


**Blackboard**  
LEARN

## Ultra Product Updates

Grand Valley State University  
Dr. Lisa Clark  
December 6, 2023



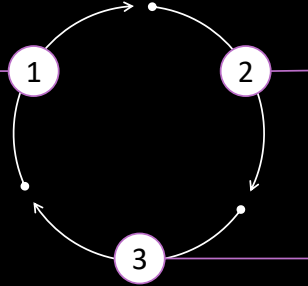
1

## Forward-Looking Statement

Statements regarding our product development initiatives, including new products and future product upgrades, updates or enhancements represent our current intentions, but may be modified, delayed or abandoned without prior notice and there is no assurance that such offering, upgrades, updates or functionality will become available unless and until they have been made generally available to our customers.

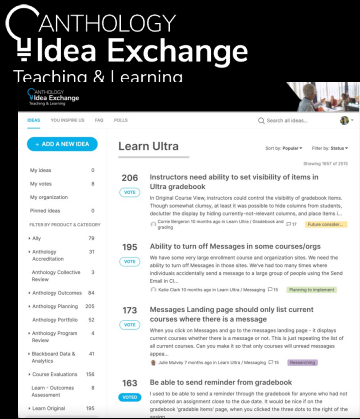
2

**“Anthology didn’t build Learn Ultra. We did.”**  
– Stephanie Richter, NIU



- Discovery**
  - Idea exchange <https://community.anthology.com/idea-exchange>
  - In-product feedback and sentiment
  - Community programs feedback
  - Student Advisory Council
  - Onsite visits
  - UX research
- Delivery**
  - Weekly Focus Groups <https://community.anthology.com/events/Category/167>
  - Technical preview and early access programs
  - Community programs feedback
  - Student Advisory Council
  - Onsite visits
- Operation**
  - Track usage
  - Track sentiment


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**ANTHOLOGY**  
**Idea Exchange**  
Teaching & Learning

171 3,524

**56**

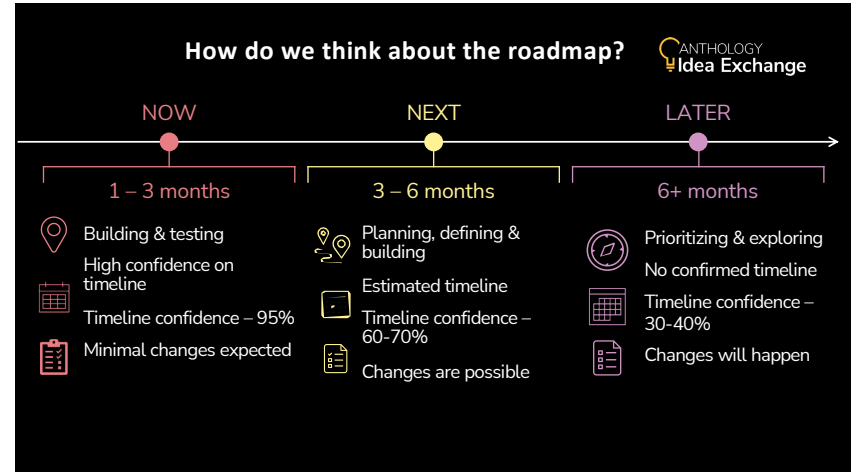


<https://community.anthology.com/idea-exchange>

4



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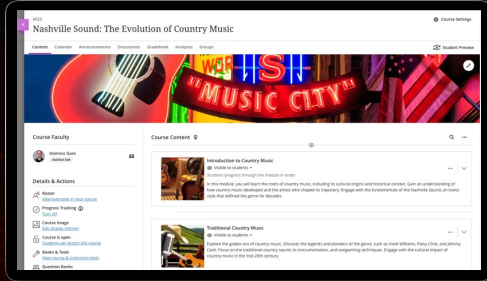


7

### Improved Course Content page 214 Votes

**NOW:** Available Now

- Simplified Details & Actions menu with dedicated Course Settings area
- Increased visibility of Announcements and Groups in top navigation
- Learning Module thumbnails
- Improvements to setting and displaying the primary instructor



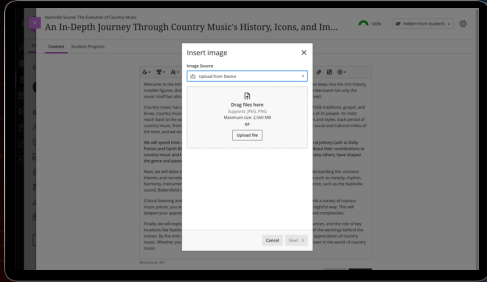
8

## Image Insertion

106 Votes

**NOW:** Available Now

- Builds on top of recently added ability to resize media
- Improved workflow for adding images to Ultra Documents
- Upload image in workflow
- Access Unsplash
- Easily zoom and crop image
- Upload and select from Unsplash available in Journal prompts, Discussions and Course Messages



