








Feature by Feature Comparison: Blackboard & Canvas

This document highlights equivalent features and functionality between Blackboard and Canvas.








Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Make Course Available	Publish Course	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas courses are set to unpublished by default. • Instructors MUST publish their course for students to access it. • After a course is published and well underway it cannot be unpublished. <p> Many instructors have used the availability setting inside of Blackboard to temporarily disable the course from student view during high stakes examinations. After an assignment is submitted in Canvas, the ability to unpublish the course does not exist.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zLMkju.</p>
Student Preview	Student View	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student View in Canvas enrolls a test student in the course, but will not prompt you to remove the student when you exit the preview. • An instructor must leave Student View in order to return to instructor editing tools. <p> Once accessing student view a student named Test Student appears in the Grades area of the course and can be removed by the instructor through the course settings.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2inDdOD.</p> <p> Visit https://bit.ly/3hc61qk. (see 3:58)</p>

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Announcements	Announcements	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users can receive notifications via their preferred communication mechanism, which to date includes Facebook, Twitter, email, text messaging, and notifications via the app if installed. • Canvas allows students to comment or like an announcement if the instructor enables the setting. • Announcements appear on the User Dashboard, and on the Course Home page depending on what type of Home Page the instructor has set up for the course. • Canvas has the ability to add RSS feeds. <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hAR6vT.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2iXeUq9.</p>
Files	Files	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything uploaded or copied into Canvas Files is accessible to students by default but can be changed. • You can create folders to organize materials. • Folders and items are available (ie, published) to students by default; however, they can be locked or released at an instructor determined date or time. • File access can also be controlled by using Canvas Modules and pages. • Instructors can upload multiple files, and then drag & drop files into folders. • All files in this area can be downloaded as a zip file. • You can upload a zip file into the Canvas Files area and Canvas will unzip it for you. <p> If you have used Blackboard as a file storage repository for files storage, we recommend migrating files to OneDrive instead.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2iXhxlx.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hAUcQx.</p>

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Content Items & Pages	Pages	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages function much like a Wiki where all edits are tracked (and the history of the edits). • Instructors can grant editing privileges to students. • Pages can include text, video, links to files, embedded files, linked files, YouTube, Panopto, links to other course tools, and much more. • A page in Canvas can be set as the Home Page of the course. • Pages can be added to Canvas Modules and be linked to other pages. <p> Embedded media cannot contain the script tag <code><script> media file</script></code>.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2AOhDua.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2AIEtCM.</p>
Discussion Forums	Discussions	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can require users to post to the discussion before viewing. • Instructors and students can easily view and filter posts. • Receive notifications via social web services, text messaging, etc. • Group discussions are more seamless in Group Pages. • On the Discussions index page, the Discussions are ordered by most recent activity. Discussions can be dragged to the Pinned Discussions section and will remain static. <p> Discussions setup to be graded will also appear on the Canvas Assignments page and in the Grades (ie Gradebook).</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zZXg04.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zFfdAm.</p>

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Assignments (assignment manager)	Assignments	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas uses a SpeedGrader which provides inline grading abilities similar to the inline grading feature in Blackboard. Instructors can comment, markup, and grade a document without downloading a student's submission. • SpeedGrader automatically shares results of graded assessments with each student as you grade them unless you deselect that option. • When an assignment is created, it is added to the Assignment page, Syllabus, and Calendar. If updated, all links are updated automatically. • An Assignment must be created to create a column in the Grades (ie, Gradebook). • Interactive rubrics can be used for grading. • Students can submit multimedia assignments, URLs, type text directly into assignment submissions, and even use Office 365 as a source for loading files. • Instructors can limit the types of files that are allowed to be uploaded. • Instructors can leave voice and video comments for students to review. • Peer review assignments, much like Blackboard's Self and Peer Assessment tool, can easily be created. • Moderated assignments are also available. • Assignment Groups allow an easy way to set up weighted grades, dropping the lowest grade, or dropping the highest grade. <p> Discussions that are setup as graded will also appear on the Assignments page. Manually created gradebook items from Blackboard will NOT appear in the assignments page in Canvas unless the instructor manually imports their Blackboard exported Grade Center.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zNs9BX.</p> <p> Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://bit.ly/2A3YBTw (Assignment Overview) • http://bit.ly/2hx9dPK (Create Assignment)

