

Selecting a Course Structure

Course structures are predefined course materials such as Course Menu links, instructions, and content examples that you can add to your course to begin the design process quickly.

- A selected course structure's content is **added** to your course and does not replace existing menu items and content in your course.
- A selected course structure's links appear at the top of your Course Menu.
- You can edit or delete course structure content in the same way as other created or imported content.
- The optional content examples are guidelines for creating your own course material. This content is set to unavailable so that students cannot view it.

You can export or archive your course before adding a course structure to ensure you have an original version

IMPORTANT! Adding a course structure does not replace existing Course Menu items and content. The course structure's content **is added** to the existing content and Course Menu in your course, and you can delete what is not needed.

You can use any theory or model for teaching in Blackboard Learn because it is open, flexible, and centered on enhancing student achievement. Blackboard offers five categories of course structures you can use as a launching pad to create your course, organize content, share knowledge, and build communities.

Focus on Activity	Focus on Communication	Focus on Content	Focus on Time
Activity	Cooperative Learning	By Chapter	Daily
Case Study	Guided Discussion	By Lecture	Weekly
Conference Session	Social Learning	By Lesson	
Constructivism	Web 2.0	By Module	
Expedition-Based		By Subject	
Experiential Learning		By Topic	
Lab Format		By Unit	
Project Format		Science-Focused	
		Traditional	

Course structure focus on activity

Course structure name	Explanation
<p>Activities</p>	<p>In activity-based courses, students are actively engaged in hands-on activities, experiments, and problem-solving. Students are encouraged to search for answers and solutions independently, putting principles into action. You can also include opportunities to do research, public service, volunteer work, field study, and internships.</p> <p>Promote online interaction with the Conversations discussion forums to help students reflect upon their experiences and connect with classmates. If students are engaged in independent activities, you can use Live Chat for meetings.</p> <p>This course structure works well for subjects that connect theory and practice, such as anthropology, Earth sciences, language immersion, government, and social sciences.</p>
<p>Case Study</p>	<p>Use the case study approach to engage students in critical thinking for real-world situations. As facilitator, guide students as they turn basic knowledge into principles that can be applied across cases. By placing them in real situations, and requiring them to make decisions, students learn to connect their knowledge of facts with the need for analytical skills.</p> <p>Course Menu items such as Brainstorm discussion forums, Apply the Theory wiki, and Blog About It reflect the importance of both group and individual work in a case study course.</p> <p>This course structure works well for classes that make use of practical examples to expose students to relevant issues, such as ecology, public policy, engineering, economics, social science, and law classes.</p>
<p>Conference Session</p>	<p>Designed as a collaborative web environment for you and your co-presenters to plan and build session material, this course structure serves as an interactive community for participants before, during, and after the conference.</p> <p>You can make areas such as Session Plans available only to the presenters, and allow participants to view the Research or Resources & Links areas</p>
<p>Constructivism</p>	<p>In a constructivist course, students are actively involved in the learning process as you facilitate by asking questions and proposing ideas. As they are challenged to blend their own experiences with new ideas, they create more complex and critical theories.</p> <p>Students can collaborate in Groups, the Share blog, and the Knowledge Base wiki. The journal in Reflect allows students to process their knowledge individually.</p> <p>This course structure works well for courses with experiments, research projects, and field trips as central parts of the curriculum</p>
<p>Expedition Based</p>	<p>Expeditionary learning gives your students active, exploratory experiences with your curriculum. Activities you design for each topic, such as fieldwork, field trips, web quests, or interviews, are the basis for students' work.</p> <p>The Expedition-Based course structure integrates the instructor-designed areas, such as Explorations and Trip Resources, with student-centered areas, such as Base Camp, Storytelling, and My Trip Journal.</p> <p>This course structure works well for classes in outdoor and wilderness education, practicums, hands-on and observational sciences such as botany and ornithology, and community-focused courses that require a number of trips and interactions outside the classroom.</p>

