Creating Learning Modules

Blackboard Learn 9.1
Last updated: November 2010
About Learning Modules

A Learning Module is an organized collection of content presented together. A Learning Module can support a course goal, a course objective, a subject, a concept, or a theme. Instructors can set a structured path through the content items using a storyboard or a set of dependencies. For example, a Learning Module can present the concept of magnets’ fields before describing how speakers and microphones work. Understanding the first concept is dependent on understanding the second concept. Alternatively, instructors can allow students to explore the content in a Learning Module in any order, and at their own pace. For example, a Learning Module can present a series of images and descriptions of various animals in a genus. Students can view the images and descriptions in any order, as no order is required for understanding the whole.

Content within a Learning Module is added and managed just like in any folder in a Content Area. The Learning Module is a shell to which other content items such as files, folders and tools are added. Learning Modules can be modified like any other item within a Content Area.

The value of creating Learning Modules lies in the ability to integrate related content and activities, providing a rich, interactive learning experience for students. You can include the following in a Learning Module:

- Content Items
- Files
- Folders
- URLs (external links)
- Mashups (multimedia)
- Tests and Surveys
- Assignments
- Discussion Board Forums
- Other Tools
Creating a Learning Module

First, you will create a new Learning Module in a Content Area. This first step creates an empty shell. Content is added in the next step.

NOTE: In this workshop, the phrase “in Edit Mode” refers to Edit Mode being ON, showing all the instructor’s functions.

▶ QUICK STEPS: adding a Learning Module

1. In Edit Mode, on the Course Menu, click an existing Content Area or create a new one.
2. On the Content Area’s Action Bar, point to Build Content to access the drop-down list.
4. On the Create Learning Module page, type in a Name. Students access the Learning Module by clicking the name you enter.
5. Optionally, enter a description in the Text box. Use the Text Editor to format the description, if desired. The description appears below the Learning Module Name.
6. Select Availability options.
7. Select View options.
8. Select Table of Contents options.
9. Click Submit.
Building Learning Modules: Creating a Learning Module

Create Learning Module

1. Learning Module Information
   - Name: Space Exploration
   - Description: This Learning Module will provide an international overview of Space Exploration

2. Availability
   - Yes / No
   - Select Date and Time Restrictions

3. View
   - Yes / No
   - Open in New Window
   - Track Number of Views

4. Table of Contents
   - Yes / No
   - Hierarchical Display

© 2010 Blackboard Inc.
Selecting Options for a Learning Module

Availability

- Permit Users to View the Content Item: Select No to restrict users from seeing the Learning Module. This will make the Learning Module unavailable.

- Select Date and Time Restrictions: Learning Modules can be set to display on a specific date and time, and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Display restrictions do not affect content availability, only the appearance of the Learning Module. You may see more or fewer content items in a Learning Module based on the date restrictions you select.

View

- Enforce Sequential Viewing of the Learning Module: Select Yes to force students to view the pages in order. If sequential viewing is not enforced, students can view the content in any order.

- Open in New Window: Select Yes if you want the Learning Module to be viewed in a separate window instead of in the content frame. Opening a Learning Module in a new window allows students to view the course and its contents at the same time as the Learning Module. They will be able to navigate to other areas and keep the Learning Module open in the separate window.

- Track Number of Views: To turn on Statistics Tracking for the Learning Module, select Yes. Statistics Tracking records the number of times the Learning Module is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom.

Table of Contents

- Show Table of Contents from Students: Select Yes to display a Table of Contents to students when they enter the Learning Module.

- Hierarchy Display: Select the way items in the Learning Module are labeled to denote their relative position in the Table of Contents. Numbers, letters, or Roman Numerals can be selected. If None is selected, the items will not be labeled.
Adding Items to a Learning Module

Now that you have created a Learning Module, it is time to add an item to it. An item can be any of the following:

- Text you enter
- An attached file in a variety of formats, including HTML, .jpg, or .gif
- A series of files that are linked together such as a web site
- An embedded file such as a Flash animation or YouTube video
- A combination of options listed above

An item can be any type of formatted text, such as reference materials, directions, a reading list, or lecture notes. Images, external links, tables, bulleted lists, and file attachments can also be added.

