Help for Students

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Contents

Help for Students **1**

Blackboard Learn Environment **9**

Logging In to Blackboard Learn 9

Frequently Asked Questions 9

About the Gateway Page 9

How to Log In 10

Forget Your Password? 10

How to Retrieve Your Password 10

About the Blackboard Learn Environment 12

Learning Your Way Around 12

More About the Page Header 13

Next Steps 13

My Places: Edit Personal Information and Settings 13

How to Edit Personal Information 13

How to Change Your Password 15

How to Personalize My Places 17

How to Change Personal Settings 19

How to Set Privacy Options 21

Next Steps 23

Course Catalog 23

Browsing the Course Catalog 24

Viewing a Course as a Guest 24

Course Menu 24

Course Menu Icons 25

Viewing New Content 27

Viewing the Course Map 27

Search for Users 28

How to Search for Other Students in Your Course Using the Roster 29

How to Search for Users Using the User Directory 29

Screen Readers 30

Language Packs 31

How to Set a Language Pack Preference 31

Tabs and Modules **33**

My Institution Tab 33

Exploring the Tools Panel 34

Exploring the Modules 34

Next Steps 35

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What's New Module 35
Courses Tab 36
Customizing Tab Modules 38
How to Customize Module Layout 38
How to Personalize the Page 40
How to Add a Module 41
Next Steps 44
Working with Tab Modules 44
Editing Module Content 44
Minimizing a Module 44
Opening a Module in a New Window 44
Removing a Module 45
Accessing Information in a Module 45
Notifications 46
Exploring the Notifications Settings 46
How to Edit the Notification Settings 47
Deciding upon Notifications and Email Notifications 49
Text Editor 51
Using the Text Editor 51
Entering Text 51
Compatible Browsers 51
Text Editor Features 51
Keyboard Shortcuts for the Text Editor 54
Inserting Multimedia Files from the Text Editor 56
Image Fields 57
MPEG or AVI Fields 57
QuickTime Fields 58
Audio Fields 58
Flash or Shockwave Fields 59
Linking to File Attachments from the Text Editor 59
Using the Math and Science Notation Tool 61
MathML Equation Editor 61
Accessing the Equation Editor 62
Running Spell Check in the Text Editor 62
Word Lists 63
Personal Word List and Cookie 63
Using Spell Check 64
Recognized Errors 64
Tools 65

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About Course Tools 65
Announcements 65
How to View Announcements 66
Blogs 67
How to Access a Blog 68
How to Create a Blog Entry 69
Viewing Blog Drafts 71
How to Comment on a Blog Entry 72
How to Edit a Blog Entry 74
How to Delete a Blog Entry 77
Viewing Blog Grades 79
Troubleshooting Blog Management 79
Calendar 80
How to Open the Calendar 80
How to Create a Personal Event 81
How to Delete and Edit a Personal Event 83
How to View a Specific Date 85
Collaboration Tools 86
About Collaboration Tools 86
Virtual Classroom 88
Chat 100
Accessing Recorded Collaboration Sessions 105
Contacts 122
How to View Contacts 122
How to Create or Edit a Contact 123
How to Delete a Contact 125
How to Search for a Contact 125
Discussion Board 125
How to Access the Discussion Board 126
Viewing a Discussion Forum 127
Using List View and Tree View in Discussions 129
Viewing a Discussion Thread 130
About the Thread Detail Page 131
How to Create Threads in a Discussion Forum 133
How to Save Posts as Draft and Submit Later 134
How to Change the Displayed Threads 138
How to Reply to Discussion Posts 140
How to Rate Discussion Posts 143
How to Search Discussion Posts 144

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How to Collect Discussion Posts 146
How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting 148
How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting 150
How to View Discussion Board Grades 152
Email 154
Before You Begin 154
How to Send Email 154
Troubleshooting 156
Journals 157
How to Access a Journal 159
How to Create a Journal Entry 160
Viewing Journal Drafts 162
How to Comment on a Journal Entry 163
How to Edit a Journal Entry 165
How to Delete a Journal Entry 168
Viewing Journal Grades 170
Troubleshooting Journal Management 170
Messages 171
How to Create a Message 172
How to Create a Message Folder 175
How to View a Message 176
How to Reply to a Message 178
How to Forward a Message 181
How to Move a Message 185
How to Delete a Message 186
How to Print a Message 188
My Grades 190
How to Access My Grades 190
How to View Grade Details 191
My Grade Item Status 193
Search for Users 194
How to Search for Other Students in Your Course Using the Roster 194
How to Search for Users Using the User Directory 195
Tasks 196
How to Open the Task List 196
How to Create or Edit a Personal Task 197
How to Sort the List of Tasks 199
How to Change the Status of a Task 200
How to Delete a Personal Task 201

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How to View Task Details 202
Wikis 204
How to Create a Wiki Page 204
How to Edit Wiki Content 206
How to Link to other Wiki Pages 208
How to Comment on a Wiki Entry 212
How to View Your Contributions 214
How to View Grades for Wiki Contributions 217
Courses and Content 220
About Courses 220
Next Steps 220
About Course Content 220
Course Content Areas 222
Next Steps 223
Course Cartridges 223
Accessing a Course Cartridge 223
Lesson Plans 224
Learning Modules 226
Following a Sequential Path 226
Navigating within Learning Modules 226
Using the Table of Contents 227
How to Move the Table of Contents 227
Mashups 227
Default Mashup Types 228
How to Create a Mashup Item Using the Text Editor 228
Course Groups 232
About Course Groups 232
Managing Group Collaboration Sessions 239
Exchanging Files within a Course Group 245
Emailing a Course Group 248
Group Assignments 252
Tests and Assignments 271
Tests and Surveys 271
Question Types 271
Grading Questions 271
How to Take an Assessment 272
Feedback and Grades 273
Multiple Assessment Attempts 274
Presentation Option 274

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Submitting Assignments 275
Frequently Asked Questions 275
How to Submit an Assignment 276
How to Save an Assignment as Draft and Submit Later 278
How to Edit or Resubmit an Assignment 283
How to View Assignment Grades and Feedback 287
Next Steps 291
Group Assignments 291
Frequently Asked Questions 292
How to Submit Work for a Group Assignment 292
How to Save a Group Assignment as Draft and Submit Later 295
How to Edit or Resubmit a Group Assignment 300
How to View Group Assignment Grades and Feedback 304
About SafeAssign 309
How SafeAssignments Work 309
How to Submit a SafeAssignment 311
How to View SafeAssignment Submissions 312

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Blackboard Learn Environment

Logging In to Blackboard Learn

The first step in using Blackboard Learn is to log in on the **Gateway** page. Your school will provide the URL, username, and password.

Note: You may be directed immediately to the **My Institution** tab. If so, you may also log in through a button on the header frame or a special portal module.

> ***IMPORTANT!*** Passwords enable access to personal information. To maintain security do not share passwords with others.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I can't log in?

Please contact the computing help desk at your school. If you're not sure how to contact them, look for the technology office on your school's website or search the web for your *school's name* + *Blackboard* + *help* or *support*.

About the Gateway Page

The **Gateway** page welcomes you and provides a login button to access Blackboard Learn. You must have a valid username and password to log in.

If the **Gateway** page does not appear, you may also log in through a button on the header frame or a special portal module.

> ***IMPORTANT!*** Cookies must be enabled within the web browser.

A **Login**: Use this function to log in to Blackboard Learn.

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B **Change Text Size**: Display assistance in changing the size of the text displayed in the browser.

C **High Contrast Setting**: Change the display to assist low vision users. You can select whether to use your operating system's High Contrast settings or use Blackboard styles.

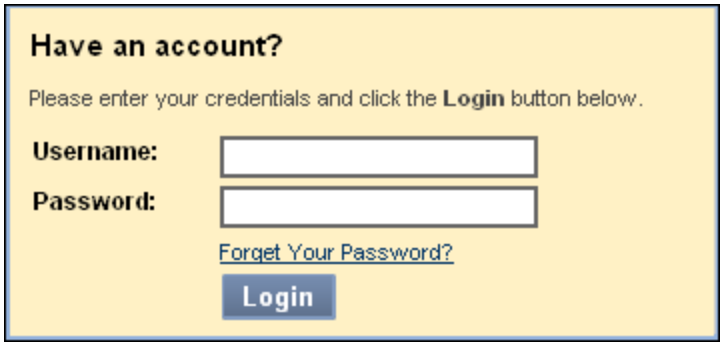
D **Create a New Account**: Create an account on Blackboard Learn.

E **View Course Catalog**: View courses belonging to your preferred category.

F **Preview as Guest**: Preview Blackboard Learn without using a system account. You may be able to browse the catalog and preview courses as a guest but you do not have access to the entire course.

How to Log In

1. Type your **Username**.
2. Type your **Password**. The maximum number of characters in a password is 32. Passwords are case sensitive.
3. Click **Login**.



Result

You are directed to the **My Institution** tab.

Forget Your Password?

You must complete the **Lost Password** page to obtain a new password. You will create a new password based on instructions received in an email. You must enter information in all the fields in the **Username Option** section or all of the fields in the **Email Address Option** section.

How to Retrieve Your Password

1. Type the URL for Blackboard Learn into a web browser.
2. On the Gateway page, click **Forgot Your Password?**

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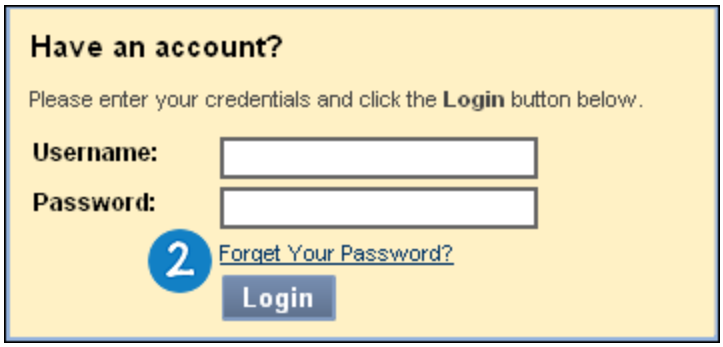
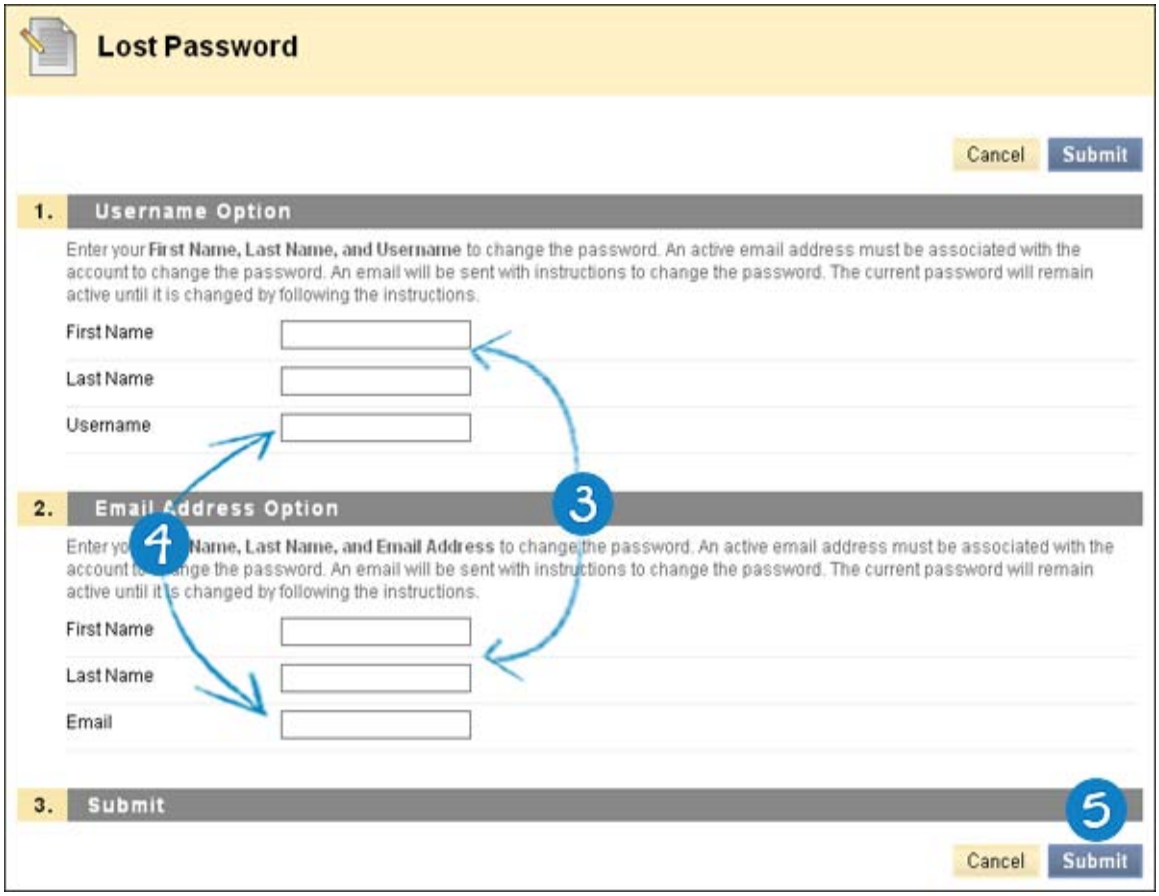


3. Type your first name and last name.
4. Type your username in the **Username** option or type your email address in the **Email** option.
5. Click **Submit**.



Result

An email will be sent with instructions to change your password. The current password will remain active until it is changed by following the instructions.

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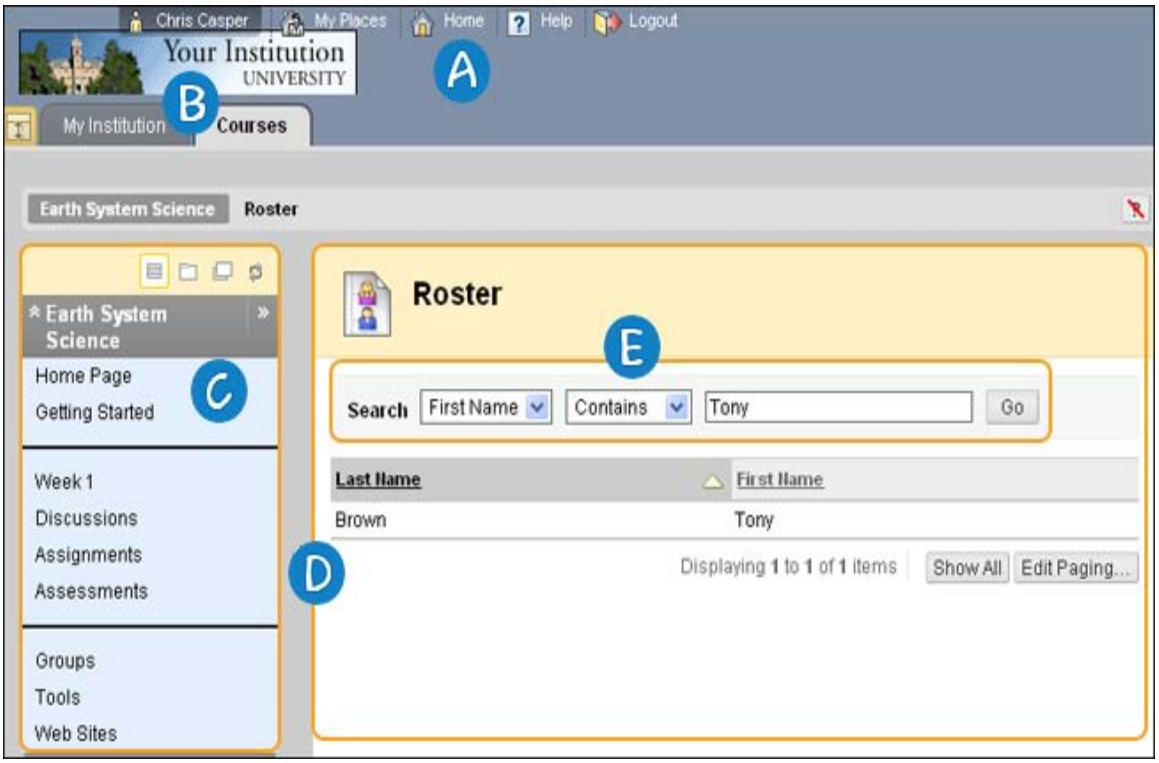
About the Blackboard Learn Environment

The following are some things to keep in mind when using Blackboard Learn:

- System administrators have the ability to disable certain tools within the application. If you encounter tools that you are unable to access contact your system administrator.
- The openness of Blackboard Learn allows instructors, leaders and administrators to be very creative. The names for items in Blackboard Learn may differ from those in the documentation.
- Building Blocks allow your school to integrate external applications, tools, content, and services into Blackboard Learn.

Learning Your Way Around



A Page Header: Area at the top of the screen that contains the tabs, the **My Places** link, and the links for **Home**, **Help**, and **Logout**. To learn more, see More About the Page Header .

B Tabs: Blackboard Learn has two common tabs, the **My Institution** tab and the **Courses** tab. If your school licenses community engagement, the **My Institution** tab, **Community** tab, and **Services** tab are available. In addition, community engagement enables your school to create custom tabs. The Blackboard administrator at your school can rename the tabs. To learn more, see My Institution Tab.

C Course Menu: Panel on the left side of the screen when inside a course. Users click button or text links to access all course content, such as Content Areas, individual tools, external links, course links, and module pages. To learn more, see Course Menu.

D Content Frame: Large area of the screen adjacent to the Course Menu that displays the selected Content Area, tool, or material.

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E **Action Bar**: Rows at the top of the page, containing page-level actions, such as **Build Content**, **Search**, **Delete**, and **Upload**.

More About the Page Header

The Blackboard Learn user interface is made up of components that allow you to easily navigate, enter data, edit items, and change options within Blackboard Learn. After logging into Blackboard, you will "land" on the **My Institution** page, or a similar page. Pages and the tabs that access them can be renamed by your school. Tabs that are visible depend on what capabilities your school has licensed. On that page, as well as others, you can access tools and information contained within modules.

The Page Header component displays information about the current screen. Its purpose is to orient the user. The Page Header always contains the tabs, the **My Places** link, and the links for **Home**, **Help**, and **Logout**. Notice that even within a course, the page header remains. We refer to the tabs and buttons in this area as universal navigation since they stay with you no matter where you are in Blackboard.

A **Tabs**: Blackboard Learn has two common tabs, the **My Institution** tab, and the **Courses** tab. If your school licenses community engagement, **My Institution** tab, **Community** tab, and **Services** tab are available. In addition, community engagement enables your school to create custom tabs and present different tabs to users based on Institution Roles.

B **My Places**: **My Places** provides users with quick and easy navigation to a variety of places within Blackboard Learn. This feature contains a customizable set of links to frequently accessed information and tools.

C **Home**: The **Home** link directs you to the Blackboard website where you can see information about their products and services.

D **Help**: The **Help** link can be set by the administrator at your school to point to school resources for providing assistance to users.

E **Logout**: You can use **Logout** to exit from Blackboard Learn.

Next Steps

To learn more about tabs, see My Institution Tab and Courses Tab.

To learn more about My Places link, see My Places: Edit Personal Information and Settings.

My Places: Edit Personal Information and Settings

My Places provides you with quick and easy navigation to a variety of places within Blackboard Learn. This feature contains a customizable set of links to frequently accessed information and tools. **My Places** also allows you to edit your personal information and settings.

How to Edit Personal Information

You can edit the information that appears in your account profile on the **Edit Personal Information** page.

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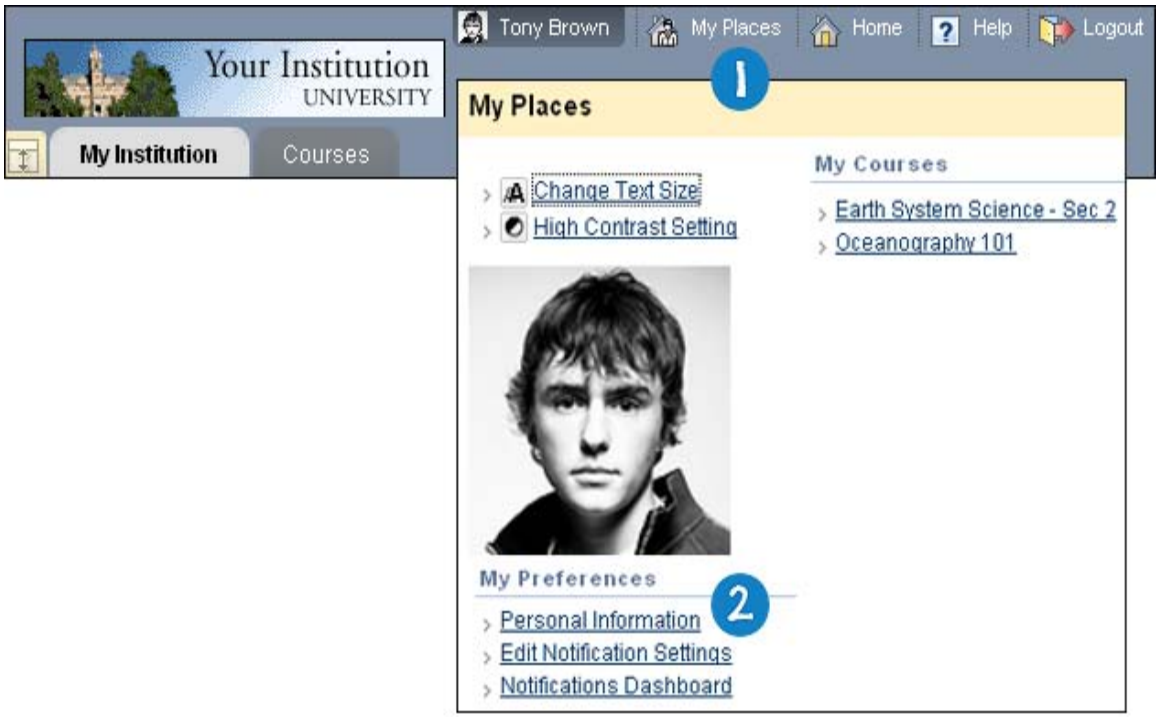
Changes made on this page are reflected throughout Blackboard Learn. For example, if you change your last name, the new last name appears in all courses you are enrolled in. Most of the personal information is optional.

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** on the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Edit Personal Information**.

4. On the **Edit Personal Information** page, make changes to the appropriate fields.

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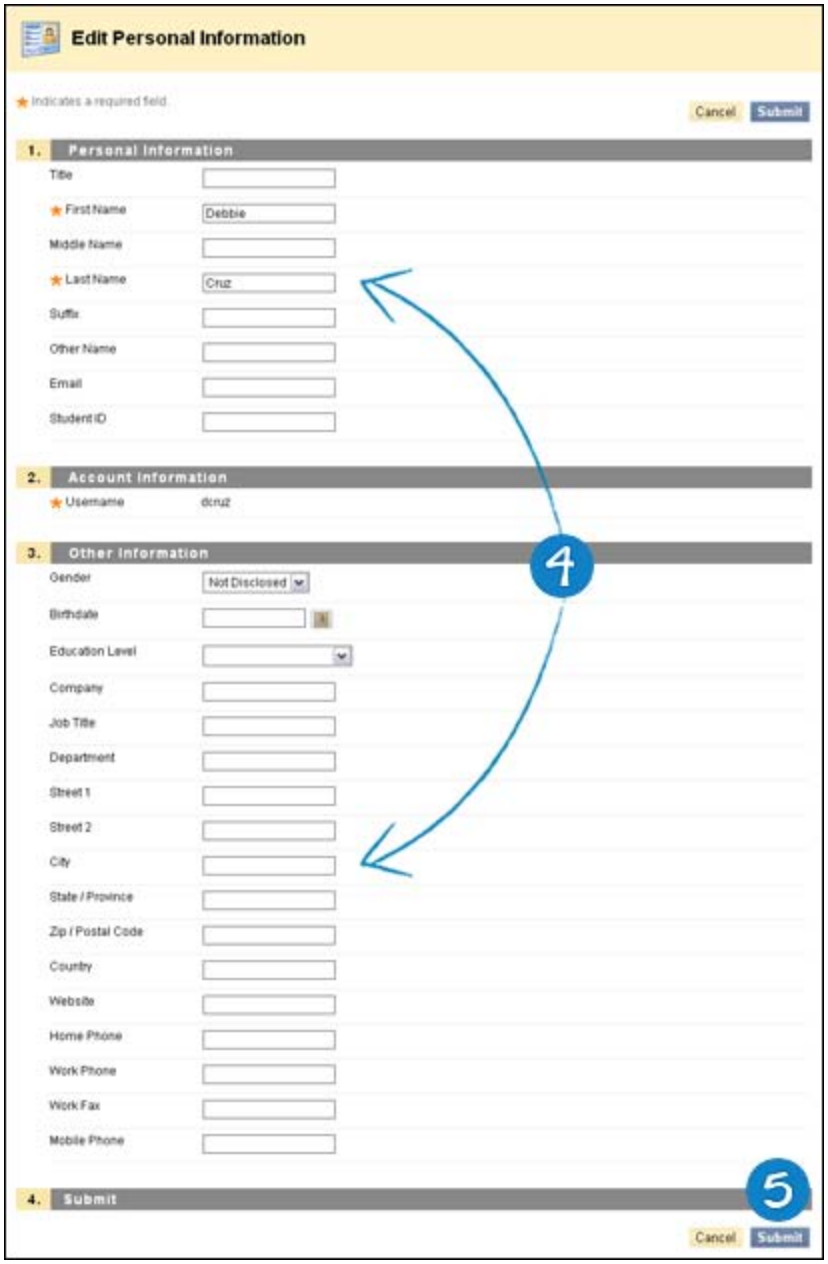
Note: If you are unable to change your information, your school may not allow you to change it through Blackboard Learn. Because Blackboard Learn often shares data with other systems on campus, such as the registrar's office, it may be necessary to ensure that your information is the same everywhere. In this case, your school will have a different way to change your information. To learn more, please contact the computing help desk at your school. If you're not sure how to contact them, look for the technology office on your school's website or search the web for your *school's name* + *Blackboard* + *help* or *support*.

5. Click **Submit**.



How to Change Your Password

Blackboard recommends that you change your password periodically to ensure security. Do not use common

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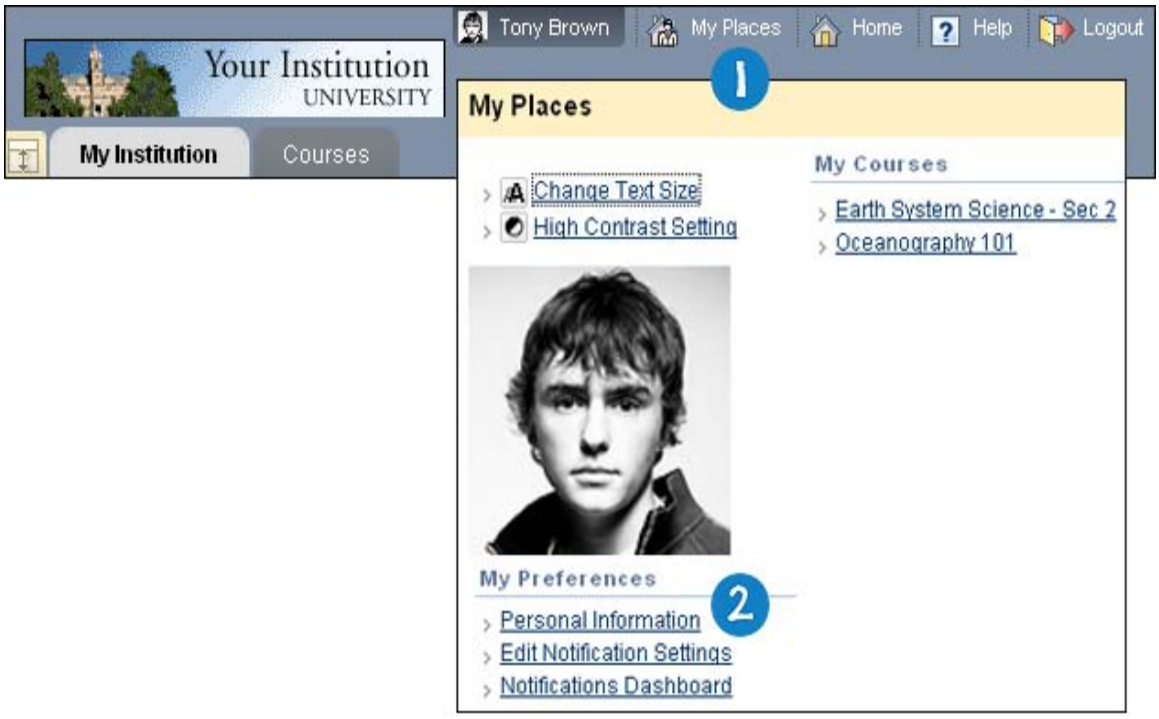
personal information as your password, such as your name or nickname.

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** on the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Change Password**.

4. On the **Change Password** page, type a new password for the account. The password must be at least one character and contain no spaces.

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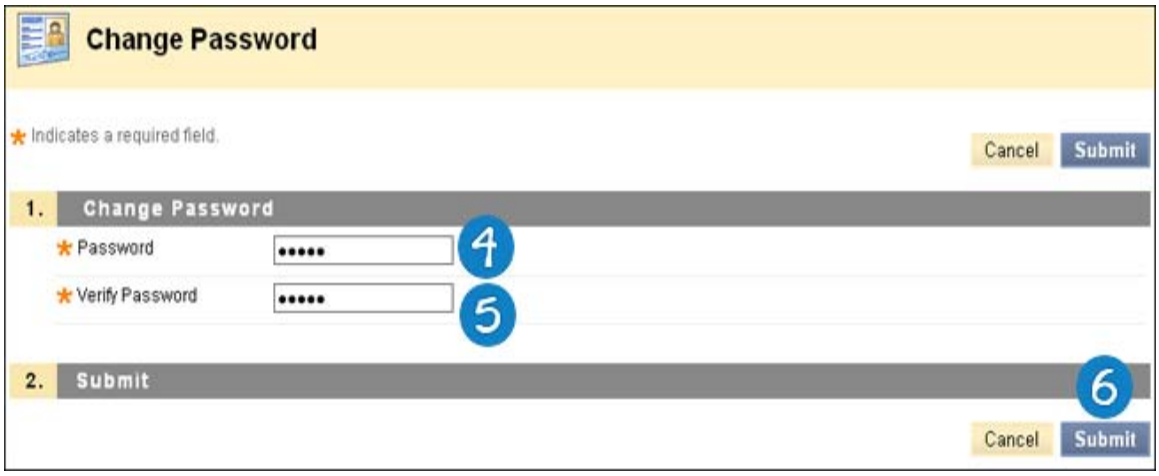
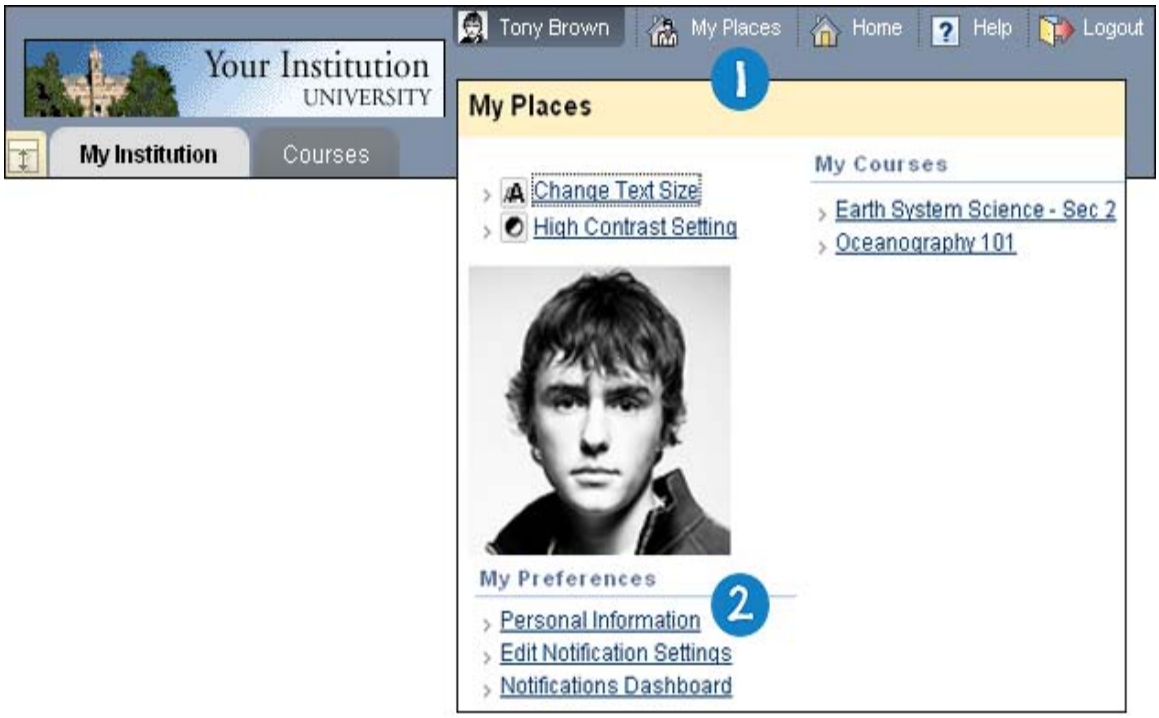
5. Type the password again to ensure accuracy.
6. Click **Submit**.



How to Personalize My Places

You can upload an avatar which can be used to represent you throughout Blackboard Learn and display links to the courses that you are enrolled in.

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** on the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Personalize My Places**.

