Blackboard Updates

This page is to help web conferencing users be aware of Blackboard changes or updates. If you have questions about their implications or would like assistance with them, please email help@syr.edu or call 315-443-2677.

Information about web conferencing software updates is posted separately.

- June 4th, 2021
- November 25th, 2020
- November 6th, 2020
  - Content Editor Improvements
  - Kaltura Metadata Displayed in Editor (Resolved)
  - Ensemble Mashups Move

June 4th, 2021

On June 4th, 2021, the integration between Turnitin and Blackboard was updated. This update brings some user interface changes but the service retains the same features. The new connection method will allow for more seamless system updates in the future and offers an improved student submission process. Details can be found in Answers.

November 25th, 2020

On November 25, 2020 the integration between Kaltura and Blackboard was updated. It has resolved the issue of users seeing metadata in the content editor after inserting Kaltura videos, and resolved an issue with Kaltura Express Capture from within in the content editor.

November 6th, 2020

On the evening of November 6th, 2020 the vendor will perform an update to Blackboard that includes user interface changes.

Content Editor Improvements

The most significant change will be a modernized user interface and improved functionality for the content editor. Blackboard is in the process of updating its content editor documentation on their help site. The information below provides a screenshot of the interface and highlights some of the most important changes. This MS Word Document from Blackboard provides a detailed comparison between the old and new versions.

New Interface Example

![New Interface Example](image-url)

Feature Highlights

![The Power of Plus](image-url)
A new “Add Content” consolidates many options for adding content from your computer, cloud storage, or integrated tools. The plus button menu lets you add a variety of objects to the page.

Better for All Devices

The editor is better suited for all devices—small screen or big. Pop-ups are gone for a better mobile experience. The “Preview” button will show you what your content will look like before you save changes.

Improved Accessibility

The editor is more accessible, and a new accessibility checker helps authors make content more accessible.

Better Copy and Paste

Pasting content from Word, Excel, and websites is even better. You can choose to remove extra HTML but retain basic formatting.

Simple Embed

When pasting links to websites such as YouTube, Vimeo, and Dailymotion, the videos are automatically embedded for inline playback. Other sites including The New York Times, WordPress, SlideShare and Facebook will embed summary previews.

Display Computer Code

Authors can now share formatted computer code snippets, super handy for computer science classes and coding clubs.

Add Multiple Files of Different Types

Adding content used to be a two-step process. You had to choose the right tool for the type of content you were adding and then choose the source. The first step is gone. Pick one or multiple files at once from your computer or the Content Collection. And of course, you can still access files from your favorite cloud storage services.

Expands Automatically

When authoring with many tools such as creating an Item or a Discussion Thread, the authoring area will automatically expand for you. To edit a large amount of content and pin the toolbar to the top, use the full screen mode.

New Table Options
Creating a table has been simplified with a grid selector instead of a pop-up. When adding tables, column widths default to use percentages rather than fixed widths for greater responsiveness across devices.

**Link Tool is for External Sites**

The link tool is now only for external links. To add links to files in the Content Collection, use the "Add Content" button.

**Recording Feedback**

The option to record audio/video feedback from your device has moved from the main toolbar to the "Add Content" button in the expanded feedback window of the grading interface.

**Mashups Moved**

Third-party tools ("Mashups") have moved from the main toolbar to the "Add Content" menu.

**Spellchecker Updates**

The Spellchecker Tool more smartly picks the default language based on course selection and user choice when available. Dictionaries have been updated and expanded. Click the tool to run spellcheck.

**Text Formatting, Bullets, List**

Options for formatting text, bullets, and lists are now presented in recognizable ways rather than just as text. For example, font choices will appear as those fonts and bullet options will display visually as those bullet types.

**Toolbar Wrapping**

The toolbar will show as many tools as it can for the size of your screen before wrapping to the next line. Show and collapse the additional tools with the ellipsis icon.

**Access Full Editor in More Places**

When authoring a very complex test question with lots of question and answer options, a limited editor is presented so the page loads faster. The grading interface features a limited editor for speed. You can expand those into a full editor as needed to access additional functionality.

**Search Only Selected Content**

When using find and replace, you can now limit your search just to content that's been selected.
All users can add Kaltura videos to the content area by using the plus button and selecting "Kaltura Media." Once you've selected your media you'll be returned to the editor with a preview thumbnail of your video with some additional metadata displaying below it. This metadata will not be displayed on the page once you press the submit button. We anticipate that the metadata will hidden in a future update but it can be safely deleted or ignored in the meantime. The ancillary metadata is highlighted by the orange arrow in the image below.

Ensemble Mashups Move

Instructor are encouraged to use the Kaltura video service which is replacing Ensemble for instructional video. After the update, users will no longer be able to access Ensemble from the Mashup button within the content editor. It will still be possible to add Ensemble video to a Blackboard course by selecting the Ensemble Video LTI option under the "Build Content" menu.