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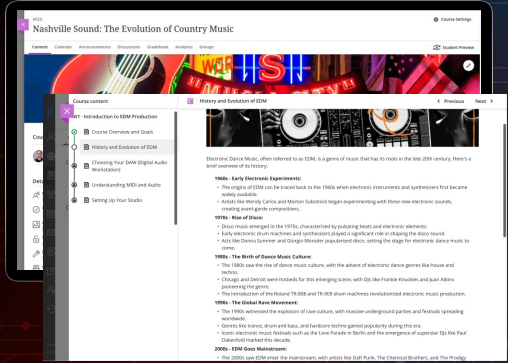
## Enhanced Learning Module Navigation

86 Votes

**NEXT:** 1 - 3 months / **LATER:** 6+ months

- Enable students to see surrounding content navigation on longer content items
- Provide icons, indicating the type of surrounding content
- View the next up item status more clearly

Next up – Table of contents



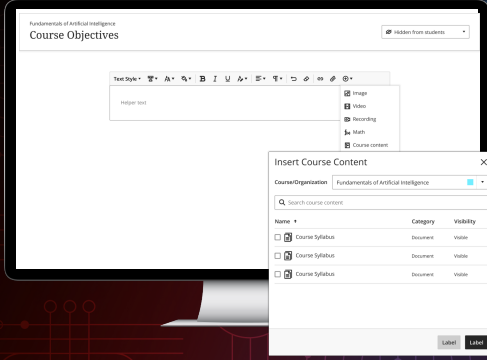
10

## Enhanced Course Links

112 Votes

**NEXT:** 1 - 3 months

- Improve connection to and navigation between course content and activities
- Support the creation of links from within the content editor to course content
- Create links in announcements, course messages and assessments



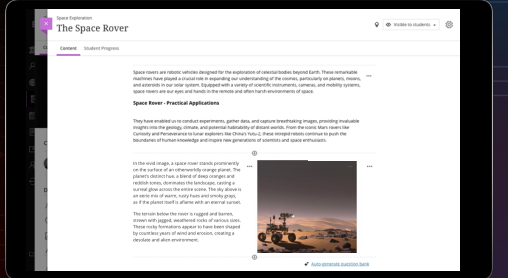
Name	Category	Visibility
Course Syllabus	Document	Visible
Course Syllabus	Document	Visible
Course Syllabus	Document	Visible

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## Advanced Layouts

**NEXT:** 3 - 6 months

- Greater flexibility when creating Ultra documents
- Add multi-column layouts, enabling different structures of content
- Helpful for multilingual courses



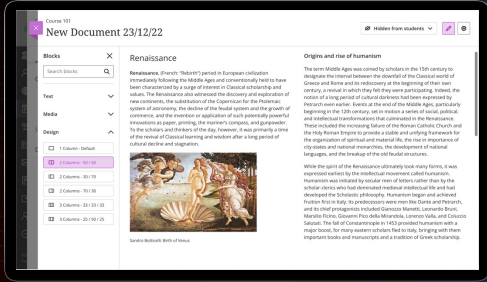
12

## Richer Ultra Documents

313 votes

LATER: 6+ months

- Easily create richer and more engaging content experiences
- Build advanced document layouts
- Embed questions, knowledge checks and other activities
- Included in core LMS



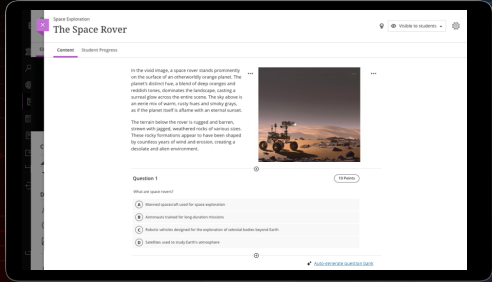
13

## Embedded Knowledge Checks

74 Votes

LATER: 6+ months

- Conduct a knowledge check within an Ultra Document
- Quick way to check students understanding and gain valuable insights
- Useful for students to self-assess and have just-in-time feedback in the context of the content

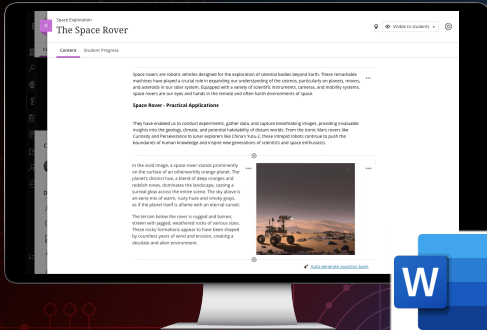


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## Import Files as Ultra Documents

