organizational structure may change during the migration. For example, if you have a quiz named "Quiz on Topic A," you should rename the quiz "Module 1: Quiz on Topic A."

Vocabulary Overview Equivalent Tools in Blackboard and Canvas

Blackboard	Canvas
Tests, Surveys, and Pools	Quizzes and Question Banks
Content Collection	Files
Discussions	Discussions
Learning Module, Content Folder, sub-folders, etc.	Module
Learning Module, Content Folder, sub-folders, items, etc.	Page
Announcements	Announcement

Converting Your Course to Canvas

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.

Converts Well to Canvas	Imports But Requires Editing	Needs to be Recreated
Announcements Assignments Course File Discussions Learning Modules Text-Based Tests, Surveys, & Pools	Glossary Audio and Video Content Content Folders Grade Center & Settings Text Descriptions of Items Text Descriptions of Folders	Rubrics Groups and Group Tools Third Party Tools (LTI) Wikis, Blogs, Journals Publisher Links & Cartridges

After you migrate your Blackboard courses into 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.

Since every course is unique, you will have to decide whether you want to edit the imported content to be usable in Canvas or build your course from scratch in Canvas.

➢ Benefits of 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 organizing content through modules
- Allows you to rethink how you will foster student-student, student-instructor, and student-content interactions
- Clears your path for redesigning Blog and Journal assignments, which are not available in Canvas
- Clears your path for redesigning Rubrics, Wikis, and Groups, which work Differently in Canvas
- Encourages you to contact your publisher for Canvas integration instructions (Publisher Materials)

➢ Reasons Why Your Imported Course May Be Easy to Edit
- If your Course Content area followed the unit/week folder structure using content folders
- 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

For help in determining the solution that will work best for your course, email SupportCenter@uhcl.edu.

Editing Your Imported Course Content

If you choose to edit the imported content from Blackboard to make it usable in Canvas, the following guide will walk you through the steps for reviewing and improving your course content.

1. ## Reorganize Files

    Imported course files will appear under Files in Canvas as a series of folders. The imported files are confusing to navigate because they have serialized, non-meaningful names like "res00043" and "res000179." 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. ([Canvas Guide: Files](#))

2. ## Reorganize Modules

    Pages, Modules, and Files are new terms to most Blackboard users. Pages are similar to Content Items, and Modules are similar to Content Areas or Unit/Week Folders in Blackboard. You will need to review the organization, naming conventions, and page content within the modules for any necessary alterations or deletions. For example, the left navigation menu links from Blackboard will import to Canvas as individual Modules.

    You should delete unnecessary modules, such as My Grades, Student Services, Course Tools, and Blackboard Student Orientation, and you will need to revise or relocate information from others, such as Start Here and Course Information. You should also review all content for any reference to Blackboard-specific tools, resources, or support.

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

3. ## Review Announcements

    Many course Announcements are specific to Blackboard and contain information that may not be consistent with Canvas. Announcements in Canvas also reference your profile information to indicate who sent the announcement. Any imported Announcements will appear to be from an unidentified user. Therefore, consider starting fresh rather than copying and editing previous Announcements. ([Canvas Guide: Announcements](#))

4. Review Links to Files or External Sites

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. ([Canvas Guide: Validate Links in Content](#))

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 even if you make no changes to the content.

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, and D indicators (e.g., A and C are correct)
- Review extra credit questions and redesign if 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 students unless they are published. ([Canvas Guide: Assignments](#))

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.

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 total 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." ([Canvas Guide: Gradebook](#))

8. Prepare Your Course for Use

Remember that your imported course(s) are development sites. If you edited your course content in this development site, you would need to copy your course into the official Canvas course where your students are enrolled. You can use the Student View to review how students will see and interact with your course content. When you are ready, publish the course! ([Canvas Guide: Course Copy](#) and [Canvas Guide: Publishing Your Course](#))

For the complete series of Canvas Instructor Guides, visit http://guides.canvaslms.com.