Course structure name	Explanation
Experiential Learning	<p>Centered on the concept that knowledge is created through concrete experiences, hands-on learning opportunities for students are at the core of an experiential course. Events are followed by reflection to develop applicable knowledge and theories for future action.</p> <p>The type of experiences provided depends on the subject area and course requirements, but can include work-study programs, laboratory experiments, role-playing simulations, and problem-solving activities.</p> <p>You can share instructions or information about each experience through the Action Plans Click to toggle glossary term definition: Content Area and monitor group and individual progress through Our Blogs, the My Reactions journal, and the Round Table discussion forums.</p> <p>This course structure works well for courses with hands-on requirements such as zoology and veterinary science, physical education, drivers' training, social work, and education practicums.</p>
Lab Format	<p>Lab format courses increase student involvement, allowing participants to develop a functional understanding of the course content.</p> <p>Typical lab-based courses begin with the presentation of lectures, followed by reading and research. Next, students use lab time to reinforce the concepts and skills learned. In a lab, they can evaluate evidence, identify problems and questions, gain experience, draw conclusions, and make decisions based on observations.</p> <p>An instructor may demonstrate the lab activities, individual students may perform their own activities, or groups can collaborate on lab work.</p> <p>This course structure works well for a variety of subjects, such as science, computer skills, foreign language, engineering, agriculture, and health sciences. This structure is also ideal for self-paced courses where tutorials and presentations are used to prepare students for lab work.</p>
Project Format	<p>Use the project format course structure to help students investigate real-world problems and propose solutions. You can gauge student progress and understanding as they advance through a project, and offer feedback and direction when needed.</p> <p>You can assign students to group projects using the Teams area. Whether they work in groups or independently, project work allows students to refine several skills, such as problem-solving, researching, organizing, critical thinking, and their interpersonal interactions. When students make decisions about their projects, they become active, engaged learners and are more responsible for their learning.</p> <p>Critiquing the end result and reflection during all stages of the process are integral parts of a project-based course. Students can use their My Ideas blogs to express their opinions and the Solutions wiki to share the problem resolutions they generated.</p> <p>This structure works well in courses where students produce portfolios of their work, such as photography, web design, or creative writing. It is also useful for courses where exploration and discovery expand student knowledge, such as math, business, or social science.</p>

Course structure focus on communication

Course structure name	Explanation
<p>Cooperative Learning</p>	<p>Cooperative learning arranges course activities around small group interaction. Each member of the group is equally responsible for the success of the group, and is individually accountable for his or her participation. Groups can vary in size and composition, depending on the learning goal. You can rearrange the groups' membership as needed during the duration of your course.</p> <p>You can use the Learning Activities area to introduce topics and activities, and then student groups conduct research and work together to produce a product to present to the class.</p> <p>The Teams spaces and Our Wiki allow you to monitor the progress of the groups and the class as a whole. The My Reflections journal is a space where students can communicate with you individually as they manage their participation in the groups.</p> <p>This course structure works well for any curriculum centered around group work, such as theater, vocational programs, or social studies.</p>
<p>Guided Discussion</p>	<p>Guided discussion is an active learning technique that encourages students to reflect on their own experiences, explore alternative ways of thinking, connect to a topic, and improve analytical skills.</p> <p>As students participate, they demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the course topics, promoting a deeper comprehension of the material. You can use guiding questions to help students create content together, allowing you to become a facilitator of information rather than the lecturer.</p> <p>While much of the class discourse takes place in the Discuss It! forums, small teams of students working in Group Think increases students' interactivity with each other as they construct, rather than acquire, knowledge. Students can reflect on the course content and communicate privately with you in My Journal.</p> <p>This course structure works well for intermediate and advanced humanities and social science courses in where students can expand their basic knowledge through conversation.</p>
<p>Social Learning</p>	<p>Social learning is based on the concept that students learn new information and behaviors by observing and interacting with peers.</p> <p>This course structure enables students to build knowledge together in Blogs and Wikis. As students create course content, it is important to motivate them to contribute and model appropriate behavior. Utilize The Hub to share readings, assignments, and instructions, and Social Circles to create communities of learners.</p> <p>This course structure works well for courses and career paths that require cooperative work, such as communication, advertising, and business.</p>
<p>Web 2.0</p>	<p>Interactive and collaborative Web 2.0 tools engage learners with your course material. Students create content together in Our Wiki and use the Share blogs to communicate their thoughts and comment on others' work.</p> <p>Use Course Central to share readings, assignments, and instructions. You can weave Click to toggle glossary term definition: into your course to make content come alive with embedded YouTube™ videos, Flickr® photos, and SlideShare presentations. Students can add Mashups to their content as well.</p> <p>This structure works well for courses reliant on current events and trends, such as political science, media studies, and digital education.</p>