LATER: 6+ months

- Import files and convert them into an Ultra Document
- Efficient content curation process
- Use tools within Ultra to add extra value to the student experience, such as knowledge checks and videos
- Accessibility improvements by having content native with access to accessibility checker

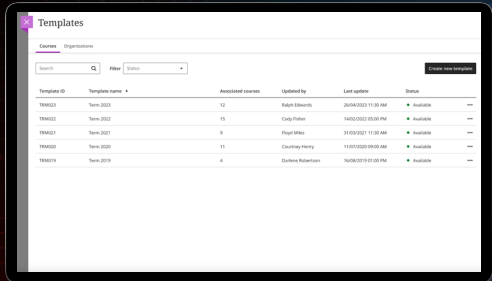


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## Course & Organization Templates

LATER: 6+ months

- Centrally manage content and settings with Templates
- Changes made to a Template are applied to associated courses or organizations
- Objects within a Template can be locked down to prevent changes in associated courses



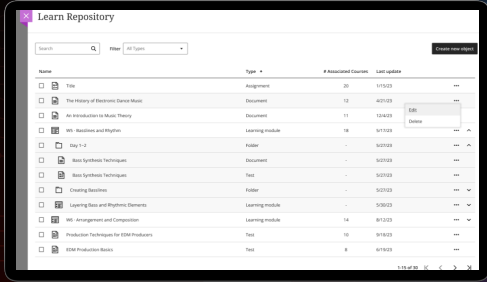
Template ID	Template name	Associated courses	Updated By	Last updated	Status
TMPL001	Team 2020	12	David Roberts	20/03/2021 11:00 AM	Available
TMPL002	Team 2021	0	Colin O'Neil	16/03/2021 15:28 PM	Available
TMPL003	Team 2021	0	Page Mills	31/03/2021 11:30 AM	Available
TMPL004	Team 2020	11	Countryberry	11/01/2020 09:00 AM	Available
TMPL005	Team 2019	4	Dariusz Kubiak	16/06/2019 03:00 PM	Available

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## Learning Object Repository

**LATER: 6+ months**

- Centrally managed institutional objects with a Learning Object Repository (LOR)
- Changes made to a LOR Object are applied to associated courses or organizations
- LOR Objects within a Template can be locked down to prevent changes in associated courses



Name	Type	# Associated Courses	Last Update
Title	Assignment	20	11/15/23
The History of Electronic Game Music	Document	12	4/25/23
An Introduction to Music Theory	Document	11	12/4/23
Web: Reaction and MySpace	Learning Module	18	9/11/23
Day 11.2	Folder	-	9/27/23
Best Systems Techniques	Document	-	9/27/23
Best Systems Techniques	Folder	-	9/27/23
Creating Modules	Folder	-	9/27/23
Learning Tools and Digital Elements	Learning Module	-	9/28/23
Web: Assessment and Composition	Learning Module	14	9/12/23
Production Techniques for 3D6 Producers	Text	10	9/18/23
3D6 Production Models	Text	9	9/18/23

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## Assessment and Grading

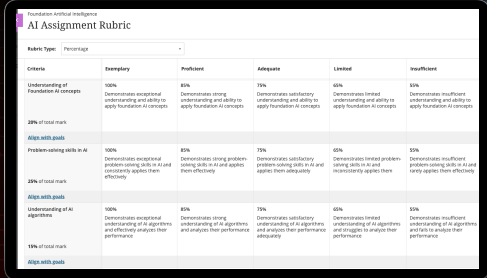


25

## Large Rubric Support

**TOMORROW!**

- Support for large rubrics that are necessary for collecting assessment data for accreditation purposes
- Support for rubrics of any size
- Rubric performance improvements



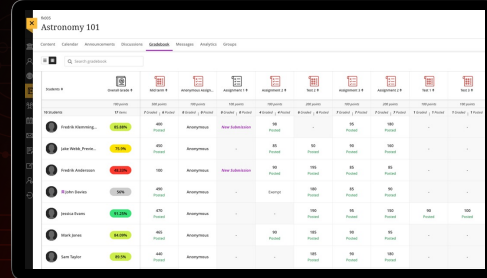
Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Adequate	Limited	Ineffective
Understanding of Foundation AI concepts	100%	80%	70%	60%	50%
Problem-solving skills in AI	100%	80%	70%	60%	50%
Understanding of AI algorithms	100%	80%	70%	60%	50%