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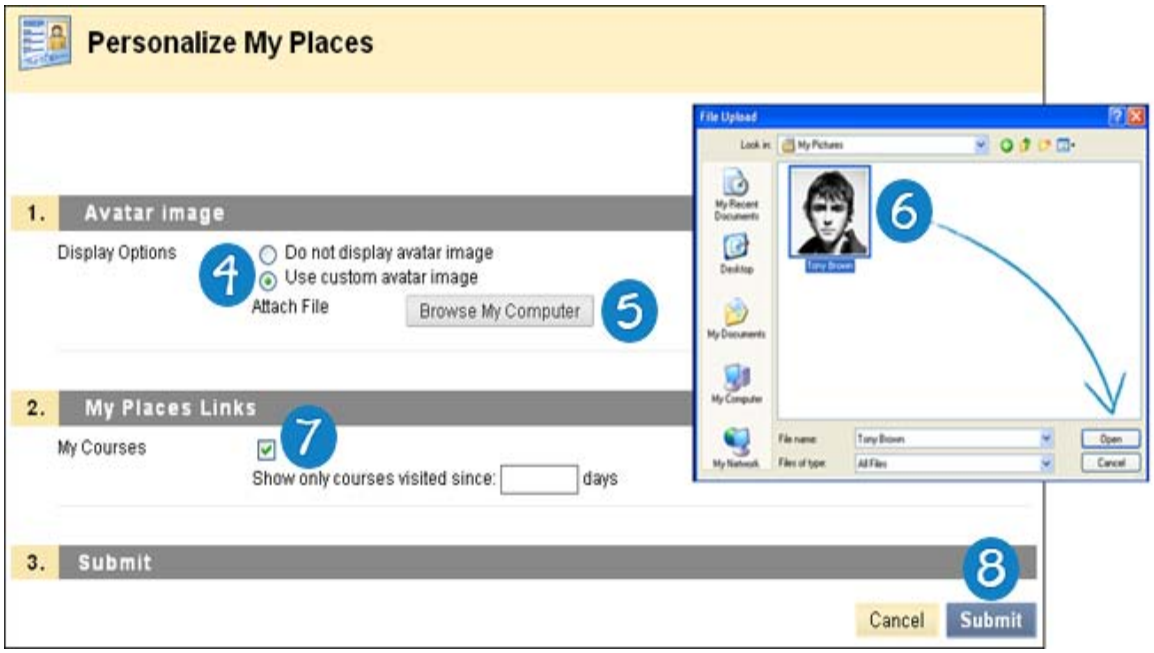
4. On the **Personalize My Places** page, you can add or change your personal avatar. Avatar images should be no larger than 150 pixels by 150 pixels. Select **Use custom avatar image**.
5. Click **Browse My Computer**.
6. Select the avatar image file and click **Open**.
7. You can display links to the courses that you are enrolled in My Places. Select **My Courses**. To limit the list to the most recently visited courses, type a number in the **Show only courses visited since: days** field.
8. Click **Submit**.



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Result

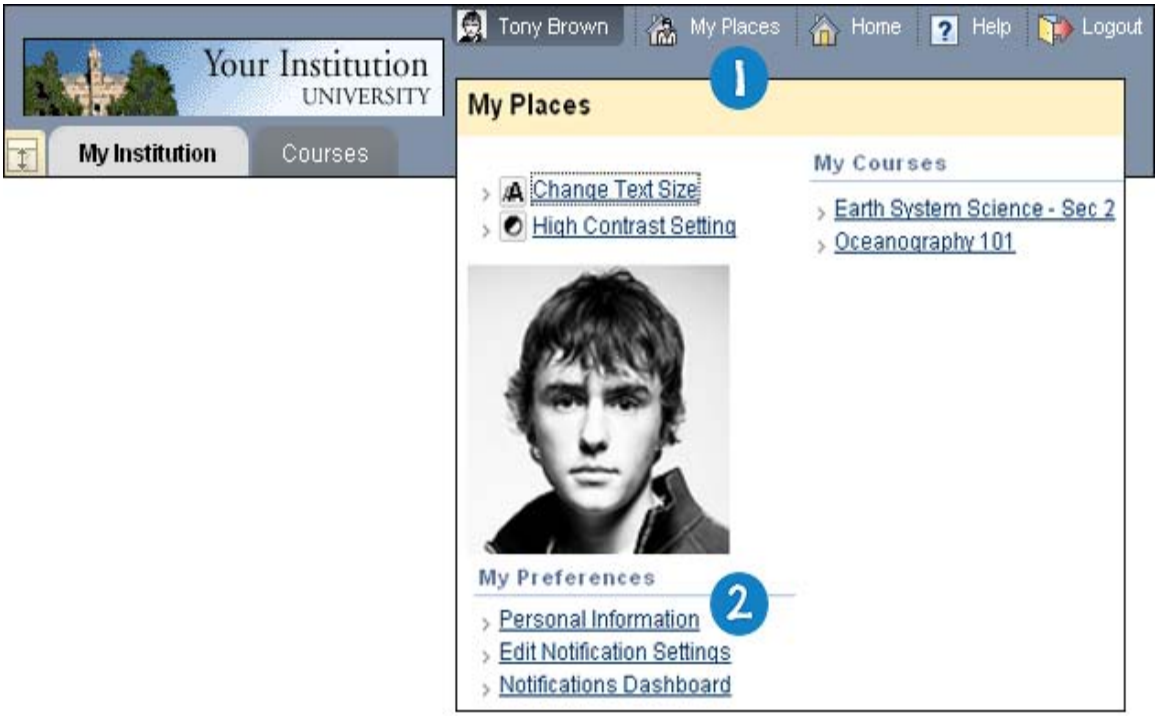
Your personal avatar is displayed in **My Places**, Blogs, Journals, and within Notifications Modules (including What's New, Needs Attention, To Do, and Alerts).

Links to your courses are displayed in **My Places**.

How to Change Personal Settings

The **Change Personal Settings** function allows you to manage the Text Editor, Language Pack, and the display of Page Instructions throughout the system.

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** on the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Change Personal Settings**.

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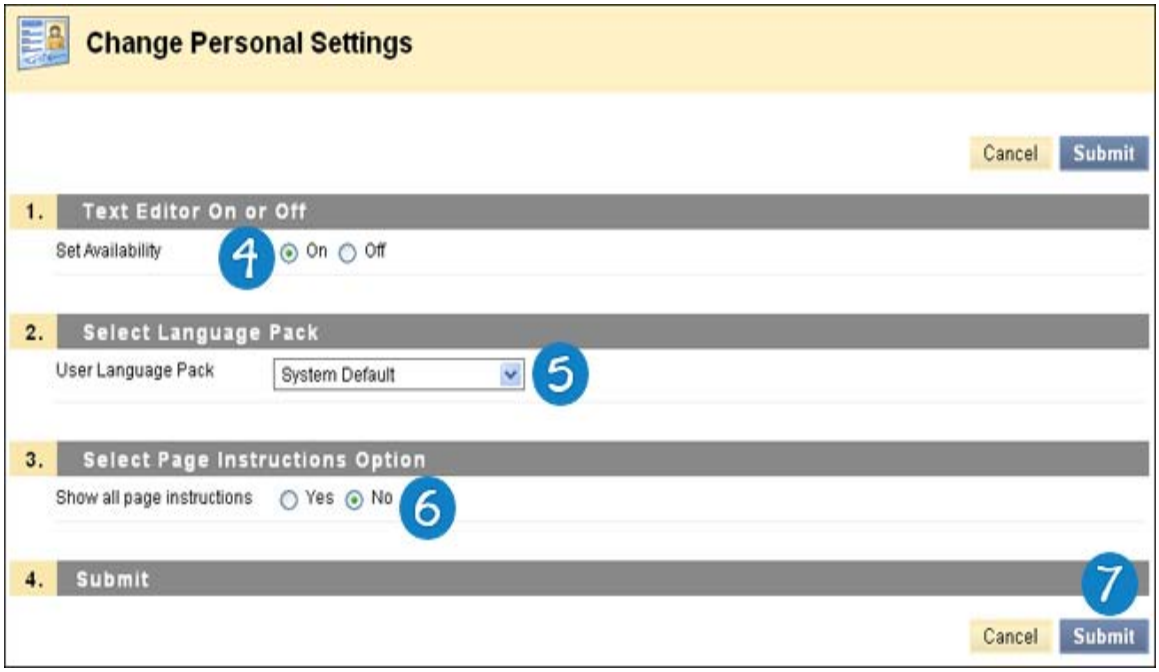
4. On the **Change Personal Settings** page, click **On** to enable the Text Editor, which allows you to create content through a simple editor when you enter content in text boxes throughout Blackboard Learn.
5. Select a **User Language Pack** from the drop-down list that is localized to your culture or accept the default.
6. To display page instructions for every page, click **Yes**. Page Instructions are brief explanations of the features of a particular page.
7. Click **Submit**.



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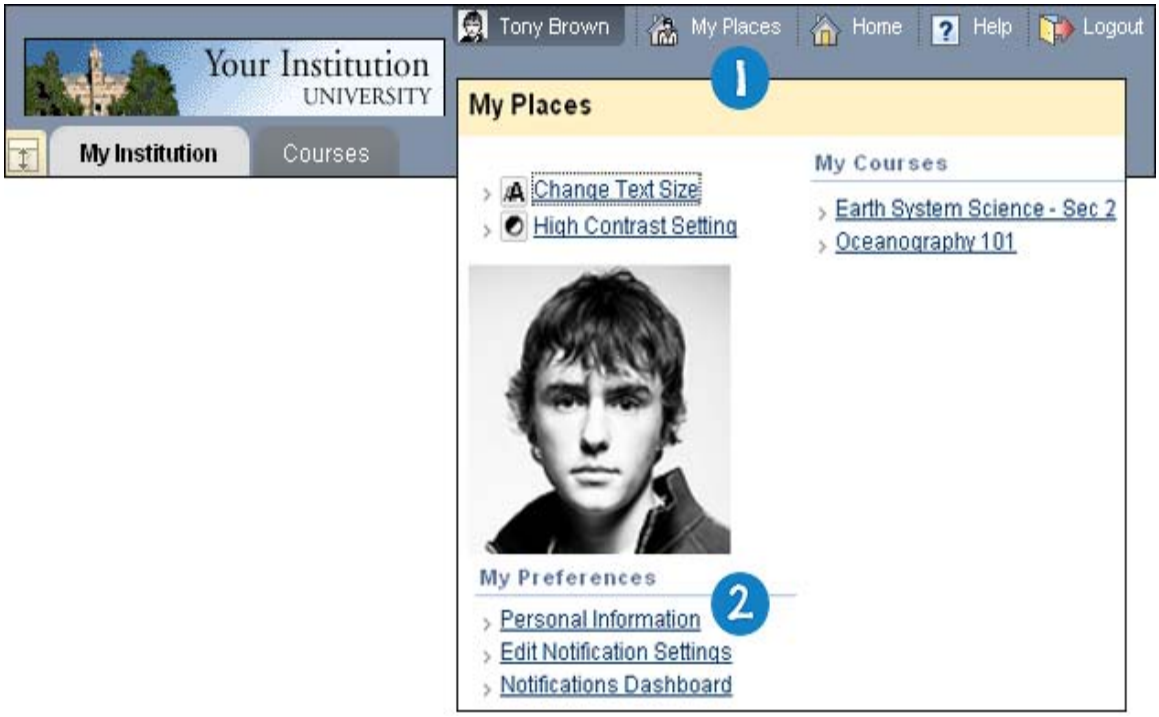
How to Set Privacy Options

Privacy Options allows you to choose the information you would like to make publicly available. This information appears in **Rosters** and **Group** pages. You may also select to make this information available in the **User Directory**. If an email address is not made available it does not appear in the **Roster**, **Group** pages, **User Directory**, the Collaboration tool or in any other part of the application.

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** on the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Set Privacy Options**.

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4. On the **Set Privacy Options** page, select the appropriate check boxes to make personal information visible to other Blackboard users.
5. To list your profile information in the user directory, click the check box.
6. To prevent other course members from contacting you by email, click the email option check box.
7. To prevent your name from being displayed in the course roster, click the check box.
8. Click **Submit**.

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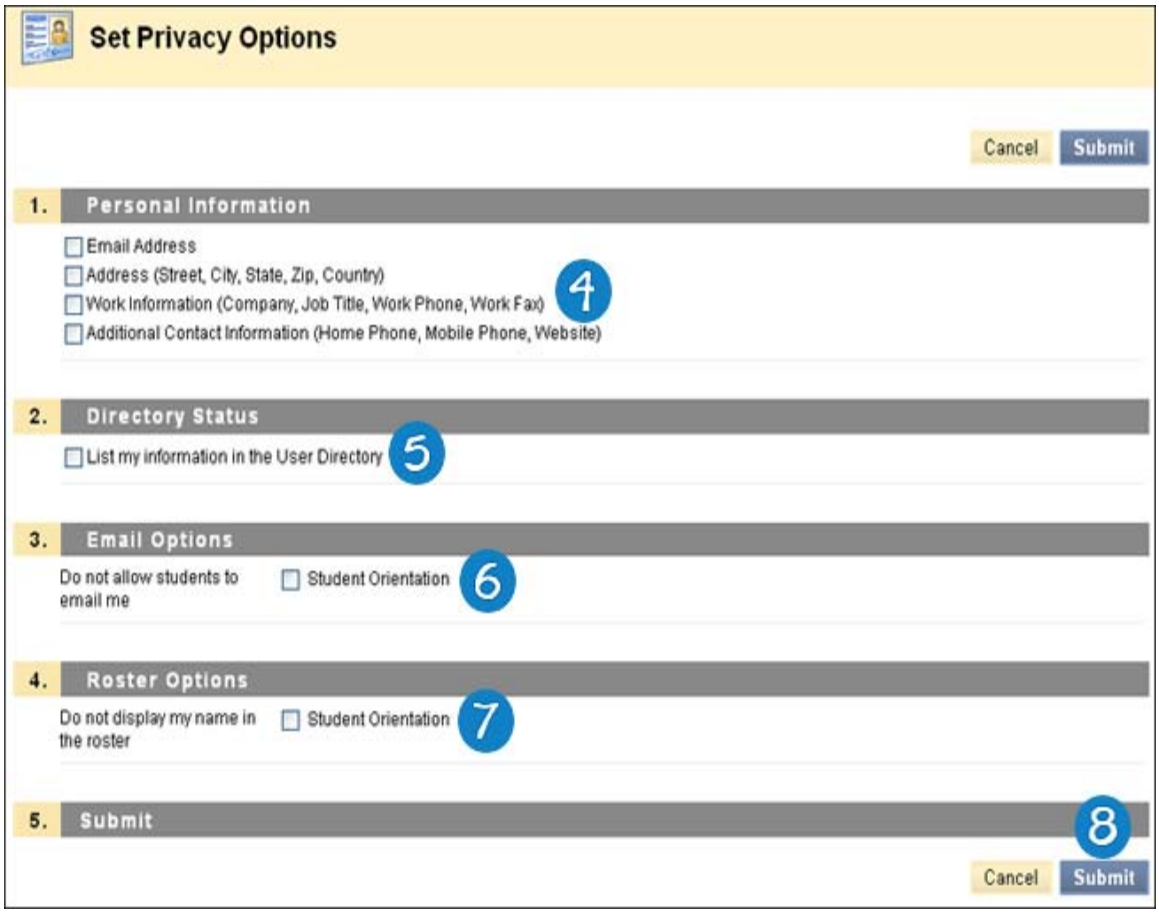

Related Tutorials Editing Your Personal Information (Flash movie | 1m 58s | 3,429 KB) | Changing Your Password (Flash movie | 1m 32s | 3,117 KB) | Setting Your Privacy Options (Flash movie | 2m 09s | 3,709 KB)

Next Steps

To manage notification settings for all courses and organizations you are enrolled in, see Notifications.

To learn more about Text Editor features, see Using the Text Editor.

To learn more about Language Pack, see Language Packs.

Course Catalog

The Course Catalog lists all courses offered at the school in defined categories such as semester and subject matter.

If your school licenses community engagement, the Organization Catalog lists all organizations at the school in defined categories, such as organization type or semester availability.

The catalog allows you to search for courses or organizations via a keyword or a specific category. The links in the catalog display instructor information and a course description. You may also be able to enroll, preview, or log into a course depending on how your school customizes Blackboard Learn.

Note: The administrator at your school may choose to use a different catalog or no catalog at all.

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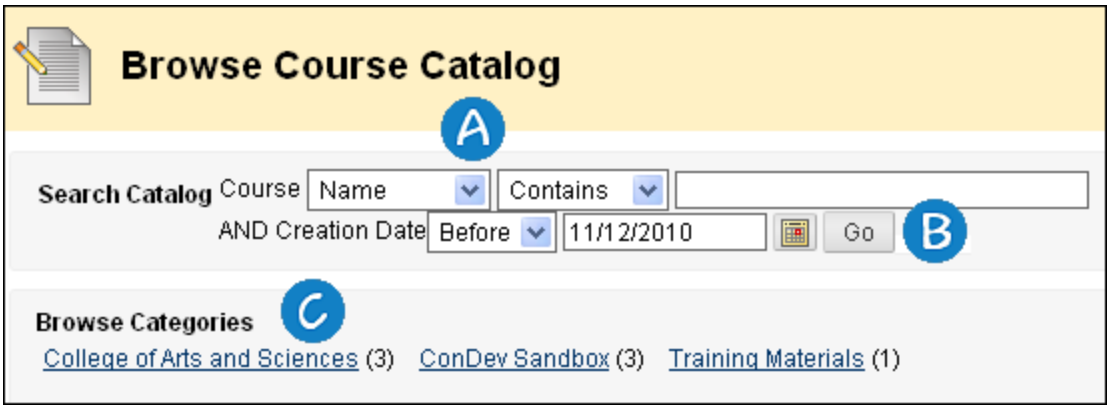
Browsing the Course Catalog

Click **View Course Catalog** on the Gateway page. Or, log in and open the **Courses** tab or the **Communities** tab.



A **Search Catalog**: Use the drop-down lists to limit the search by parameters.

B **Go**: Click **Go** to search for a course.

C **Browse Categories**: Click the hyperlink of the category or courses to view the catalog.

Viewing a Course as a Guest

You may be able to browse the catalog and preview courses as a guest. Click on the link to a course to view it as a guest. Guests do not have access to the entire course.

Note: Your instructor determines whether you are allowed to preview a course prior to enrollment. Thus, this option may not be available for all courses.

Course Menu

The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course and contains links to materials and tools within the course. Your instructor can customize the style of the Course Menu and the content and tools available to users. As such, your courses may look a bit different from each other and have different sets of tools available.

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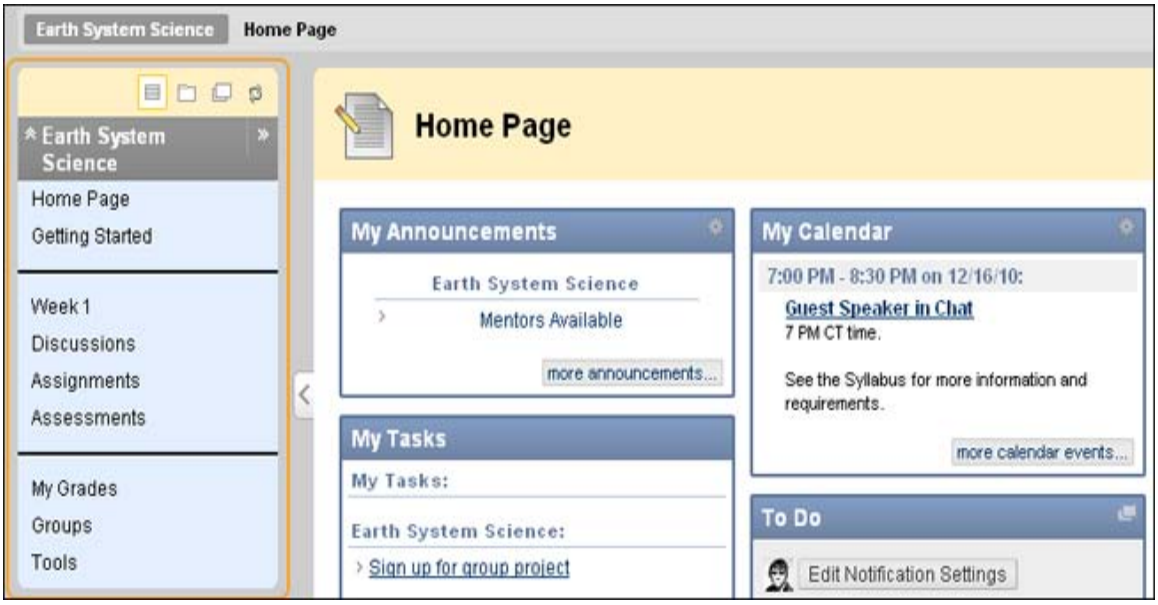
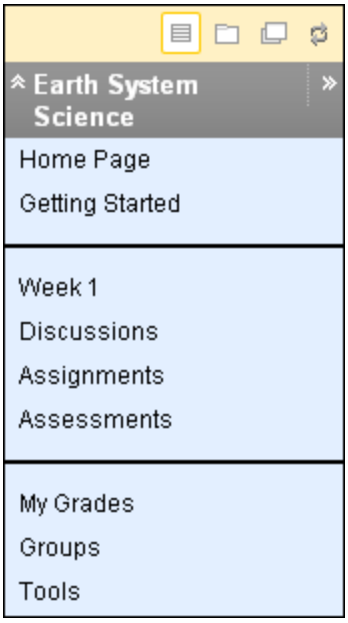


You can expand or collapse the Course Menu frame. Click to collapse the Course Menu so it is out of sight or expand it to its fullest size.

Course Menu Icons

At the top of the Course Menu is a set of icons that can be used to change the display of the Course Menu. The menu can be displayed as text links or buttons, as a Folder tree, or in a separate window .

List View: The List View icon contains text links that lead to course materials and tools.



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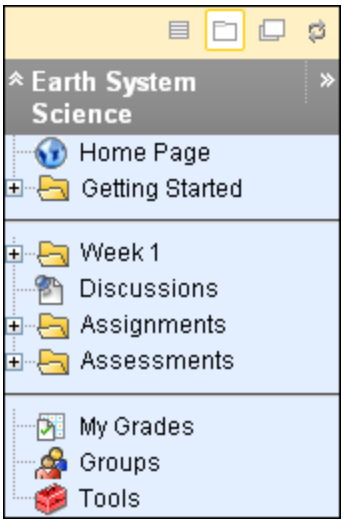
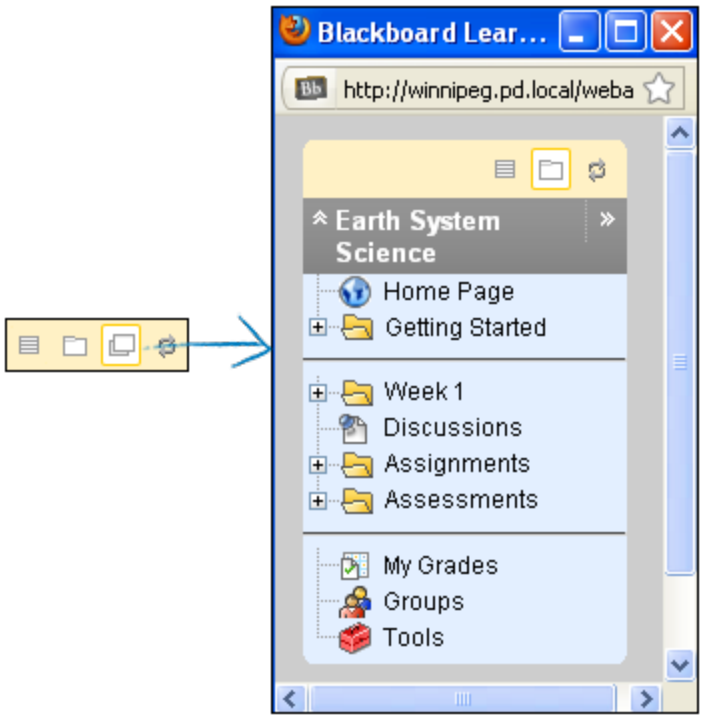
Folder View: The Folder View icon uses icons and expandable folders to access content and tools. You can expand folders to reveal items and collapse to save space.



Display in a New Window: The Display in a New Window icon opens the Course Menu in a separate window.



Refresh: The Refresh icon is used to view any new content added to the Course Menu.

Note: Your instructor can determine the default view of the Course Menu, so these options may be unavailable.

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Viewing New Content

When content is added to the Course Menu or the Course Map, that content does not appear for 20 minutes. To ensure that you are viewing the latest content for a course, click **Refresh**.

Viewing the Course Map

The Course Map is a collapsible tree directory that is used for navigation within a course. You can open the Course Map from the Course Menu. When you use Virtual Classroom, the Course Map is called Map in the Tools list.

The pop-up Course Map provides a view of the course content and available tools in Folder View. You can expand or collapse folders in the Course Map to help organize your view. You can browse and make selections from the Course Map when adding a course link to an Announcement, the Course Menu, or a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. You can also view the Course Map when using the Collaboration tool and the Performance Dashboard.

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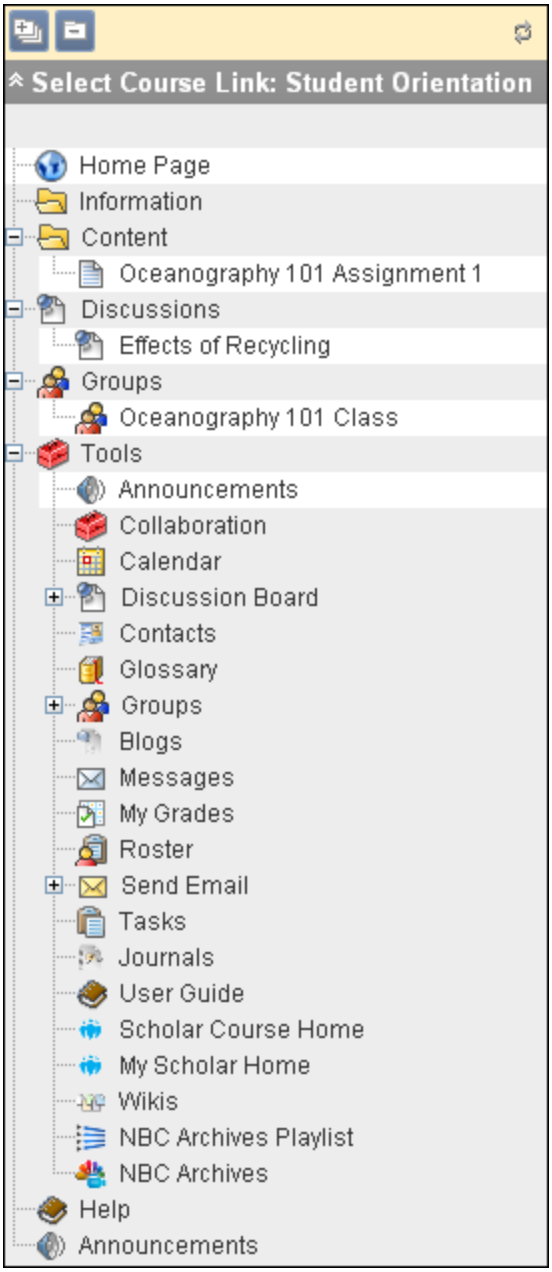

Search for Users

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If these tools are not available, your instructor may have disabled them.

To search for other students in your course, use the Roster. The name of each student is included in the Roster automatically. You cannot remove your name from the Roster, but you can choose to make your email address available.

To search for other students and instructors in the entire Blackboard system, use the User Directory. You can choose whether to be included and what information to share by setting your privacy options. To learn more, see How to Set Privacy Options.

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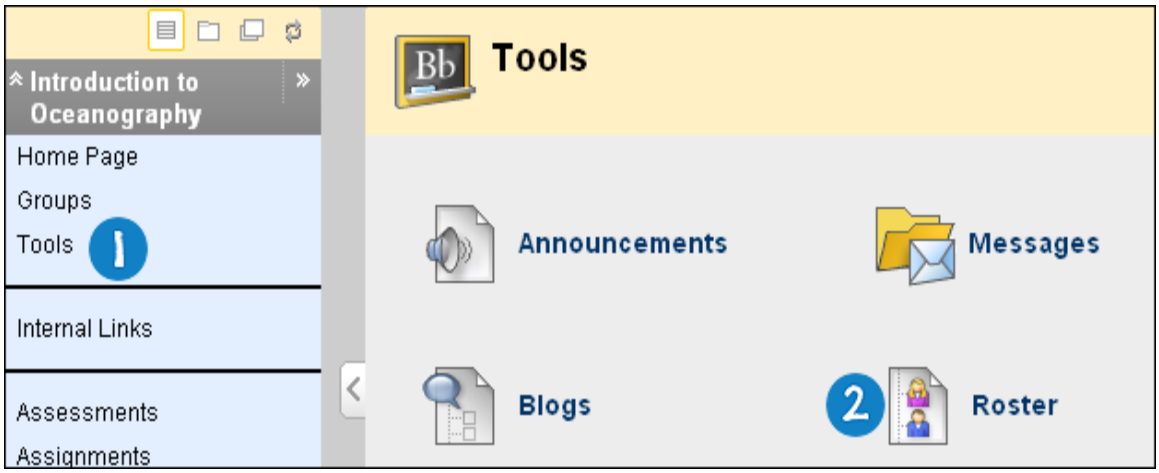
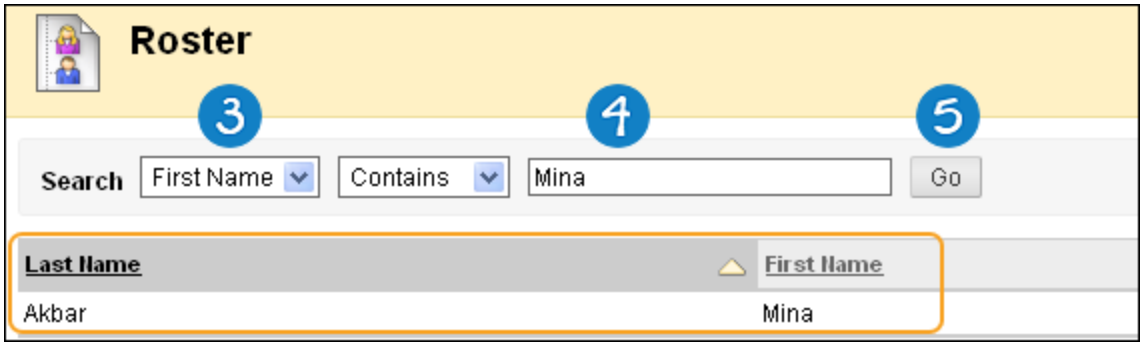
For your personal information to appear in the Roster or User Directory, it must be appear on the **Edit Personal Information** page. To learn more, see How to Edit Personal Information.

How to Search for Other Students in Your Course Using the Roster

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools.**
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Roster**.



3. On the **Roster** page, use the following parameters to search for users, or click **Go** to list all students:
    - First Name
    - Last Name
    - Contains
    - Equal to
    - Starts with
    - Not blank
4. Type a keyword or text string in the box.
5. Click **Go**.



How to Search for Users Using the User Directory

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **User Directory**.

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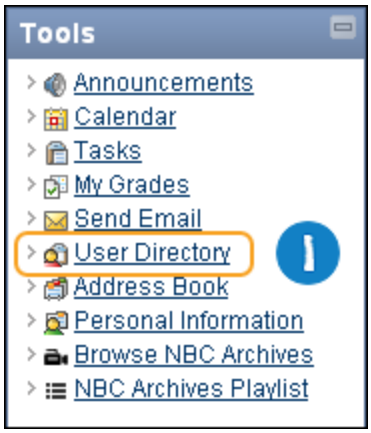

2. On the **Users** page, use the following parameters to search for users, or click **Go** to list all students:
    - Username
    - First Name
    - Last Name
    - Email
    - Contains
    - Equal to
    - Starts with
3. Type a keyword or text string in the box.
4. Click **Go**.

Screen Readers

Blackboard Learn has created a Screen Reader Tutorial to provide users who access Blackboard Learn through a screen reader with information to help them use Blackboard Learn successfully.

To view the tutorial, see the Blackboard Learn Screen Reader Tutorial.

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Language Packs

Language Packs present Blackboard Learn using language and cultural norms matched to different audiences. Language Packs are defined at the system level, the course level and finally at the user level.

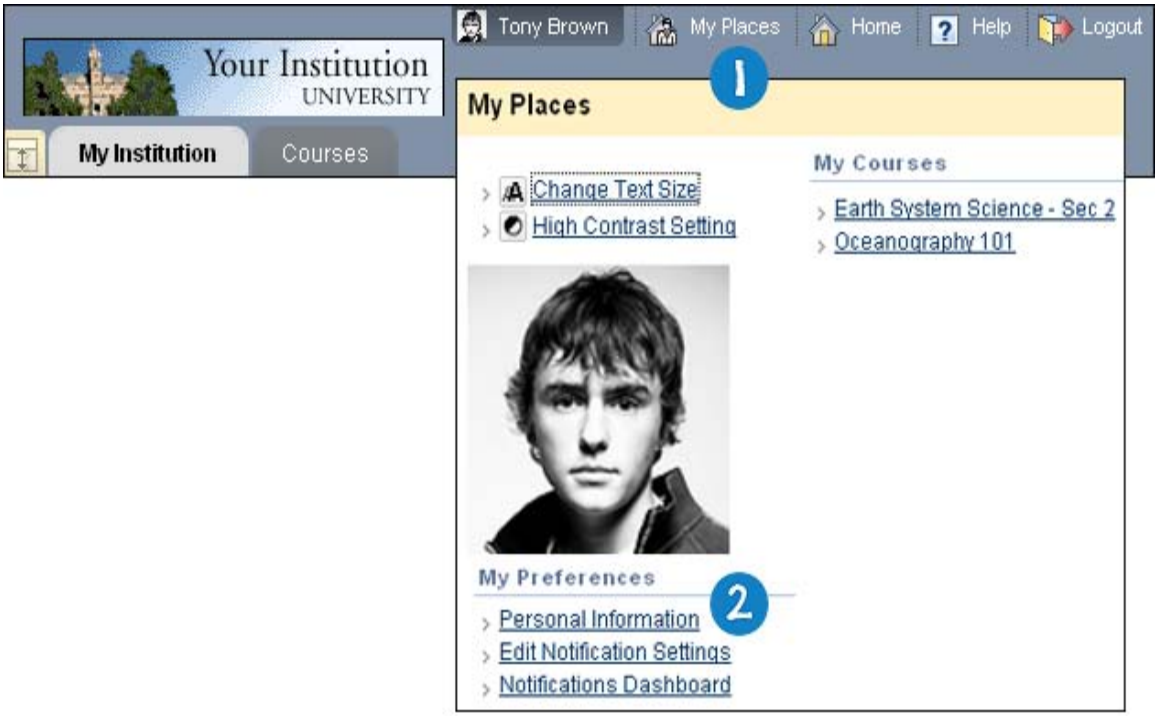
At the system level, the administrator defines one language pack as the system default. This is the language that appears when no other language packs are specified at the course level or at the user level.

At the course level, the instructor can set a language pack and enforce it. When a language pack is enforced, all users see that language pack. If the language pack is not enforced, and a user has a preferred language pack associated with their account, the user's language pack preference overrides the course language pack.

At the user level, individuals may select their preferred language pack.

How to Set a Language Pack Preference

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Personal Information**. You can also access **Personal Information** from the **Tools** panel.