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Self and Peer Assessments	<p>Assignments with Peer Review Enabled</p> <p>No Equivalent for Self-Assessment</p>	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Self and Peer Assessment Tool was unique in Blackboard from many other tools and allows instructors to create specific tasks for assessing student learning. • Peer Review is a feature of the Assignment tool in Canvas. Students can be assigned assignments to review or grade, anonymously or with a name attached. • Self-Assessment can be achieved in a variety of ways including using the assignment tool with feedback or having students submit a quiz with varying point values assigned that correlate to self-assessment criteria. Students can also be required to re-submit. <p> In Canvas, Self-Assessments are being requested by users at https://community.canvaslms.com/ideas/5123-create-a-student-accessible-rubric-for-self-assessments. Join the conversation!</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hEn1vl and http://bit.ly/2julUil.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hx9dPK.</p>
Send Mail	Communications (Inbox, Send Messages, Conversations)	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private messages appear in your Inbox within Canvas; notifications will push out to Email, Twitter, Facebook, Text Message, depending upon your selection. See our blog post on this subject. • Discussion responses can be accessed from Inbox. • Messages can include file attachments, webcam recordings, media uploads, or plain text. • Conversation messages are also generated by a comment made by a student or instructor on an assignment. • By default, students receive email for every announcement and message; however, students can control in a granular way how and when they receive messaging. <p> A message is sent to students for every published assignment. Encourage students to review their notification settings prior to the start of the semester and change the settings to their liking and so that they aren't overwhelmed by messaging from Canvas.</p> <p> Visit https://bit.ly/2MKlwHU.</p>

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
		 Visit https://bit.ly/30pTzNv .
Tests, Quizzes, Surveys	Quizzes, Surveys	 Features & Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests and Test Pools in Blackboard are referred to as Quizzes and Question Banks in Canvas. • Quizzes are automatically submitted if it is a timed assessment. • The Quiz timer can be changed (ie, Moderated) for individual students to allow for extended time on published quizzes. • Like Blackboard, instructors can allow an additional attempt for a single student; however, Canvas calls this moderating. • Tests can be edited after students begin submitting attempts and are automatically re-graded. • Instructors can manually add or remove points from students' scores using Canvas' Quiz Fudge points feature. • Like Blackboard, test questions and answers can contain media; however, they do not call these Mashups. It is just another button on the rich text editor. • Quizzes can be setup as practice or graded quizzes (ie, practice quizzes do not count in students final grades). • Surveys can also be setup to be graded, if desired. • New Quizzes LTI is a new engine that is currently being tested, and will begin supporting additional question types including Hot Spots, Categorization, and Ordering as well as enhancements to existing question types. At this time it is not recommended as it is not well integrated.

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz Log Auditing MUST be enabled to track additional student activity during a quiz. <p> The auto-regrade feature affecting students receiving multiple choice, true false, or multiple answer type questions that were corrected, may require manual intervention by instructors. Regrade will not trigger if questions are removed or if a point value is updated; only if a correct response is updated.</p> <p> Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://bit.ly/2zLDqF2 (Quizzes) • http://bit.ly/2zNCAFW (New Quizzes) <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2A4mcDD</p>
Grade Center	Gradebook (or Grades)	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assignment MUST be created to create a column in the Gradebook. NOTE: Discussions that are setup as graded will also appear on Assignments and an item will be added in the Gradebook. • Columns are sortable. • Grades can be weighted and can use a variety of competency based structures if outcomes-based grading is selected. • Instructors can curve grades. • SpeedGrader is available through the Gradebook. • The SpeedGrader tool displays submitted assignments, grading rubric, and media commenting in a single interface, which does not require downloading student file submissions. • Instructors can hide gradebook items using the Mute Assignment feature. • Instructors can message students who have yet to submit an assignment or who scored less/more than an instructor set criteria. • Submissions are viewable online or downloadable. • Comments for assessment feedback can be text or media-based. They can be speech to text if generated via Chrome. • Students can message instructors within the grade column.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Columns representing set Assignment Groups are shaded and located, by default, on the far right side of the gradebook. • Students are able to enter “what-if” scenarios to calculate hypothetical grades. <p> Important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpublished Assignments will not appear in the Gradebook. • The Gradebook will not allow an instructor to enter Group Assignment grades for a student not within a group. <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2yNhXrY.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hxhIPU.</p>
Grade Assignment	SpeedGrader	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade/give feedback on all submissions for an assignment, quiz, or graded discussion in one place. • Students sorting is allowed in a variety of ways, providing instructors the options to grade alphabetically, by submission date, while hiding student names, or for only students that have submitted. • The tool is accessible through Assignments or within Grades. • Submitted files can be marked with instructor comments, drawings, highlights, or text. • Students can download graded files as annotated PDFs. • Instructors are able to record audio or video feedback for each student assignment. <p> The Grade Assignment tool is the closest equivalent from Blackboard to Canvas; although, the features & functionality overall is richer than what is available in Blackboard.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2iZruFu.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2imNvhY.</p>