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## Gradebook Improvements

**TOMORROW!**

- Grid view usability improvements
- Sort records to make it easier to organize and find information
- Adding Student ID to make it easier for instructors to identify students with similar names



Student	Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Assignment 3	Assignment 4	Assignment 5	Assignment 6	Assignment 7	Assignment 8
John Doe	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Jane Smith	95%	85%	75%	65%	55%	45%	35%	25%
Bob Johnson	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%
Alice Brown	85%	75%	65%	55%	45%	35%	25%	15%
Charlie Davis	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%
Diana Miller	75%	65%	55%	45%	35%	25%	15%	5%
Frank Wilson	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%	0%
Grace Taylor	65%	55%	45%	35%	25%	15%	5%	0%

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### Partial credit

**TOMORROW!**

- Multi-select questions with ability to set partial and negative credit
- Negative credit auto-distributes across wrong answer choices

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### Delegated Grading of Anonymous Assessments

**JANUARY release**

- Split grading workload for an anonymous assessment across a teaching team
- Delegate grading based on group membership
- Graders only see grading workload assigned to them

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### Attempt Logs

**NOW: 1 - 3 months**

- Check student progress within an attempt to identify possible issues
- Helps instructors gain insight into where students spend time in tests
- Clearly view how student is progressing through the test
- Easily toggle between student attempts
- View the time the student is spending in each attempt

Date and Time	Event	Question Number	Question	Time Per Question
04/17/2023 at 1:00 pm	Started		Assessment	0:00
04/17/2023 at 1:08 pm	Saved	1	The groundbreaking sport cases known as the "Patent Eligibility Trifecta" were which of the following 3 cases?	00:08
04/17/2023 at 1:10 pm	Saved	2	Can I discuss details of my invention with a potential investor before filing a patent application?	00:05
04/17/2023 at 1:18 pm	Saved	3	Describe the use of patents in 2 different countries and explain how jurisdiction differs. Provide examples 1:00:00:00	00:03
04/17/2023 at 1:17 pm	Saved	4	My employee has invented a new product or process. Who will own the rights to the patent?	00:01

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### Forms

**NOW: 1 - 3 months**

- Additional use cases for assessment:
  - Student opinions
  - Data collection
  - Survey
- No correct answers or points defined at the question level
- The Form can be graded or not
- Likert question type

31

### Feedback for Non-Submitters

111 Votes

**NEXT: 1 - 3 months**

- Enable instructors to provide feedback to students who have not made a submission
- Ability to provide feedback on override grades to communicate the reason behind a grade change

32

### Print Tests

243 Votes

**NEXT: 3 - 6 months**

- Questions and answer options optimized for printing
- Enabling instructors to print blank tests for offline exams or students with accommodations
- Support for saving tests as PDFs for accreditation or archiving purposes

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### Assessment Workflow Improvements

334 Votes

**NEXT: 1 - 3 months**

- Improved workflow to prevent students from starting attempts by mistake
- Improved assignment submission interface
- Clearly identifiable file drop zone to improve file-based submission workflow

