Copying from Blackboard to Canvas: A Guide

The move to Canvas can be an opportunity to reevaluate your course material and adjust anything you may have been putting off or overlooking. It is generally easier to cut and paste specific material and re-upload specific files from Blackboard into Canvas than doing a wholesale export/import of the entire course from Blackboard. We do not suggest using the whole-course export/import function for the following reasons:

- The organizational structures of Blackboard and Canvas are different enough that content doesn't always map nicely from one to the other. You will need to clean up some areas and may need to recreate other areas.
- Depending on the course, you'd also be bringing over a lot of extra material that you'd then need to delete. If the course has been copied multiple times in Blackboard (from semester to semester), you'd be bringing over multiple copies of each assignment / file / etc., which can really clutter up your Canvas site and cause it to take longer to load. Deleting all of that can take longer than only copying the material that you need.

Which content imports well?

- Quizzes and most question types
- Quizzes and test banks from publishers

How do I import quizzes and test banks?

- In Blackboard, navigate to Course Tools→Tests, Surveys, and Pools on the menu bar.
- Click the Tests link.
- Hover over the quiz you would like to import to Canvas. A gray chevron (arrow) will appear. Click and select Export to Local Computer.
- A zip folder will download, typically to your Downloads folder. You do not need to unzip it.
- Open your Canvas course and navigate to Settings. On the right side of the screen, click on Import Course Content.
- In the Content Type drop-down menu, select Blackboard 6/7/8/9 export .zip file.
- Click Choose File and navigate to your Blackboard zip folder to open.
- In the Default Question Bank drop-down menu, select a pre-existing bank you have already created or select Create New Question Bank and give it a name.
- Select the All Content radio button.
- Click the red Import button.
- Some quizzes may appear as 0 points possible until you click "edit" and Canvas will recalculate the points possible for each question.

Which content should you recreate?

- Assignments

- o SafeAssign assignments: SafeAssign is a Blackboard product and will be replaced by a different plagiarism detection solution this fall.
- Discussion Board forums
- Announcements
- Learning Modules
- Course files
- Groups and group tools
- Faculty Information
- Wikis, blogs, journals

Which content will have to be relinked?

Your content that resides in tools that integrate with Blackboard is still available to you to use. It just needs to be relinked in Canvas. These areas include:

- Kaltura
- Publisher Tools

Special Considerations

Folders

Content is often organized within folders in Blackboard, but Canvas does not have folders. Instead, Canvas uses modules to organize content. Think of modules as the table of contents for your course. Students can navigate through a module by clicking the "next" or "back" buttons at the bottom of the page. If you do choose to export/import your entire Blackboard course, folders usually appear as modules or text headers in Canvas and may require some cleanup.

Blogs, Wikis, and Journals

Canvas does not have blogs, wikis, and journal tools, so these items will not be migrated from your Blackboard course. Instructors often find that discussion boards in Canvas can be used in a similar manner as blogs and journals, whereas a page set to be editable by students can function much like a wiki. Feel free to contact the LD&I team to learn more.

Blackboard Course Links

Links in a Blackboard course that link to another location in that course will not migrate into Canvas. A quick way to check for broken links in Canvas is to go to Settings and click "Validate Links in Content."

Assignments

In Blackboard, there are usually two components of an assignment: the link to the assignment and the assignment. In Canvas, the link to the assignment usually appears in a module and the assignment appears in Assignments (left navigation bar).

Items

If you have chosen to import your entire course as a zip file, items in Blackboard (i.e. a list of learning objectives) migrate as Pages. Click "Pages" in the left navigation bar and then click "View All Pages" to find items in Canvas. You may want to combine multiple shorter pages into one single page.

Lectures

Some of your lectures may have been recorded using an old Flash-based technology. Some browsers do not support Flash anymore, and therefore students must be told to use Firefox browser in order to display your lectures. Our ideal solution will be to eventually move all lecture content over to Kaltura videos. You may need some assistance migrating lectures that are not currently housed in Kaltura. Contact the LD&I team if you have questions.

For now, please make sure that you post an announcement for students regarding this issue. Here is some sample language:

Dear Students,

Some of the lectures in this course do not display correctly in all browsers. We recommend downloading and using Firefox for viewing lectures [insert link: https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/]. Google Chrome, Safari, and other browsers may not display lectures correctly.

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