

BLACKBOARD INSTRUCTOR HANDBOOK - 2025-2026 EDITION

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Accessing and Logging in to Blackboard

The following steps will assist you with accessing and logging into your Blackboard account. If you run into any issues accessing your Blackboard account, please contact the Office of Online Learning and Support.

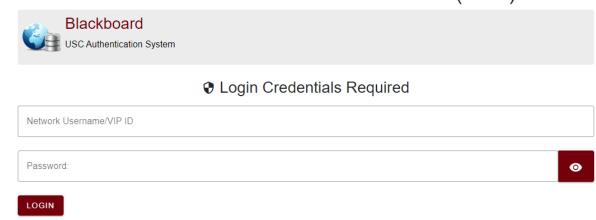
- 1. Open a browser window. It is recommended to use the latest version of Google Chrome or Firefox
- 2. Go to www.usca.edu/manegate/faculty-staff/ and scroll down to the bottom of the page to access the tools and click on "Blackboard." You can also access Blackboard directly at this link: http://blackboard.usca.edu/
- 3. Click "Login" (as shown below).

LOG IN TO BLACKBOARD



4. This will direct you to the USC Central Authentication Service (CAS) where you will need to enter your network username/VIP ID and your password.

USC Central Authentication Service (CAS)

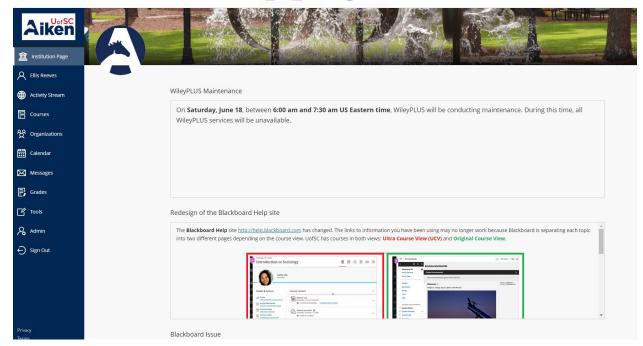


- 5. Once your information is entered and you press "login" you will need to verify your account via the multifactor authentication.
- 6. You are now logged into your Blackboard account.

"Institution Page" Home Page

Once you are logged into your Blackboard account, the "Institution Page" will act as your landing page.





This page will allow you to access the following menus: Profile (which will be listed as your name), Activity Stream, Courses, Organizations, Calendar, Messages, Grades, Tools, and Sign Out. The functions of each of these menu selections are expanded on below.

Profile

The profile tab (listed as your name) will allow you to edit your profile image, see your full name and primary email, add a nickname or other name, add a personal website, and allow you to list your department information.

Activity Stream

The activity stream will allow you to see your recent activity within blackboard and link you to previous pages that you have accessed.

Courses

The courses tab will allow you to access all past, current, and upcoming courses (that have been scheduled) that you have been assigned to as the instructor, course builder, TA, or participant.

Organizations

The organizations tab will allow you to access all past, current, and upcoming organizations that you have been assigned to as an organization leader, organization builder, or participant. Organizations, unlike courses, are able to run beyond the course of a semester and are often not associated with academic grades.

Calendar

The calendar tab will allow you to see all due dates and course schedules for courses that you are assigned to when applicable. You can also add personal events and reminders to this calendar.



Messages

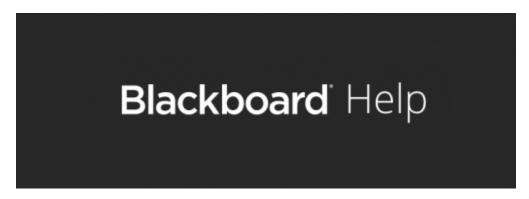
The messages tab allows you to quickly access messages from courses that you are assigned to as the instructor.

Grades

The grades tab allows you to view a widget of the grade center for each course that you are assigned.

Tools

The tools tab allows you to access various Blackboard tools such as content collection, portfolios, goals, goal performance, application authorization, and reporting framework LTI link. The use of these tools various from instructor to instructor.



Check out <u>Blackboard Help</u> for more helpful information!

Course Home Page

The course home page is what an instructor will see when they access a course via the course tab. The view of the course will vary depending on if the instructor is using Original Course View or Ultra Course View.