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Rubrics	Rubrics	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates with graded items. • Add media comments and integration within SpeedGrader. • Instructors can override a grade produced by clicking the Rubric criteria. • Students can view the rubric within their Grades area. • Rubrics can be added to quizzes. <p> Blackboard rubrics will not migrate to Canvas.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zIJP48.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zNDthw.</p>
Course Navigation	Navigation	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas does not allow easy creation of unique course navigation menu links. • You cannot rename your menu links. • Menu links can be hidden from students through the Course Settings > Navigation tab. • Modules are used in Canvas for organizing content, NOT folders (except within the Files area). • Items in the menu can be rearranged in the order of instructor preference. <p> Blackboard's navigation structure will NOT migrate to Canvas.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2z6HRuF.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2inTRxQ.</p>

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
Bulk Delete Content	Reset Course Content	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors can reset their course content and delete all content within a course to start over as though it never existed. This tool was an administrative function in Blackboard. <p> Reset Course Content deletes all content and any submissions that were sent by students and cannot be undone and cannot be recovered.</p> <p> Visit https://bit.ly/2UtnJM0.</p>
Learning Units AND Folders	Modules	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modules are similar to folders and behave much the same way Learning Modules did in Blackboard. Instructors can drag and drop items within a module. Users can expand and collapse a module at any time. Completion requirements can be set for each individual item within a module. One Module can be set as a prerequisite to another module. Modules can be setup to force a linear sequence for students. Modules can be locked until a specific date. Due dates and point values for assignments, graded discussions, and quizzes automatically populate on the Modules that contain them. <p> Important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Folders do not exist except in the Files section of Canvas. Modules are the equivalent tool that can be used to organize content, files, assignments, collaborations, quizzes, etcetera within Canvas. Collapsing a Module for the instructor does NOT collapse that module for students. For content within a Module to be visible, the entire Module must also be published.

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Blackboard	Canvas	Features, Changes, & Resource Links
		<p> Visit http://bit.ly/2A38fFW.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2jxbO00.</p>
Calendar	Calendar	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Calendar feed link can be copied into other calendar software (Outlook, Google Calendar, etc.). • Due dates set on Assignments automatically display on the Calendar. • Items on the calendar, including Assignments, Quizzes, or graded Discussions that contain due dates, automatically update all associated objects with that item in various areas of the course. • Instructors and students viewing the calendar can view one or all of their course related calendar items in a single view. • Each user has a personal calendar for non course-related events. • Calendar items are automatically listed at the bottom of the Syllabus inside each course. • The calendar has a scheduling tool. <p> Assignments can be created and deleted directly from the calendar for any course. Any assignment deleted from the Calendar directly will delete the corresponding assignment within the course.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2iZocSO.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2z8BUxD.</p>

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Groups	Groups	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups have access to nearly every course tool including Announcements, Pages, Files, Discussion, Conferences, and Collaboration. • Access to Groups for instructor moderation seems more intuitive than many other platforms. • Test student does not work to see how groups will function. • Groups can edit documents, spreadsheets, and powerpoints together (see Collaborations). <p> If you move a student from one group to another after grading a group assignment, they will likely carry that grade with them into their new group. Changing group names or collapsing groups after the add/drop date has passed also may create issues. Deleting a group site with student submissions inside of it will also delete that work from Canvas (and could be unrecoverable).</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2hzZpnL.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zPLv9x.</p>
Notification Dashboard	Recent Activity	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Recent Activity links allow you to expand, remove, or navigate to that item within the course. • There is Global Navigation Activity and Course Activity Feeds, both of which display information pertaining to announcements, discussions, assignments, and conversations, including due date changes, assignment changes, graded and ungraded items, and much more. The difference is that one is available within the Dashboard, the other within the Course. <p> Because all course activity displays in these feeds, it may not be necessary to receive all notifications via related communication preferences (ie, email, text, social sites, etcetera); therefore, it is important to review Notification settings to prevent the numerous communication protocols available within the Canvas platform.</p> <p> Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://bit.ly/2AMCjSx (Course Activity) • http://bit.ly/2zOkfZ6 (Global Activity)

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		 Visit http://bit.ly/2mzr6mg to review Notification Settings
No Equivalent	Notification Settings (preferences)	 Features & Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add additional contact methods in addition to email, including Text messaging, Twitter, Facebook, or even personal emails. • Students can define which objects trigger notifications as well as how often to receive them.  Based on communication plans for important student dates, it will be important for instructors to become familiar with these settings and make recommendations to students based on how often they post content as well as make it available.  Visit http://bit.ly/2zOejPK .  Visit http://bit.ly/2mzr6mg .