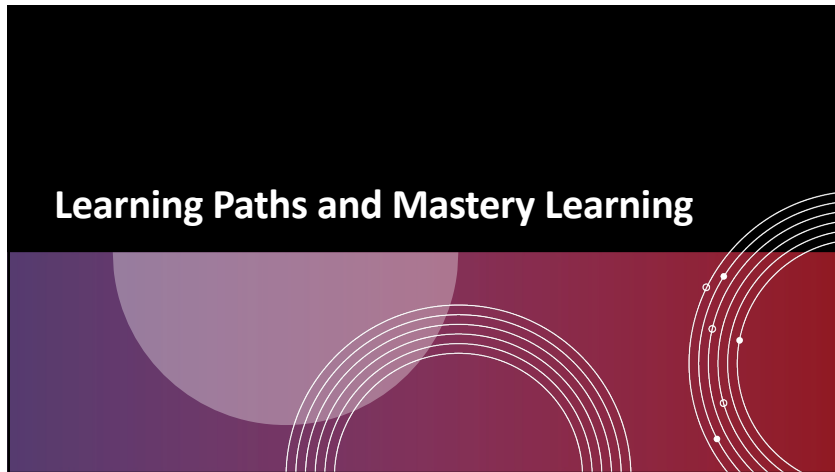
34

### Additional Roadmap Highlights

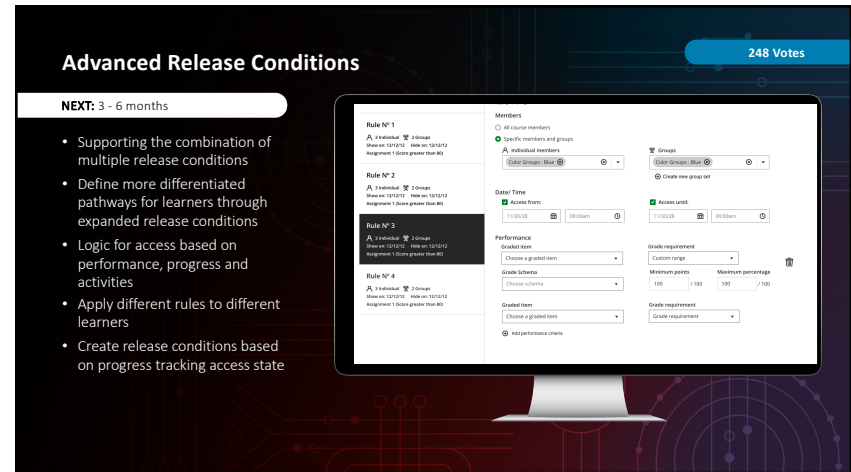
**NOW: 1 - 3 months**      **NEXT: 3 - 6 months**      **LATER: 6+ months**

- Additional Total and Weighted Calculations
- Due Date Exceptions for Group Submissions
- Matching question improvements
- Align questions with goals in question banks
- Display categories on Gradable Items page
- Anonymous responses for Forms
- Gradebook usability improvements
- Submit assignment on behalf of a Student
- Gradebook column statistics
- Hide Gradebook rows
- Notes on Override Grades
- Question meta data
- No-points rubric
- Bulk change question points
- File Rendering Improvements
- Gradebook text column

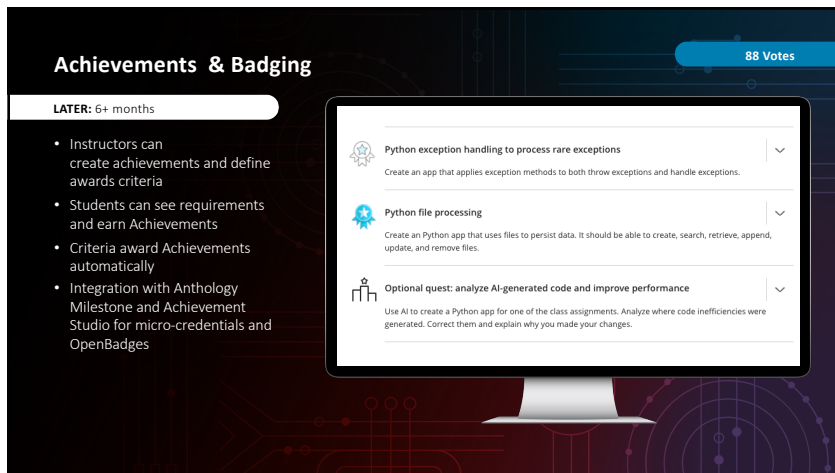
35



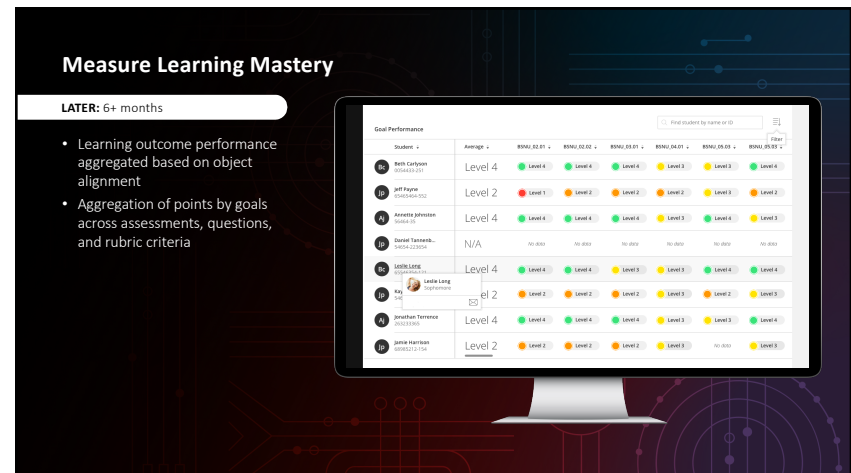
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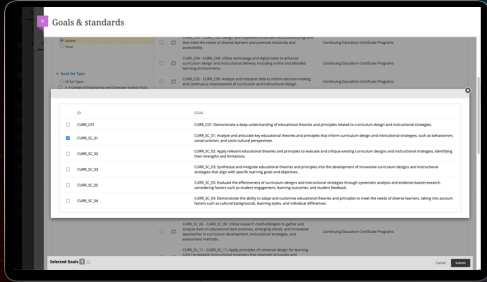
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## Automated Goal Alignment