Course Menu

In Ultra Course View, the course menu is labeled as "Details and Actions" and is located on the left side of the course home page. It contains options for instructors to access the roster, course description, progress tracking, course image, course availability, attendance, books and tools, question banks, and conversion exceptions.

- **Roster:** Instructors are able to view all students enrolled in the course.
- Course Description: Instructors are able to view the course description that is generated through Self-Service.
- Progress Tracking: Progress tracking allows instructors to see course progress relating to course content, assignments, and tests.
- Course Image: Instructors can assign a banner image for the course.
- Course is Open: Instructors can adjust if students can or cannot access the course.
- Attendance: Instructors can manage student attendance.



- **Books and Tools:** Instructors can access additional tools via this tab such as the course accessibility report, Panopto, Zoom, and more.
- Question Banks: Instructors can manage their questions banks by importing new question banks or viewing current banks.
- **Conversion Exceptions:** Instructors can view any changes that occurred when copying material from Blackboard Original. Most exceptions are low priority changes to styling and formatting to create a more consistent appearance.

Ultra Course View also offers a top menu row that allows for ease of navigation for both instructors and students. Students are able to view all of these menu items outside of analytics.

Content Calendar Announcements Discussions Gradebook Messages Analytics Groups

- Content: All course modules and content are located under this tab.
- Calendar: All due dates and scheduled items appear under this tab.
- Announcements: All announcements from instructor.
- **Discussions:** Instructors and students are able to access all discussions included in the course.
- **Gradebook:** Instructors can access their gradebook via this tab.
- **Messages:** This section instructors to manage all messages within the course.
- Analytics: Instructors can view course analytics relating to grades, student access, missed due dates, and time spent in the course.
- **Groups:** Instructor can view all groups and sets and create new ones for group assignments.

How to Request a Blackboard Development Course Shell

Blackboard development sites, often called "Sandboxes," provide instructors with a testing site they can experiment in and practice with new features and functions. Unlike working in a normal class page, there is no fear of deleting important content from the development site.

To request a development course shell, contact the Office of Online Learning and Support.

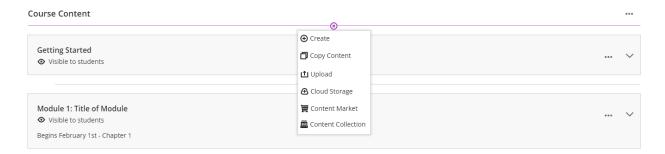
Inserting Course Content

To insert content using Ultra Course View instructors will need to follow the following steps:

1. Click the "+" icon that appears on various areas under the "Course Content" section.

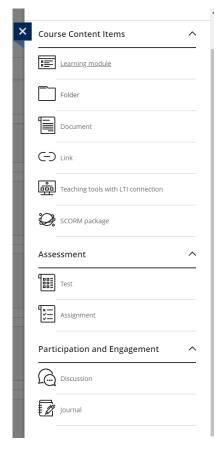


2. This will populate a new selection menu that allows instructors to either **create** content, **autogenerate modules**, **copy content**, **upload**, access **cloud storage**, access the **content market**, or view **content collection**.



- 3. To add content, instructors will want to click "Create."

 This will populate a new right column menu that allows instructors to add a learning module, folder, document, link, test, assignment, discussion, etc.
 - a. Learning Module: Modules can hold all types of course content, assessments, and discussions.
 Consider these like a file cabinet holding the majority of your content. They will be the first layer students see when accessing the course.
 - Folder: A folder can add another layer to modules.
 Folders can hold all content items outside of modules. Instructors can have multiple folders within a module.
 - c. Document: Documents hold the bulk of your content and are where instructors will add course content.
 - **d. Link:** Provides a hyperlinked item within a module or folder that takes students to an external site.
 - e. Test: Add a test to a module or folder
 - **f. Assignment:** Add an assignment to a module or folder
 - **g. Discussion:** Add a discussion to a module or folder.
- **4.** Additional Course Content Information can be found through Blackboard Help



Grade Center

The Blackboard grade center is populated with students who are enrolled in the course. It allows instructors to **create columns**, **create calculate columns**, **manage** grades, create **reports**, and **filter** data.

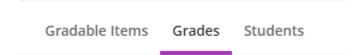


Access the Grade Center

In Ultra Course View, the grade center is referred to as the "Gradebook" and can be accessed from the top menu column in an Ultra course.