▶ QUICK STEPS: adding items to a Learning Module

1. In Edit Mode, on the Course Menu, click the Content Area containing the Learning Module.
2. On the Content Area page, click the Learning Module’s title.
3. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to Build Content and click Item.
4. On the Create Item page, enter a Name. The Name will appear in the Table of Contents in the Learning Module.
5. Enter text in the Text box. Use formatting options to select font face, size, alignment and color. Use the Text Editor to insert images, embed multimedia files and spell check.
6. Add an attached file by clicking Browse My Computer, or Browse Course Files.
7. Select the Options for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.
8. Click Submit.
Building Learning Modules: Adding Items to a Learning Module
You can enter a name for a file attachment, rather than use the file name. If you do not enter a name, the file name will be used.
Adding Files to a Learning Module

Adding files to the Learning Module is similar to adding items. The difference is that when you add a file, there is no text editor available to write a description of the file. Students will click the file name and open or download the file. The action is dependent on what type of file has been added. Files that open in a web browser, for example PowerPoint or PDF files, open in the main frame of the Learning Module or open in a new window depending on the file settings. Files that do not open in a web browser can be downloaded or opened in a separate application on your computer.

► QUICK STEPS: adding files to a Learning Module

1. In Edit Mode, access the Learning Module.
2. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to Build Content and click File.
3. On the Create File page, find the file to upload by clicking Browse My Computer or Browse Course Files.
4. Enter a Name. The Name will appear in the Table of Contents in the Learning Module. If a name is not entered, the name of the file, including the file extension becomes the link in the Table of Contents.
5. To open the file in a new window, select Yes.
7. Click Submit.
Building Learning Modules: Adding Files to a Learning Module

Space Exploration

Create Content ▼ Create Assessment ▼ Add Interactive Tool ▼ Assign Textbook ▼

Create

> Item
> File
> Audio
> Image
> Video
> URL

New Page

> Content Folder
> Blank Page
> Module Page
> Tools Area

Mashups

> Flickr Photo
> SlideShare Presentation
> YouTube Video
> Scholar Stream
> Scholar Bookmark

Create File

* Indicates a required field.

1. Select File

   - Find File: Browse My Computer, Browse Course Files
   - Selected Files: File Name: four_systems.jpg
     - Select a Different File
   - Name: Four Rocket Systems
   - Color of Name: [ ] Black
   - Open in New Window: [ ] Yes, [ ] No

2. Standard Options

   - Permit Users to View this Content: [ ] Yes, [ ] No
   - Track Number of Views: [ ] Yes, [ ] No

3. Submit

   - Display After: [ ]
   - Display Until: [ ]
   - [ ] Yes, [ ] No

4. Additional Options

© 2010 Blackboard Inc.
The file name or the name added to the Name of Link of File will appear in the Table of Contents. If students are allowed to view content non-sequentially, they can click the file’s name to gain access.
Adding a Blank Page to a Learning Module

Blank Pages present content in a different way than adding items. Blank pages can include Mashups, links to course content, and file attachments.

A Blank Page is different than a content item or folder in that there is no description that appears below the title of the page. For example, if you add Blank Pages to a Learning Module, the amount of scrolling can be limited, which streamlines the appearance of the Learning Module.

**QUICK STEPS: adding a Blank Page to a Learning Module**

1. In **Edit Mode**, on the Course Menu, click the Content Area containing the Learning Module.

2. On the Content Area page, click the Learning Module's title.

3. On the Learning Module's Action Bar, point to **Build Content** and click **Blank Page**.

4. On the blank page, replace the "New Page" Title with a name for the page. This becomes the link in the Learning Module. This is the only information about the page that will display. It is important to add a descriptive name.

5. Add your content for the page using the Text Editor where you can include formatted text, links, and other multimedia content.

6. Add an attached file by clicking **Browse My Computer**, or **Browse Course**. Document attachments will appear as links.

7. Select the Options for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.

8. Click **Submit**.
Building Learning Modules: Adding a Blank Page to a Learning Module

1. Navigate to the Learning Module editor and select the appropriate unit.

2. Click on the 'Build Content' tab.

3. Select 'New Page' and choose 'Blank Page' from the options.
Building Learning Modules: Adding a Blank Page to a Learning Module

Terrestrial Planets

A terrestrial planet, telluric planet or rocky planet is a planet that is primarily composed of silicate rocks and/or metals. Within the solar system, the terrestrial planets are the inner planets closest to the Sun. The terms are derived from Latin words for Earth (Terra and Tellus), so these planets are, in a certain way, “Earth-like.” Terrestrial planets are substantially different from gas giants, which might not have solid surfaces and are composed mostly of some combination of hydrogen, helium, and water existing in various physical states.