3. On the **Personal Information** page, select **Change Password**.

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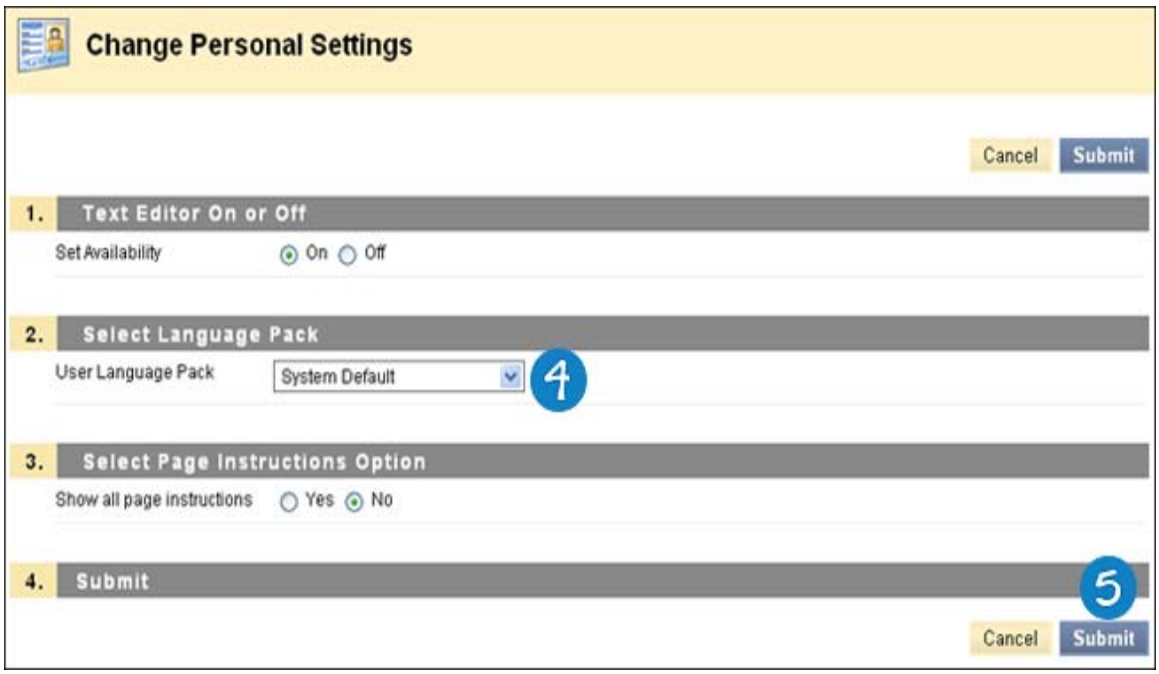
4. On the **Change Personal Settings** page, select a language pack from the drop-down list.
5. Click **Submit**.



Spell Check and Language Packs

The Spell Check tool supports English (United States), English (Great Britain), French, and Spanish. The Spell Check tool does not work with other language packs. If Spell Check does not recognize the language pack it uses a supported dictionary.

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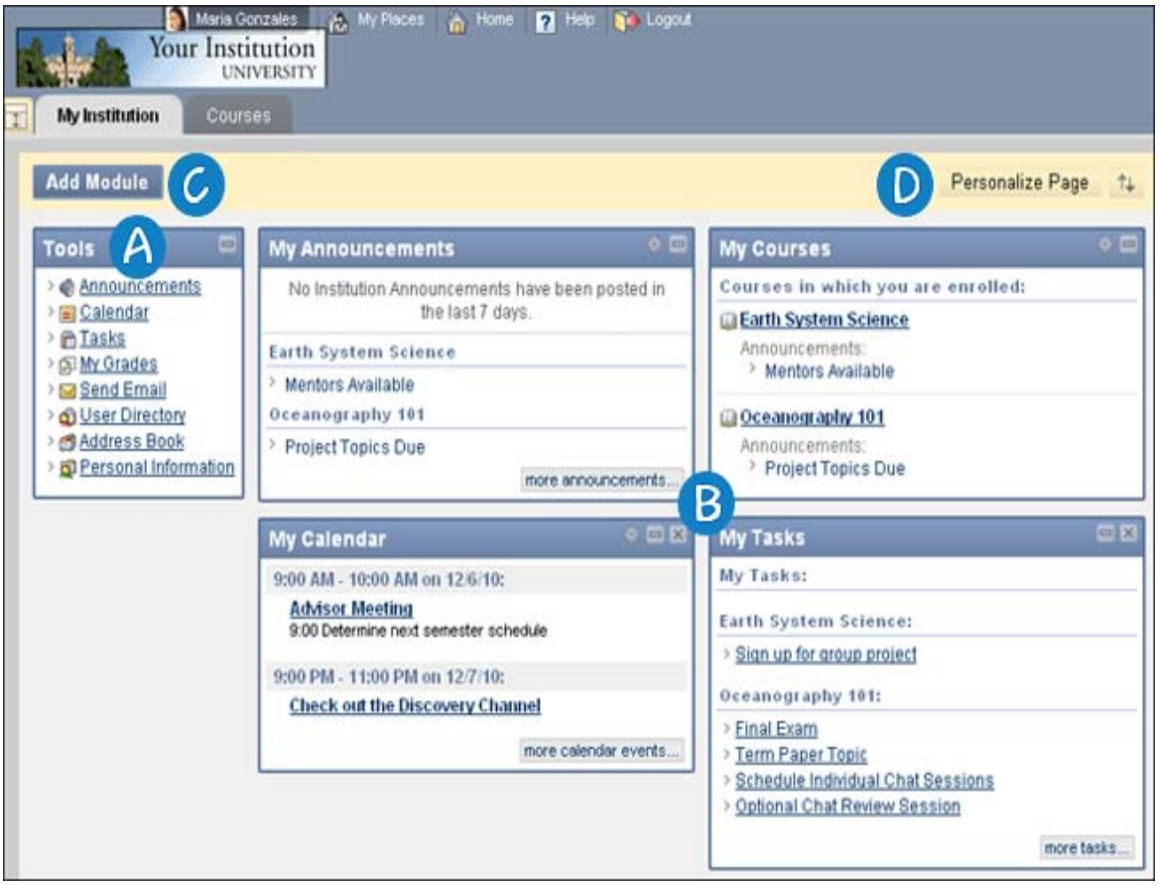
Tabs and Modules

My Institution Tab

The **My Institution** tab contains tools and content. Several modules include content pulled from courses specific to each user. Remember that the Blackboard administrator at your school can rename tabs.

You can personalize the content and layout of the **My Institution** tab. After personalization, the My Institution area displays the desired settings when you log in again. While you can choose which modules appear, the Blackboard administrator at your school may restrict or require modules.

In some instances, you may have access to several tabs that contain modules. These additional tabs include the same features for customizing the content and layout of modules.



A **Tools**: The **Tools** panel is the area that contains tools to manage information and communicate with other users. It is a quick access point to important information.

B **Module**: Modules contain links that allow you to view information and navigate to your course. The Blackboard administrator at your school determines what default modules will appear on the **My Institution** tab, so you may see different items.

C **Add Module**: The **Add Module** function allows you to select modules to appear on the **My Institution** page.

D **Personalize Page**: The **Personalize Page** function allows you to change the theme color of your page.

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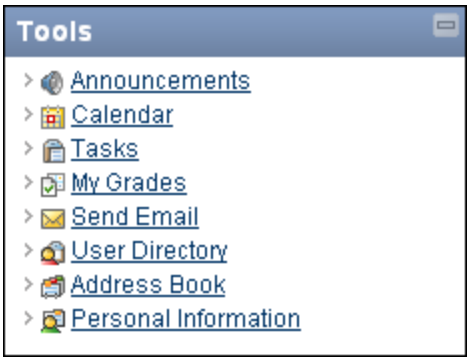
Exploring the Tools Panel

The Blackboard administrator at your school determines what default **Tools** panel links will appear on the **My Institution** tab, so you may see different items.



- **Announcements**: You can use this tool to view important information, reminders, or updates posted by your instructor. For example, your instructor can use announcements to provide corrections and clarifications of materials, assignment due dates or exam schedules, or reminders or helpful tips.
- **Calendar**: You can consult the **Calendar** tool to see events that your instructor has added. You can also post your private or personal events in the calendar.
- **Tasks**: You can add your personal tasks using the **Tasks** tool. You can also use this tool to keep track of work that must be completed..
- **My Grades**: The **My Grades** page shows the status of gradable items such as tests, assignments, journal, and blog entries, and Discussion Board posts.
- **Send Email**: In your course, you can send email messages to other course members' external email addresses.
- **User Directory**: The **User Directory** lists users. Users only appear in the **User Directory** if they indicate that they want to be included on the **Set Privacy Options** page.
- **Address Book**: You can store contact information in an address book. The address book is empty until you create contacts. You must create a profile for anyone you want to add to your address book, even if the contact is a Blackboard Learn user.
- **Personal Information**: You can use the **Personal Information** link to access and edit the same personal information found in the **My Places** link in the header.

Exploring the Modules

The **My Institution** tab contains modules. Modules are packets of content that appear on tabs. Modules allow you to view information such as events, announcements, and a list of your courses. Administrators can also present more advanced modules, such as news channels or tools using the Content Collection. Modules contain links that allow you to navigate to areas in your courses. The Blackboard administrator at your school can rename modules and determine which will appear when you log in to your course for the first time.

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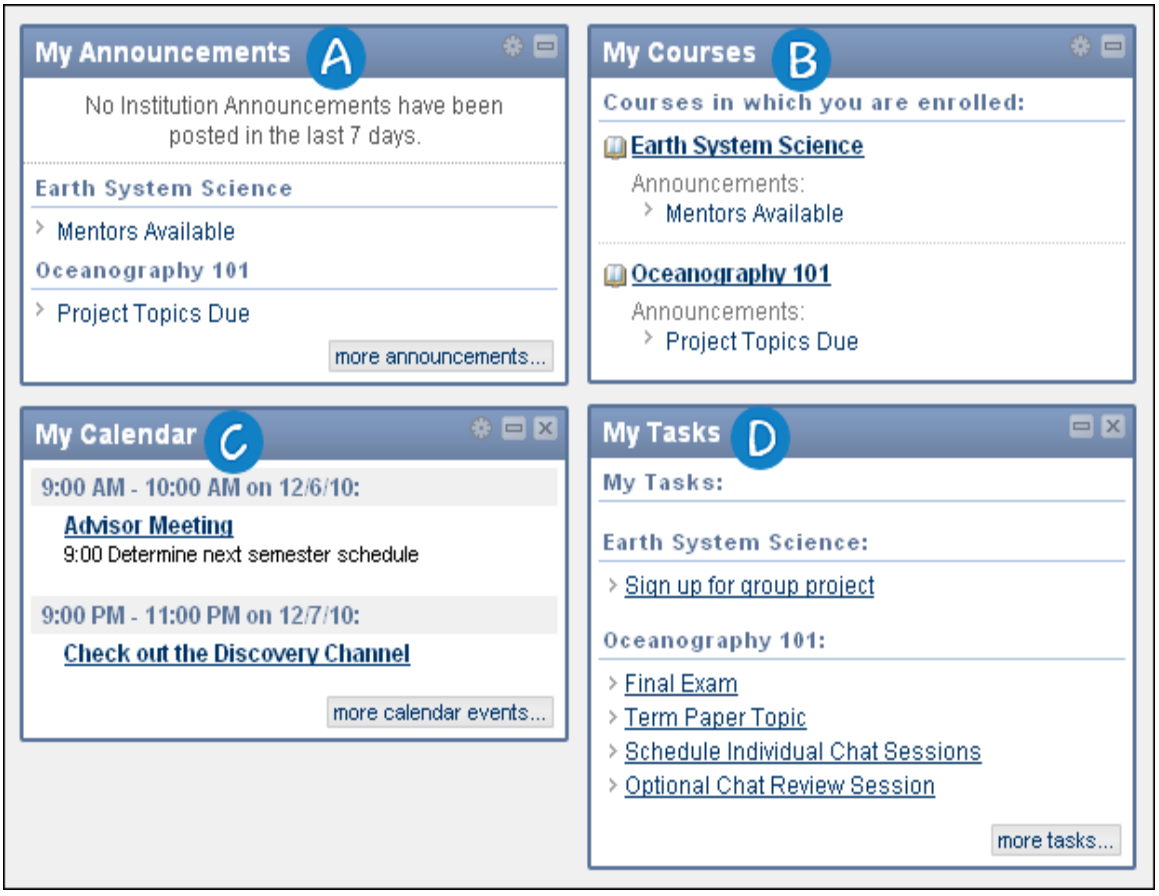

A **My Announcements**: The **My Announcements** module displays announcements from all courses in which you are enrolled, as well as school-wide announcements. It can also contain announcements from your school's administrator. Announcements communicate important, time-sensitive information. When you click an announcement link, you are taken to the main **Announcements** page.

B **My Courses**: The **My Courses** module lists all the courses to which you have access.

C **My Calendar**: The **My Calendar** module displays calendar dates for courses in which you are enrolled and any personal events you have added.

D **My Tasks**: The **My Tasks** module lists tasks for all courses in which you are enrolled.

Next Steps

You can personalize the placement, color, and selection of modules that appear on the **My Institution** or **Notifications Dashboard** tabs. To learn more, see Customizing Tab Modules. You can see updates for a course in a module. To learn more, see What's New Module.

What's New Module

The **What's New** module reports on additions and changes to course content. The module displays the number of new items for each content type and links to a details page for each course. It displays items going back seven days. The **What's New** module may appear at the **My Institution** tab if your school licenses community engagement.

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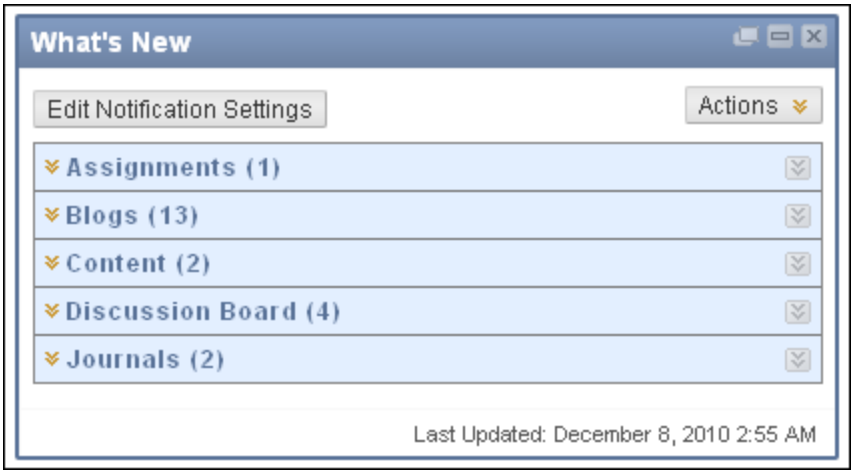


The content types that are reported in the module are:

- Assessments
- Assignments
- Blogs
- Content
- Discussion Board posts

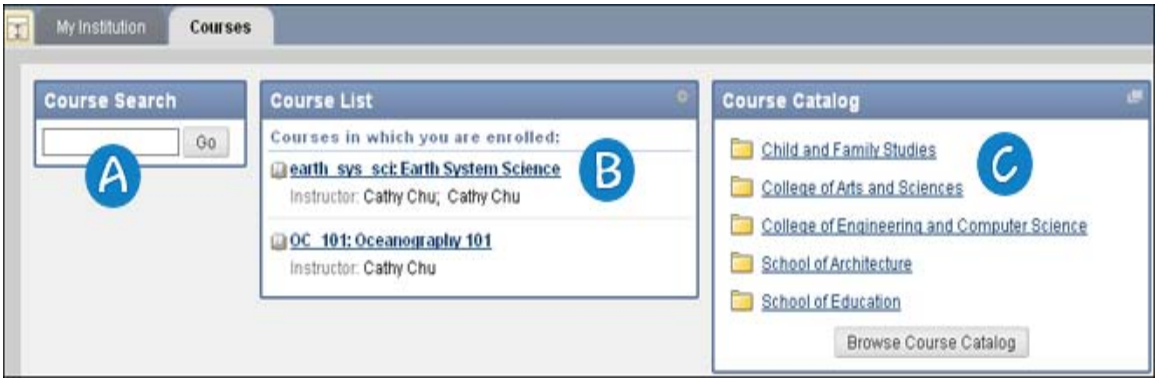
The **What's New** module reports content that is made available to the entire course. Adaptive Release Content that becomes available to you after certain criteria are met is not reported in this module.

The **What's New** module reports changes once a day. You can see what has changed the first time you log in for the day. Any changes made after you log in do not appear in the module until the next day unless you click **Refresh**.

You see updates for a course only if it is available and you are a participant in the course.

Courses Tab

The **Courses** tab contains tools and content. Several modules include content pulled from courses specific to each user. Remember that the Blackboard administrator at your school can rename tabs.



A **Course Search**: You can search for a course, and if allowed, preview the course. Type a keyword or text string in the box, click **Go**, and the results appear on the **Browse Course Catalog** page.

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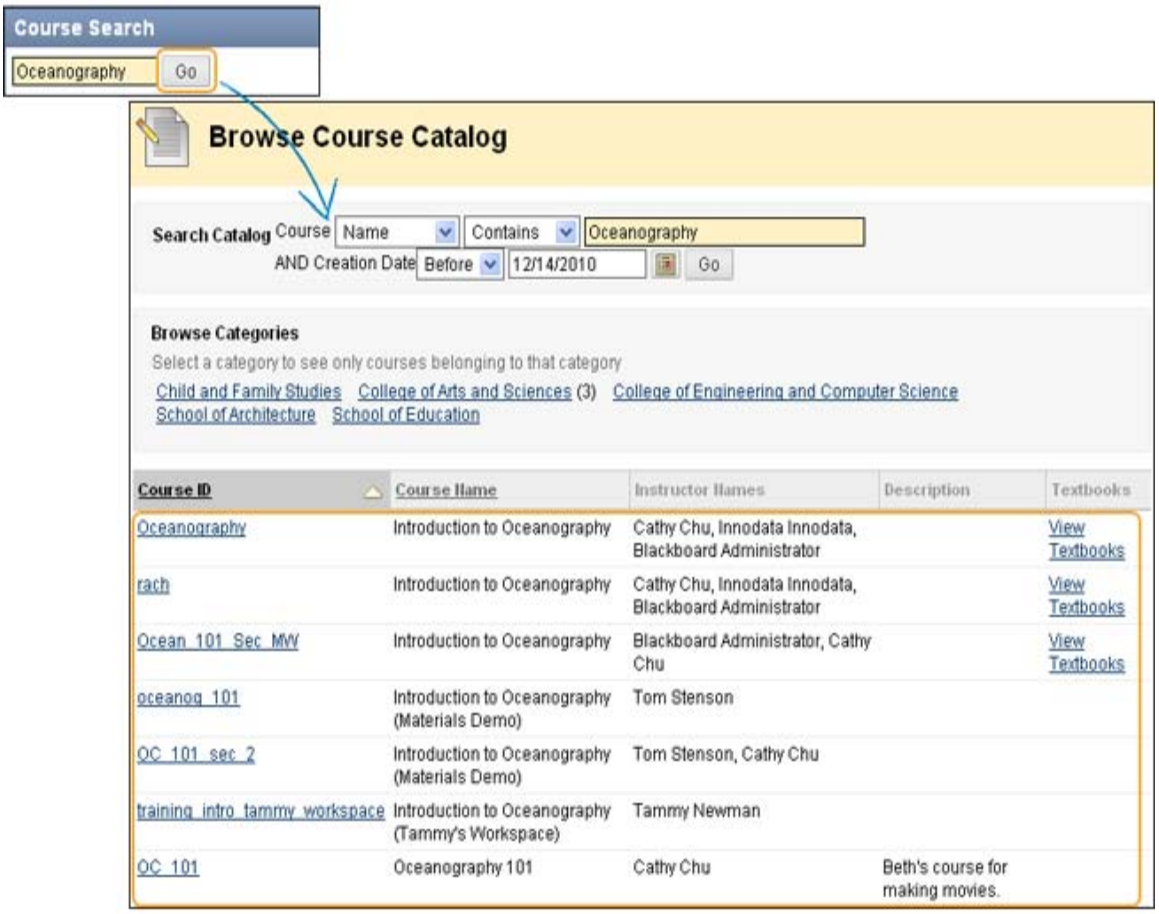

B **Course List**: From the list, you can access any course you are enrolled in or teaching. For example, if you are a student in two courses and a Teaching Assistant in one course, your course list will be divided into the courses you are enrolled in and the courses in which you are a TA.

C **Course Catalog**: You can search the catalog for courses or organizations. Select a category link or click the **Browse Course Catalog** function to begin your search. On the **Browse Course Catalog** page, you can narrow your search by course name, ID, description, or instructor. Type a keyword or text string in the box, click **Go**, and the results appear.

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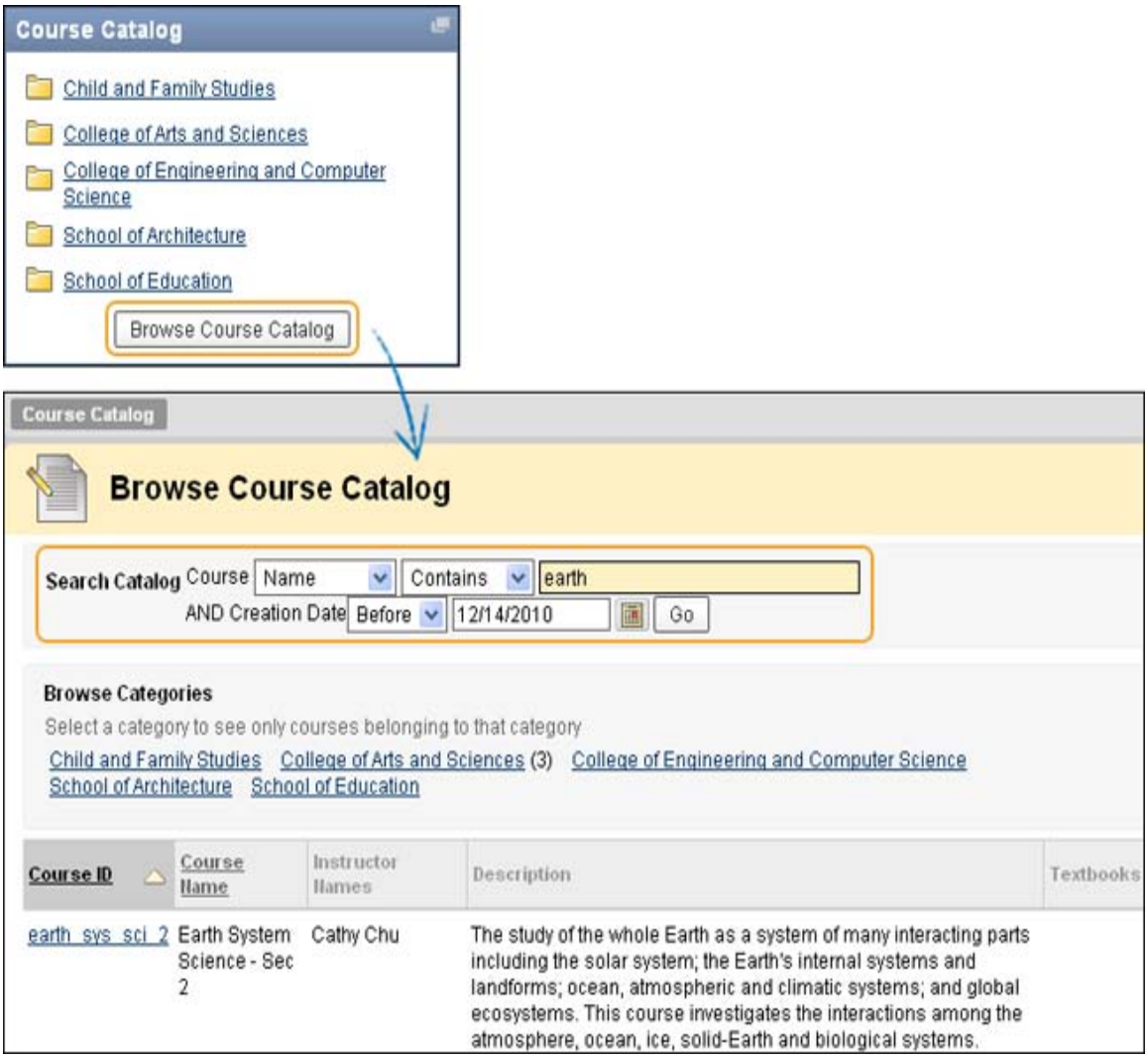

If your school licenses community engagement, the organization catalog lists all organizations in categories, such as organization type or semester availability.

Guests are able to browse the catalog and preview courses. Guests do not have access to the entire course. Instructors determine whether users are allowed to preview a course prior to enrollment.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school may choose to use a different catalog or no catalog at all.

Customizing Tab Modules

You can personalize the placement, color, and selection of modules that appear on the **My Institution** or **Notifications Dashboard** tabs. The **Notifications Dashboard** tab appears only if your school licenses community engagement.

How to Customize Module Layout

You can reorder the modules on any tab using the drag-and-drop function or the **Keyboard Accessible Reordering** tool.

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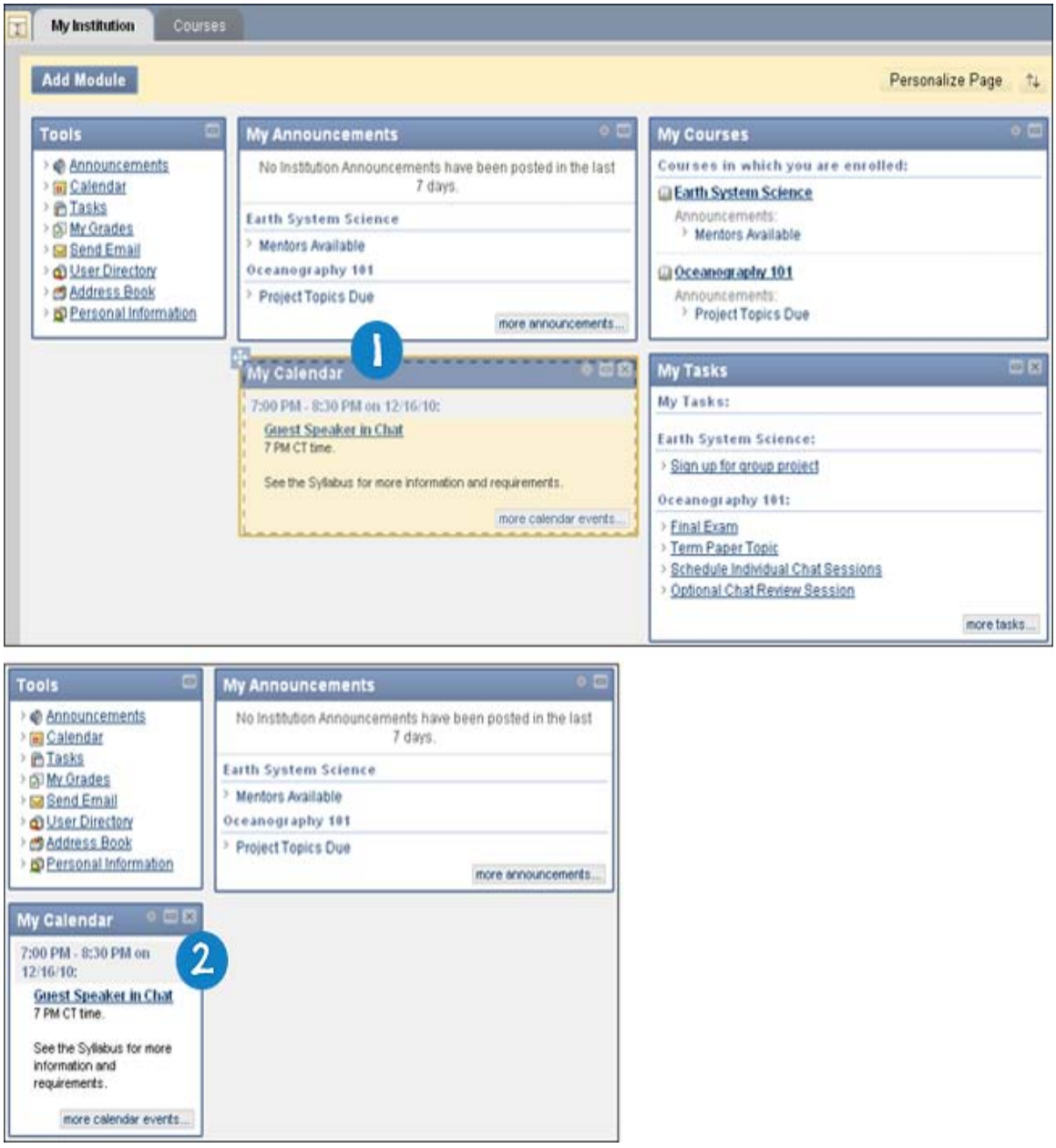
Using the Drag-and-Drop Function

1. Press and hold the header of a module to move it to a new location. The module is surrounded by a dashed line as it is moved.
2. Release the module to place it in its new location.



Using the Keyboard Accessible Reordering Tool

The **Keyboard Accessible Reordering** tool provides users with an alternative method to reorder items. The tool appears on the Action Bar wherever content can be reordered, such as on a module page, a content page, or the Course Menu.

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1. On the Action Bar, click ↑↓ to access the pop-up **Reorder: Modules** window.
2. Select one of the modules.
3. Use the up and down arrow icons to move the module to a new position in a column list.

   -OR-
   Use the right and left pointing arrows to move modules between columns.
4. Click **Submit**.
5. Click **OK**.

How to Personalize the Page

1. Open the **My Institution** tab or another tab containing modules.
2. Click **Personalize Page** in the top right-hand corner.

3. On the **Personalize** page, select a color theme from the **Color Palette Library**.
4. Click **Submit**.

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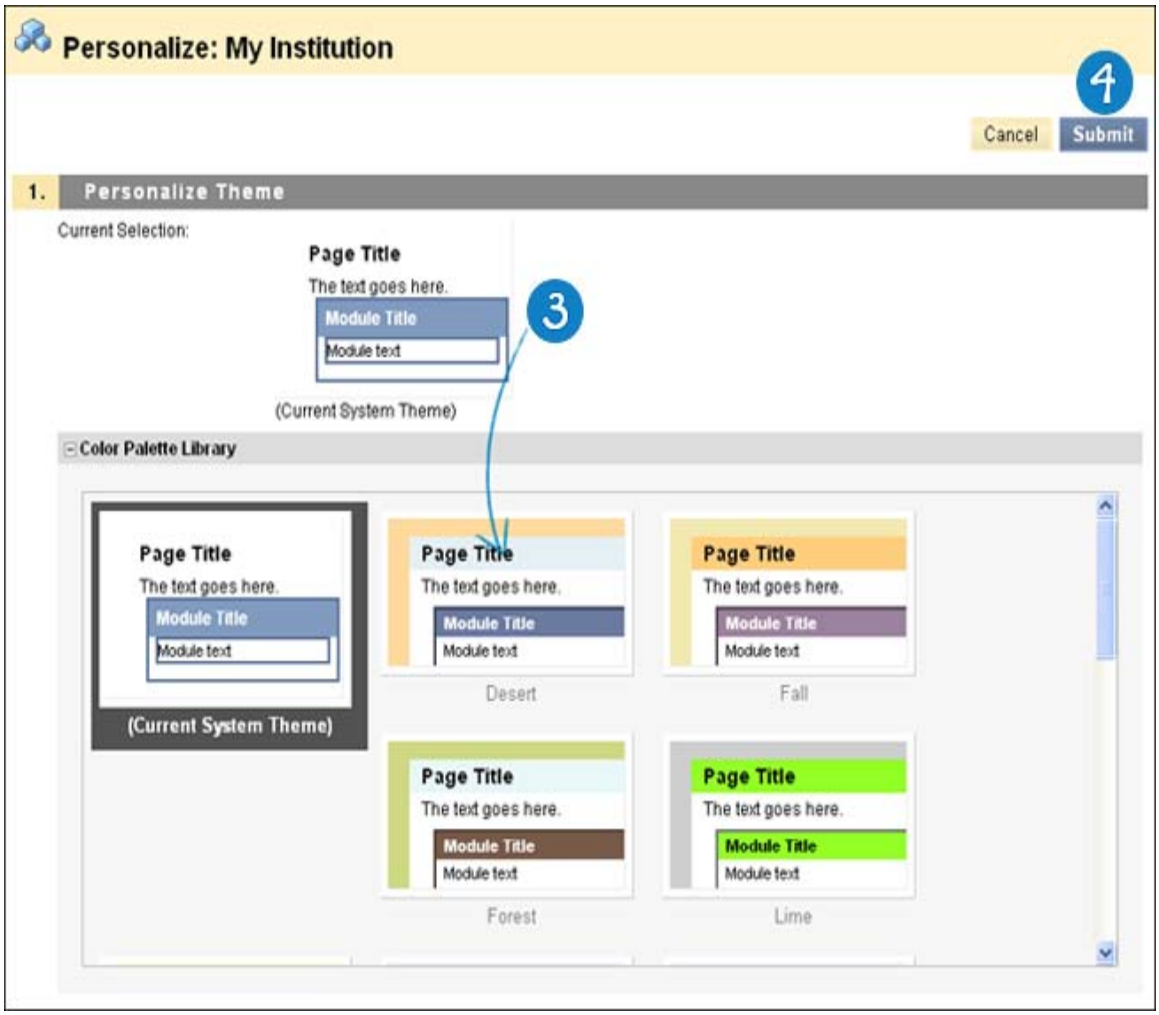

How to Add a Module

1. Open the **My Institution** tab or another tab containing modules.
2. Click **Add Module** on the upper left-hand corner.

3. On the **Add Module** page, select the boxes next to those modules to appear on the tab. Checkboxes that appear faded out have been set by the Blackboard administrator at your school and cannot be changed.

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4. Click **Submit**.