**LATER: 6+ months**

- Reducing time and helping to scale instruction with automated goal alignment
- Supporting alignment for gradable items within Ultra including but not limited to assessments, questions and rubric criteria



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## Flexible Grading

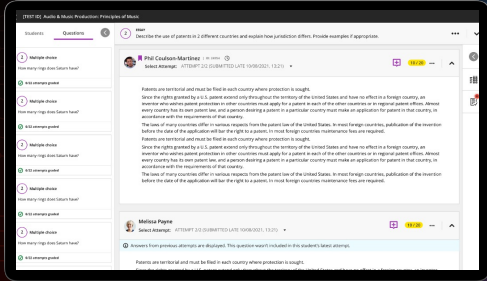


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## Flexible Grading

**NOW: Available Now**

- Highly efficient grading experience that allows instructors full flexibility in how they approach their grading
- Most efficient grading experience on the market
- Grade by student or by question

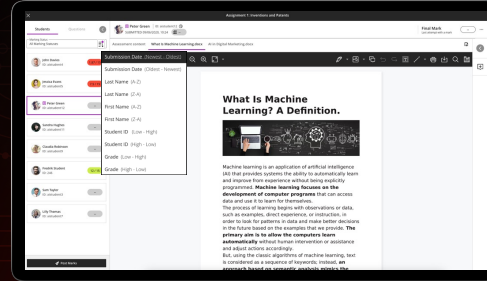


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## Flexible Grading Improvements

**TOMORROW**

- Continued usability and efficiency improvements based on user feedback
- Optimized file grading workflow for assignment submissions
- The ability for instructors to reorder the student list by submission date, name, and ID to support varied marking approaches



43

### Flexible Grading Improvements

66 Votes

**NEXT: 3 - 6 months**

- Continued usability and efficiency improvements based on user feedback
- Enable instructors to provide question level feedback
- Support for Group Submissions

45

### Flexible Grading: Beyond

**LATER: 6+ months**

- Ability to grade essay questions using a rubric
- Support for Peer Review & Parallel grading
- Intelligent grading such as grouping similar responses, bulk feedback and predicted grading time

46

### Which item are you most excited about?

- Gradebook improvements
- Advanced Release Conditions
- Forms
- Badging and Mastery gradebook
- Flexible Grading

47

### Collaboration and Active Learning

48

## Announcement Enhancements

138 Votes

**NOW: 1 - 3 months**

- Continued enhancements to Announcements
- Number of unread announcements shown in the top navigation to increase visibility
- Mark announcements as read/unread for better control
- Post announcements with a single click
- Scheduled announcements to be sent as email

The screenshot shows a course page for 'Space Exploration' with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Home', 'Announcements', 'Discussions', 'Gradesbook', 'Messages', 'Analytics', and 'Groups'. Below the navigation bar, there's a 'Course Faculty' section with a profile for 'Michael Collins'. The main content area features several announcements, including 'Introduction to Space Exploration' and 'Fundamentals of Rocket Propulsion'. A 'Details & Actions' sidebar is visible on the left.

49

## Follow Discussions

162 Votes

**NEXT: 3 - 6 months**

- Improved discussion to further encourage student engagement
- Follow important discussions or discussion student has participated in through clear notifications
- Support the ability for course conversion from Original, so an instructor subscribed to a forum will maintain the 'follow' in Ultra

The screenshot shows a 'Discussion Topic' page for 'Using the following periodic, rigidly-placed content...'. It includes a 'Discussion Settings' sidebar with options for 'One Date', 'Maximum grade', 'Author', and 'Participants'. The main content area shows a discussion post by 'Cathy Ng' with a 'Reply' button and a 'Follow' button.

50

## Anonymous Discussions

71 Votes

**NEXT: 3 - 6 months**

- Provide more authentic, honest and genuine conversations to occur without revealing student names
- Support the ability to allow anonymous responses and replies within Discussion boards
- Anonymous discussions are facilitated only by the instructor
- Users can post anonymously when enabled

The screenshot shows a 'Discussion Topic' page with a 'Discussion Settings' sidebar. The 'Details & Information' section includes options for 'Posting on Course Content page', 'Post first', 'Allow discussion only with student replies', 'Present editing', and 'Allow anonymous responses and replies'. The 'Anonymous Discussions' section is also visible.

51

## Discussions Due Dates

**NEXT: 6+ months**

- Provide the ability to set multiple due dates for discussions
- Due dates will be available for both posts and replies

The screenshot shows a 'Discussion Topic' page with a 'Discussion Settings' sidebar. The 'Details & Information' section includes options for 'Posting on Course Content page', 'Post first', 'Allow discussion only with student replies', 'Present editing', and 'Allow anonymous responses and replies'. The 'Due Dates' section is also visible.