Structure

Terrestrial planets all have roughly the same structure: a central metallic core, mostly iron, with a surrounding silicate mantle. The Moon is similar, but lacks an iron core. Terrestrial planets have canyons, craters, mountains, and volcanoes. Terrestrial planets possess secondary atmospheres — atmospheres generated through internal volcanism or comet impacts, as opposed to the gas giants, which possess primary atmospheres — atmospheres captured directly from the original solar nebula.

Theoretically, there are two types of terrestrial or rocky planets, one dominated by silicon compounds and another dominated by carbon compounds, like carbonaceous chondritic asteroids. These are the silicate planets and carbon planets (or “diamond planets”), respectively.

Solar terrestrial planets

Earth's solar system has four terrestrial planets: Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. Only one terrestrial planet, Earth, is known to have an active biosphere.

During the formation of the solar system, there were probably many more (planetsimals), but they have all merged with or been destroyed by the four remaining worlds in the solar nebula.

Plutinos, objects like Pluto, are similar to terrestrial planets in the fact that they do have a solid surface, but are composed of more icy materials.

Attachments

Attach a file from a local drive, Course Files, or the Content Collection. All attached files are saved in Course Files. Click Delete Attach to remove the attachment. The file itself is not deleted.

Options

- Permit Users to View the Content: Yes, No
- Track Number of Views: Yes, No
- Select Date and Time Restrictions: Display After, Display Until

Submit
Building Learning Modules: Adding a Blank Page to a Learning Module

**Editing a Blank Page**

When on the blank page with Edit Mode ON, the page contents are automatically opened in the Text Editor, and the title can be edited inline.

**Deleting a Blank Page**

There are two ways to delete a Blank Page.

1. Open the Content Area or Learning Module where the Blank Page exists.
2. Open the contextual menu, select **Delete**.

OR

1. When Edit Mode is ON when inside the Blank Page, open the contextual menu.
2. Select **Delete**.
Adding Folders to a Learning Module

Adding folders to a Learning Module provides a way to organize content in the Table of Contents that displays the relationship among items. Content that is placed within a folder becomes a sub-section of the Table of Contents hierarchy. Numbers or letters can be used to label the hierarchy to further illustrate the relationship among items.

Folders can be nested providing a way to display many levels of content. Be aware that when folders are used in Learning Modules that are set to be sequential, each folder and all nest folders and the content within them must be navigated through before the returning to an upper level in the hierarchy.

Each folder itself is a page in the Learning Module. It is important to provide a description or other content in the text editor when adding a folder so that the page will not appear blank to students navigating through the Learning Module.

When items in a Table of Contents are hidden, all nested items are also hidden. For instance, if a folder is hidden, then none of its content is visible either.

▶ QUICK STEPS: adding folders to a Learning Module

1. In Edit Mode, access the Learning Module.
2. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to Build Content and click Content Folder.
3. On the Create Content Folder page, enter a Name. The Name will appear in the Table of Contents in the Learning Module.
4. Enter text in the Text box. It is important to add a description or other information here to that the page does not appear blank when students access it. Use formatting options to select font face, size, alignment and color. Use the Text Editor to insert images, embed multimedia files and spell check.
5. Select the Options for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.
6. Click Submit.
Building Learning Modules: Adding Folders to a Learning Module

Create Content Folder

1. **Content Folder Information**
   - Name: Early Research
   - Text:
     
     The earliest research into the development of rockets began with the development of projectile weapons that used a propellant.

2. **Options**
   - Permit Users to View this Content: Yes
   - Track Number of Views: Yes

3. **Submit**
Hands-on Activity

For this activity, use your Practice Course.

In this activity, you will build a new Learning Module for Unit 3. Your Practice Course already contains a Unit 3 folder—your Unit 3 Learning Module will demonstrate a different way to present some of the same content.

Create the Learning Module

- Add a new Learning Module titled Unit 3: Gas Giants to the Units Content Area. Select the options you want and make the Learning Module available.

Add an item

- Add an item titled Introduction. Type the following text: Unit Overview: This unit explores Uranus, Saturn, Jupiter, and Neptune.

Add files

Add the following files from Course Files > Unit 3:

- uranus.htm, saturn.htm, jupiter.htm, neptune.htm

Add folders

Add the following folder under the file jupiter.htm:

- Folder Name: Moons of Jupiter
- Type the following folder description in the Text Editor: The content in this section discusses the moons of Jupiter. According to Universe Today, there are 63 confirmed moons of Jupiter. In the course, we will study the four largest moons.