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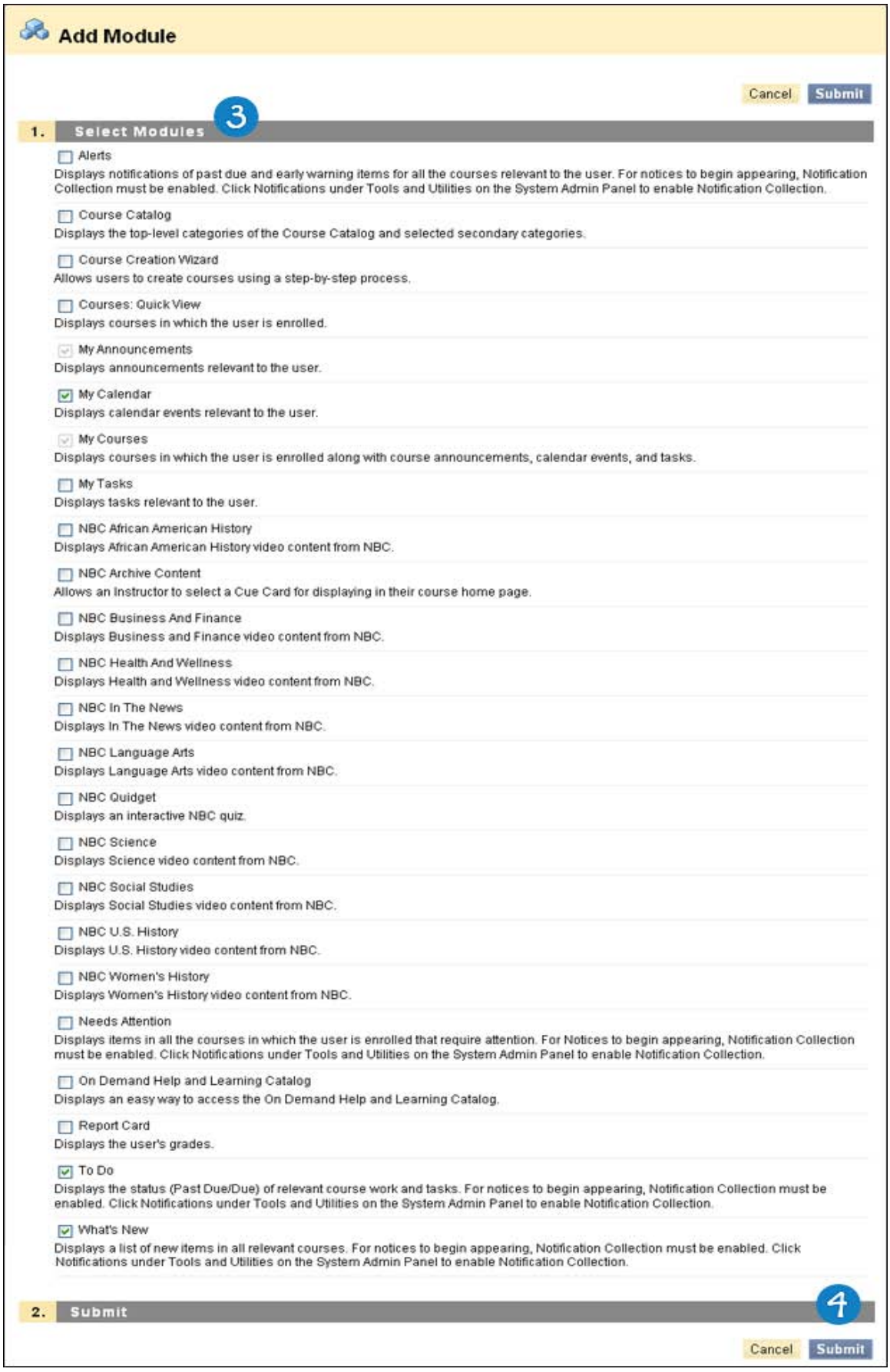

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Next Steps

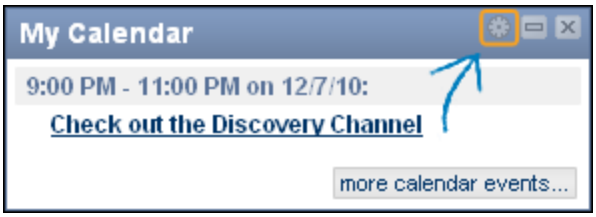
You can edit, minimize, display in a separate window, and remove modules from a tab area. To learn more, see Working with Tab Modules.

Working with Tab Modules

You can edit, minimize, display in a separate window, remove modules from a tab area unless the module is required , and access information in a module.

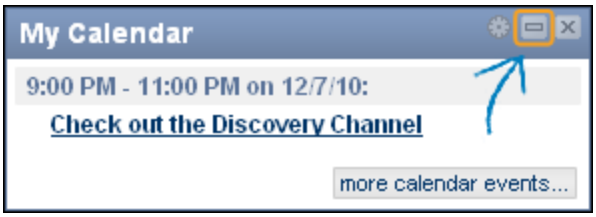
Editing Module Content

Click the **Manage Module Settings** icon located at the top of each module to edit the content of that specific module.



Minimizing a Module

Click the minus (-) button located at the top of each module to minimize a module.



Opening a Module in a New Window

Click the dual-window icon located at the top of each module to open it in a separate window. If the icon does not appear, then this option is not available for that module.

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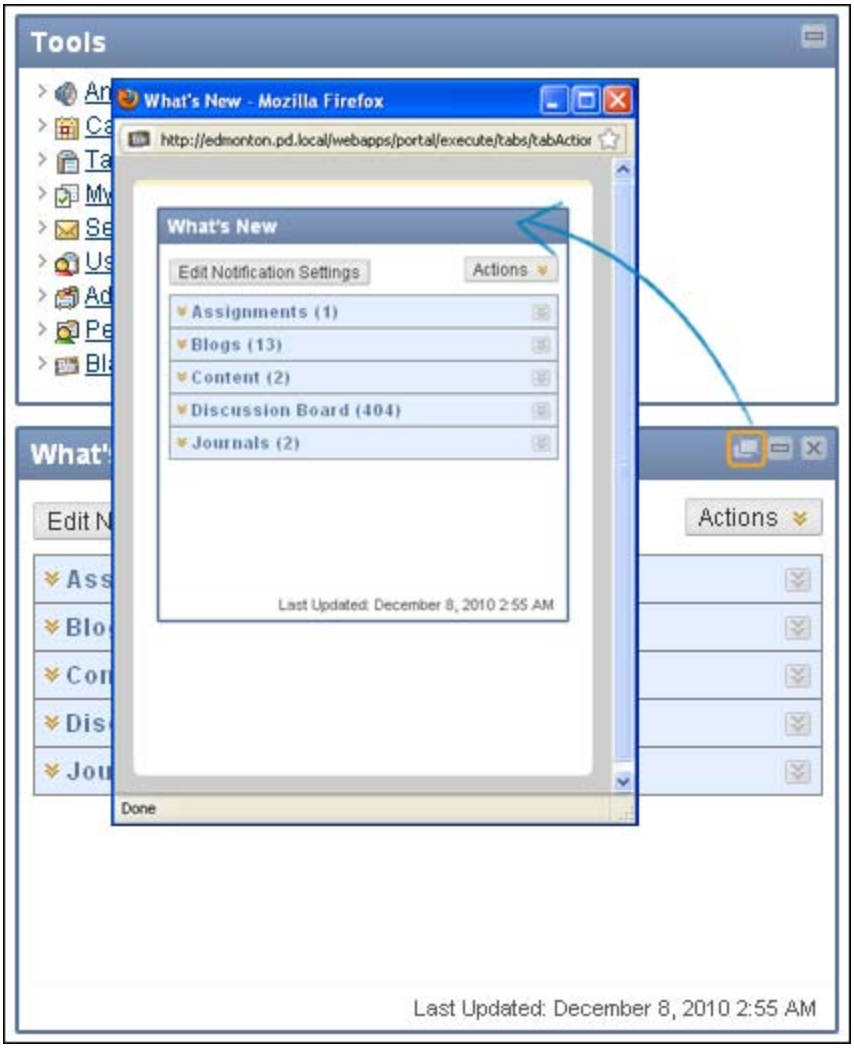
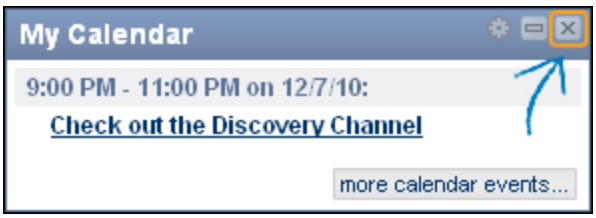


Removing a Module

Click the remove icon (**X**) located at the top of each module to remove the module. Click **Remove** and a confirmation receipt appears when the process is complete. Removing a module does not mean deleting it. You can restore deleted modules by using **Add Module** function. Modules that do not have a remove icon are required and cannot be removed.



Accessing Information in a Module

Click the link in the module window to display the information that you want to view. Information may display in

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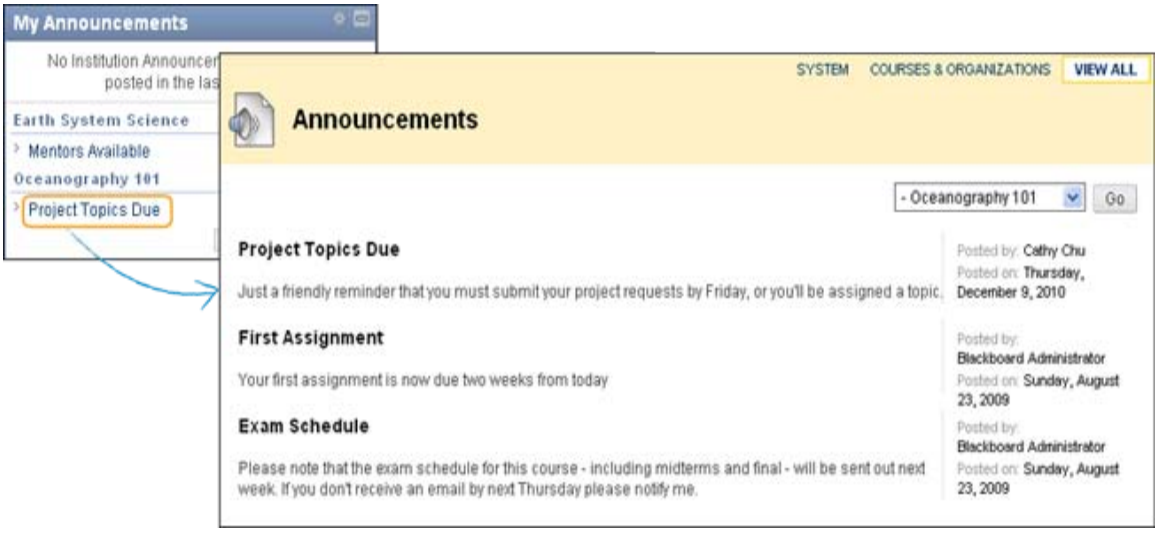
the same tab, in a separate window, or the link may direct you to another tab in Blackboard Learn.



Notifications

If allowed by the Blackboard administrator at your school, you can choose which items you want to be notified about and specify settings for each item.

> ***WARNING!*** If the Blackboard administrator at your school has defined the notification settings, those settings will take precedence over your settings.

About the Notification System

From **My Places**, you can manage notification settings for all of the courses and organizations you are enrolled in. The Notification System is a framework for the delivery of notifications to Blackboard Learn users. When an event occurs in the system (such as an assignment is created, a survey is submitted, or a test is overdue, the Notification System informs you of what you need (and want) to know using one or more of available notification methods.

The first and most important thing you need to understand about this system is that all enabled notifications are generated automatically whenever their associated event occurs. For example, when your instructor creates an assignment and makes it available, the system automatically creates the appropriate notifications.

Exploring the Notifications Settings

Click **My Places** then **Edit Notifications Settings** to display the **Edit Notifications Settings** page.

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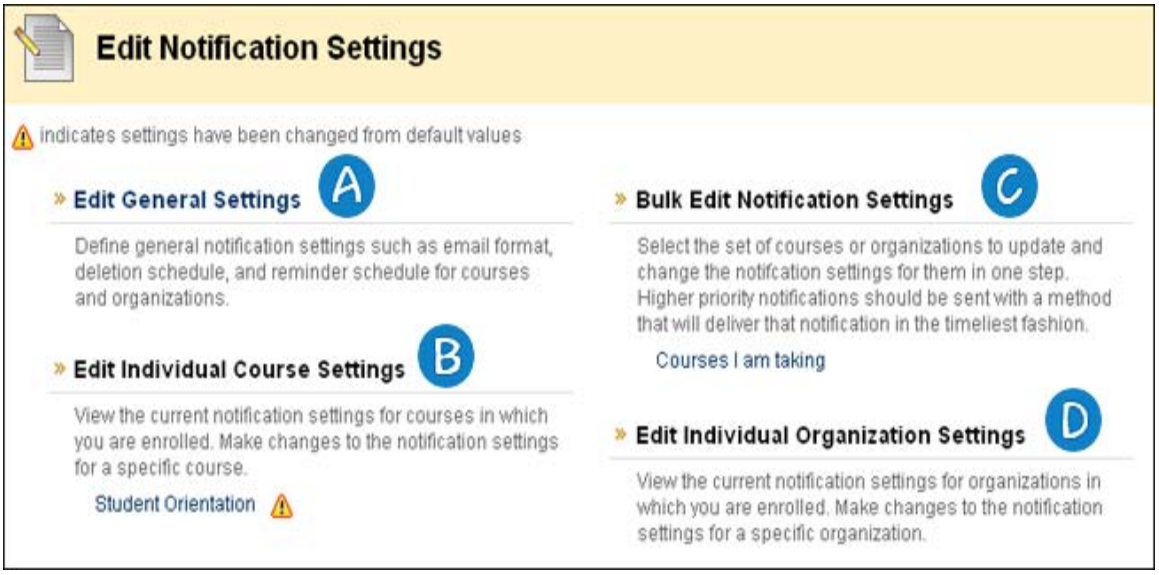

A **Edit General Settings**: Defines the general notification settings such as email format, deletion schedule, and reminder schedule for courses and organizations.

B **Edit Individual Course Settings**: Displays the current notification settings for courses in which you are enrolled in. Changes to the notification settings for a specific course can be made.

C **Bulk Edit Notification Settings**: Select a set of courses or organizations to update and change the notification settings for them in one step.

D **Edit Individual Organization Settings**: Displays the current notification settings for organizations in which you are enrolled in. Changes to the notification settings for a specific organization can be made.

How to Edit the Notification Settings

1. Click the **My Places** link at the top of the page.
2. On the **My Places** page, select **Edit Notification Settings**.

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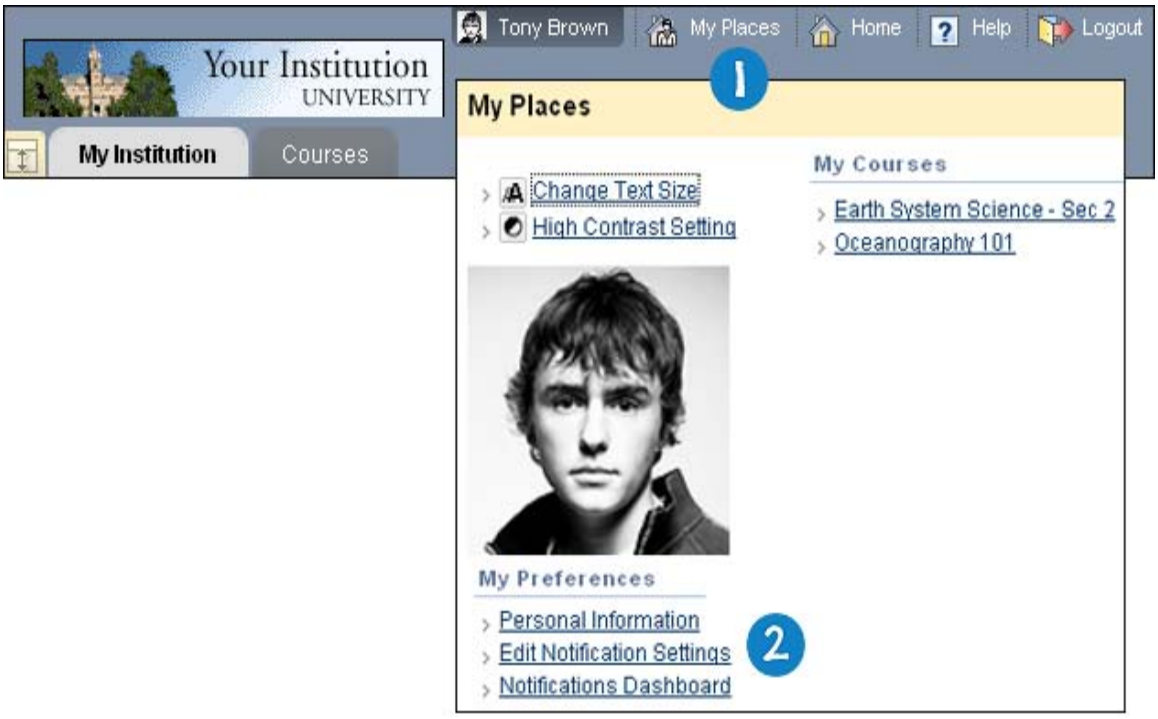
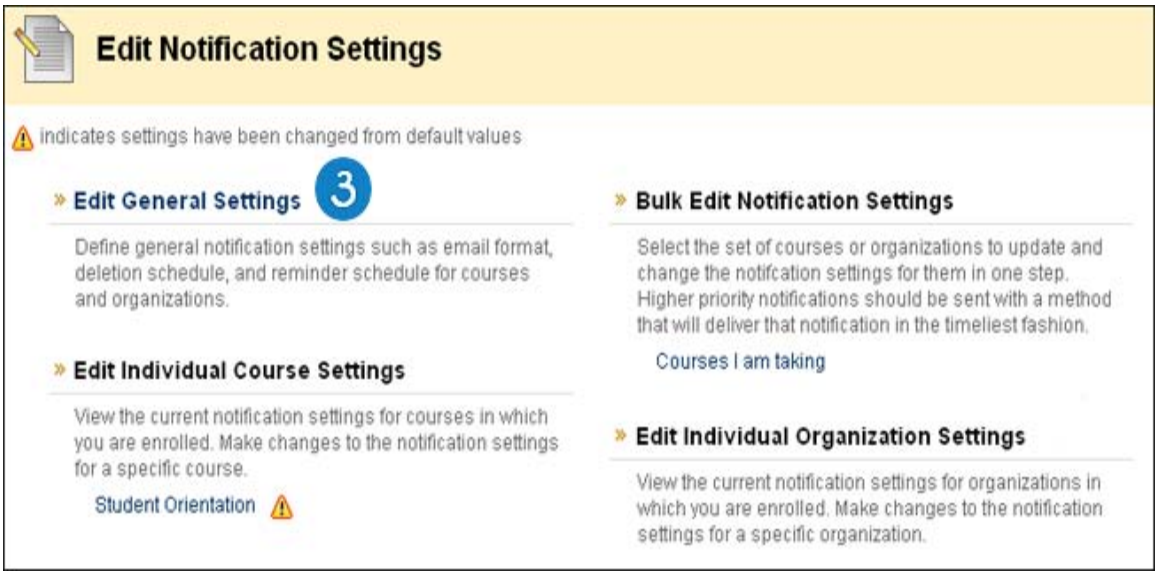


3. On the **Edit Notification Settings** page, select **Edit General Settings**.



4. On the **General Settings** page, you may elect to receive an email for each notification, or elect to receive a daily digest email that contains information on all of the notifications for that day. You set the time for the daily digest.
    - **Individual** emails: Emails will be sent for each notification. For Early Warning System details, unread Discussion Board messages, unread blog posts, and unread journal entries, however, the digest selection is necessary.
    - **Daily Digest** email: All notifications will be collected and sent in a daily digest.
5. Set the number of days until a notification is automatically removed.

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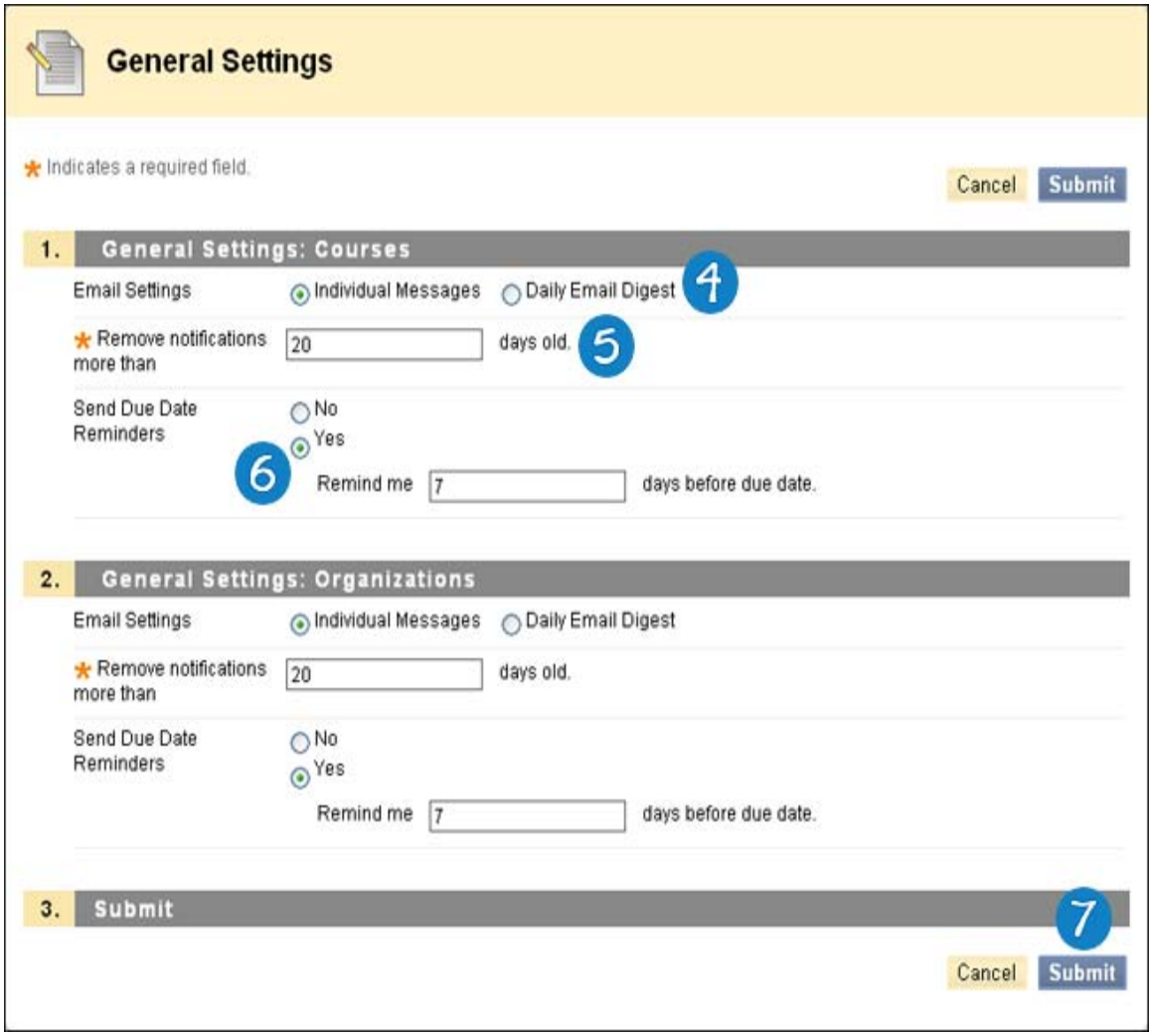
6. You can set Due Date reminders for notifications. Select **Yes**. This reminder will be emailed to you. Set the number of days before the Due Date to send an email. The email will be sent as a digest email or as individual emails, depending upon the option selected by the user.
7. Click **Submit**.



Deciding upon Notifications and Email Notifications

It is possible to decide the notification types and emails to receive.

All Notification types, by default, are turned On. Thus, these notifications will display in the Notifications Dashboard modules.

All Email Notification types, by default, are turned Off. An email will be sent out corresponding to that notification, though for the following items, email notifications can only be sent out if daily digest email is selected:

- Early Warning System Rule details
- Unread Discussion Board messages
- Unread blog posts
- Unread journal entries

After choosing the appropriate settings, click **Submit** to save these settings.

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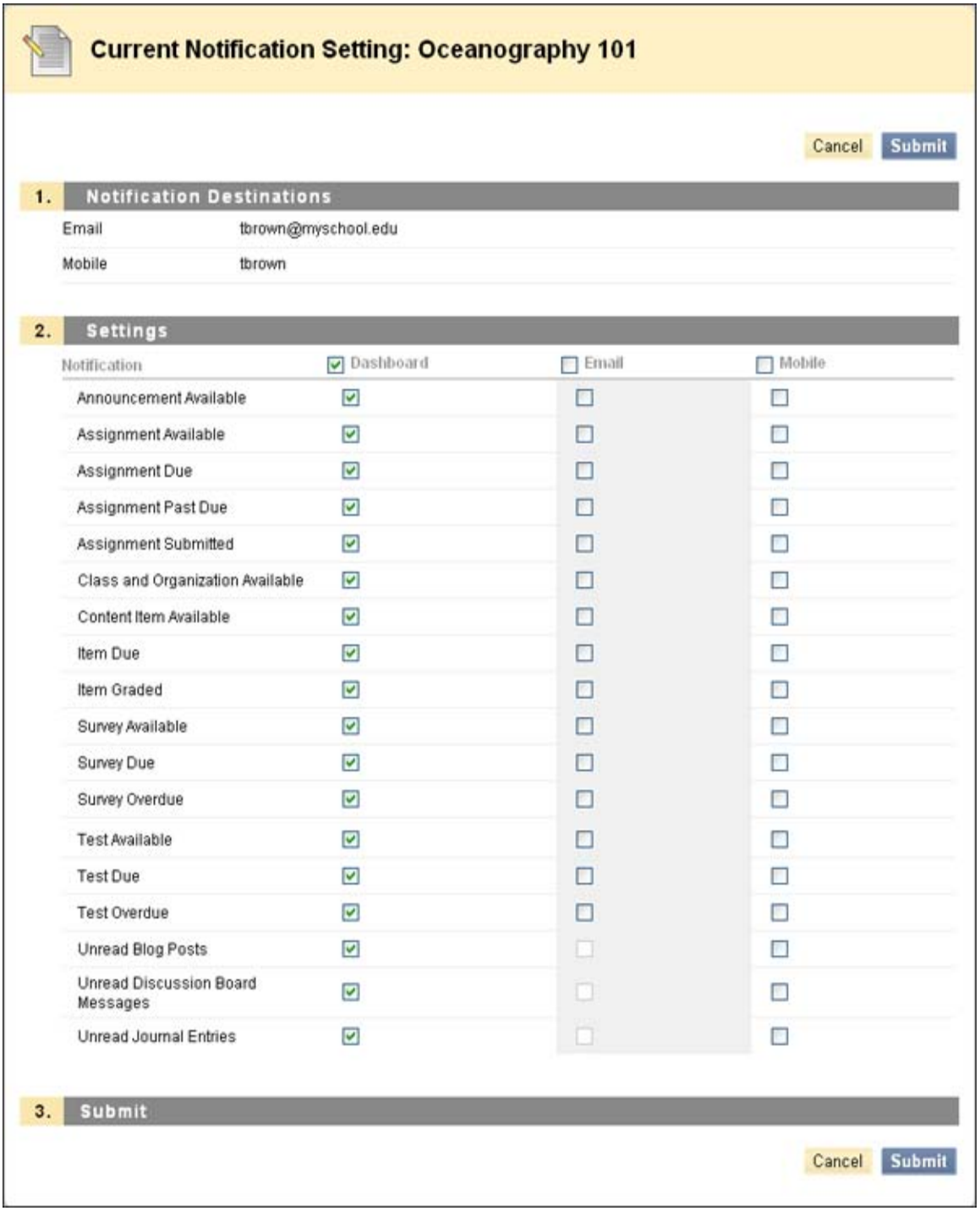

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Text Editor

Using the Text Editor

The Text Editor presents controls for adding and formatting text, equations, and multimedia files. When it is enabled, it appears throughout the system as the default editor when adding text through a text box.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school and your instructor control whether this tool is available. If this tool has been turned off, it will not appear in the interface and will not be available for you to use.

If the Text Editor does not appear, first check the following list of browsers to ensure that the current browser is compatible. If the Text Editor still does not appear, it has most likely been disabled by the Blackboard administrator at your school.

Users who access the system through assistive technologies should use standard text entry options instead of the Text Editor.

Administrators can disable the Text Editor and control the availability of the features (Spell Check, WebEQ, MathML, HTML Validation). It is possible that not all users will see all features.

> ***WARNING!*** Users have the option to attach different types of files to the Text Editor. Do not copy and paste a file from one text box to another. This will result in an error.

Entering Text

By default, Blackboard Learn will format text to 12-point, left-justified Arial. Any other formatting must be done using the Text Editor.

Compatible Browsers

The Text Editor is compatible with all the supported browsers for Blackboard Learn.

Firefox does not permit users to access their computer's clipboard.

- To cut, use CTRL-X, the contextual menu or the **Edit** menu in the browser's toolbar.
- To copy, use CTRL-C, the contextual menu or the **Edit** menu in the browser's toolbar.
- To paste, use CTRL-V the contextual menu or the **Edit** menu in the browser's toolbar.

Macintosh users can use right-click paste on Firefox no matter where the clipboard content originates. Macintosh users may find that this does not fully resolve the problem, particularly because Firefox does not permit pasting text from Microsoft Office files on the Mac. To accomplish this task, paste the text into a basic text editor, such as TextEdit or Notepad, and then paste the text into the Text Editor.

Safari does not permit users to access their computer's clipboard.

- To cut, use CTRL-X, the contextual menu or the Edit menu in the browser's toolbar.
- To copy, use CTRL-C, the contextual menu or the Edit menu in the browser's toolbar.
- To paste, use CTRL-V the contextual menu or the Edit menu in the browser's toolbar.

Text Editor Features

The Text Editor has three collapsible rows of functions.

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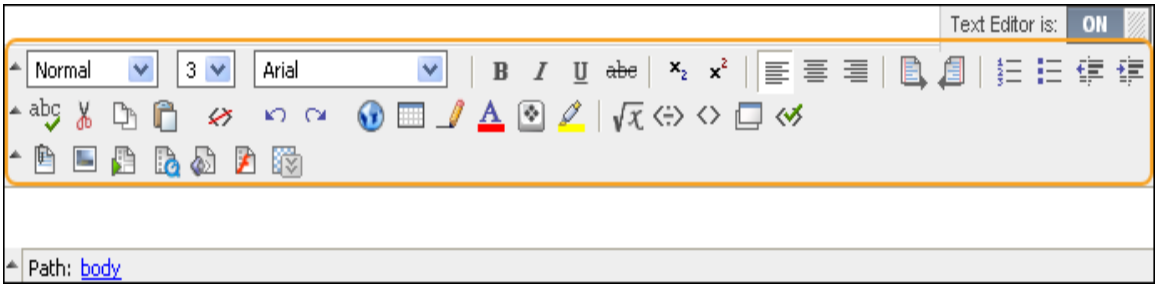

The following tables define each function:

Function	Description
Normal	Select a style for the text. The options correspond to standard HTML Style types.
3	Select the size of the text.
Arial	Select the font face for the text.
B	Make selected text bold.
I	Make selected text italic.
U	Underline the selected text.
abc	Display text with a horizontal line through the characters. This font style is not supported by all browsers.
x_2	Display text on the same line, but slightly below the current text.
x^2	Display text on the same line, but slightly above the current text.
	Align text to the left.
	Align text in the center.
	Align text to the right.
	Begin typing on the left side of the **Text** box and text typed moves across the screen left to right.
	Begin typing on the right side of the **Text** box and text typed moves across the screen right to left.
	Create an ordered or numbered list or add a numbered list item.
	Create an unordered or bulleted list or add a bullet list item.
	Move text left.
	Move text right.

Function	Description
abc	Select the ABC check mark to open Spell Check.
	Cut the selected items.
	Copy the selected items.
	Paste copied or cut content.

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Function	Description
	Deletes formatting tags that are shown in the Pathfinder at the bottom of the text box. Select the formatting tag to delete in the Pathfinder and then click **Clear Formatting** to delete. This is useful when copying and pasting text from another application yields discrepancies in formatting.
	Select the circular arrow pointing to the left to undo the previous action.
	Select the circular arrow pointing to the right to redo the previous action.
	Add a hyperlink. Types include: file, ftp, gopher, http, https, mailto, news, telnet, and wais. Please keep in mind that when creating a hyperlink, the text that appears on the page is separate from the information about the link. Information about where the link points is stored in a tag that surrounds the text. Therefore, it is possible to change the link without changing the text that appears to users. Please be careful when constructing links to ensure that the text is consistent with where users will be taken when they click the link.
	Add a table.
	Add a horizontal line.
	Add a select color to the selected text.
	Click and select a symbol to be used in the text.
	Select text, click the Highlight Text icon, and select a color to use to set off the selected text.
	Open the WebEQ Equation Editor icon (vx) to add an equation. Equations cannot be added to a cell in a table. Instead, create the equation outside the table and then cut and paste the equation into the cell.
	Open the MathML Equation Editor icon to add an equation.
	Click the opposing chevrons icon (< >) to view and edit the text in the source code that is generated by the Text Editor. Click the icon again to restore the standard view.
	Preview the content as it will be seen by end users.
	Opens a new window that reports on the validation of the source coding. Validation of source code is run against XHTML 1.0 Strict rules. Not all reported errors will cause pages to malfunction; however, errors can affect the way a page appears, how style sheets are employed, and accessibility. Poorly formed HTML will be selected and can be corrected.

The third row will only appear where it is possible to attach a file or link to a file.

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Function	Description
	Add a file to the text area. The **Insert Content Link** page will appear. The system supports the following file types: .doc, .exe, .html, .htm, .pdf, .ppt, .pps, .txt, .wpd, .xls, .zip. • **Browse My Computer**: Select a file from the local machine. • **Browse Course**: If Course Files is the Course's storage repository, select a file from Course Files. • **Browse Content Collection**: If your school licenses content management, select a file from the Content Collection. • **Source URL**: Type a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system. • **Name of Link to File**: Provide a descriptive name of the content is helpful for the user. This allows the user to read the link in context, rather than simply read the name of the file being linked to. • **Alt Text**: Provide text to describe what this image is for a visually impaired or blind user using assistive technology such as screen readers. All image and multimedia files should have alt text associated with them. • **Launch in new window**: Select whether to open the file in the current window or open a new browser window to display the file. Depending on your browser settings, some files may also open in a new tab.
	Add an image to the text area. The **Insert Image** page appears. The system supports the following file types: .gif, .jif, .jpg, jpeg, .png, .tiff, .wmf.
	Add MPEG/AVI media content to the text area. The **Insert MPEG/AVI File** page appears. The system supports the following file types: .avi, .mpg, .mpeg.
	Add Apple QuickTime media to the text area. The **Insert QuickTime File** page appears. The system supports the following file type: .qt.
	Add an audio file, such as .mp3, .midi or .wav to the text area. The **Insert Audio File** page appears. The system supports the following file types: .aiff, .asf, .mp3, .midi, .moov, .mov, .mp, .wav, .wma, .wmv.
	Add Adobe Flash or Shockwave media to the text area. The **Insert Flash/Shockwave File** page appears. The system supports the following file types: .swa, .swf.
	Add a **Flickr Photo**, **SlideShare Presentation**, or **YouTube Video**. The **Search for** page appears. The system supports any files available on YouTube, SlideShare, or Flickr.

Keyboard Shortcuts for the Text Editor

The Text Editor supports the keyboard shortcuts listed in the following table. Please note that Macintosh users should use the CMD key instead of the CTRL key.

Note: If the shortcut keys that move selected items one character left, right, up, or down are used, the object being moved will be absolutely positioned. An absolutely positioned element is determined by pixels, so moving it up once will move it up one pixel.