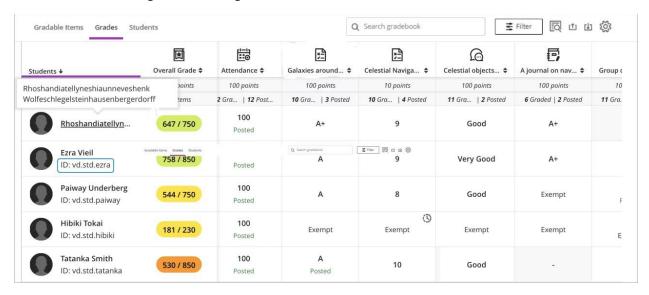


The gradebook has 3 different views that can be utilized by the instructor. To navigate to each view instructors, can click on each tab in the gradebook menu.



"Gradable items" shows a list of all assignments in the course. This view can be helpful when instructors wish to see how many assignments have been submitted or how many assignments need to be graded at a glance. This view also allows isntructors to rearrange the order of assignments by clicking on the arrow button at the end of each row and then dragging the item up or down.

"Grades" shows the traditional grid gradebook view. This view is usually the option instructors utilize most when actually grading and reviewing grades. This view displays each student's grade for a specific assignment, with one student per row and one gradable item per column. Use the arrow buttons to sort columns into ascending or descending order.



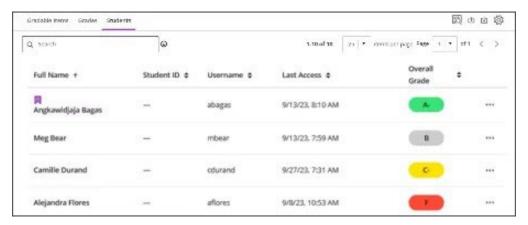
In the grid, you can select a student's gradable item to open a menu with these options:

- View: Go directly to the assignment submission and start grading.
- Feedback: Enter feedback for overridden test/assignment grades and automatic zeros.
- Post: Post a grade that's been assigned but not yet posted.
- Add or edit exceptions: If an assignment is timed or has a due date, you can add exceptions here, as well as allow multiple attempts.



 Add or edit exemptions: You can remove an assignment from being counted towards a student's overall grade.

"Students" shows a list of all your students with their dates of last access and their overall grades. You can only see overall grades if you've set up the overall grade for the course. Students with grading accommodations have a purple flag with their name.



You can directly message students and add accommodations from the "Students" view. You can search for students by name, username, or student ID. Select a student's name to go to their student overview.

Overall Grade in Gradebook

In Ultra Course View, instructors will have the option to set up their "Overall Grade" calculation as *points* or *weighted*. The course content list will change based on the selection made. As a reminder, the total grade percentage must equal 100%.

Weighted Option

When calculating total grades by weighted options, the instructor will want to make sure that the "Category Weight" equals the correct weighted percentage. All required columns and categories that will be calculated for the weighted column must already be created.

The following steps will need to be accomplished to successfully set up a weighted grade option in Ultra Course View:

1. All assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. will need to be created and added to the course.



 Make sure that all assessments are filed in the correct categories. Blackboard provides the following grading categories: assignment, test, discussion, journal, exam, homework, presentation, or quiz.

To set up the weighted grade calculation:

- 1. Access the Gradebook
- If this is the first time the overall grade calculation is being created, a
 "Set it up" option will populate in the right column. Select this option.
 (If you don't see that option click on the icon at the top left of the
 gradebook that says "Overall Grade" and then click "edit.")
- 3. Select "Weighted"
- 4. Instructors will now see the "Overall Grade" option and be able to set percentages for assignments, discussion, exam, homework, journal, presentation, quiz, and test columns.



Set up the overall grade!

The overall grade helps students

keep track of their performance in your course. You can select the gradebook items to include.





Total: 100%

5. Once setup with the correct percentages, click "Save."

Points Option

Setting up a points-based grade center is simple; all points are automatically populated in the grade center from each assignment. There is no minimum or maximum number of points you must include.