Add the following folder under the file saturn.htm:

- Folder Name: Moons of Saturn
- Be sure to type a description.
NOTE: If the files are not available from Course Files, you can download them from the Workshop Resources Content Area. The file name is unit_resources.zip.
Adding URLs to a Learning Module

Web sites and Internet resources can be included in Learning Modules by adding a URL (uniform resource locator). A URL is just a shortcut to a web resource. An image or document relevant to the Internet resource can be attached as well.

**QUICK STEPS: adding URLs**

1. In **Edit Mode**, access the Learning Module.
2. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to **Build Content** and click **URL**.
3. On the **Create URL** page, enter a **Name**. The name must be less than 255 characters long.
4. Enter the **URL**, including the protocol http://
5. Enter text in the **Text** box. Use formatting options to select font face, size, alignment and color. Use the Text Editor to insert images, embed multimedia files and spell check.
6. Optionally, add an attached file by clicking **Browse My Computer**, or **Browse Course Files**.
7. Select the **Options** for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.
8. Click **Submit**.
Open in New Window

Opening a URL in a new window allows students to see both the course material and the external content. Students will be aware that the URL is an outside resource.

Opening a URL in the content frame keeps students within the course. Students can follow links and still remain in the frame. Students can click the breadcrumbs to navigate away from the URL and the link will close.
Adding Mashups to a Learning Module

Mashups are a simple way to add multimedia to your course without having to create it yourself.

▶ QUICK STEPS: adding Mashups

1. In Edit Mode, access the Learning Module.
2. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to Build Content and click the type of Mashup to add. For this activity, select YouTube Video.
3. On the Search for a YouTube Video page, enter a search terms to locate a video, and click Go.
4. On the Search Results page, the order of the videos is determined by the YouTube Service so you may have to sort the results or scroll down to find what you want. Click Preview to watch the video before adding it to the Learning Module. Click Select to add the video to the Learning Module.
5. Enter text in the Text box to describe the video or provide any other information.
6. Select Mashup Options.
7. Optionally, attach or link other content.
8. Select the Options for availability, tracking, and date and time restrictions.
9. Click Submit.
Adding Mashups to a Learning Module

1. **Create Content**
   - Item
   - File
   - Audio
   - Image
   - Video
   - URL
   - Lesson Plan
   - Syllabus
   - Course Link

2. **Content Folder**
   - Blank Page
   - Module Page
   - Tools Area

3. **Mashups**
   - Flickr Photo
   - SlideShare Presentation
   - YouTube Video
   - Scholar Stream
   - Scholar Bookmark

4. **Search for a YouTube Video**
   - Search: Jupiter
   - All of the words
   - Language: English

5. **Search Results**
   - Displaying 1 to 10 of 41811 items
   - Sort by: Relevance, Uploaded, Anytime

   **Jupiter sounds (so strange) NASA-Voyager recording**
   - Duration: 6:10
   - Views: 4,753,463
   - Rating: 4.75
   - Comments: 6,697
   - YouTube ID: 701y9V3o8E8
   - From an original CD JUPITER NASA-Voyager SPACE SOUNDS (1980) BFANNINO Research. Fascinating recording of Jupiter sounds (electromagnetic 'voices') by NASA-Voyager. The complex interactions of charged electromagnetic particles from the solar wind, planetary magnetosphere etc. create this beautiful soundscape. It sounds very interesting, even scary. Jupiter is mainly composed of hydrogen and helium. The entire planet is made of gas, with no solid surface under the atmosphere. The pressures ...
Create Mashup Item

1. Add YouTube Content to Course
   - Name: Jupiter sounds (so strange!) NASA-Voyager
   - Duration: 859
   - Views: 1,656
   - Upload Date: 9/24/07
   - YouTube URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPbD1VYvde

   Message:
   From an original CD, JUPITER NASA-VoyAGER SPACE SOUNDS (1990) BRAINWIND Research Fascinating recording of Jupiter sounds (electromagnetic "voices") by NASA-Voyager. The complex interactions of charged electromagnetic particles from the solar wind, planetary magnetosphere etc. create vibrate "soundscapes". It sounds very interesting, even scary. Jupiter is mostly composed of hydrogen and helium. The entire planet is made of gas, with no solid surface under the atmosphere.

2. Mashup Options
   - Show YouTube URL: Yes
   - Show YouTube Information: Yes

3. Attach or Link Content
   - Attach local file
     - Browse My Computer
     - Browse Course Files

4. Options
   - Permit Users to View this Content: Yes
   - Track Number of Views: Yes
   - Select Date and Time Restrictions:
     - Display After
     - Display Until
     - Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.
Adding Tests or Surveys to a Learning Module

You can also add a test or survey to the Learning Module. There are several advantages to putting an evaluation in a Learning Module. After students read and work through the material in the Learning Module, they can immediately take a test to assess their knowledge of what they just learned, or they can complete a survey to give you feedback.