Keyboard Shortcut	Description
RIGHT ARROW	Move one character to the right.
LEFT ARROW	Move one character to the left.
DOWN ARROW	Move down one line.
UP ARROW	Move up one line.
CTRL+RIGHT ARROW MAC: CMD+RGT ARROW	Move right one word.
CTRL+LEFT ARROW MAC: CMD+LFT ARROW	Move left one word.

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Keyboard Shortcut	Description
END	Move to the end of the line.
HOME	Move to the start of the line.
CTRL+DOWN ARROW MAC: CMD+DWN ARROW	Move down one paragraph.
CTRL+UP ARROW MAC: CMD+UP ARROW	Move up one paragraph.
PAGE DOWN	Move down one page.
PAGE UP	Move up one page.
CTRL+HOME MAC: CMD+HOME	Move to the beginning of the text.
CTRL+END MAC: CMD+END	Move to the end of the text.
Selection	
SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW	Extend the selection one character to the right.
SHIFT+LEFT ARROW	Extend the selection one character to the left.
CTRL+SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW MAC: CMD+SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW	Extend the selection right one word.
CTRL+SHIFT+LEFT ARROW MAC: CMD+SHIFT+LEFT ARROW	Extend the selection left one word.
SHIFT+UP ARROW	Extend the selection up one line.
SHIFT+DOWN ARROW	Extend the selection down one line.
SHIFT+END	Extend the selection to the end of the current line.
SHIFT+HOME	Extend the selection to the start of the current line.
SHIFT+PAGE DOWN	Extend the selection down one page.
SHIFT+PAGE UP	Extend the selection up one page.
CTRL+SHIFT+END	Extend the selection to the end of the document.
CTRL+SHIFT+HOME MAC: CMD+SHIFT+HOME	Extend the selection to the beginning of the document.
CTRL+A MAC: CMD+A	Select all elements in the document.
Editing	
BACKSPACE	Delete the selection. Or, if there is no selection, delete the character to the left of the mouse pointer.
CTRL+BACKSPACE MAC: CMD+BACKSPACE	Delete all of a word to the left of the mouse pointer.
CTRL+C MAC: CMD+C	Copy the selection.
CTRL+V MAC: CMD+V	Paste cut contents or copied contents.
CTRL+X MAC: CMD+X	Cut the selection.

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Keyboard Shortcut	Description
DELETE	Delete the selection.
INSERT	Toggle between inserting and overwriting text.
CTRL+Z MAC: CMD+Z	Undo the most recent formatting command.
CTRL+Y MAC: CMD+Y	Redo the most recent undone command.
CTRL+F MAC: CMD+F	Find text.
SHIFT+F10	Display the context menu. This is the same as a right-click.
Formatting	
CTRL+B MAC: CMD+B	Toggle bold formatting.
CTRL+I MAC: CMD+I	Toggle italic formatting.
CTRL+U MAC: CMD+U	Toggle underlining.

Inserting Multimedia Files from the Text Editor

Users may add the following multimedia files when authoring content in the Text Editor.

- **Image**
  - **MPEG or AVI**: MPEG (Moving Picture Expert Groups) files are audio-visual files in a digital compressed format. AVI (Audio Video Interleave) is Microsoft's file format for storing audio and video data.
  - **QuickTime**: QuickTime is a video and animation system that supports most formats, including JPG and MPEG. Users with a PC will require a QuickTime driver to view QuickTime files. Macintosh users do not require this driver.
- **Audio**
  - **Flash or Shockwave**: Adobe Flash and Shockwave files support audio, animation and video. They are also browser independent. Browsers require specific plug-ins to run Flash and Shockwave files.

The following table explains which function in the **File Attachment Toolbar** of the Text Editor is used to add different file types.

Function	File Attachment Types
	.doc, .exe, .html, .htm, .pdf, .ppt, .pps, .rtf, .tiff .txt, .wmf, .wpd, .xls, .zip
	.gif, .jif, .jpg, .jpeg, .tiff, .wmf
	.asf, .avi, .mpg, .mpeg, .wmv

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Function	File Attachment Types
	.qt, moov, .mov
	.aiff, .asf, .au, .mpe, .mp3, .ra, .ram, .rm, .wav, .wma, .wmv
	.swf

The options to control how a multimedia file displays, such as should it loop, should the controls display, will not be available after the file has been inserted. To edit these options, use the HTML view and edit the options directly.

Image Fields

The following table details the fields on the Insert Image page.

Field	Description
Select Image	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
Image Options	
Set the Width	Enter the width of the image in pixels.
Set the Height	Enter the height of the image in pixels.
Image Target URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
Launch in new window	Choose whether to display the image in a new window.
Border	Choose a border for the image. If None is chosen there will be no border around the image.
Alt Text	Alt Text is displayed if the image does not display and is read by screen readers. It is important to include for accessibility.

MPEG or AVI Fields

The following table details the fields on the Insert MPEG File page.

Field	Description
Insert MPEG File	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
MPEG File Options	
Set the Width	Enter the width of the video in pixels.

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Field	Description
Set the Height	Enter the height of the video in pixels.
AutoStart	Select **Yes** to start playing when the page is opened. Select **No** to let users start playing manually after opening the page.
Loop	Choose whether the file repeats continuously.
Controls	Select the size of controls to appear to users. Controls must be available if users are to start the video manually.
Alt Text	Alt Text is displayed if the image does not display and is read by screen readers. It is important to include for accessibility.

QuickTime Fields

The following table details the fields on the Insert QuickTime File page.

Field	Description
Insert QuickTime File	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
QuickTime File Options	
Set the Width	Enter the width of the video.
Set the Height	Enter the height of the video.
AutoStart	Select **Yes** to start playing when the page is opened. Select **No** to let users start playing manually after opening the page.
Loop	Choose whether the file should repeat continuously.
Controls	Select to display controls.
Alt Text	Alt Text is displayed if the image does not display and is read by screen readers. It is important to include for accessibility.

Audio Fields

The following table details the fields on the Insert Audio File page.

Field	Description
Insert Audio File	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
Audio File Options	
AutoStart	Select **Yes** to start playing when the page is opened. Select **No** to let users start playing manually after opening the page.
Loop	Choose whether the file repeats continuously.
Controls	Select to display controls.
Alt Text	Alt Text is displayed if the image does not display and is read by screen readers. It is important to include for accessibility.

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Flash or Shockwave Fields

The following table details the fields on the Insert SWF File page.

Field	Description
Insert SWF File	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system.
SWF File Options	
Set the Width	Enter the width of the Flash file.
Set the Height	Enter the height of the Flash file.
AutoStart	Select **Yes** to start playing when the page is opened. Select **No** to let users start playing manually after opening the page.
Loop	Choose whether the file repeats continuously.
Set Quality	Select the quality of the images that will appear to users. Note that the better the quality of an image the larger the file. Larger files take longer to open.
Alt Text	Alt Text is displayed if the image does not display and is read by screen readers. It is important to include for accessibility.

Linking to File Attachments from the Text Editor

You can include a link to a file attachment by clicking the **Add File Text Editor** function from the Text Editor. You can select a file from your computer or from Content Collection, or insert a file as a URL link.

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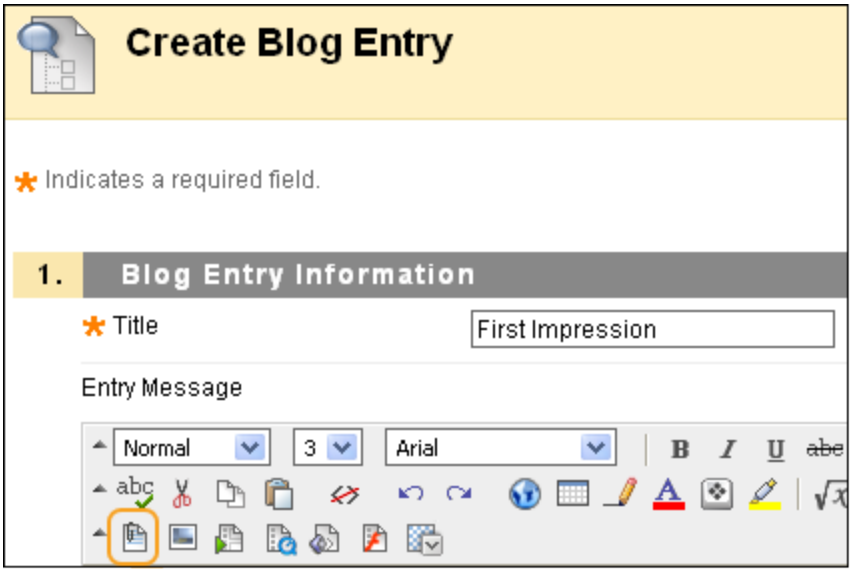

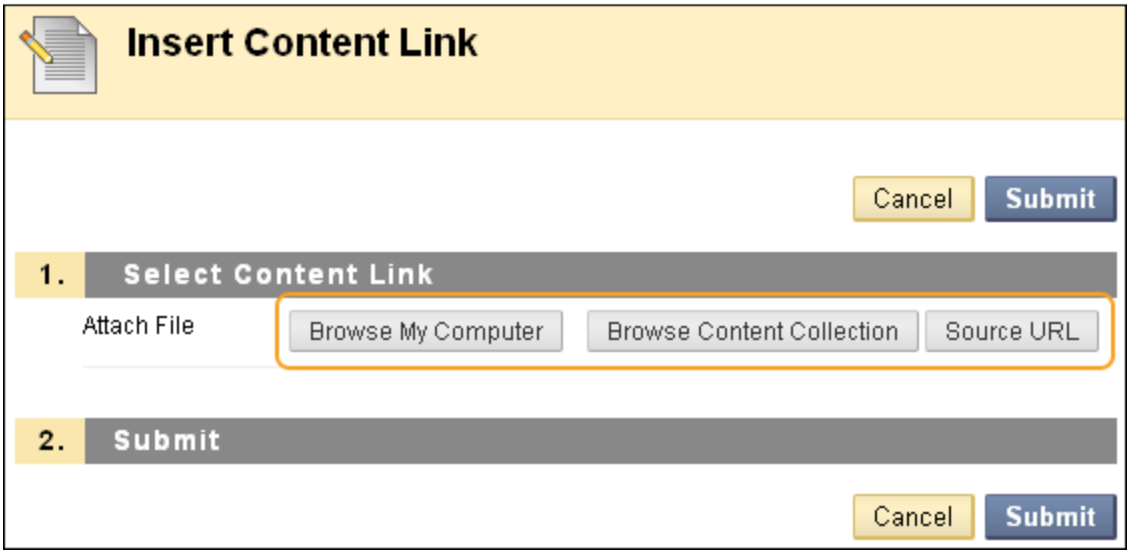

The following table details the fields on the **Insert Content Link to File** window.

Field	Description
Select Content Link	
Browse	Click **Browse** to locate a file.
Specify Source URL	Enter a URL to create a link to a file outside of the local system. For example: http://blackboard/images/picture1.jpeg.
Content Link Options	
Name of Link to File	Enter the name of the link that users click to access the attached file.
Alt Text	Enter text that appears when a pointer hovers over the link. Alternate text is important for accessibility.
Launch in New Window	Select **Yes** to have the file open in a new separate window. Select **No** to have the file open in the content frame.

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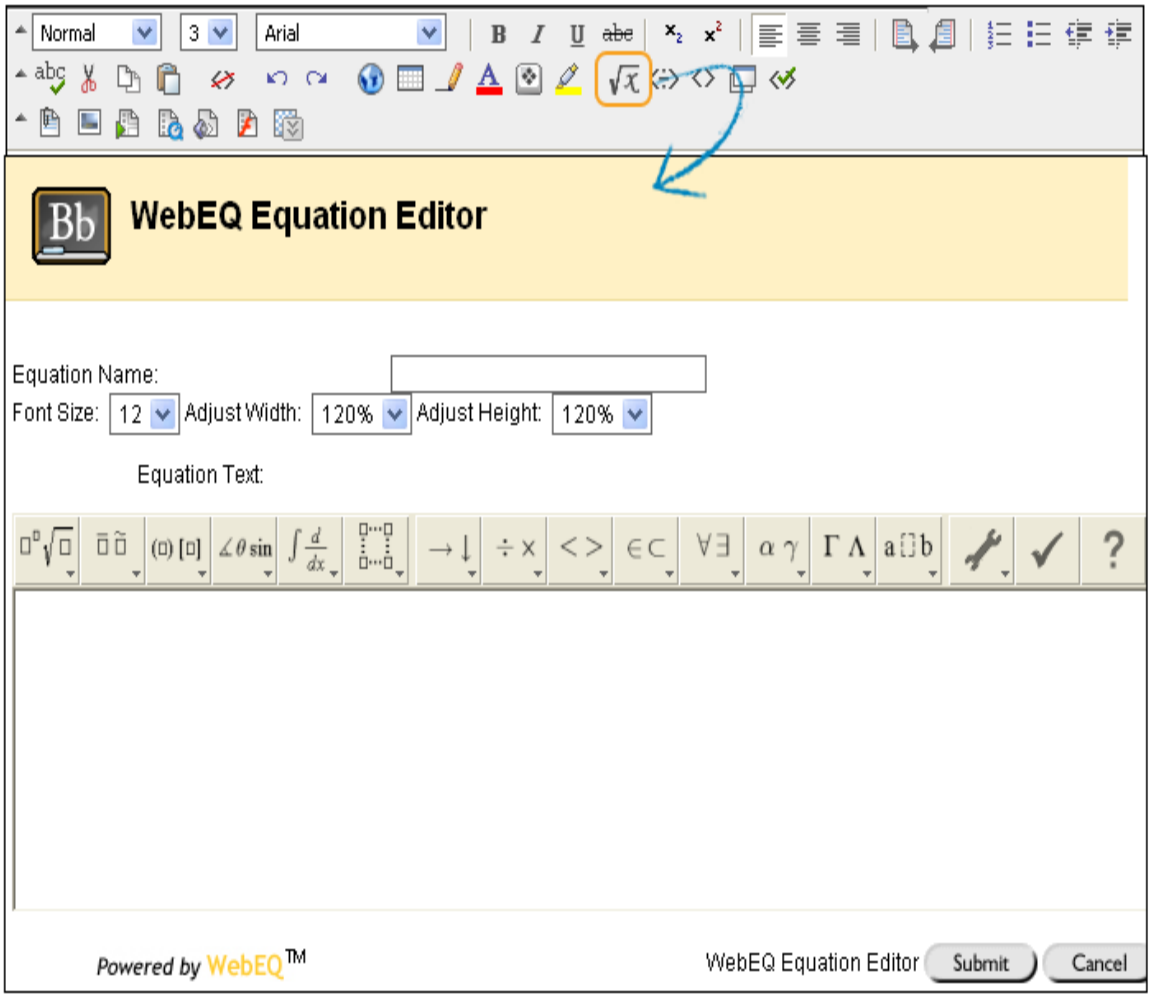
Using the Math and Science Notation Tool

The Math and Science Notation Tool (WebEQ Equation Editor) is a general purpose equation editor. The Math and Science Notation Tool enables you to use mathematical and scientific notation. You can add equations, edit existing equations, and move equations within the Equation Editor. All of the Equation Editor symbols are based on MathML, a markup language for math on the Web. MathML is a subset of XHTML.



The Java 2 Run Time Environment is required to use the Math and Science Notation Tool.

For best performance on a Windows® operating system use Internet Explorer 6.0.

For best performance on a Macintosh®:

- Mac OS X v 10.2 or later
- Install the MRJ Plug-in from http://homepage.mac.com/pcbeard/MRJPlugin/.

You may receive a pop-up box when launching WebEQ that asks you to trust an applet provided by Design Science, the maker of WebEQ. If you click **Always**, the pop-up will no longer appear on that computer when launching WebEQ.

MathML Equation Editor

The MathML Equation Editor functions in the same way at the Math and Science Notation Tool. Instead of

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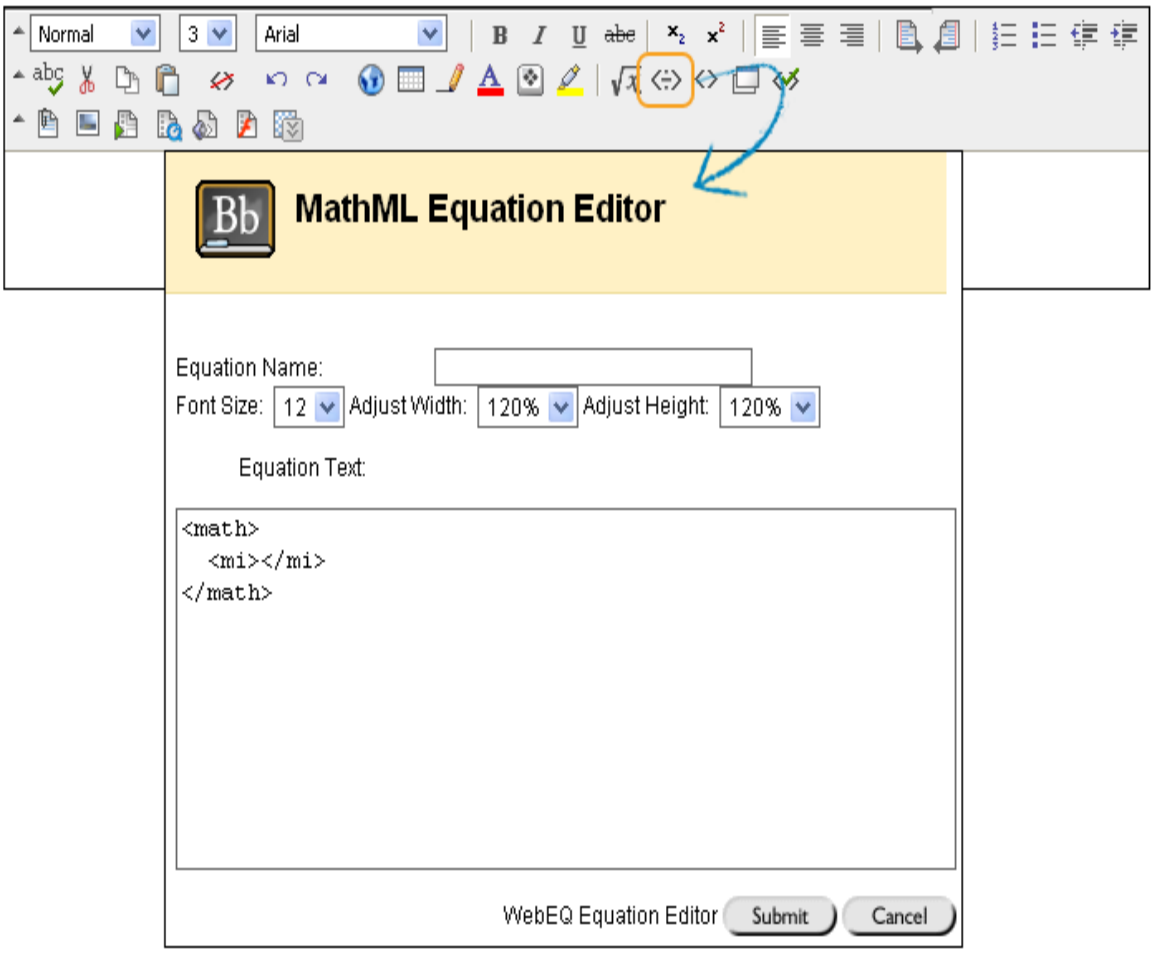
opening with the symbol buttons, a blank text box will appear where users can enter XML.



Accessing the Equation Editor

You can access the WebEQ Equation Editor by clicking the Math and Science Notation Tool icon. To insert XML, you can click the MathML Equation Editor icon.

Tip: If an equation is more than one line or uses a large font size, the equation may be cut off when it appears on the page. Add an empty line after the final line in the equation to prevent this error.

Running Spell Check in the Text Editor

The **Spell Check** function supports a full English dictionary, a supplemental word list configured by the Blackboard administrator at your school, and custom word lists that are stored on your local machine. The **Spell Check** function is available wherever you can enter blocks of text. It is also available as a module if your school licenses community engagement.

When Spell Check is launched it will review the text block and sequentially bring up any words it does not recognize for review.

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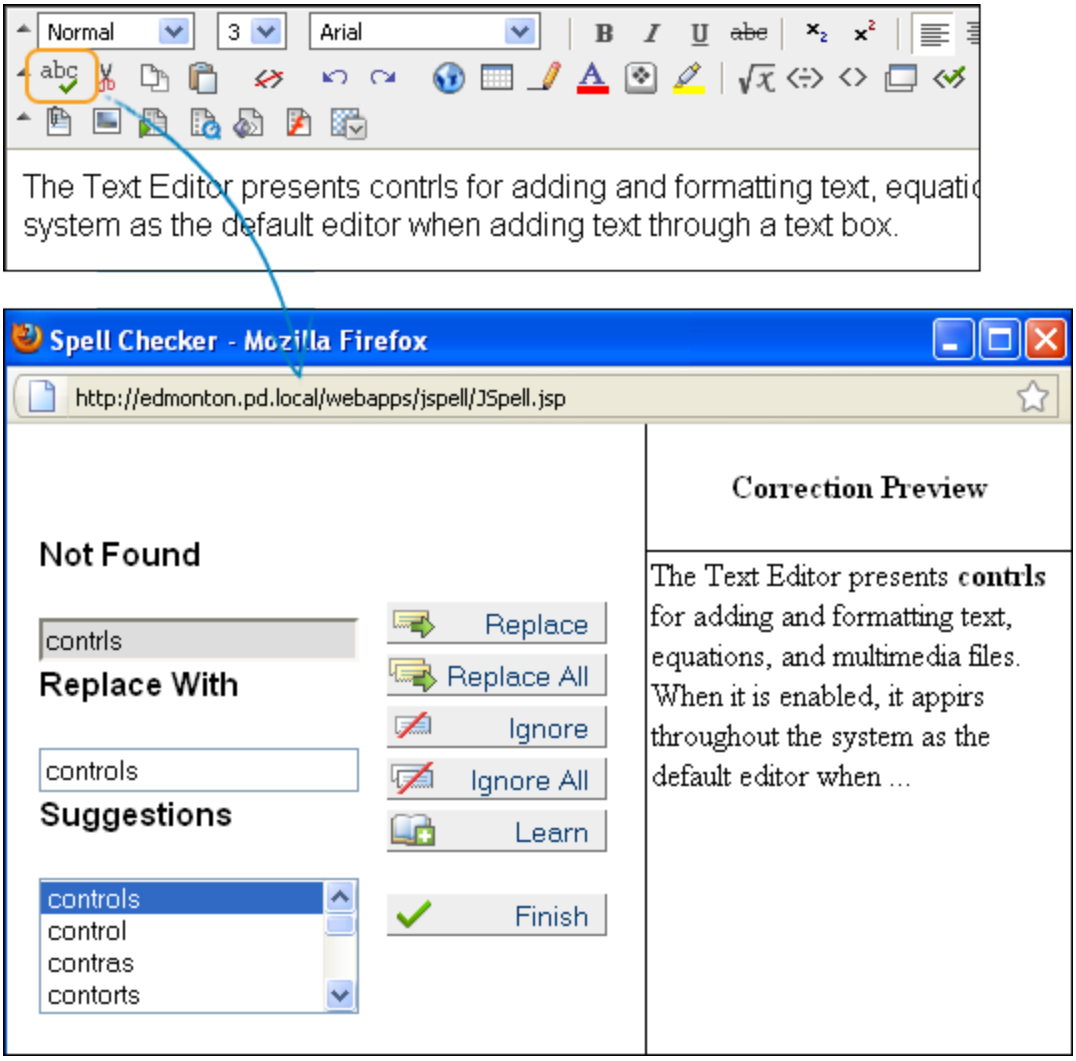

Word Lists

Misspelled words are determined by the following three sources:

- **Spell Check Dictionary**: A full English dictionary that includes words that will not be flagged for correction. The dictionary is also the only source for suggestions. This dictionary cannot be edited.
- **Supplemental Word List**: A list of additional terms added by the Blackboard administrator at your school that do not appear in the default dictionary.
- **Personal Word List**: This word list is stored on each user's local machine. Words are added to this list using the **Learn** function. The words in the personal word list are not flagged for correction. These words are not included as suggestions for misspelled words. Extensive personal word lists may slow performance of the **Spell Check** tool.

Personal Word List and Cookie

The personal word list is stored as a cookie on the user's local machine. The cookie is not user or installation specific. Therefore, a user's word list will be available to them whenever they are using Spell Check as long as they are on the same local machine. Also, if another user logs onto the same machine, that user will have the personal word list stored on that machine applied to Spell Check. For example, if a user creates a personal

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word list on a computer in the computer lab, this word list will be available to all users who use this computer in the lab. The user may not take this word list with them to a different computer.

Using Spell Check

When Spell Check is launched, it reviews the text block and sequentially brings up any words it does not recognize for review.

The following table details the functions available with Spell Check.

Function	Description	Action
	Replace the occurrence of a word with a correction or suggestion	Enter a correction in the **Replace With** field or select a suggestion from the list. Click **Replace** to change the word in the text to the word in the **Replace With** field. If the misspelled word appears later in the text block it will be flagged again for correction.
	Replace every occurrence of a word in the text with a correction or suggestion	Enter a correction in the **Replace With** field or select a suggestion from the list. Click **Replace All** to change every occurrence of the word in the text with the word in the **Replace With** field.
	Ignore the word and not make a correction	Click **Ignore**. The word will not be changed. If the word appears again in the text block it will be flagged for correction.
	Ignore every occurrence of the word in the text block	Click **Ignore All**. The word will not be changed and Spell Check will not flag it for correction again in the text.
	Teach Spell Check to recognize the word as correct	Click **Learn**. The word will be added to the personal word list. Whenever Spell Check is run on the local machine the word will be recognized and not flagged.
	Close the spell check without finishing	Click **Finish**.

Recognized Errors

Note how Spell Check handles the following circumstances:

- Double words are recognized as errors.
- Irregular capitalization is not recognized as an error.
- Initial capitalization at the beginning of sentences is not checked.
- Words in ALL CAPS are checked for spelling errors.
- Words that contain numbers are recognized as errors.
- A word that appears in the supplemental or personal word list must be entered as a correction during a spell check (these words do not appear as suggestions). The **Spell Check** tool must be run again to verify that the word is spelled correctly.

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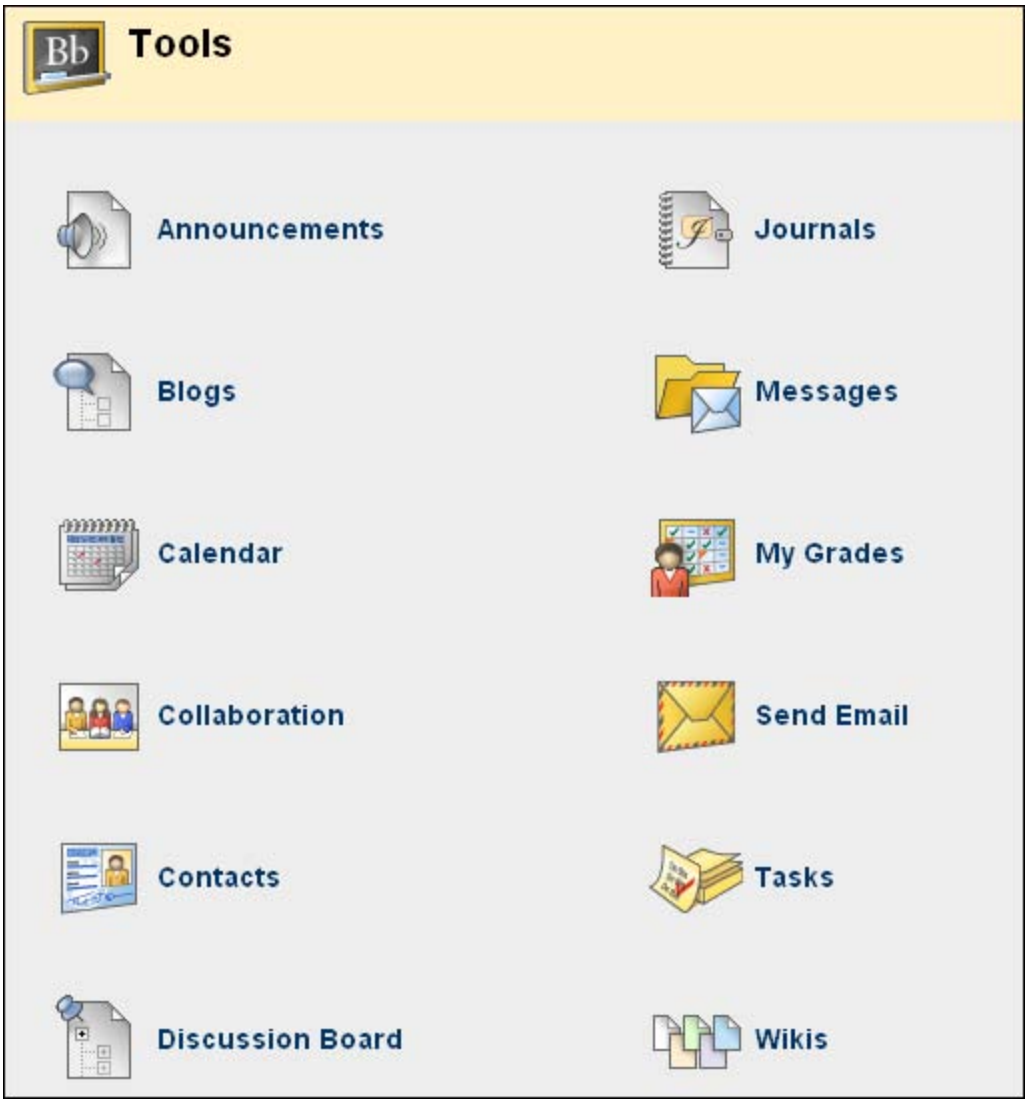
Tools

About Course Tools

Tools appear throughout Blackboard Learn. You can access tools from inside a course or from a tab.

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If a tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.



Announcements

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

Users and course group members can view important messages from instructors in the **My Announcements** module or through the Announcements tool. As a default module on the homepage, announcements are typically one of the first things you see when accessing your course. When you click an announcement link on

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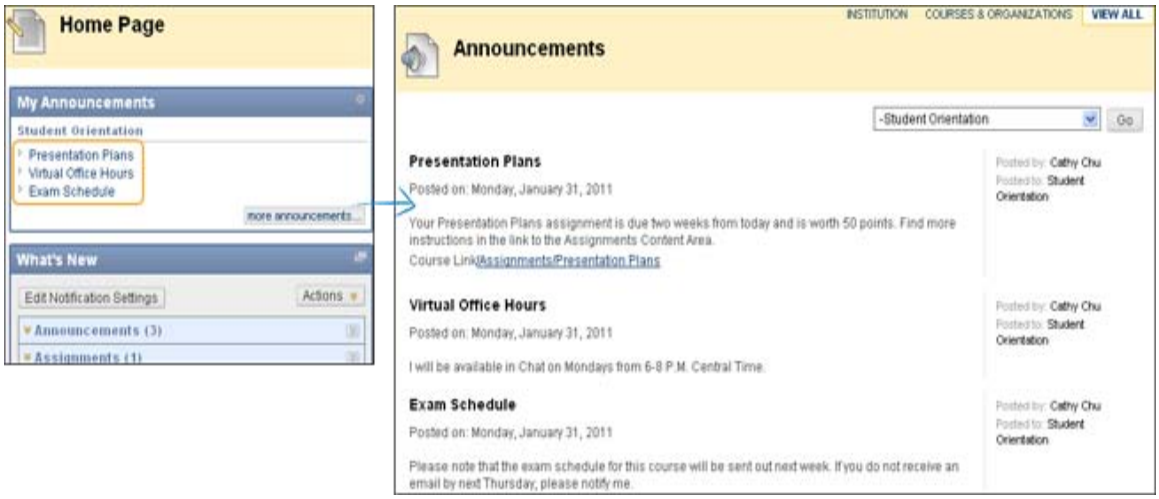
the homepage, you are taken to the main **Announcements** page. Announcements are organized and displayed by:

- Institution
- Courses and Organizations
- All Course announcements

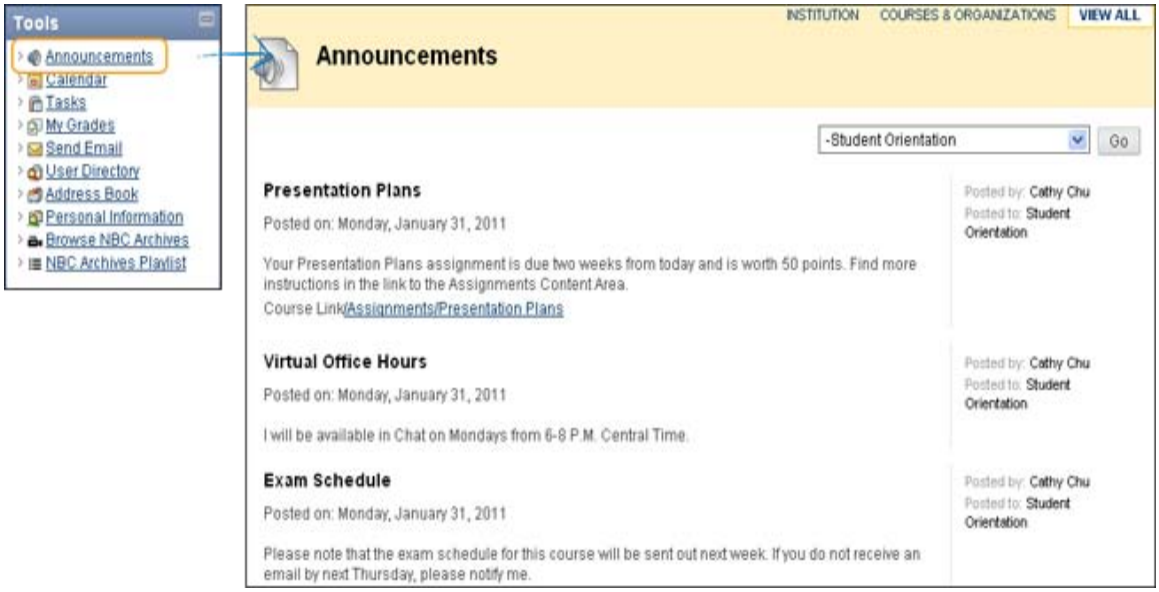
How to View Announcements

1. On the **My Announcements** module in the **Home Page** or in **My Institution** tab, click the Announcements link.



-OR-

On the **Tools** panel, click **Announcements**.