52

### Group Collaboration

89 Votes

**NOW: Available Now**

- Groups more easily accessible through top navigation
- Easily message groups and group participants
- Overview of group activity in dedicated Group Space

The screenshot shows a 'Red Group' interface with a 'Group Content' section on the left containing assignments and discussions, and a 'Members (14)' list on the right. A blue bar at the top right indicates '89 Votes'.

54

### Group Collaboration

**NEXT: 3 - 6 months**

- Users need maximum flexibility to communicate, especially within their groups
- We will expose the list of participants directly from group spaces
- Users will be able to messages the group from group spaces
- This encourages easy engagement on content belonging to that group

The screenshot shows the same 'Red Group' interface as slide 54, but with a 'Members' dropdown menu open, displaying a search bar and a list of group members.

55

### Actionable Insights and Learner Progression

An abstract graphic featuring overlapping circles and lines in shades of purple and red, representing data and progression.

57

### Holistic Student Overview

**NOW: Available Now**

- Institutional enablement of Progress Tracking
- Help instructor understand student's performance in course
- Comprehensive view of student including current overall grade, last course access, accommodations, grades and feedback
- Instructor sees course outline as seen by student with information on their progress
- Make private notes about a student to record noteworthy interactions or events

The screenshot shows a 'Holistic Student Overview' for 'Nicolaas Matthijs' with a 'Current Grade' of 'C+'. It includes a table of course activities and a 'Structure' section.

Item Name	Status
Introduction - Start Here	Completed 12/05/23 10:14 AM
Introduction - Start Here	Completed 12/05/23 10:14 AM
Introduction	Completed 12/05/23 10:14 AM
Pre-Assessment	Completed 12/05/23 10:14 AM
Course Design	Started 12/05/23 10:14 AM

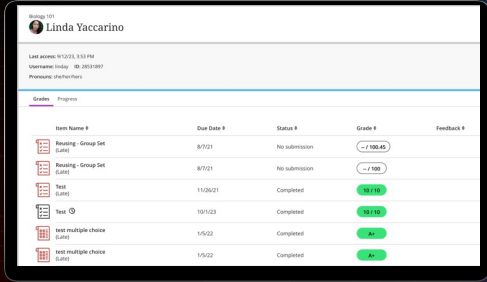
58

### Observer Support

25 Votes

**NEXT: 3 – 6 months**

- Ability for observers and student advisors to observe one or multiple students
- Ability to see grades and course progress by course
- LATER:** enhanced observer dashboard with key course indicators per student



Item Name #	Due Date #	Status #	Grade #	Feedback #
Reading - Group Set (4/4)	8/7/21	No submission	-1/100.00	
Reading - Group Set (4/4)	8/7/21	No submission	-1/100	
Test (3/4)	11/28/21	Completed	10/116	
Test (3/4)	10/1/23	Completed	10/116	
Test multiple-choice (3/4)	1/5/22	Completed	100	
Test multiple-choice (3/4)	1/5/22	Completed	100	

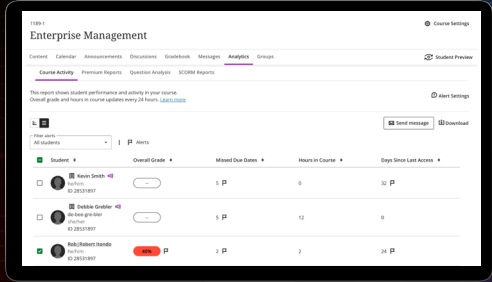
60

### Student Alerts (Flagging Risk Indicators)

28 Votes

**NOW: 1 – 3 Months, LATER: 6+ Months**

- Supports early intervention actions for instructors and advisors
- Improve student retention by identifying students in a class who are falling behind
- Next:**
  - Create alerts based on volume of missed deadlines
- Later:**
  - Institutional defaults for alert settings



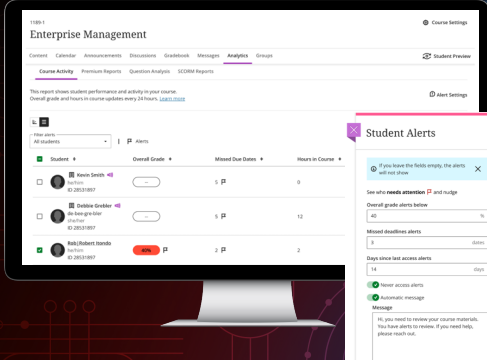
Student	Overall Grade	Missed Due Dates	Hours in Course	Days Since Last Access
Kevin Smith	5 P	0	0	31 P
Chelsea Graham	5 P	0	12	0
Robt Robert Banda	2 P	2	2	24 P

