

Notifications

Notifications recognizes the fact that Instructors do not live in Blackboard and delivers their course information to them via email in a format that draws them back into Blackboard to view or act upon the Notification.

Notifications provide an excellent reference point for Instructors to keep abreast of their Students' course related activities on a daily basis. Combined with the Early Warning System, Notifications gives Instructors insight into which Students may be at risk and provides a mechanism for communication with their Students.

The customization of Notifications gives users increased control over their experience within Blackboard and provides a way for System Administrators to decide which aspects of the Notifications system they will provide to their users.

What's New in this Release for Instructors?

Blackboard Learn provides timely and actionable Notifications of Instructor's course information, including when new content becomes available, when students meet Early Warning System rules criteria and when Student submitted assignments and tests are available for grading. Notifications are displayed in modules within Bb Learn and are delivered via email, either as individual email notes or as a daily Notifications digest.

While not new to Blackboard Learn, there are several things Instructors should consider when creating course content to take full advantage of Notifications:

- **Content Availability**, which can be controlled by the Display As Of dates in the content properties
- **Adaptive Release rules**, which will be respected by Notifications
- **Early Warning System rules**

The user experience is much improved with this centralized view of course related activity. If Community Engagement is installed, Instructors no longer are required to keep track of their students' activities inside each course. Instead, they will have easy access to notifications across of their courses. The format of the display automatically segments by urgency, further automating the process of determining which of the multitude of events require immediate attention, or which can be deferred.

What's New in this Release for Students?

Blackboard Learn provides timely and actionable Notifications of student's course information, including when new content becomes available and Due Dates of assignments and tests. Notifications are displayed in modules within Bb Learn and are delivered via email, either as individual email notes or as a daily Notifications digest.

Notifications will make students' online learning experience much nicer. Instead of hunting around for all of their new content and wondering when Assignments and Tests are due, this information will be given to them in an easily consumable format. Using the context menu to navigate to the appropriate action page (i.e., Assignment Due notification will take the student to the Submit Assignment page and Survey Available notification will take the student to the Survey), students will have a more intuitive way to navigate Blackboard Learn.

Frequently Asked Questions about Notifications

How do Instructors create Notifications and when will Students receive Notifications?

Most Notifications are tied directly to the creation of course content. When creating course content, Instructors can control the delivery of Notifications in several ways:

- **Display As Of date range:** Content Availability Notifications will be sent to Students based on these dates. If there are no Display As Of dates on the item, Notifications will be delivered immediately.
- **Adaptive Release Rules:** Any content that is subject to Adaptive Release rules will send Notifications to the appropriate Students if and when they meet the criteria of the Adaptive Release rules.
- **Announcements:** When creating Announcements, email Notifications can be forced to students via email, regardless of what personalization settings the Student may have. This is an excellent way to send emergency Notifications, such as when a class is canceled.

Some Notifications are created by the actions of Students, as when a Student submits an Assignment or Survey, or when posts are made to Discussion Board forums, Blogs and Journals.

How can Students use Notifications to take action?

Notifications, both on-line and in email, include links to pages where students can take appropriate actions. For instance, Notifications for unread Discussion Board postings contain links to the course Discussion Board and Notifications for Submitted Assignments contain links to the Assignment Submission page. Most Notifications also provide a quick way to send an email to the Instructor or Course Group members pertinent to that Notification.

Many Instructors use Announcements as a way to notify Students when Assignments are due. Do Announcements generate Notifications to Students?

Students will receive Notifications when Course Announcements become available to them. However, Instructors will discover that Students are also receiving Notifications when Assignments become available and are due and will quickly learn they can rely on Notifications to keep Students up to date.

How can Instructors take advantage of Notifications to determine at-risk Students?

The Alerts module displays information about which students that may be at risk. For example, when Student's miss a Due Date for an Assignment; Passed Due Notifications are displayed in the Alerts Module.

The Alerts module also displays Early Warning System rules created by the Instructor. The Early Warning System is an excellent way to search for at risk behaviors. Rules can be created based on a Student's last access to the course, on specific Grade Center columns or on specific Due Dates. Once a day, these rules will collect the latest information about which Students meet the rule criteria. Results of Early Warning System rules are displayed in the Alerts module.

How can Instructors communicate with students?

Each Notification has a contextual menu. For many types of Notification this menu provides, among other actions, a quick way to communicate with Students or Groups via email.

How can Instructors track Course activity on a daily basis?

The Needs Attention module displays all Student Submissions that are ready to be graded. Not only can Instructors easily see which Students have submitted each assignment, they can use the Notifications' context menu to navigate directly to the submission page where they can view and grade the submission. Submission Notifications even tell the Instructors if a submission came in after the due date.

How can Students use Notifications to take action?

Notifications, both on-line and in email, include links to pages where students can take appropriate actions. For instance, Notifications for unread Discussion Board postings contain links to the course Discussion Board and Notifications for Assignment Due Dates contain links to the Assignment Submission page. Most Notifications also provide a quick way to send an email to the instructor or Course Group members pertinent to that Notification.

Can Students personalize how they receive Notifications?

Yes. Notifications Settings can be accessed via a button on the Notifications modules and via My Places. Students can choose, on a course-by-course basis, which types of Notifications they want to receive and if they want to receive Notifications by email.

The To Do List shows the due dates of Assignments and Tests. What if a Student wants a few days advanced notice?

Students can set up Reminders via email for Due Date Notifications by defining how many days in advance they would like to receive them.

Are Notifications only for Course content?

Notifications cover Course and Organization content, but not System Announcements. Students can have different personalization settings for each of their courses and organizations.

Several of these features are also discussed in the section on changes to existing features and functions. To understand the full impact of the upgrade to Blackboard Learn, make sure to review the entire document. Email Notifications are turned off by default. If the System Administrator has turned on email Notification, students can select which types of Notifications they would like to receive in email form.

Students can also elect to have their email Notifications come individually (one email note per notifications) or as a daily digest of all new Notifications.

Where does this feature appear?

Notifications modules can reside on any Modules page in the system. By default they appear on the Home Page within Courses

There are four Notifications modules available to users:

- **To Do List** shows future due dates as well as any due dates they may have missed.
- **What's New** shows all course content as it becomes available and any unread posts to Discussion Boards, Blogs and Journals.
- **Needs Attention** shows Student submissions that are ready for grading. This is an excellent place for Instructors to get a sense of what needs to be done today.
- **Alerts** show Students who have not submitted work as of its due date and Early Warning System rules. It provides a good sense of which Students may be falling behind in their course work.

These modules can be made role-specific and are displayed, by default, on the course Home Page and, with Community Engagement, on a Notifications Dashboard.

Edit Notifications Settings allows students to personalize which Notifications they receive and how they receive them.

Email Notifications are sent to the email address listed in the student's Personal Information.

Are there any changes to existing workflows?

The What's New module has been removed in favor of Notifications module.