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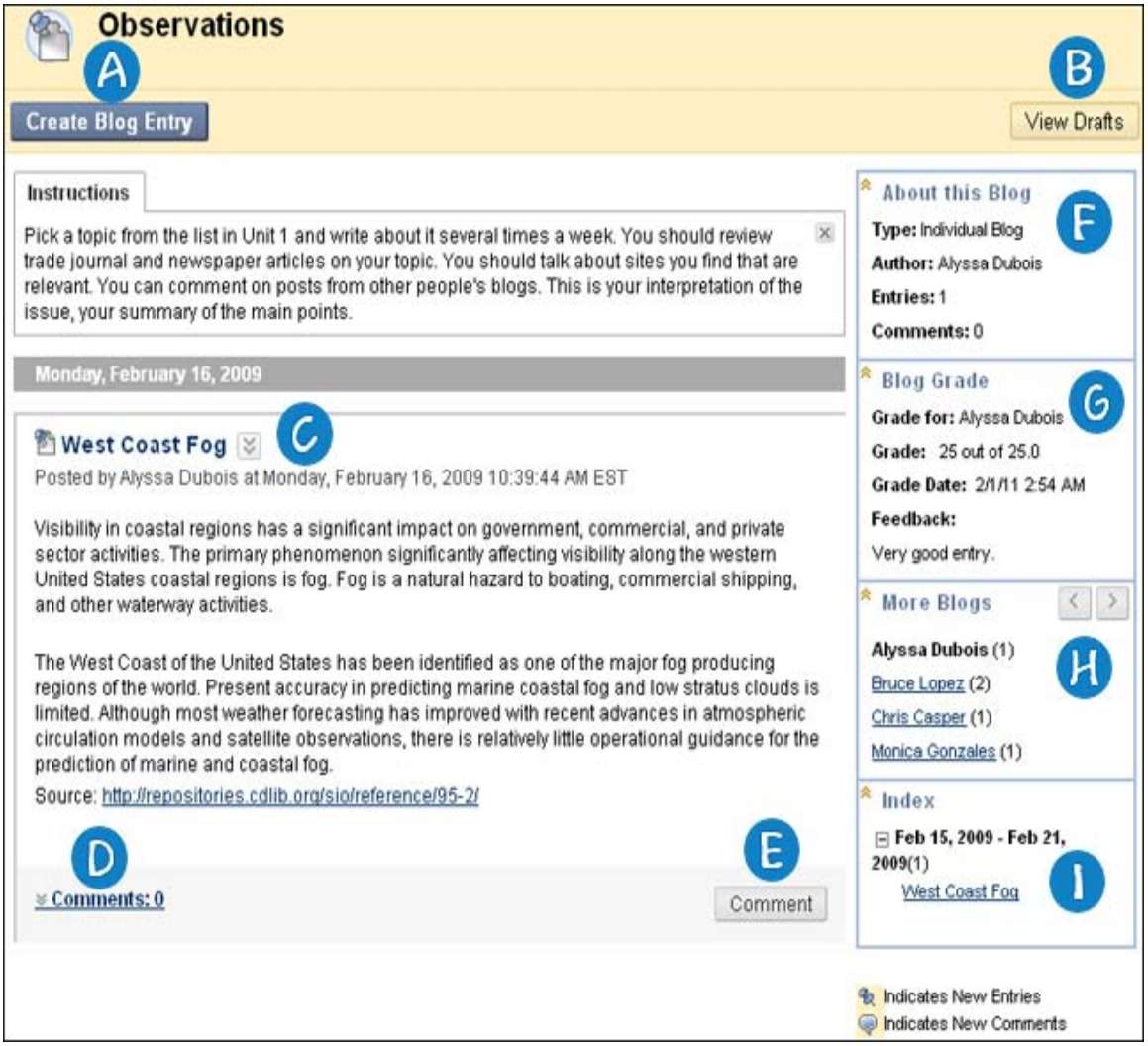
Blogs

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

A blog is your personal online journal. Each blog entry you make can include any combination of text, images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments. Blogs are an effective means of sharing knowledge and materials created and collected by the group in the course. You can post to the blog and add comments to existing posts. Use your blog to express your ideas and share them with the class.

As the owner of a blog, you will want to create multiple entries over a period of time. Your instructor and course members can then add comments. A blog can also be owned by the course or a group. In the Group area, all members of a group can create entries for the same blog, building upon one another. Any course member can read and comment on a Group blog, but cannot make entries if not a member of the group. Your instructor can also offer comments and grade individual posts.

The Blog topic page is divided into two main sections. You can view the **Instructions** in the content frame. Click the **X** to collapse the field. In the side panel, you can view information about the blog. You can expand and collapse sections in the side panel using the double arrows.



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A **Create Blog Entry**: You can make a blog entry using the **Create Blog Entry** function. You can make another blog entry for a topic at any time. For example, your instructor may add a comment requesting that you clarify what has been written before a grade is assigned or suggest a topic for another entry.

B **View Drafts**: You can access any entries saved as drafts. Click **View Drafts** on the Action Bar.

C **Blog Entry**: Your blog entries appear in the content frame following the **Instructions**.

D **Comments**: Following an entry, you can see if comments were made. Click the link to view comments.

E **Comment**: You can add comments by clicking **Comment**.

F **About this Blog**: In the side panel, you can see the blog information in the **About this Blog** section.

G **Blog Grade**: The **Blog Grade** section appears if a blog is set to be graded. You can see if your blog entries have been graded..

H **More Blogs**: You can see other blog entries made by other course members in the **More Blogs** section.

I **Index**: You can see the titles of your selected entries for either the week or the month in the **Index** section, determined by the settings your instructor makes during blog creation. The most recent entry title appears first.

How to Access a Blog

There are three different types of blogs that you can access:

- **Class**: All enrolled users are able to post blog entries. All enrolled users can post comments to blog entries.

  If you are removed from the class, you will not have access to any blogs. If you are removed from the class after individual blogs have been created, all your entries and comments will be deleted. If you are removed from a class after class blogs have been created, all your entries and comments will be retained, but the name of the author or commenter will be changed to "Anonymous."
- **Individual**: Only the owner of the blog is able to post blog entries. All other users enrolled in the class are able to view and add comments.
- **Group**: If your instructor enables the **Blogs** tool for the group, all group members can post blog entries and make comments on blog entries. Any class member can view group blogs, but can only add comments.

Your instructor can edit and delete entries in any of the three blog types and delete any user comments.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Blogs**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Blogs**.

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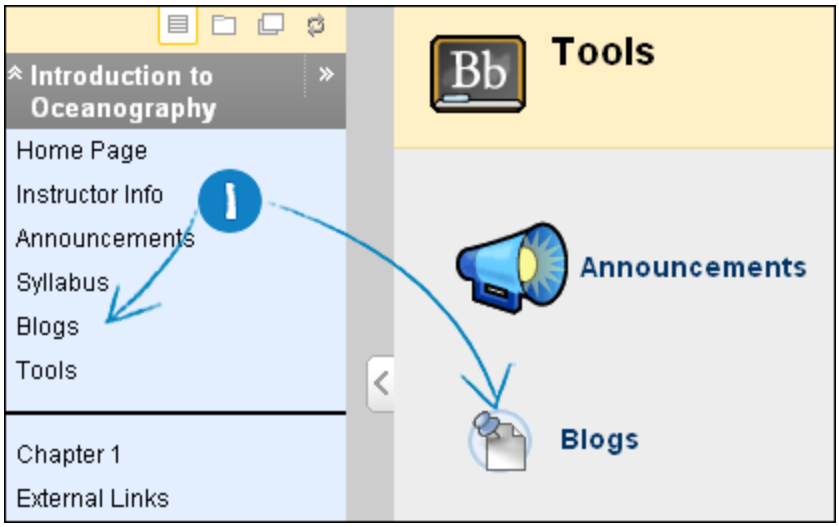
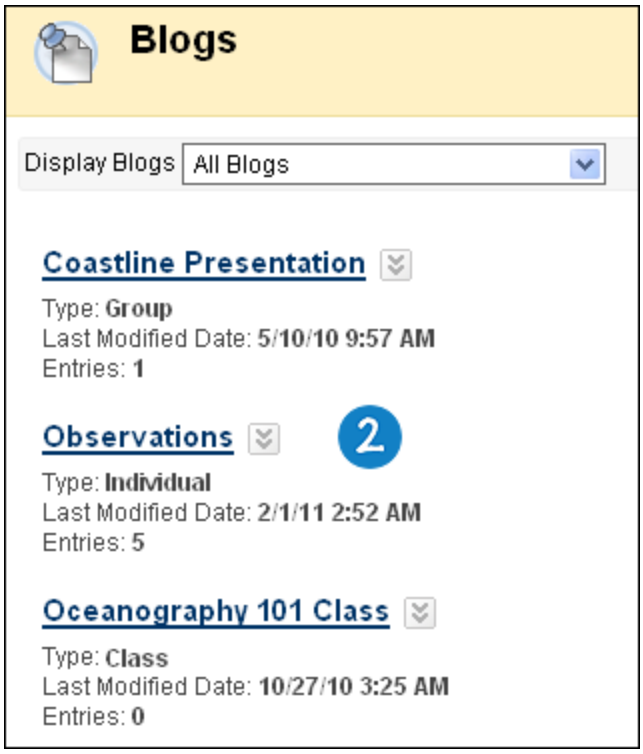


2. On the **Blogs** listing page, click the name of the blog to open.



How to Create a Blog Entry

Only your instructor can create a blog, but once created, you can create entries. The blog topics appear in alphabetical order on the Blogs listing page. On the Blogs listing page, under each blog title, you can see if the blog belongs to a group, the course, or to individual students. Your instructor can use blog entries to provide structure for discussions on class topics and other issues. If allowed by your school, you can add an avatar which will appear with individual blogs.

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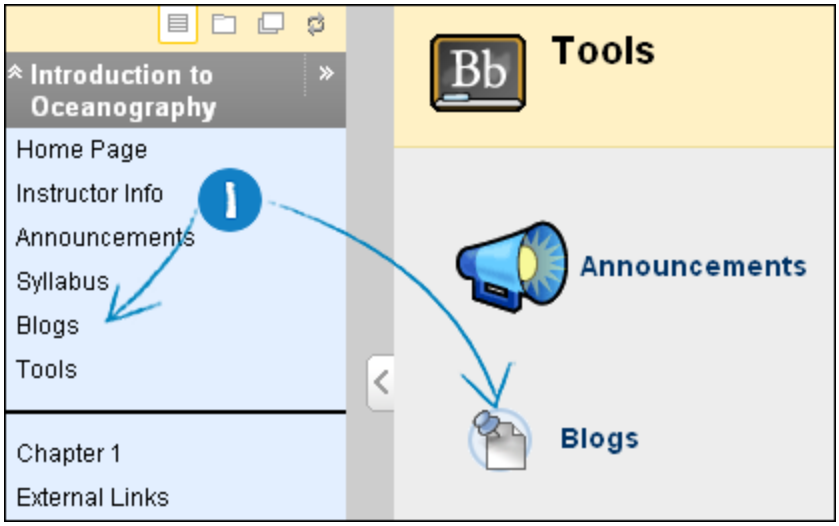
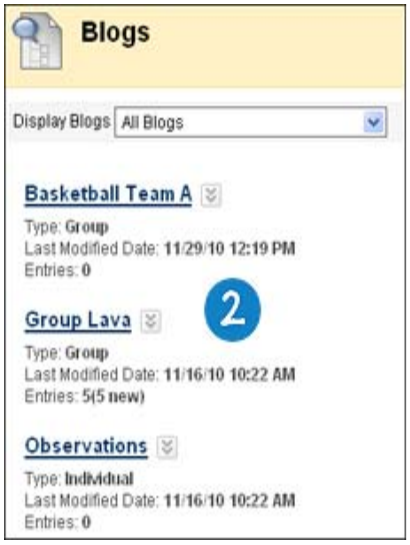
1. On the Course Menu, click **Blogs**.

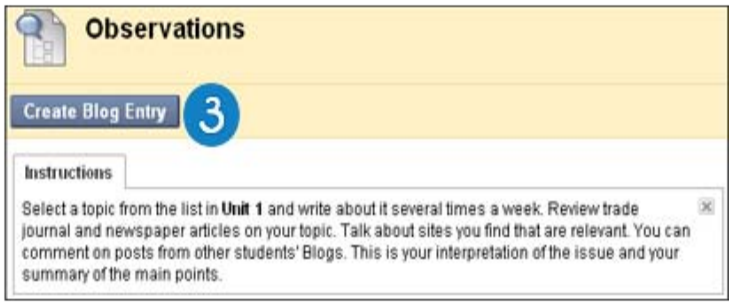
   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Blogs**.



2. On the **Blogs** list page, click the name of the blog to open.
3. On the **Blog** topic page, click **Create Blog Entry**.





4. On the **Create Blog Entry** page, type an **Entry Title**.
5. Type the text in the **Entry Message** text box.
6. Alternatively, in the **Attach File** field, attach a file using one of the following options:
   - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
   - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
     - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.

       -OR-

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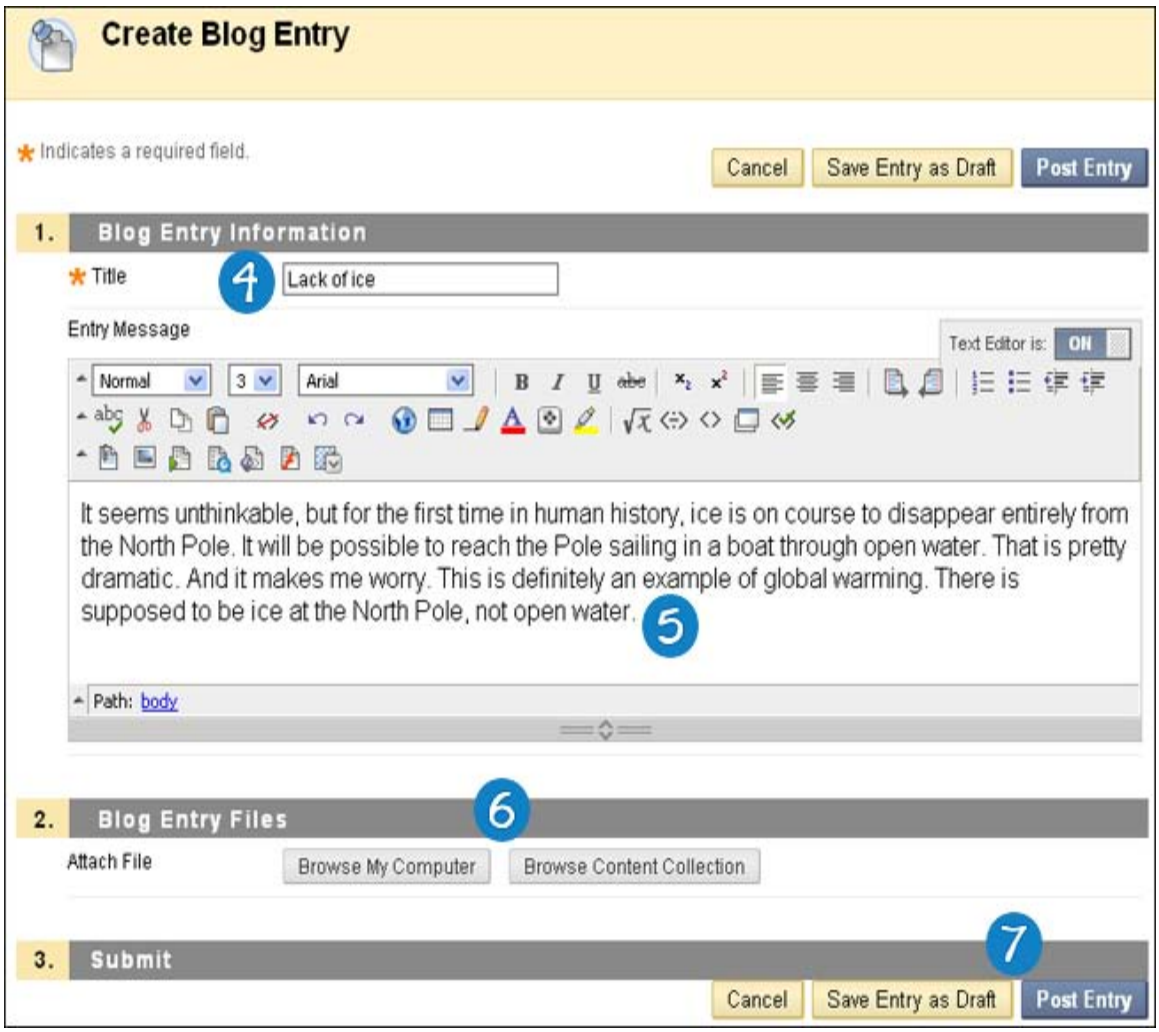
- If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

Note: Files added by students are not uploaded to the course repository.

7. Click **Post Entry**.

   -OR-

   Click **Save Entry as Draft** to save the entry for later posting.



Viewing Blog Drafts

You can save blog entries for later posting by clicking **Save Entry as Draft**. You can view these drafts by clicking **View Drafts** on the main blog page, then click the name of the blog entry.

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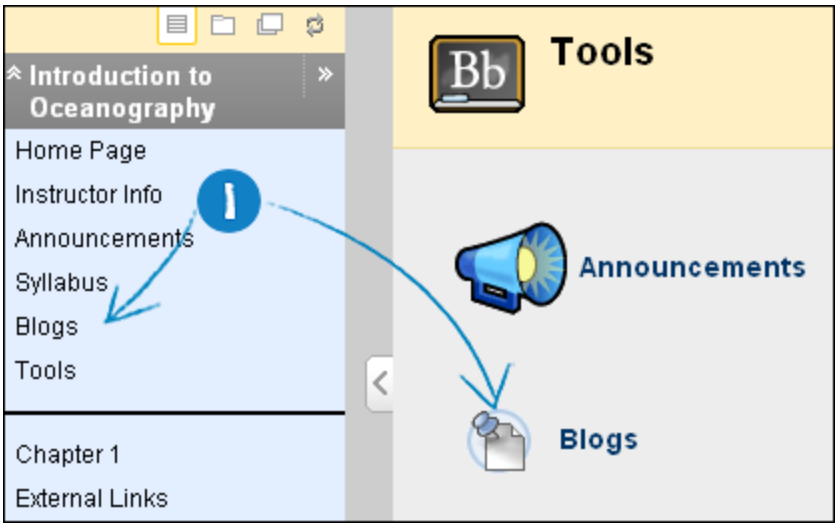
How to Comment on a Blog Entry

You can comment on one another's blog entries, whether they belong to an individual, the course, or a group. Your instructor determines if comments can be made anonymously or deleted.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Blogs**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Blogs**.



2. On the **Blogs** list page, click the name of the blog to open.

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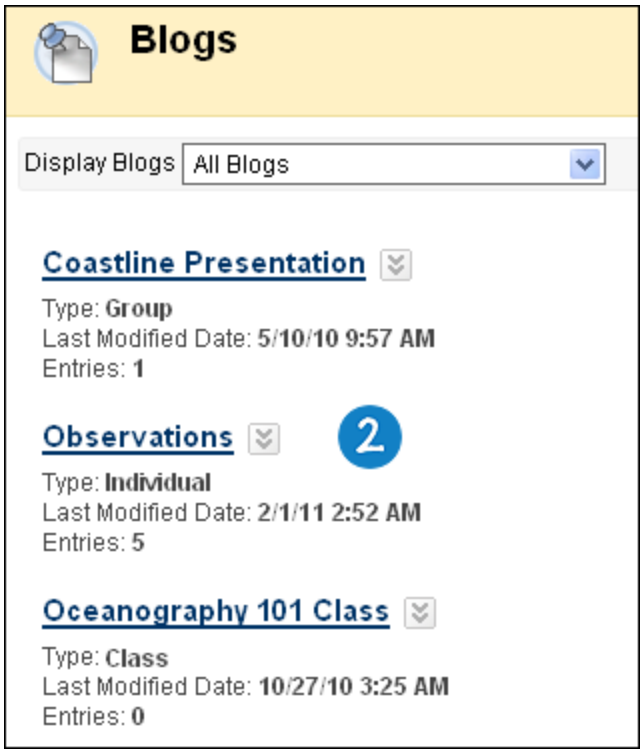

3. On the **Blog** topic page, select a blog to view by selecting the user's name in the side panel under **More Blogs** section. The user's blog entries open in the content frame.
4. Click **Comment** for the appropriate post.
5. Type a comment in the **Comment** field.
6. Click **Add**.

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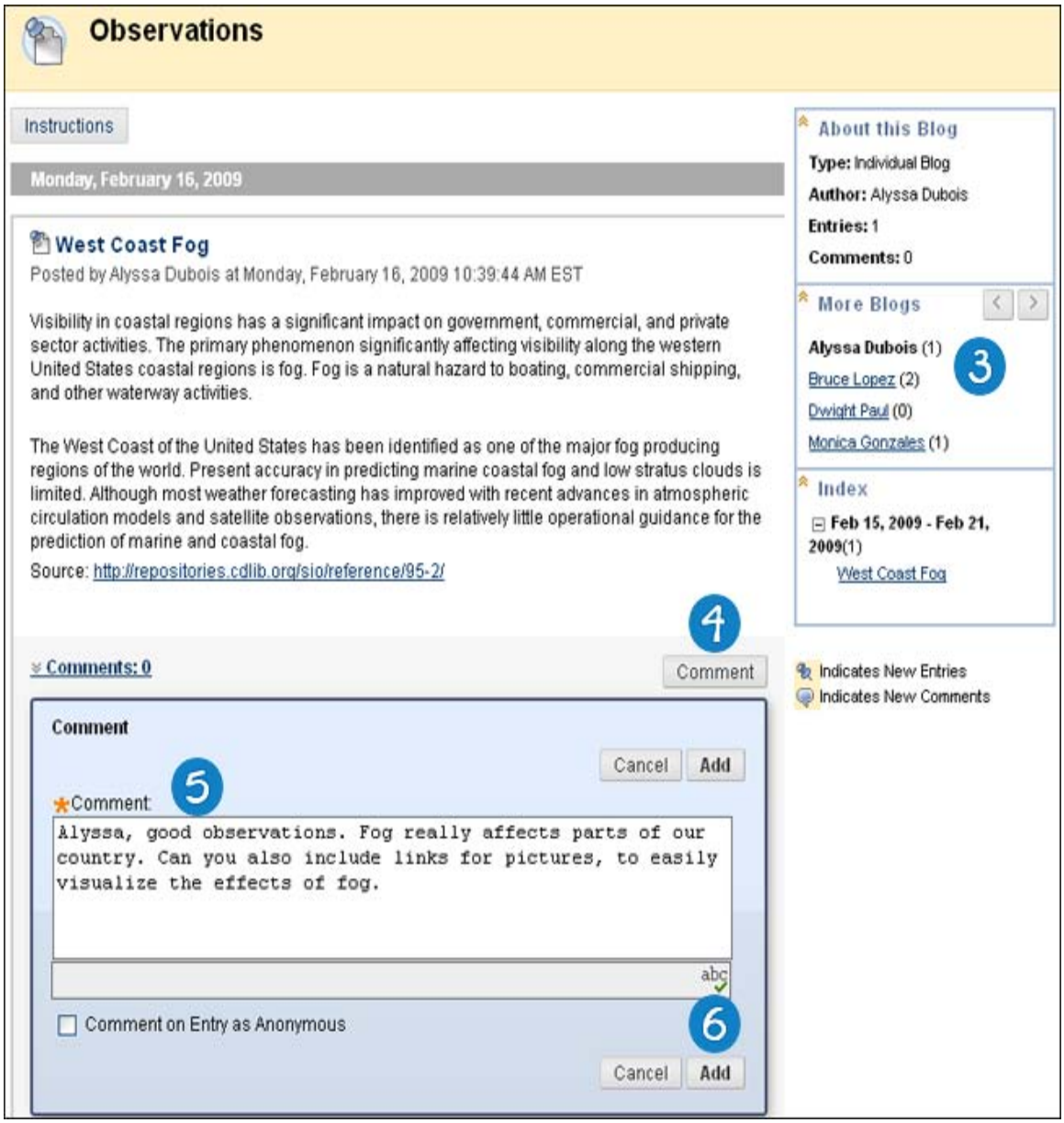

How to Edit a Blog Entry

Your instructor will determine if you are allowed to edit your blog entries. However, if you edit gradable blog entries, the original graded entry will be lost. If you edit an entry be sure to mark it as **New** so others will know you changed the post and they can read it again.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Blogs**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Blogs**.

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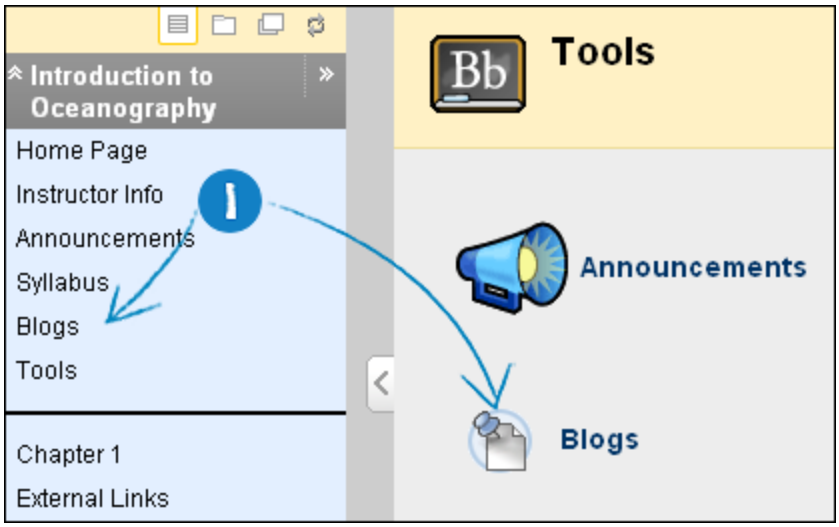
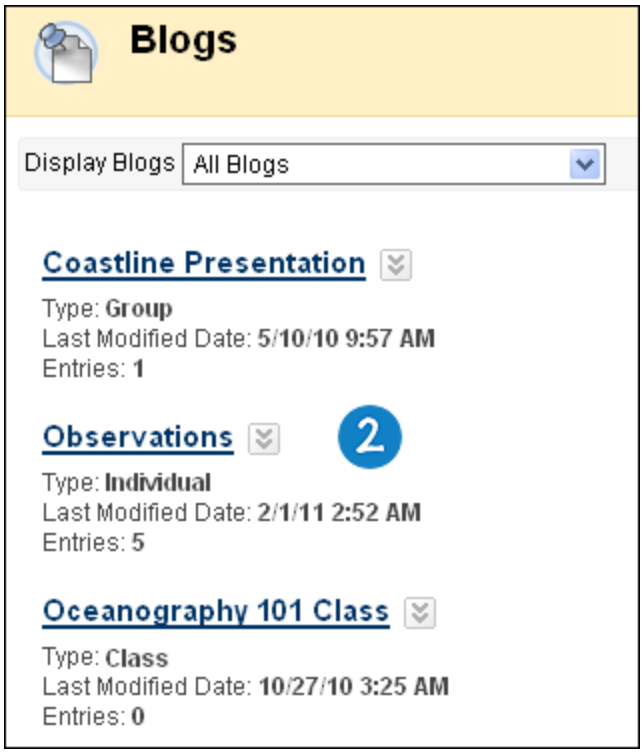


2. On the **Blogs** list page, click the name of the blog to open.



3. On the **Blog** topic page, select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the blog entry.

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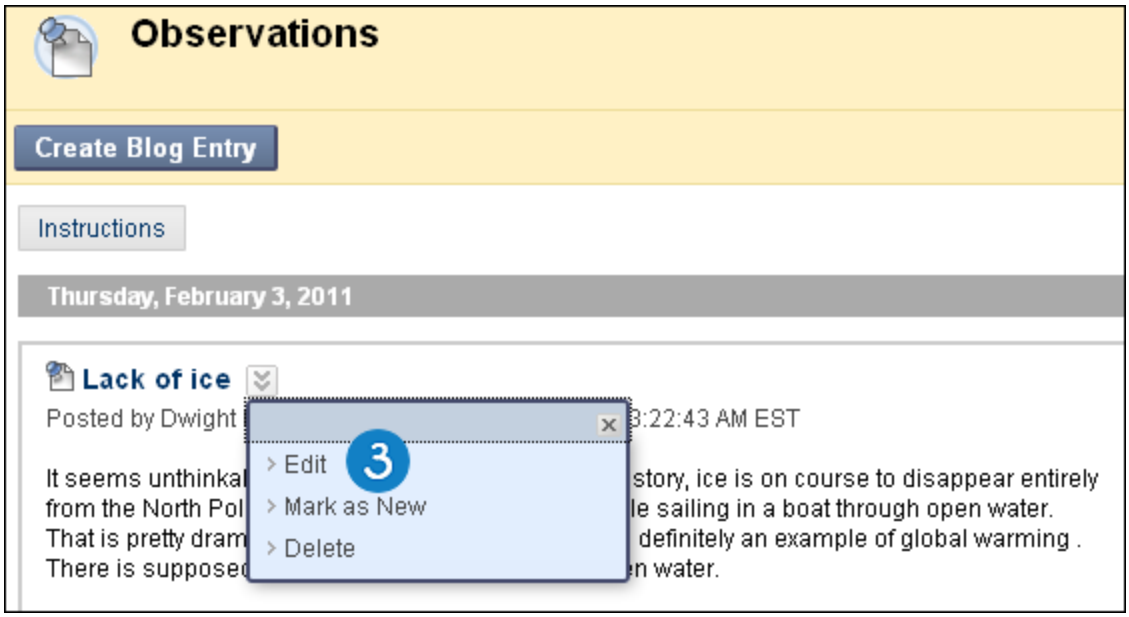

4. On the **Edit Blog Entry** page, make the necessary changes.
5. Click **Post Entry**.

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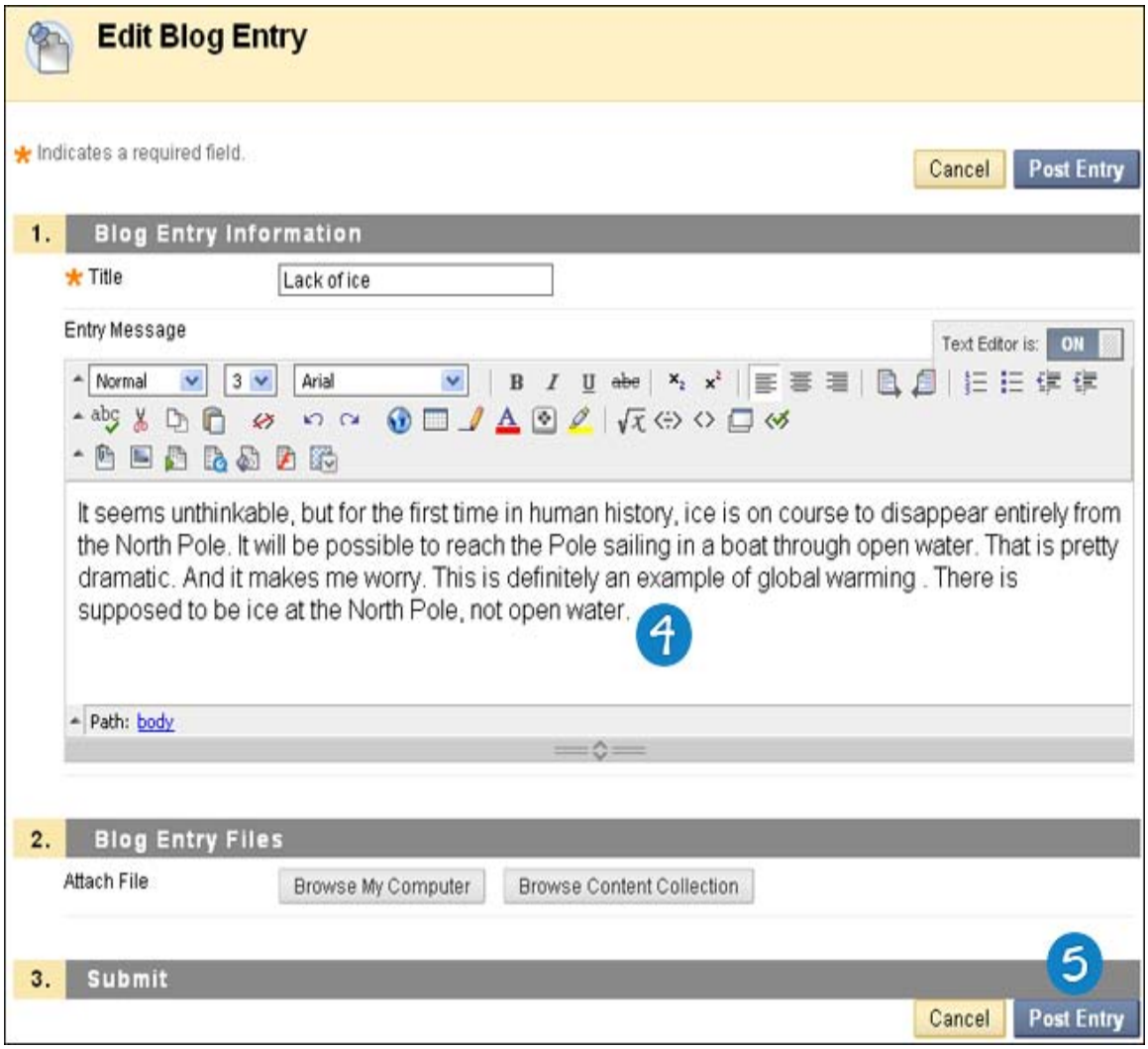

How to Delete a Blog Entry

Your instructor will determine if you are allowed to delete your blog entries. However, if you delete gradable blog entries, the original graded entry will be lost.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Blogs**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Blogs**.