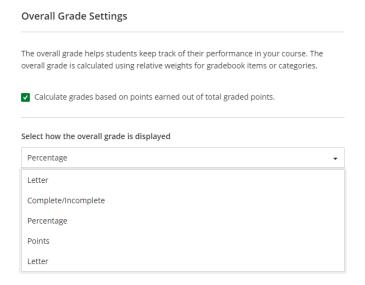
Overall Grade Display

Within the overall grade center, the instructor can also select how the grade is displayed. A drop-down list presents the following options:

- Letter
- Complete/Incomplete
- Percentage
- Points
- Letter



Once selecting an option from the drop-down menu, the instructor should hit "Save," and then the display will be instantly updated in the grade center.



Granting Accommodations and Exceptions

Accommodations

You can add <u>accommodations</u> for individual students, such as an exemption from assessment due dates or time limits. Be sure to add all accommodations approved by Disability Services. To add an accommodation, go to the Students view of the gradebook. Select the "More options" menu at the end of a student row, and then select "Accommodations" to open the Accommodations panel.

You can also select a student's name to open their student overview. Then select "Accommodations."



When an accommodation is assigned to a student, a purple flag appears by their name.

Exceptions

Exceptions are different from accommodations you set in the course roster or student drill-down. An accommodation applies to all due dates or time limits in your course for an individual student. Exceptions are only allowed for the Show on and Hide after dates and additional attempts.

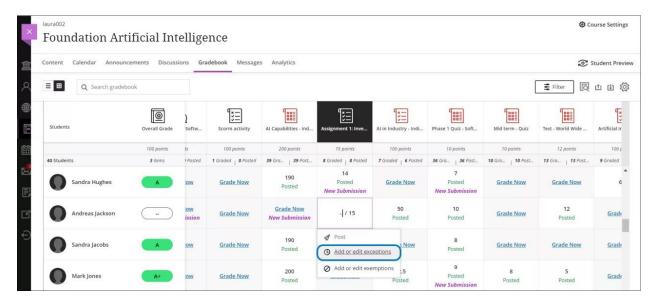


When special circumstances arise, you can give an individual student an exception on a specific test or assignment. An exception includes additional attempts, rescheduled due dates, or extended access, even if the assessment is hidden from other students.

Examples:

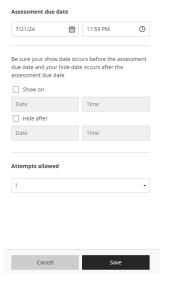
- **Test with one attempt**: Allow more attempts for a student who is blind and wants to use screen reader technology for the first time.
- **New assessment due date**: Set a new due date for a student in a regional competition, so they can submit the assessment after coming back.
- Assignment with the conditional availability of Hide after date and time: Extend the access to
 an assignment for a student with internet issues. If the due date and time are the same as the
 originals, the submission is still marked late in the gradebook. To avoid this, you can set a new
 Hide after date and time.

To add an exception, navigate to the gradebook Grades view. Select the assessment cell for that student to display the options menu. Then, choose Add or edit exceptions and the Exceptions panel opens.





You can then update the due date, attempts, and availability as needed.



After you allow an exception for a student's assessment, you'll see a gray clock icon next to the student's name. The accommodation icon is a purple flag.

Navigating Grading in Ultra

Blackboard Help provides an in-depth look at various grading functions available in blackboard Ultra Course View. This information van be viewing on the <u>Navigate Grading</u> portion of their site and covers:

- Viewing Gradable Items
- Viewing Student Engagement from Gradebook
- · Adding Accommodations from the Student List View
- Searching the Gradebook
- Gradebook Settings
- And More

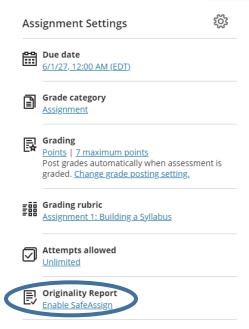
If you have any questions regarding the gradebook settings and features in Ultra Course View, please contact the Office of Online Learning and Support, and we will assist you with these features.