61

### Automated Nudging

**LATER: 6+ months**

- Scale outreach activities and improve retention
- Set criteria for sending messages to students automatically
- Institutional and course settings
- Review a history of messages sent to students



62

### Accessibility and Inclusion

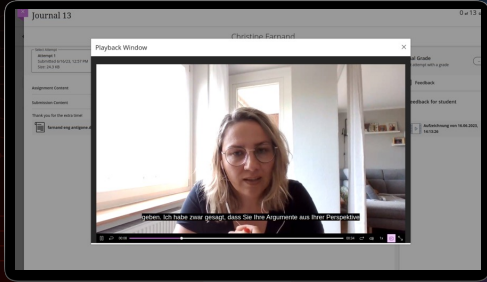


63

## Auto-captioning

**NOW:** Available Now

- Automated captioning for video and audio recorded in Learn
- Video / audio in assessment feedback, announcements, etc.
- Support for many languages



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## Core Accessibility Improvements

**NOW:** Available Now / **NEXT:** 3 - 6 Months

Improved navigation with keyboard and assistive technology through updates to

- Headings and landmarks
- Skip link to course content
- Course content search

Image Settings

- Ability to add meaningful descriptions or mark images as decorative

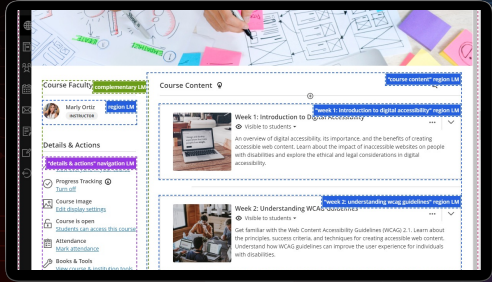
Accessibility Documentation

- New Accessibility in Ultra page in Help Center

**Next Up:**

Latest WCAG Standards

- Reviewing the latest WCAG 2.2 standards and working with external auditors on alignment



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## Base Navigation Improvements



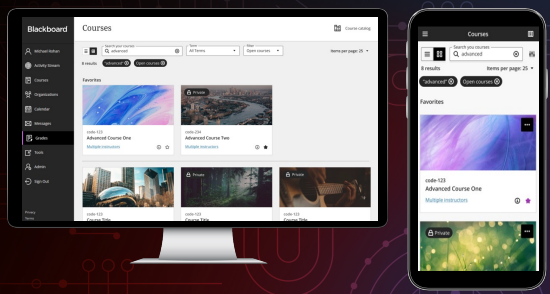
66

## Base Navigation Enhancements

**NEXT:** 1 - 3 months

39 Votes

- Alignment of search and filter options across Base Navigation pages
- New term dropdown selector for easy access to the required term
- Save user preferences
- Improved mobile display
- Improved status label for clear course start and completion



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## Tool Availability Control

81 Votes

**NOW: 3 - 6 Months**

- Continued enhancements to tool availability control at course level
- Logical hiding of the calendar from Base Navigation

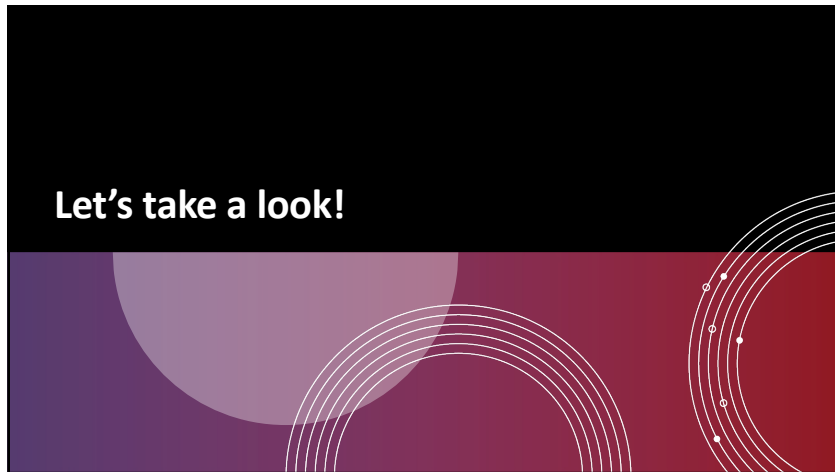
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## Personal Dashboard

**LATER: 6+ months**

- Personalized dashboard that helps Students and instructors better understand what to do next
- Actionable overview of upcoming deadlines and to-dos
- Simplified activity stream

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