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No Equivalent	Syllabus	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up due dates for assignments, discussions, and quizzes automatically populates at the bottom of the Syllabus page. Dates that appear on the Syllabus also appear on the Calendar. Objects such as Assignments, Discussions, Quizzes, or other calendar items are hyperlinked from the bottom of the Syllabus page to the content automatically. The top of the Syllabus page is can be edited to allow sharing of files or to paste in formatted text, links to specific course content (perhaps those that are not automatically populated at the bottom). <p> The Syllabus page can be used to set the Home Page of the course, the spot students land upon clicking the course from their Dashboard. The functions of Syllabus and USask policy regarding editing of the syllabus are not currently aligned.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2iZA0o4 and http://bit.ly/2yOaWH3.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2jvdBCV.</p>
Journal	None	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The journal tool as it lived in Blackboard is not available as a separate tool within Canvas. Instructors can use the Assignment tool with a text submission option to track journal entries as an alternative to the Journal Tool in Blackboard. <p> Instructors that desire to have this feature in Canvas can submit an Idea to the Canvas Community, which can then be voted on by community members. (Tip: Log in to Canvas first, then when you click on the link to the Canvas Community, you will be logged in.)</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2my5qa2 for assignment types.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zQMsyB to search, vote, or submit this as an idea to Canvas.</p>

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Blog	Discussion Board	 Features & Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blogs are currently not available in Canvas. • You can create a discussion board where students can post an update their own post to act as a blog. • Usask is offering external facing blog posting through alternative tools, like Wordpress  Visit http://bit.ly/2zQMsyB to search, vote, or submit this as an idea to Canvas.
WebEx Meetings	MEETS	 Features & Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule meetings with your students for synchronous online learning and virtual office hours. • MEETS operates exactly the same as the WebEx Meetings tool in Blackboard, and even looks the same since it's a third party tool.
No Equivalent	Collaborations	 Features & Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a way for instructors to integrate the use of Office 365 within their course. • Collaborations allow users to collaborate on a single instance of the same document.  Visit http://bit.ly/2ip6Yi0 .  Visit http://bit.ly/2A40M9L .

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Support	Help	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reach a Canvas support analyst, click "Chat with Canvas Support" for a live chat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. • Call the Canvas Support Hotline at 1-855-382-5556 for on-demand support. • The big difference is that support is provided directly by Canvas Technicians. • Canvas Status available at http://status.instructure.com/ will automatically update in the event of any system problems. • Ask the Community allows instructors to receive help from Experts from all around the world and is available on the Help section within Canvas. <p> Canvas Support will guide students towards their instructor when appropriate, or to USask staff as needed and depending on the specific issue.</p> <p> Visit http://canvas.usask.ca/ and click Help.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2A3mvys.</p>
ePortfolios	ePortfolio	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows students to retrieve assignments, projects, and more to display on their portfolio that were submitted in previous Canvas courses. • There are multiple sharing options for any user creating an ePortfolio within Canvas. <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2AUXzXo.</p> <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zLeFZF.</p>

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Statistics Tracking	Analytics and New Analytics	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Analytics identify specific user tracking as well as assignment and grade distribution trends. • Course statistics help instructors identify which content items students are interacting with. <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2A611B9.</p> <p> Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://bit.ly/2myJg7r (Analytics) • https://bit.ly/3cN9msp (New Analytics)
Mobile App	Mobile App	<p> Features & Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two main versions of the app for higher education – Canvas Student and Canvas Teacher (for instructors) • The apps are free. • The apps allow you to complete most tasks that you would be able to complete in the web browser, with just some small exceptions/limitations. It displays and resizes effectively for content in Canvas. There are sometimes issues with types of documents displaying. <p> Visit http://bit.ly/2zJRzmB.</p> <p> Visit https://bit.ly/30s792U.</p>

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