Course structure focus on content

Course structure name	Explanation
By Chapter	<p>This course structure organizes your course by chapters in the required textbook and works well for subjects, such as medicine, language, or mathematics. Encourage questions, interactivity, and reflection with the Discuss forums, Chat, and Blogs.</p>
By Lecture	<p>One of the most common ways to deliver course content to students is through lectures. In Blackboard Learn, you can ask students to read your lectures, listen to a recording of your voice, or view slide presentations of the material. You can add dimension to your lectures with videos that you create or links to external multimedia sources.</p> <p>You can use other tools to encourage students to interact with you and other course members. Your lectures can stimulate students to reflect on their experiences and learning in the My Reactions blog and the Questions and Answers discussion forums.</p> <p>This course structure works well for large introductory courses at the university or post-graduate level where lectures are the primary delivery method.</p>
By Lesson	<p>Use the lesson-based course structure to organize your course sequentially. In the Our Conversations discussion forums, help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate understanding of the course material. Students can reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you in the Reflections journals.</p> <p>This course structure works well for material that needs to be learned in a prescribed order, such as math or foreign languages.</p>
By Module	<p>A module is an independent unit or lesson. Modules are usually self-contained and students can access them in any order, making them suitable for self-paced courses. For example, an astronomy course might present each planet's information and assignments as a distinct module so that students can select which planet to explore first.</p> <p>Utilize the Collaborate wiki and Discuss forums to help students work together on course content and connect with each other. To further encourage cooperation, use the Study Teams area to assign students to smaller group discussions, research assignments, and projects.</p>
By Subject	<p>Use the subject-based course structure to organize your materials by area of study. The Course Menu contains Content Areas for each subject, which can be easily renamed to fit your course.</p> <p>This course structure works well for elementary and middle school environments where one teacher is responsible for more than one subject for a set of students, such as Language Arts, Social Studies, and Health, or where multiple teachers share the same course. Alternatively, you might break a single subject into a set of defined areas. For example, a Language Arts course could have separate pages for grammar, literature, composition, spelling, and vocabulary.</p> <p>The discussion forums in Talk About It help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate their understanding of the course material. Students can use My Journal to reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you.</p>
By Topic	<p>Use the topic-based course structure to organize your course in self-contained segments.</p> <p>Utilize The Buzz discussion forums for students to generate ideas and share resources. Editorials provide a space for students to blog about their insights</p>

Course structure name	Explanation
	<p>and opinions and get feedback from peers. Students can use their Reflection journals to contemplate on their experiences and communicate privately with you.</p> <p>This course structure works well for self-paced courses that allow students to select which topic to complete next as well as courses that use current events to demonstrate concepts.</p>
By Unit	<p>The unit-based course structure organizes your content into sections. For example, you might divide a music appreciation course into four units of study: history, composers, musical techniques, and significant works.</p> <p>With separate links on the Course Menu for each unit, you can require students to follow a prescribed order or select units in the order they prefer.</p> <p>You can provide students with a rich, interactive environment by utilizing a range of communication tools. Blog It provides students a way to share their thoughts and collect feedback from peers, Collaborate enables students to work side-by-side on wiki pages, and Course Dialogue promotes discussions among students.</p> <p>This course structure works well for subjects that divide easily into large categories, such as historical time periods, psychological schools of thought, or styles of composition and rhetoric.</p>
Science Focused	<p>You can use the science-focused course structure to present information and lab materials to students and provide areas for reflection and collaboration.</p> <p>Use the Units Content Area to organize your course by lab, project, or lecture. Incorporating relevant projects, experiments, or lab activities encourages students to be active participants in their learning, allowing them to gain deeper knowledge of the course content.</p> <p>Students can record their ideas, research, and solutions in the Experiment Journal, discuss their findings in Discoveries, or collaborate in the Lab Wiki.</p> <p>This course structure works well for science courses, especially those that include hands-on activities.</p>
Traditional	<p>This course structure organizes the online environment by content type or function. For example, there are Content Areas for assignments, tests, and your content.</p> <p>Communication tools such as the Discussion Board are available on the Course Menu for easy access.</p> <p>The Home Page is the course entry point, providing access to important information each time your students log in.</p>

Course structure focus on time

Course structure name	Explanation
<p>Daily</p>	<p>You can use the daily course structure for short, intense class terms or when a segment of material needs to be presented or learned in a defined time period.</p> <p>In the Daily Work Content Area, add folders for each day. Content in each of the folders should follow a consistent layout for easy navigation, with similar content items, activities, and tools. This uniformity helps students adhere to the schedule.</p> <p>When students need to complete work on a daily basis, communication is vital. Students can use the Log It journals to reflect on the daily course content and communicate privately with you. Use the Discuss forums to encourage conversation among students and the announcements in Today's Buzz to communicate daily reminders and give encouragement.</p> <p>This course structure works well for intensive training sessions and shortened summer or winter terms.</p>
<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Organizing content by time can help students stay on track. In Previous Weeks, create a folder for each week of the course. Course material in each of the weekly folders should follow a consistent layout for easy navigation, with similar content items, activities, and tools. You can make folders for future weeks unavailable until they are needed to keep students focused.</p> <p>Each week, change the Current Week link in the Course Menu so that it points to the current week's folder. This gives students one-click access to the week's activities without needing to determine which week to choose.</p> <p>Use Course Dialogue to address questions. The Ideas to Share blogs help students connect with their classmates and demonstrate understanding of course material. The Weekly Journal enables students to reflect on what they learned and communicate privately with you.</p> <p>This structure works well for courses where students need to move through the content at the same pace.</p>