After adding the test or survey to the Learning Module, you must make the link available so students can gain access. If there are any date and time restrictions on the test or survey, they will apply.

▶ QUICK STEPS: adding a test or survey

1. In Edit Mode, access the Learning Module.
2. On the Learning Module’s Action Bar, point to Create Assessment and click Test.
3. Select Create Test or Create Survey. In this example, we will create a test.
4. On the Add Test page, either create a new test by clicking Create, or select one from the Add Test list.
5. Click Submit.
6. The Test Options page will automatically appear after the Test has been added to the Learning Module. Select the desired options, which control instructions, availability, feedback, and presentation.
7. Click Submit.
Building Learning Modules: Adding Tests or Surveys to a Learning Module

Create Test

1. Add Test
   - Create a new Test or select an existing Test. Any Test that has already been added will not be displayed.
     Create a New Test
     Create

2. Submit
   - Click Submit to add this Test. Click Cancel to quit.
     Submit
Adding Other Content and Tools to a Learning Module

Now that you have learned how to add items, files, folders, URL, and assessments to a Learning Module, we will look at adding activities and tools that promote interactive learning and collaboration.

For example, add assignments or group projects to give students an opportunity to apply what they have studied in a Learning Module. Or, add collaboration tools, such as Chat sessions and Discussion Board forums, where students can brainstorm and share their ideas about topics presented in the Learning Module.
Hands-on Activity

For this activity, use your Practice Course.

Add content

In the Unit 3: Gas Giants Learning Module, add the following content.

- Add a Mashup. Search for and add a YouTube video.
- Add the Unit 3 Quiz. This assessment already exists; you do not need to create it.
- Add a URL: http://www.nasa.gov.
- Add a Unit 3: Mass Objects Discussion Board link.
In the table below, Dr. C answers your question regarding the length of Learning Modules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>▼ Your Question</th>
<th>▼ Dr. C’s Reply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How long should my Learning Module be?</td>
<td>Because so many factors influence course design, including your audience, subject matter, and teaching style, there is no formula appropriate for everyone. As a general rule, include approximately 8–14 items in a Learning Module. Units with too many items can appear daunting to students, whereas very short modules make for inefficient navigation. To promote continuity and consistency, try to make modules approximately the same length.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Changing the Content Order in a Learning Module

Content appears in the order it was added, but the order can be changed. The move icon appears as a double-tipped arrow, or handle next to a content item.

**QUICK STEPS: changing the order of items in a Learning Module**

1. In **Edit Mode**, in the Learning Module, press the move icon next to the content item. The item is highlighted.
2. Drag the item into the new location in the Learning Module. The item is surrounded by dashes as it is being moved into its new position.

Items can also be reordered using the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool.

**TIP:** Use the Hide/Show Details button to collapse the descriptions of items in the Learning Module. The setting will stick after logging out of the system and logging back in. This will not affect how students view the information and they do not have the ability to hide or show details of an item.

**QUICK STEPS: using the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool**

1. In **Edit Mode**, in the Learning Module, click the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar.
2. In the list, click the item to move.
3. Use the up and down arrows below the title box to adjust the order.
4. Click Submit.

**TIP:** Turn Edit Mode OFF and navigate through the Learning Module to make sure the content order is ideal.
Deleting Content from a Learning Module

Items and files which are no longer needed can be deleted from Learning Modules. Files that were added to the Learning Module using Course Files are not deleted from the system and can be added again. When a Test or Survey is deleted, it will remain available in the Test Manager and can be added again later.

TIP: Keep copies of any content descriptions and notes on ordering items in case they are needed later.

▸ QUICK STEPS: deleting content from a Learning Module

1. In Edit Mode, in the Learning Module, click the item’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.
2. Select Delete.
3. You will be prompted to confirm or cancel the deletion.
4. Click OK to delete the item.
Unit 2: Terrestrial Planets

Introduction
This unit looks at the terrestrial planets, including Earth, Venus, and Mars.
The first page of each module may inform students about the instructor's views or introductory content. The module will be viewed in sequence.

Learning Objectives
Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:
• Identify the historical context and significance of terrestrial planets.

Mercury
• Edit
• Adaptive Release
• Adaptive Release: Advanced
• Add Alignments
• Set Review Status (Disabled)
• Metadata
• Statistics Tracking (On/Off)
• User Progress
• Copy
• Move
• Delete

Delete: Introduction?
OK Cancel