Enabling Safe Assign

To enable Safe Assign in Ultra Course View:

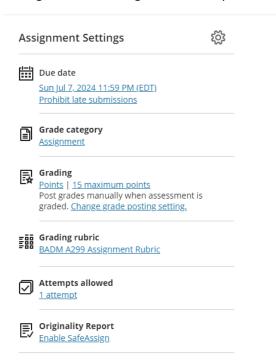
- 1. Access the assignment that you want to enable Safe Assign.
- 2. In the right menu column "Assignment Setting" click "Enable Safe Assign" under Originality Report"





Proctoring

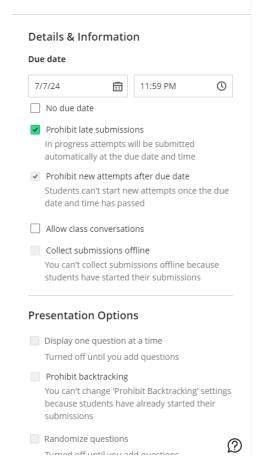
USC Aiken uses Respondus Lockdown Browser for proctoring. This system is available as a tool in all Blackboard course shells. To add proctoring or the lockdown browser to any of your assignments, first navigate to your assignment on the content page and open it. On the right-hand side of the page is a panel that says "Assignment Settings." Click on the gear icon to expand the settings menu.



The top of the settings menu contains some basic options such as the assignment due date.

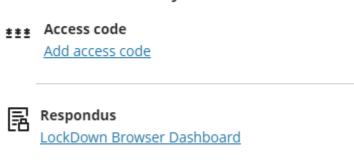


Assignment Settings



If you scroll through these options, you will find the Respondus section toward the end of the menu under "Assessment Security."

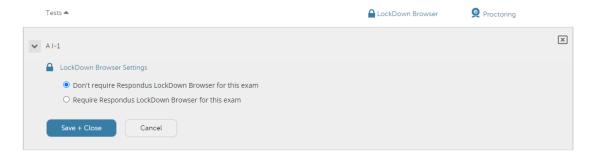
Assessment security



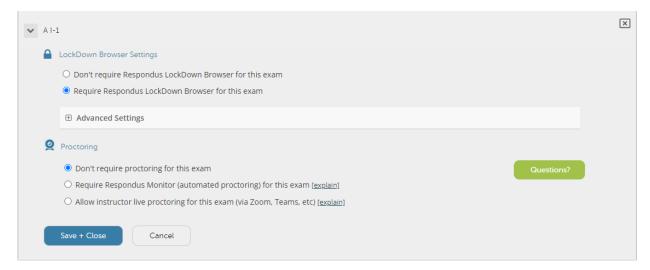
If you click on the LockDown Browser Dashboard link, you will be taken a dashboard that includes all tests and assignments in your course. Select the assessment item you want and click the drop down



arrow next to it and click "settings." You'll then be able to add the LockDown Browser as a requirement for that assignment.



Once you've indicated that you wish to add the LockDown Browser, you can choose to select proctoring as well if you like.



Once you've selected the security items you want to enable, click the "Save + Close" button.

Viewing and Managing Course Roster

To view and manage a course roster in Ultra Course View, instructors will need to do the following:

- 1. Access the course in Blackboard
- 2. Under "Details & Actions" click "View everyone in your course" under Roster.

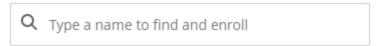


- 3. This will populate a full roster of all students, teaching assistants, course builders, and instructors assigned to the course.
- 4. To enroll a user, instructors will want to click on the "+" icon in the top right corner of the screen.
- 5. In Ultra Course View, instructors will need to have the individuals name or USC network username to enroll a user.

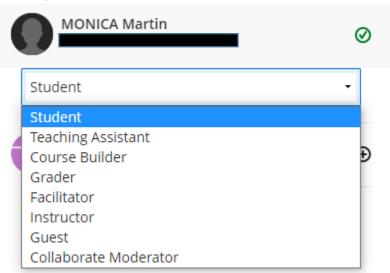


Ultra Course Template Enroll People

Add students, assistants, and other people to your course.



6. Once the username is entered, the user will populate as shown below. Instructors will see the following enrollment options for the user.

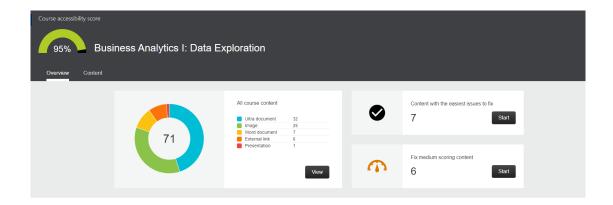


Click "Save" to process enrollment. This does not enroll students on Self Service Carolina. If you
have any reservations about conducting the course enrollment, please contact <u>Online Learning</u>
and <u>Support</u>.