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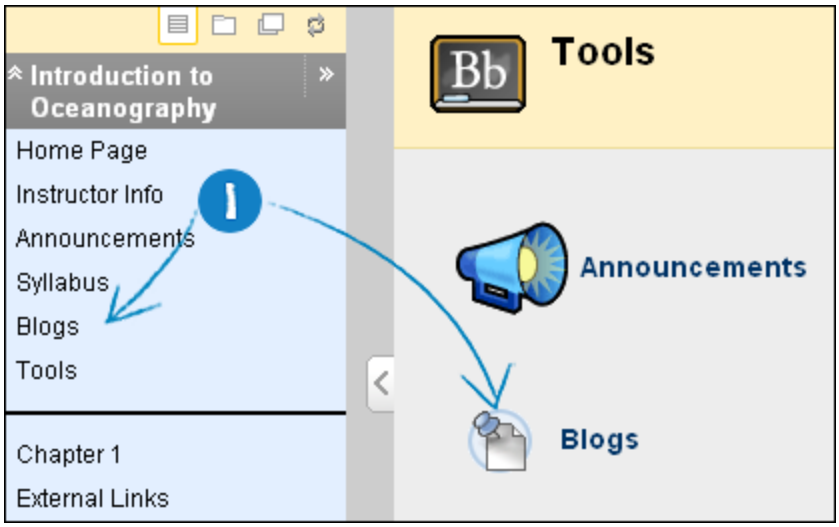
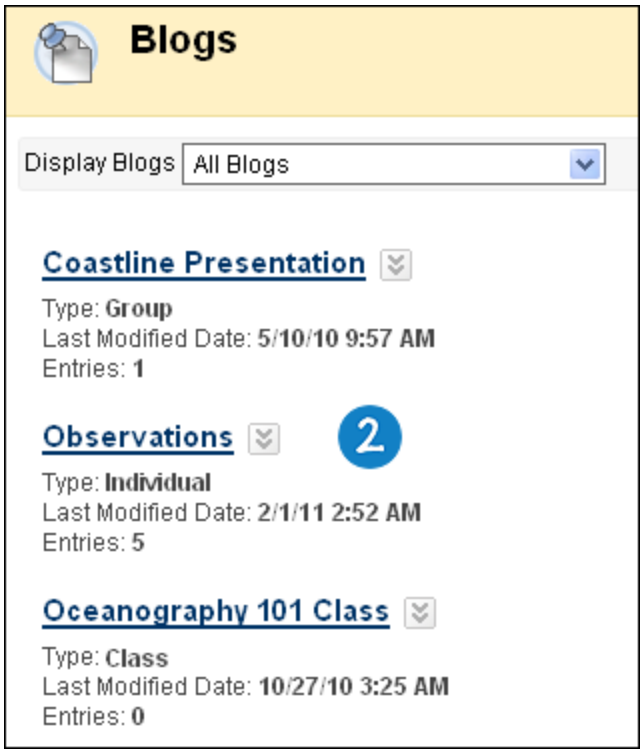


2. On the **Blogs** list page, click the name of the blog to open.



3. On the **Blog** topic page, select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the blog entry. This action is final and cannot be undone.

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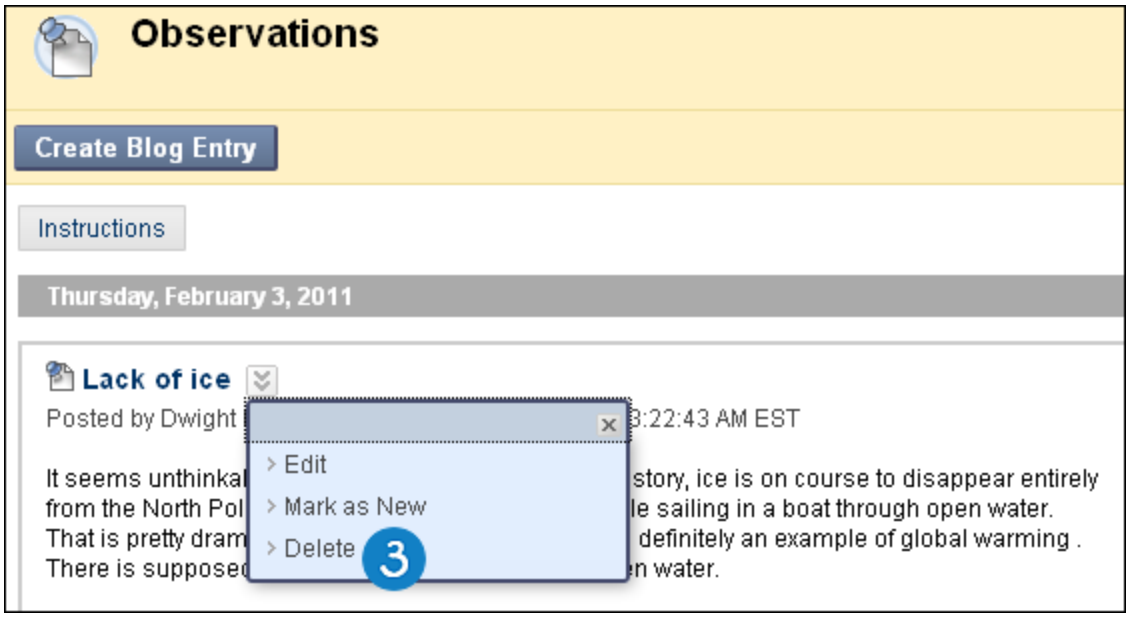
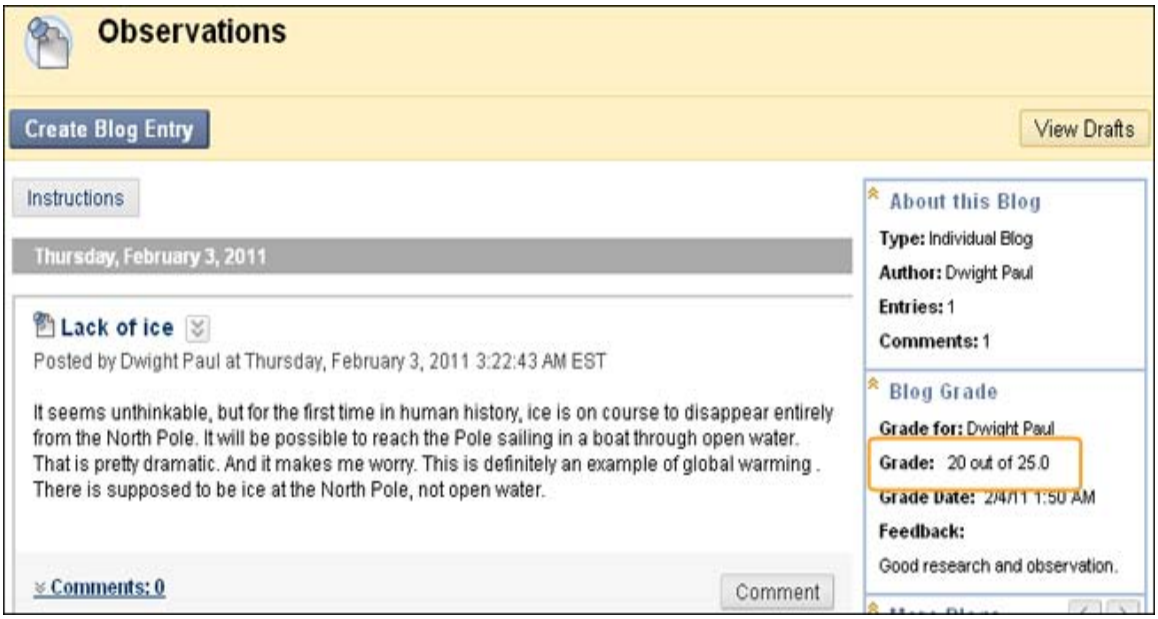


Viewing Blog Grades

When your blog entries have been graded, you can view your grade in two places . The grading information appears under **Blog Grade** section on the **Blog** topic page and in the **My Grades** tool. Any feedback and the date the grade was assigned also appear in these areas.



Troubleshooting Blog Management

- If your instructor deleted the blog while you are posting, the blog and all comments are deleted.
- If a blog is made unavailable while you are posting, the blog remains visible to your instructor in **Edit** view but is not displayed to you.

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- If the **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** setting is changed, entries remain but you cannot edit them.
- If the **Allow Users to Delete Comments** setting is changed, comments remain but you cannot edit them.

Related Tutorials Creating a Blog Entry (Flash movie | 2m 35s | 8,225 KB)

Calendar

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

The **Calendar** tool allows you to view events by day, week, month, or year. You can view and organize upcoming and past events into categories.

You will see different options in the calendar depending on where you access it. When you access the calendar outside of a course, you can view all items on your calendar and have the options to add and modify personal events. When you access the calendar through a course only those calendar items that relate to your course appear.

Course Calendar events appear to all members of the course. Common entries include upcoming tests, due dates for assignments, or special lectures. If you access the calendar while in your course, you will only see the entries you have added. If you access the calendar from the **Tools** panel in the **My Institution** tab, it includes the following:

- Your personal entries
- Entries for all courses in which you are enrolled
- Entries for any organizations in which you are enrolled
- Institution-wide events

How to Open the Calendar

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Calendar**.

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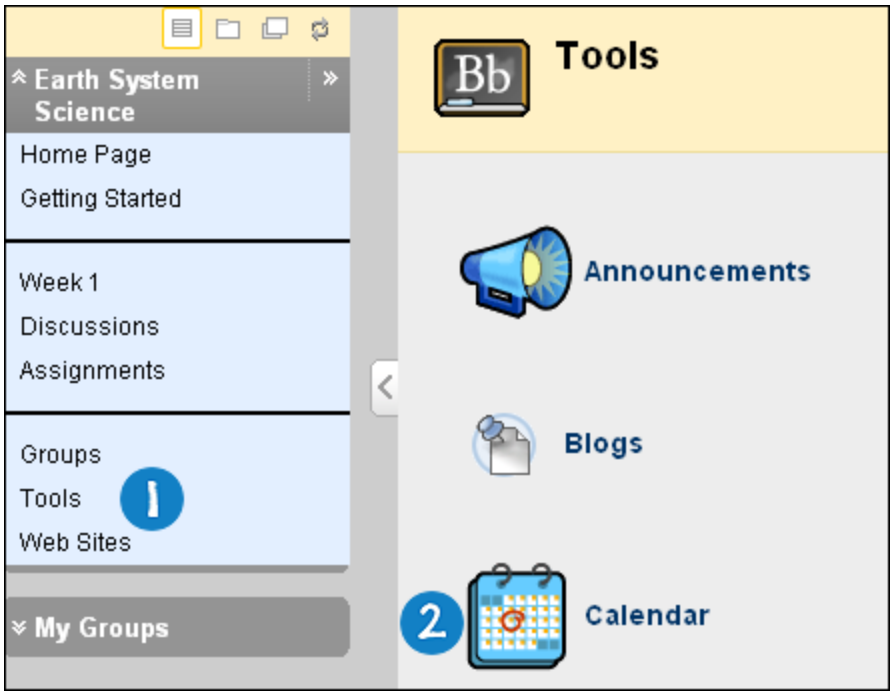
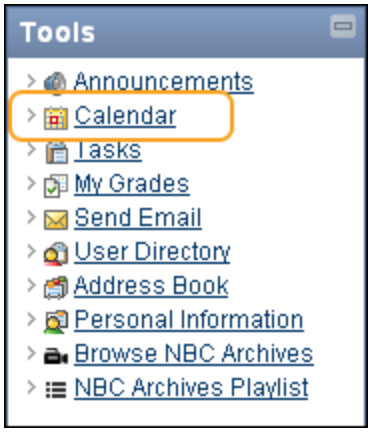


-OR-

On the **Tools** panel, select **Calendar**.



How to Create a Personal Event

1. On the **Tools** panel, clink **Calendar**.
2. On the **Personal Calendar** page, click **Create Personal Event**.

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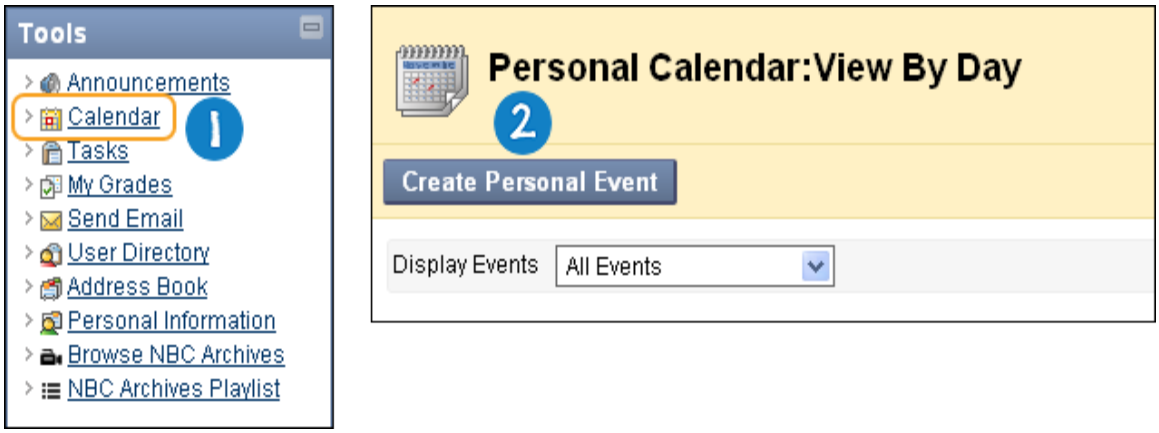

3. On the **Create Personal Event** page, type the **Event Name.**
4. Type a **Description**.
5. Use the **Date** and **Time** fields to select an **Event Time** or use the **Date Selection Calendar** to select the date, and **Time Selection Menu** to select the time.
6. Click **Submit**.

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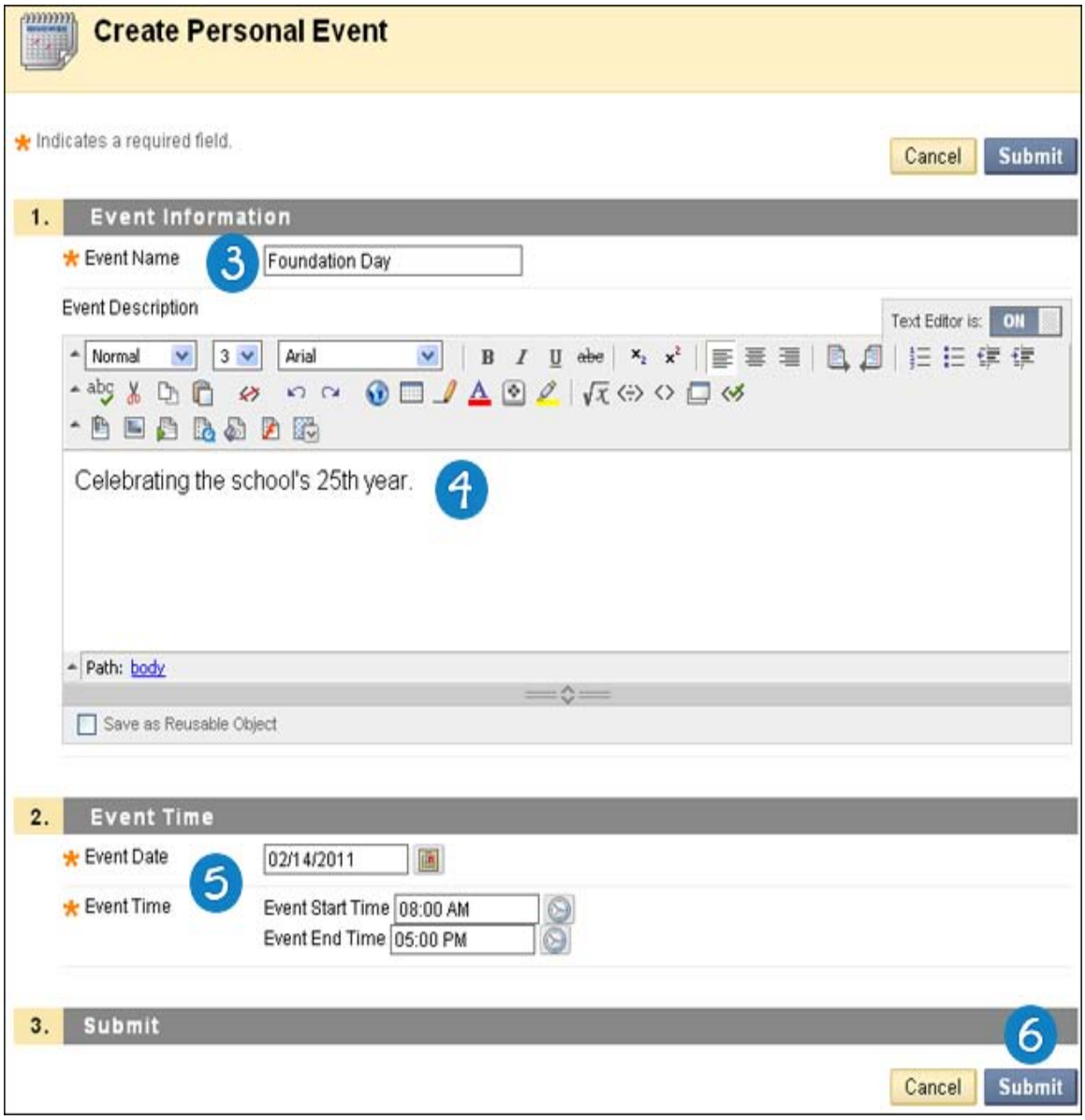

How to Delete and Edit a Personal Event

1. On the **Tools** panel, clink **Calendar**.
2. To delete a personal event, on the **Personal Calendar** page, navigate to the date of the event to delete. Select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the event.

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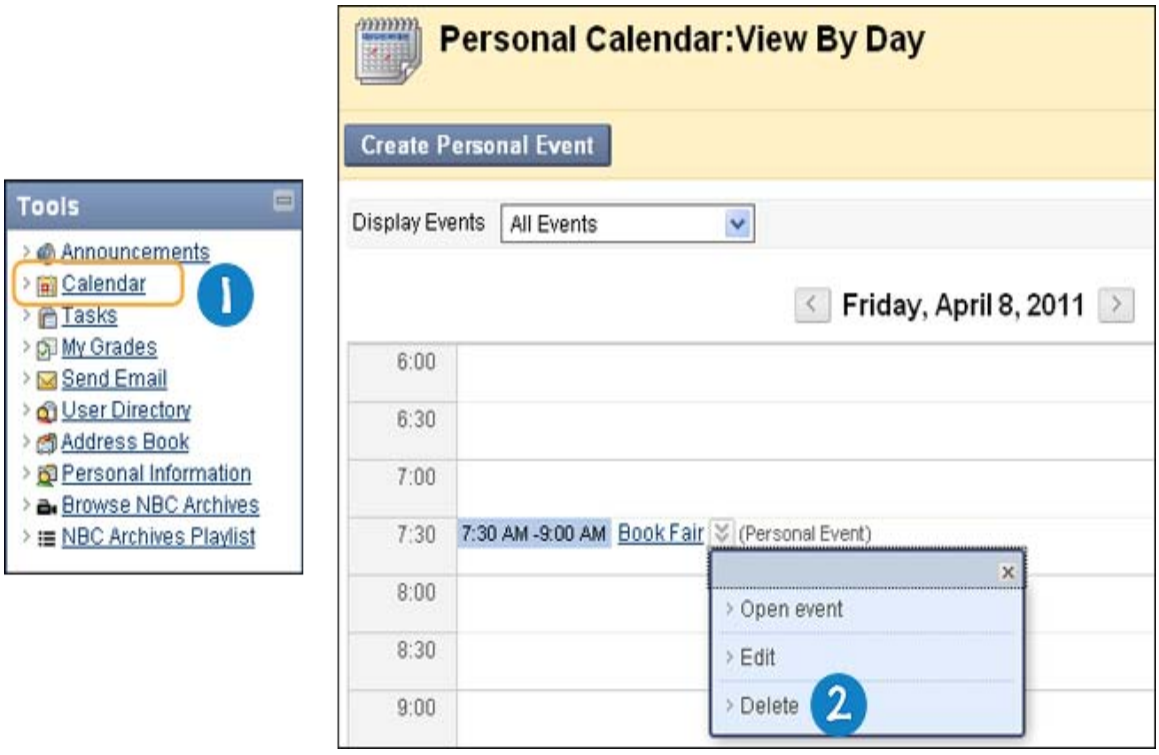

-OR-

To edit a personal event, on the **Personal Calendar** page, navigate to the date of the event to edit. Select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the event.

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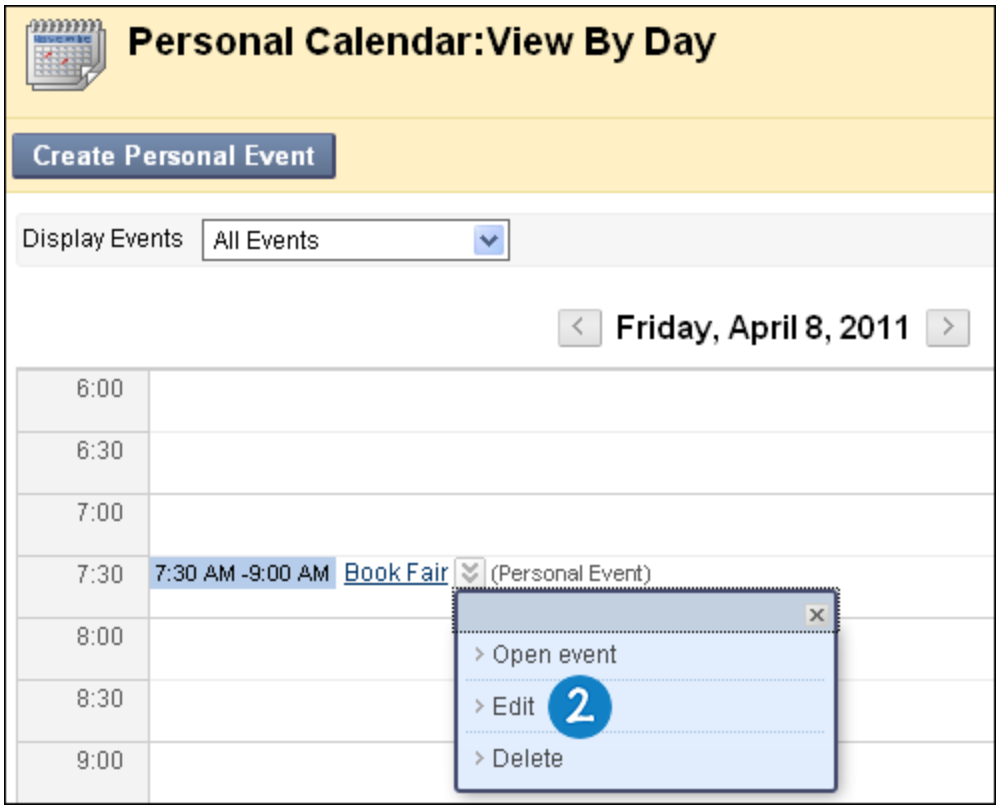

How to View a Specific Date

Students can view the calendar by day, week, month, year or by specific date. If viewed by month, only the first few characters of the event title appear on the Calendar. Click the link for details.

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Calendar**.
2. On the **Personal Calendar** page, click **Jump To**.

3. On the **Calendar Quick Jump** pop-up window, type a date in the **Select a Date** field (using the `mm/dd/yyyy` format) or use the **Date Selection Calendar** to select a date.
4. Select the **Month**, **Week**, or **Day** options to **Select the type of view**.

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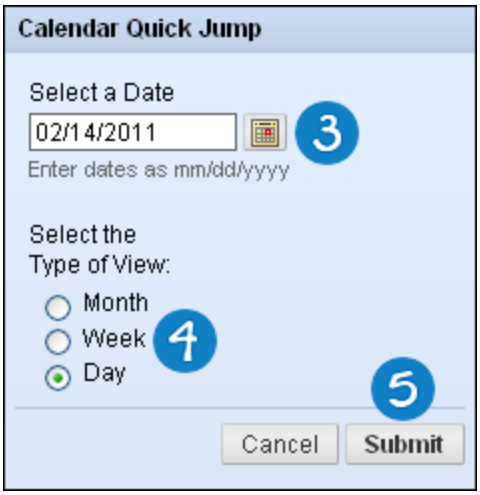
5. Click **Submit**.



Collaboration Tools

About Collaboration Tools

The Collaboration tools allow you to participate in real-time lessons and discussions. Examples of these sessions include real-time, online discussions, TA sessions, and live question and answer forums. Archives of previous sessions are also available for review. Guest speakers can also lead sessions using the Collaboration tools. You can search for and join Collaboration sessions and view session archives.

Course groups can also use the Collaboration tools for private sessions open only to course group members.

The following Collaboration tools are available.

- Virtual Classroom: Virtual Classroom is a shared online environment where you can participate in a real-time discussion with other users, access the web, and engage in question and answer sessions. You may also access the whiteboard to display text and images.
- Chat: Chat is an exchange of text messages online, and part of the Virtual Classroom. You can access Chat separately. Chat allows you to open just the chat function.

Note: An accessible version of the Virtual Classroom tool is available. A link to this version appears when you join a session on the **Collaboration Sessions** page.

Before You Begin

- The Java 2 RunTime Environment is required to use the Collaboration tools. The plug-in may be downloaded from the page that appears when you join a Collaboration session. You must enable pop-ups to successfully run a Collaboration tool.
- For those users that want to use Safari, you must disable the Pop-Up Window Blocking.

Accessing the Collaboration Sessions Area

On the Course Menu, select **Tools**. On the **Tools** page, select **Collaboration**.

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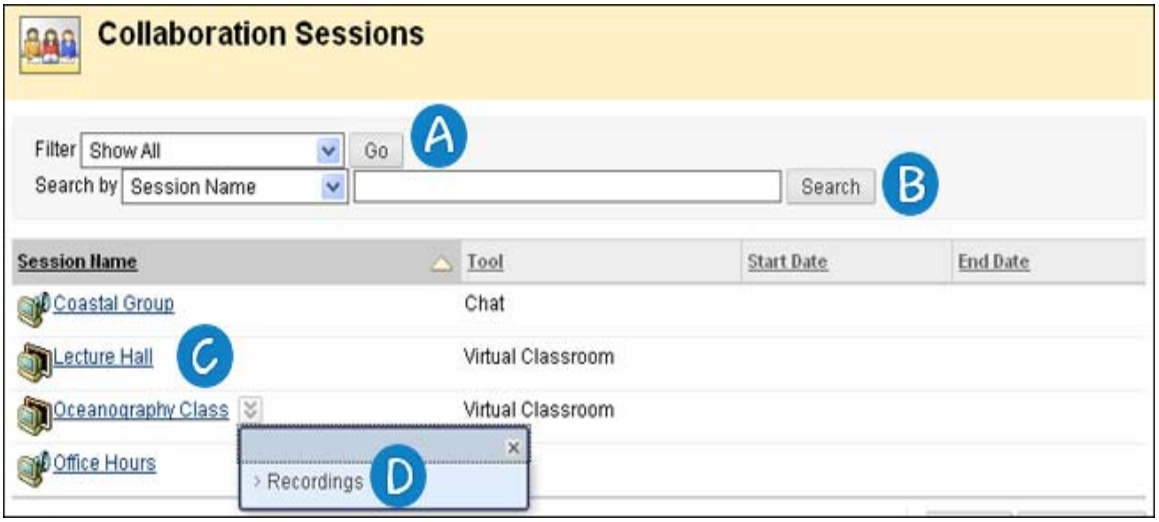

A **Filter**: You can filter the sessions listed on the page. Click the arrow next to the drop-down list and select the type of session to display and click **Go**:

- **Show All**: The default filter that displays all of the Collaboration sessions.
- **Available Sessions**: Displays all of the sessions that are in use.
- **Session with Recordings**: Displays completed sessions that have an archive.
- **Future Sessions**: Displays sessions that are scheduled to take place in the future.

B **Search**: You can search for a specific session by clicking the **Session Name**, **Start Date**, or **End Date** option and then type a value in the field. Click **Search**.

C **Join**: You can enter a session by clicking the **Session Name**.

D **Recordings**: You can access the recordings for a session. Select **Recordings** from the contextual menu for the session.

User Roles

By default, participants are Active Users when they enter a collaboration session. At any time, your instructor can change your role to Passive. Passive Users can view the exchange, but can contribute only if they raise their hands and are granted permission by the Moderator.

Your instructor might change your role to Passive if you are dominating the conversation or responding inappropriately.

The following three roles are available in a collaboration session:

- ***The Moderator*** is represented by a globe icon. The Moderator is typically the instructor. The Moderator can modify participant roles, grant passive users permission to participate, expel users, and record and end the session.
- ***An Active User*** is represented by a full color icon. By default, Active Users can send messages as often as they like during a chat session.
- ***A Passive User*** is represented by a gray toned icon. Passive Users can observe the chat exchange, but must raise their hands to request permission to send messages. If more than one student raises their hands, numbers are assigned to the handraise icons to represent the order they raised their hands.

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Virtual Classroom

About Virtual Classroom

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

You can ask questions, draw on the whiteboard, and participate in breakout sessions from the Virtual Classroom.

Note: Before joining a Virtual Classroom session, follow the checklist below to make sure that your computer is set up properly.

- Be sure to turn off any pop-up blockers that may be enabled on your Internet browser. Don't forget to disable any additional pop-up blockers that may be enabled in your browser toolbar, for example, Yahoo or Google toolbars.
- Make sure that you have the required Sun Java plug-in.
- Try joining the Virtual Classroom session well in advance of the scheduled session to ensure that the tool loads properly.

How to Open the Virtual Classroom

1. On the Course Menu, select **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.

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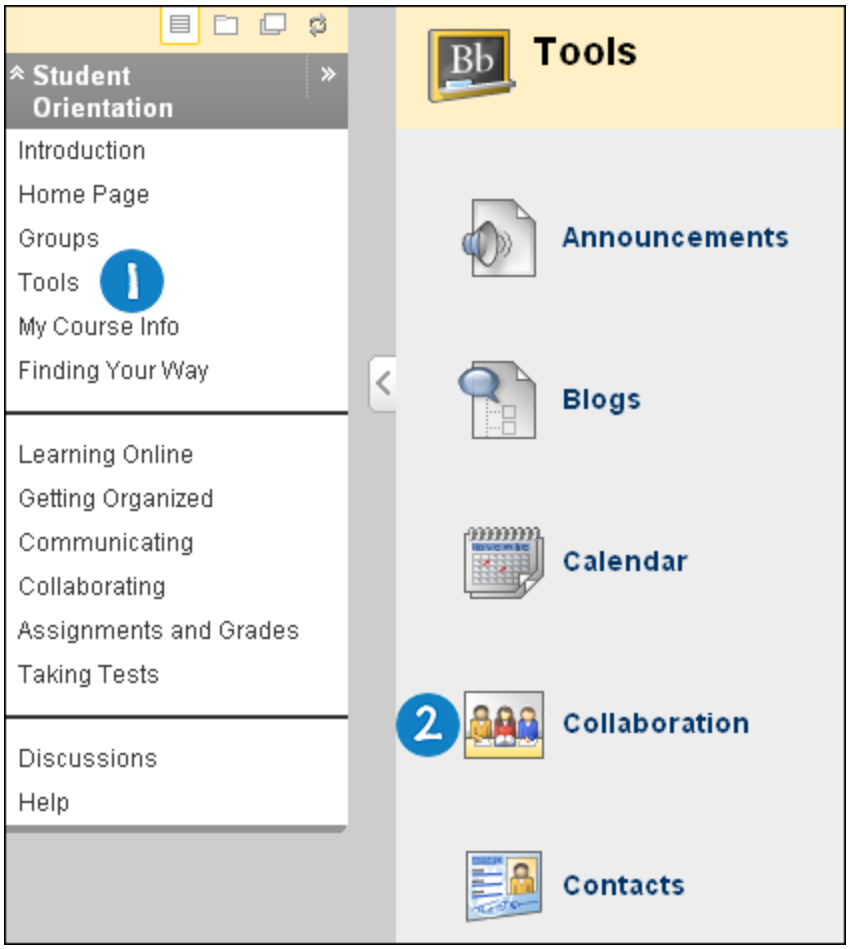
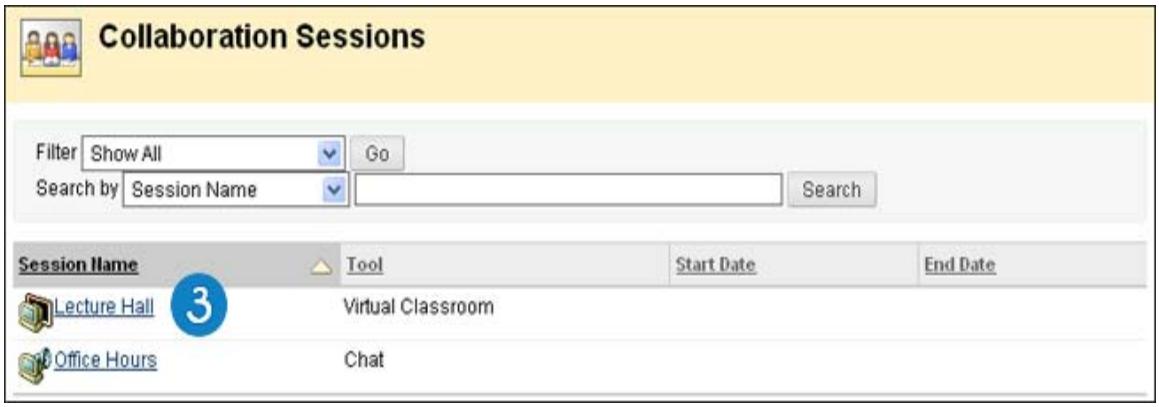


3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name** next to a Virtual Classroom session.



Virtual Classroom Areas

When you launch the Virtual Classroom, it appears in a new window.

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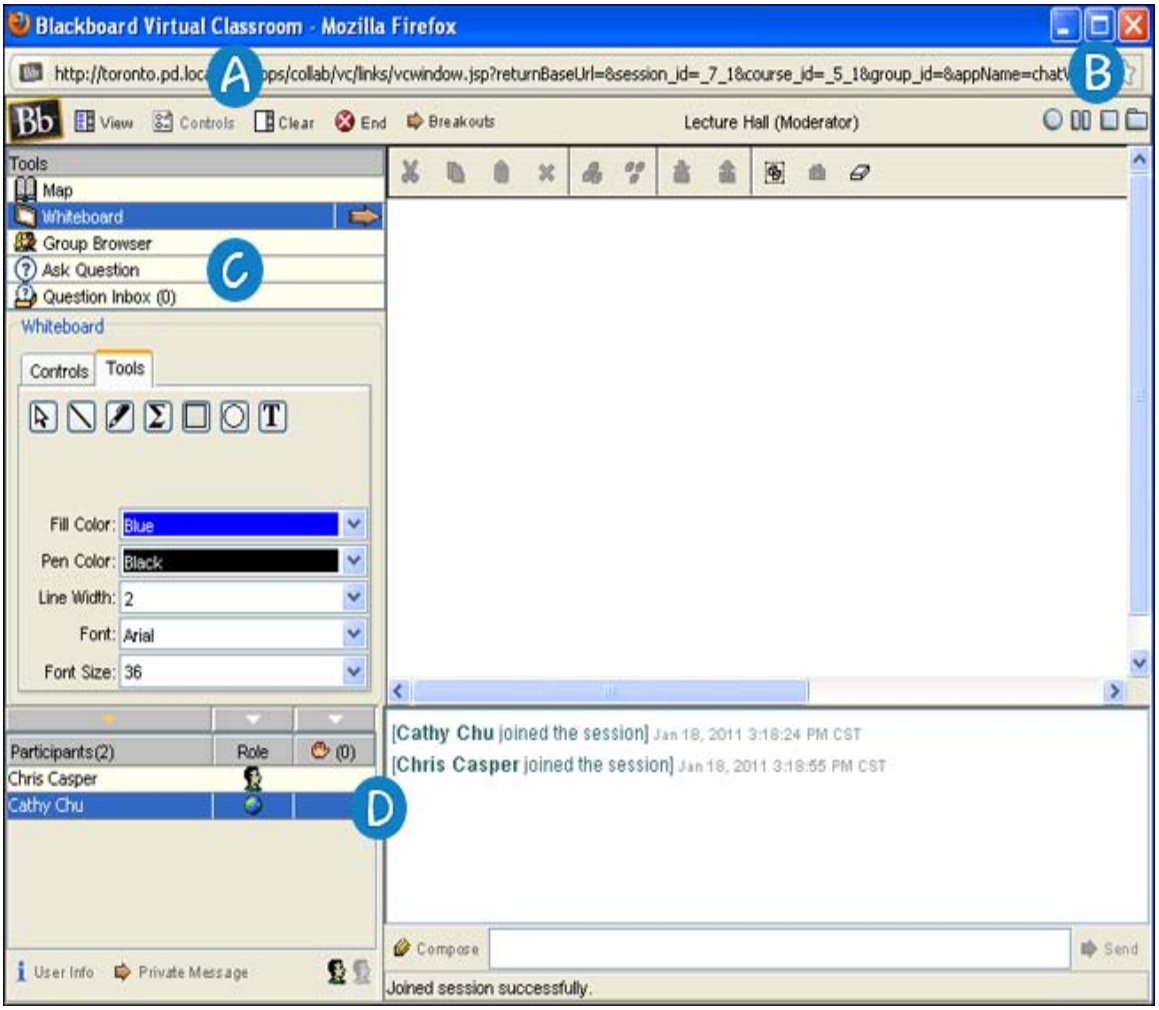

A **Menu Bar**: Allows your instructor l to control the Virtual Classroom. This includes managing participation, selecting user access rights, ending the sessions, and monitoring breakout session.