Accessing Accessibility Score for Course

- 1. Access the course you want to check the accessibility score
- 2. In the left "Details and Actions" menu column, select "View course & institution tools"
- 3. This will populate a right menu column. Select "Accessibility Report"
- 4. This will launch Blackboard Ally and provide you with your course accessibility score.
- 5. This will show an overview of any content with accessibility issues and provide instructions for how to resolve the issue. All fully online courses should be 95% accessible or higher.





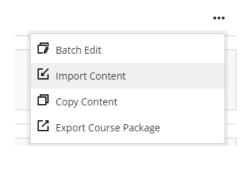
Importing Courses

Instructors can import courses from a previous course outside of the USC system. When a course is imported to Blackboard, all course content is imported into the new Blackboard course shell at once.

To import a course in Ultra Course View, the instructor is will need a ZIP file of the previous courses exported course content. This ZIP file cannot be edited. Imports do not include student enrollment or previous grade data.

To initiate an import, instructors will need to do the following:

- 1. Access the course in Blackboard
- 2. Under the "Content" page of the course, the instructor will want to click the "..." symbol in the top right corner under the "Student Preview" button.
- 3. This will populate a menu. Please select "Import Content" from this list.
- 4. Select "Import Course Content" or "Cloud Storage" from the next menu. Please note only compress files can be imported (ZIP and IMSCC).
- 5. Select the course file to import.







Course Copy

Instructors have the option to copy course materials into a new course or an existing one. Course content can be copied from an Original course to an Ultra course, but due to the different formats of the views, some cleanup will be necessary to redevelop the course. When copying from an Ultra Course to an Ultra Course, the content is replicated exactly.

To initiate a course copy in Ultra Course View, instructors will need to do the following:

- 1. Access the course that the content will be copied into in Blackboard.
- 2. Under the "Content" page, select the "..." symbol in the top right corner of the screen under the "Student Preview" icon.
- 3. This will populate a menu that list "Copy Content" as an option. Select this option.
- 4. This will pull up a new right menu column. In the "Course or Organization Name or ID" box, type the course ID or name to populate the course content will be copied from.
- 5. Select copy all or select individual content items from a folder or module.
- 6. Click "Copy Select Content" to initiate copy.

More information on conducting a course copy in Ultra Course View can be accessed on <u>Blackboard</u> <u>Help</u>.

Merging Courses

USC Columbia's <u>Information Technology Service Desk</u> is the primary support system for Blackboard course mergers.

To submit a service ticket to request a merger:

- 1. Visit the UTS Service Portal.
- 2. Login with your USC Credentials.
- 3. Click "Order Something."
- 4. Select "Learning Management System (Blackboard)."
- 5. Select "Merge course sections" from the dropdown option.
- 6. Include your contact number and copy your detailed request.
- 7. Click "Submit."

You can call the Service Desk at 803-777-1800 if you need additional support.

Before submitting the request, you will need the **course ID and section numbers** for the courses you want merged. Ideally, you will want to request a course merger before you copy content into the course before the semester begins. If you already have a "primary" course that you want other sections merged to, you should request that the "primary" course listed be used as the parent course, so it does not affect the availability of course content or having to perform a course copy to a parent course in the middle of the semester.



Do not merge courses after students have submitted work because that content will be lost. Please make sure to merge courses before the semester starts. Courses cannot be merged once the semester has begun.

Al Features

Since 2023, Blackboard has continuously been releasing AI features into Blackboard. Below you can find a detailed breakdown of all of these AI features.

- Al Conversations: Accessed through the "Create/+" button. Allows for faculty to build real world
 chat based simulations to promote critical thinking. We also can use these for Socratic
 questioning.
- Al Assignment and Discussion Generation: While building a discussion or assignment, you will
 see the ability to generate assignment topics or discussion board topic based on material in your
 course.
- Al Rubric Generation: Create Al generated rubrics based on assignment instructions.
- Al Assisted Feedback: Translate shorthand feedback into professional, easily understandable language.
- More coming in 2025 and 2026!

Instructional Design Support

If an instructor would like to request design assistance with a new course or refreshing/updating a current course, please reach out to the <u>Online Learning and Support team</u>. We have a great team of instructional designers who can walk you through the course design process, provide new insight on the framework around course design, and provide you with assistance on navigating Blackboard (and more).