B **Recording Tool**: Allows you to record Virtual Classroom sessions.

C **Tools**: Includes all the tools used during the Virtual Classroom session. This includes accessing the Course Map, utilizing the Whiteboard, searching for website, and asking and answering questions .

D **Chat**: Allows you to compose messages, raise hand to ask questions, and activate private messages.

Virtual Classroom Menu Bar and Record Menu

Group Collaboration Sessions have additional Session Manager features including a Menu Bar and a Record Menu.

Menu Bar

Only users with active privileges can access the options on the menu bar.

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- **View**: Choose an option for viewing personal messages in the Virtual Classroom. Select **Show in-line** to view private messages within the chat area. Select **Show in separate frame** to view private messages in a separate window.
- **Controls**: Allows the session moderator to select the features each user may access.
- **Clear**: Erase the user's chat display.
- **End**: Ends the Collaboration session.
- **Breakouts**: Create a breakout room for a group of users.
    - Select the check boxes for the users who will participate in the breakout session. You may only join a breakout session if you are selected by the session's creator.
    - Users who enter a breakout session are still active in the main Virtual Classroom session. If a breakout session is closed users are still active in the main session. Breakout sessions default to the same settings as the main session.

Record Menu

You can record and save the sessions created in groups. Recordings can be started, paused, and stopped during the session. A session can have more than one archive.

The following table details the functions available with Record menu.

Function	Action
	Click **Begins recording** to create the transcript. Information is recorded as participants exchange messages. More than one recording can be created per session. ***Note:*** Clicking the **Begins recording** function again when recording is already in progress will stop the recording.
	Click **Pauses Recording** to temporarily stop the recording. The chat display panel and the transcript will indicate the recording has been paused. Click it again to resume recording.
	Click **Stops Recording** to end the recording. Once a chat session has been stopped, it is not possible to add to the recording. ***Tip:*** If you end a recording in error, simply click the **Begins recording** function to start another transcript. Title the next recording "Part Two" or "Continued."

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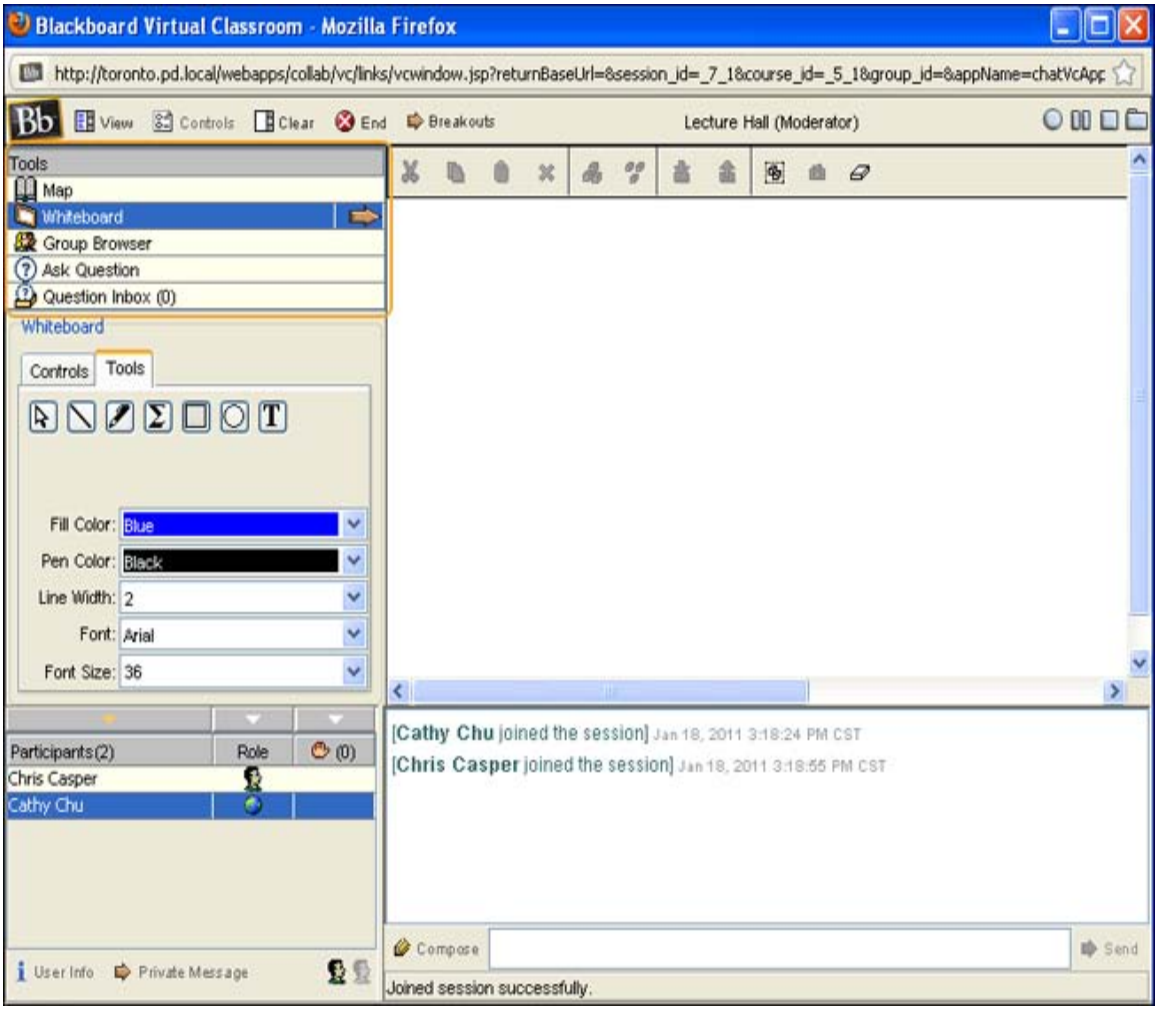
Function	Action
	Click **Bookmark** to add comments to the recording. For instance, make a note that you are about to introduce a new topic. When adding bookmark comments, remember students can view recordings. Bookmarks will appear in a different color than the chat text.

Virtual Classroom Tools

If granted access to these tools by your instructor, you can view the Course Map, use the Whiteboard, access websites, and ask questions.

Classroom tools appear on the left side of the Virtual Classroom. To begin using items in the **Tools** area, click the name of the tool.



Virtual Classroom Course Map

The Course Map enables you to browse the course while in a Virtual Classroom. You must have active privileges to use the Course Map in a Virtual Classroom.

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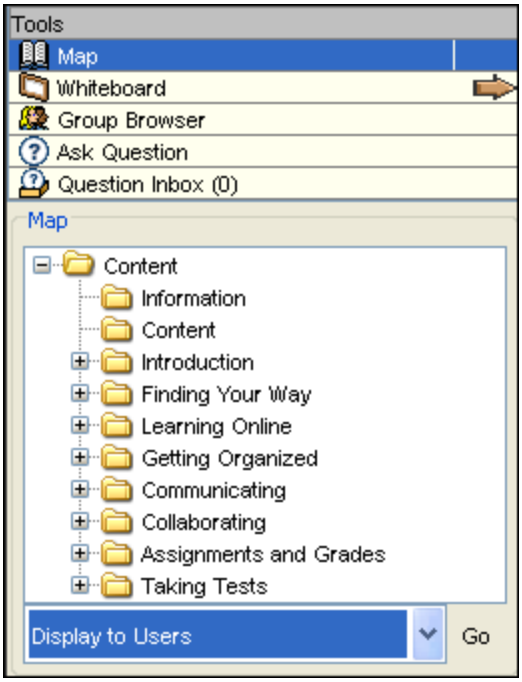

The following table details the available functions in the Course Map.

Function	Action
Display an element on the map to all users	Click the Content Area in the Map and select **Display To Users** in the drop-down list. Click **Go**.
Display an element on the map in a separate window	Click the Content Area in the Map and select **Preview in New Window** in the drop-down list. Click **Go**. The new window is only visible to the user who opens it.
Refresh the map during a Collaboration session	Select **Refresh Tree** in the drop-down list. Click **Go**. This edits the map to match the Course Menu.

Virtual Classroom Whiteboard

The Virtual Classroom **Whiteboard** enables you to present different types of information as you would on a whiteboard in a classroom. Using the tools in the Whiteboard tools palette, you can draw images, type text, and present equations. Your instructor determines whether these functions are available.

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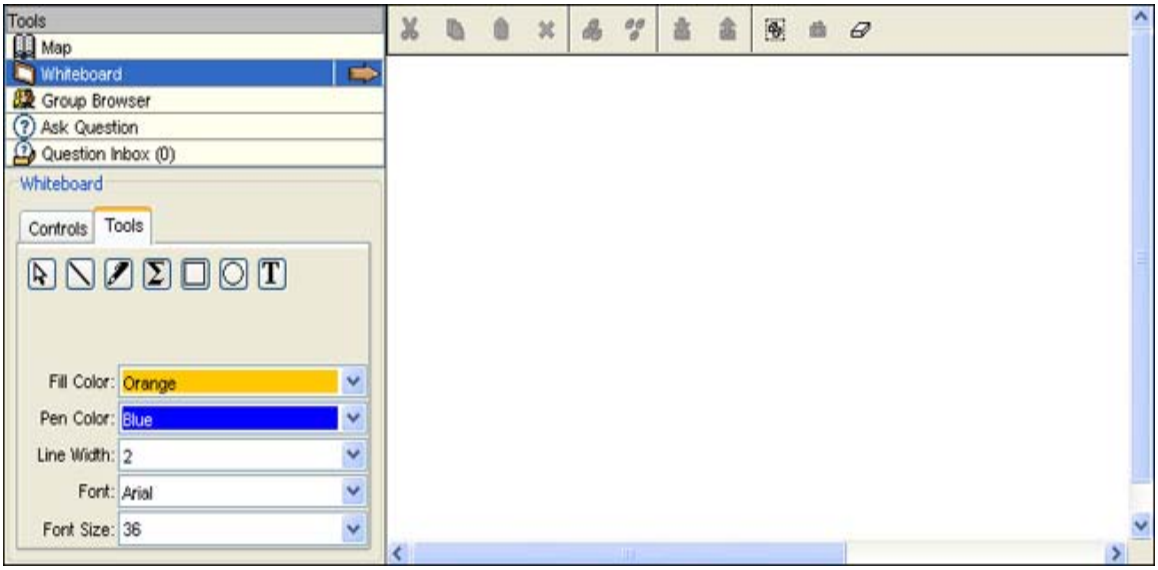

The following table details the tools available for use on the **Whiteboard**.

Function	Description	Action
	Select an item	Click the **Arrow** tool and then click on an item for selection. You can perform the following options on selected items: • Enlarge: Click one of the small black boxes that surround the item and drag it to the desired size. • Move: Click the item and move it to the appropriate location. • Cut: Click the Whiteboard item and then click the **Cut** icon. • Copy: Click the Whiteboard item and then click the **Copy** icon. • Paste: Click the Whiteboard item and then click the **Paste** icon. • Delete: Click the Whiteboard item, click the selected object, and then click the **Delete** icon. • Group items: Click the Whiteboard items and then click the **Group** icon. • Ungroup: Click a Whiteboard item in a group and then click the **Ungroup** icon. • Bring front: Click the Whiteboard item, click the selected object, and then click the **Bring to front** icon. • Bring back: Click the Whiteboard item, click the selected object, and then click the **Send to back** icon. • Select all figures on the Whiteboard and then click the **Selects all Figures** icon.
	Draw free hand	Click the **Pen** tool. Choose the color of the pen in the **Fill Color** drop-down list.
	Type text using the keyboard	Click the text tool (**T**) and then click the Whiteboard area. A Whiteboard Text Input box appears. Type the text in the box and click **Insert**. Use the options in the Tools palette to select color, font, and size.
	Draw a straight line	Click the Slanted Line tool.
	Draw a square	Click the **Square** tool. Choose the color of the square from the **Fill Color** drop-down list.
	Draw a circle	Click the **Oval** tool. Choose the color of the circle from the **Fill Color** drop-down list.

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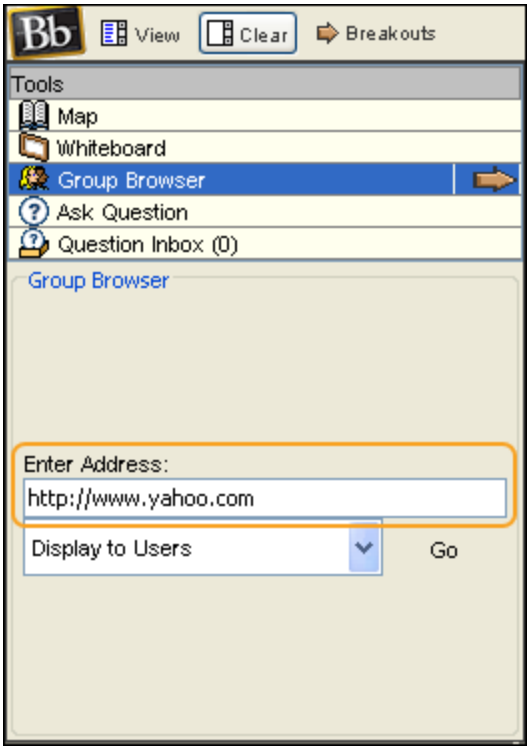
Function	Description	Action
Σ	Input an equation	Click The Math and Science Equation Editor icon (**?**). The Equation Editor appears. Input the equation and click **Insert Equation**.

Virtual Classroom Group Browser

The Group Browser enables you to collaboratively browse the web. This tool opens a URL that is viewable by all users. URL's used in the session are recorded in the archive if one is created. The Blackboard administrator determines whether this function is made available to users.

How to Open a Website

Type the URL in the **Enter Address** field. Click **Go**.



How to Choose Where to Display the Website

Click **Display To Users** to display the website in the Whiteboard, or click **Preview in New Window** to open the website in a new browser window. The preview window is only displayed to the user that opened it.

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How to Ask a Question in the Virtual Classroom

If allowed by your instructor, you can ask questions during the session. As you submit questions during the session, your instructor can view and respond to them.

1. On the **Ask Question** area, click **Compose**.
2. On the **Submit Question** pop-up window, type the question in the text box.

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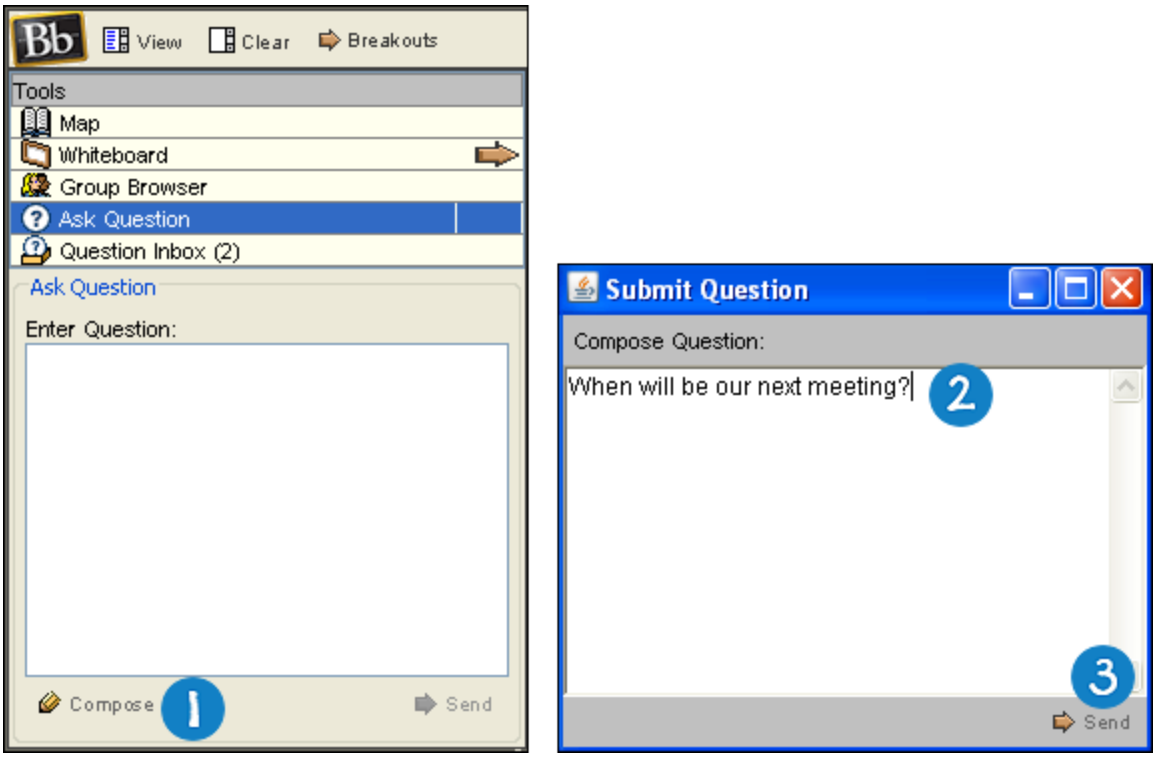
3. Click **Send**.



Virtual Classroom Question Inbox

Questions from users are sent to the **Question Inbox** during the Virtual Classroom session. The **Question Inbox** is used to manage and respond to questions during a Collaboration session.

How to Respond to a Question

1. In the **From** list, click the username.
2. Click the **Respond to Question** icon.

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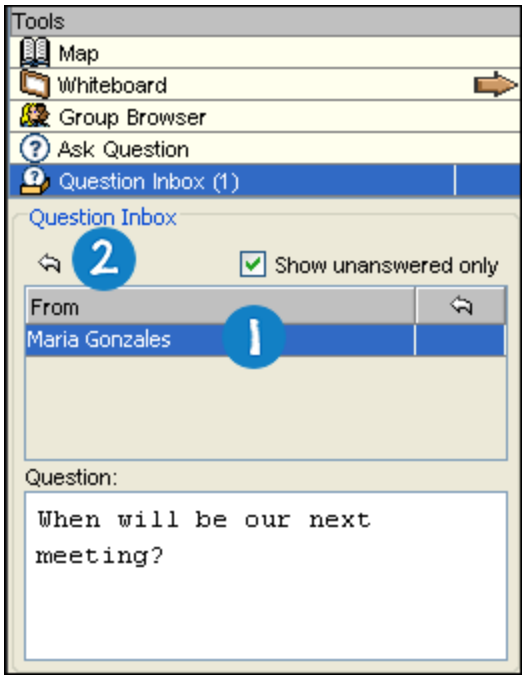
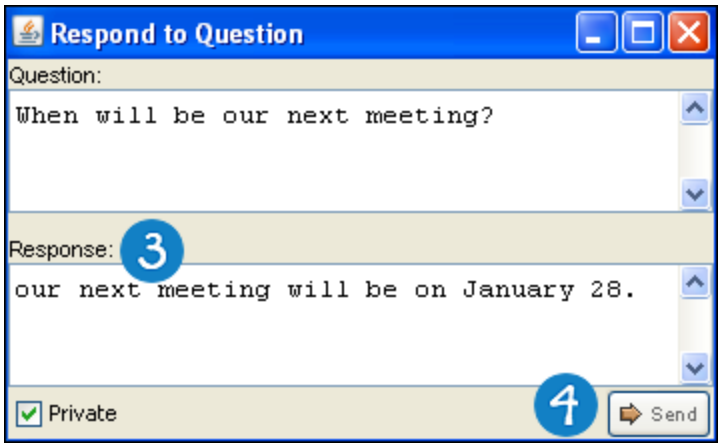


3. On the **Respond to Question** pop-up window, type your message in the **Response** text box.
4. Click **Send**.



How to Delete a Question

1. In the **From** list, click the username.
2. Click the **Delete** icon.

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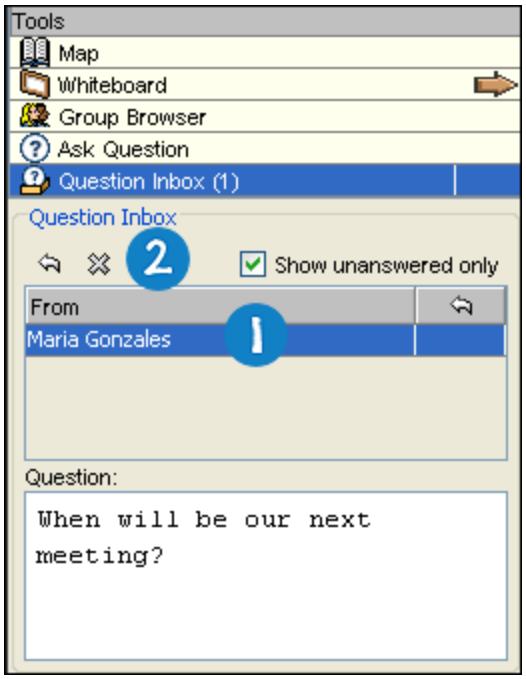

How to View Unanswered Question

Select the check box next to **Show unanswered only**.

Respond to Question Fields

When you click the **Respond to Question** icon, the **Respond to Question** window appears.

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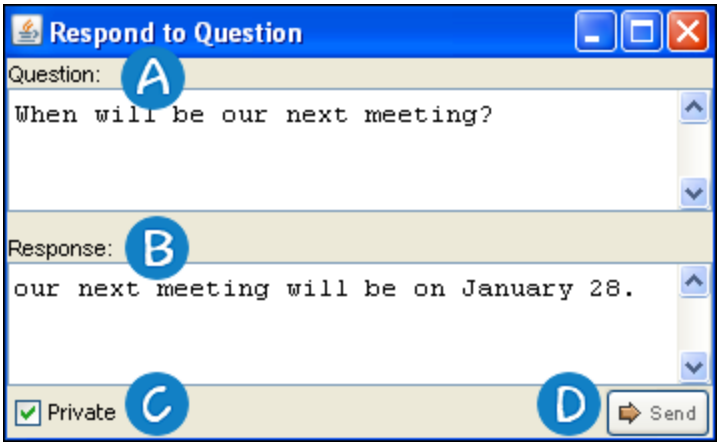

A **Question**: Display the question that was submitted.

B **Response**: Use to provide the response to the question.

C **Private**: Select this check box to make the response to the question private. If marked private, the response is only sent to the person who submitted the message.

D **Send**: Send the response to the person who submitted the message.

Chat

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

The Chat tool allows you to interact with other users using a text-based chat. Chat is part of the Virtual Classroom. It can also be accessed separately. Some of the functions in the Chat are limited to those users with an active role.

How to Join Chat

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.

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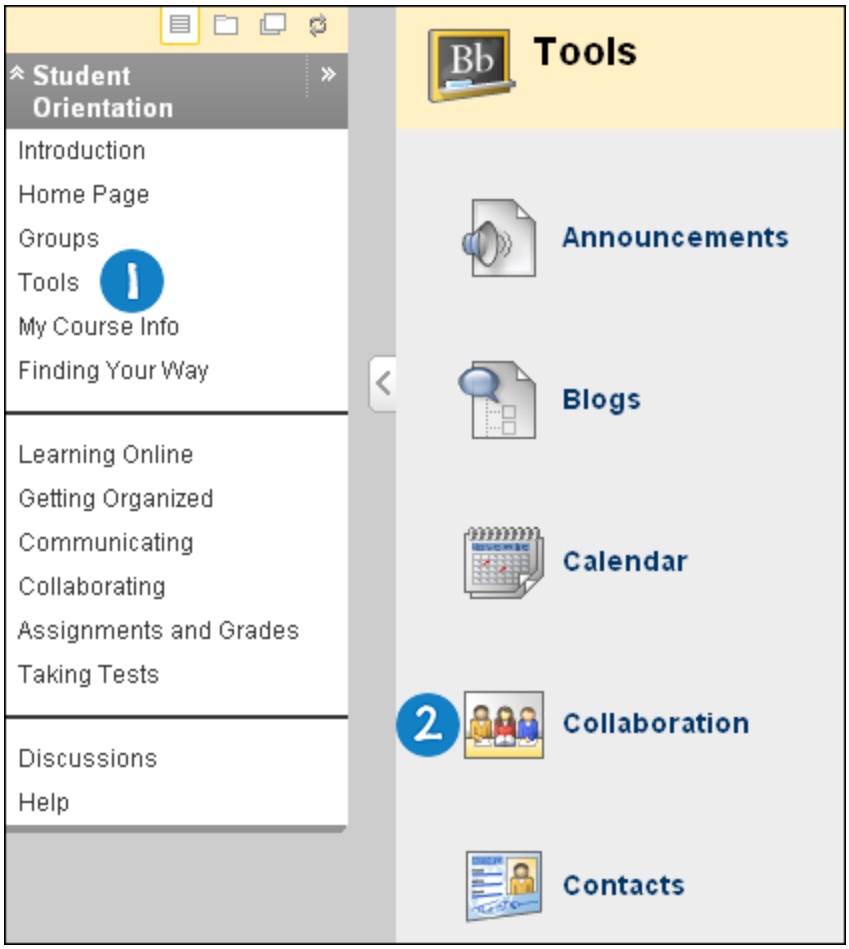
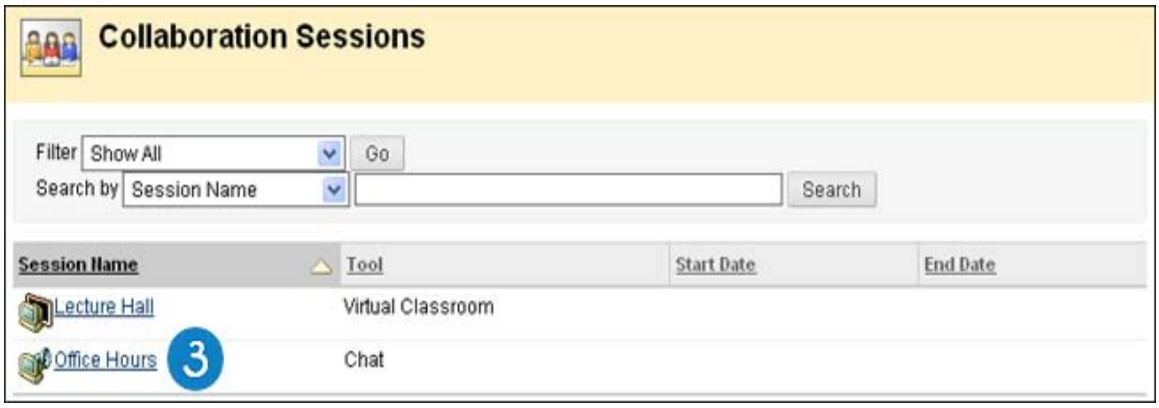


3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name** next to a Chat session.



How to Send Chat Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.

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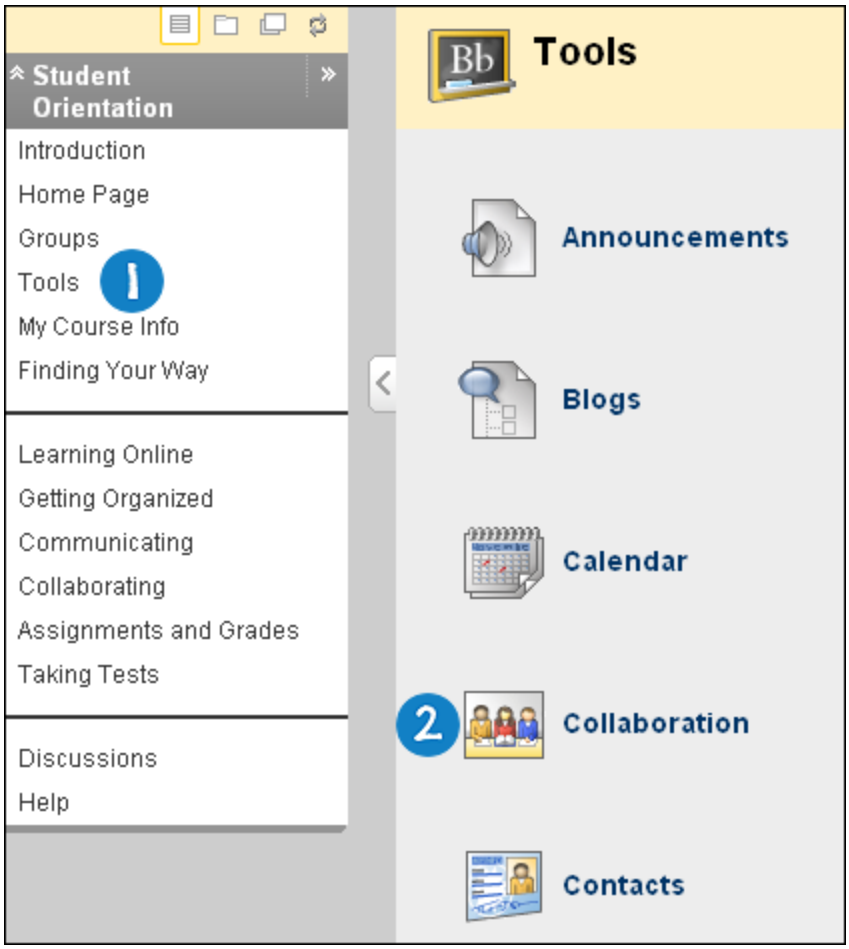
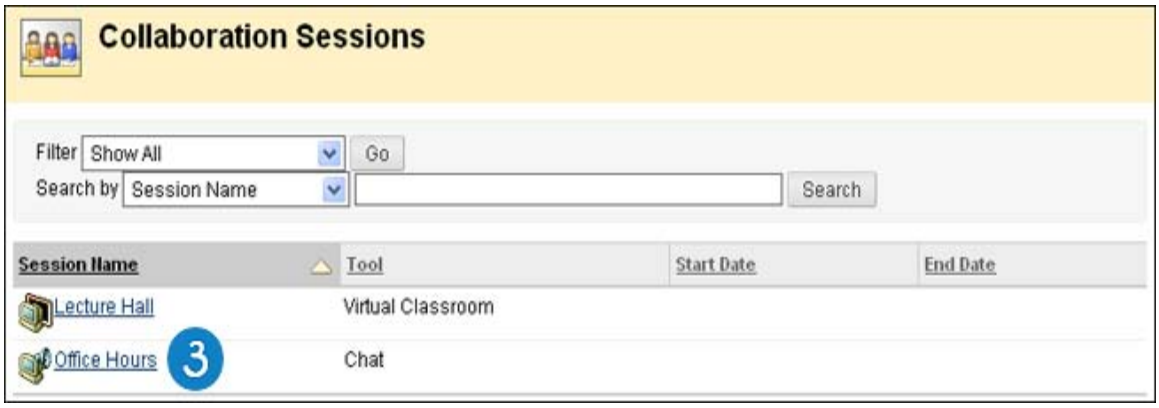


3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the **Session Name** next to a Chat session.



4. On the **Chat** window, type your message in the **Compose** text box.
5. Click **Send**.

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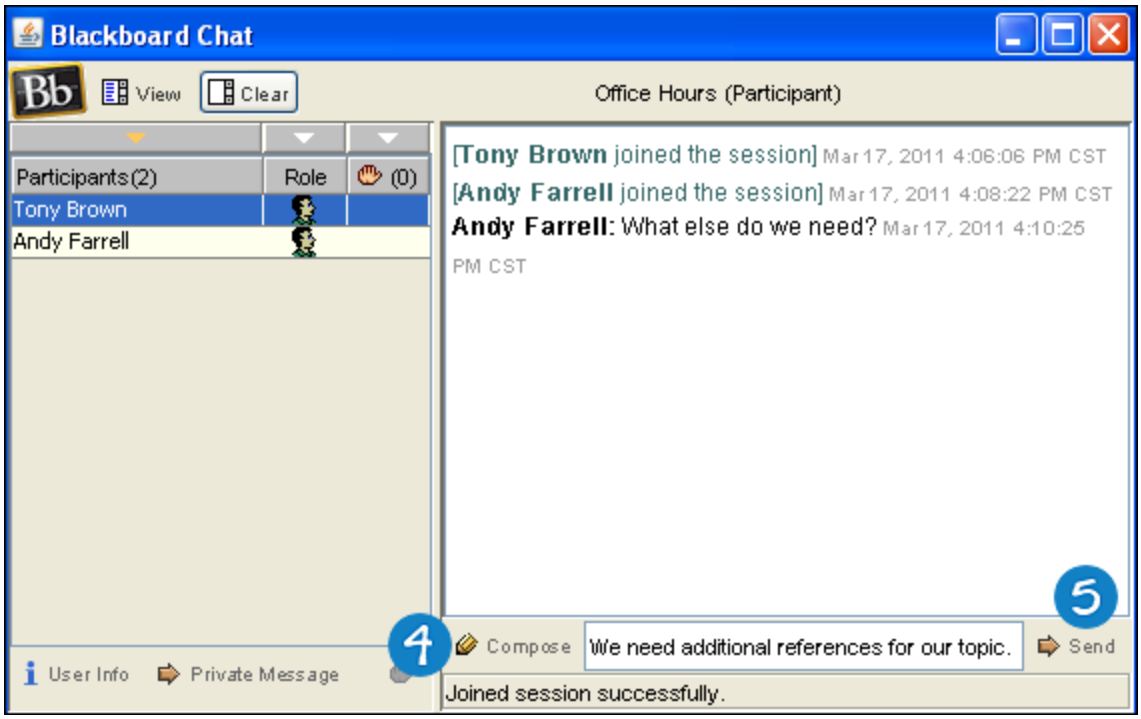
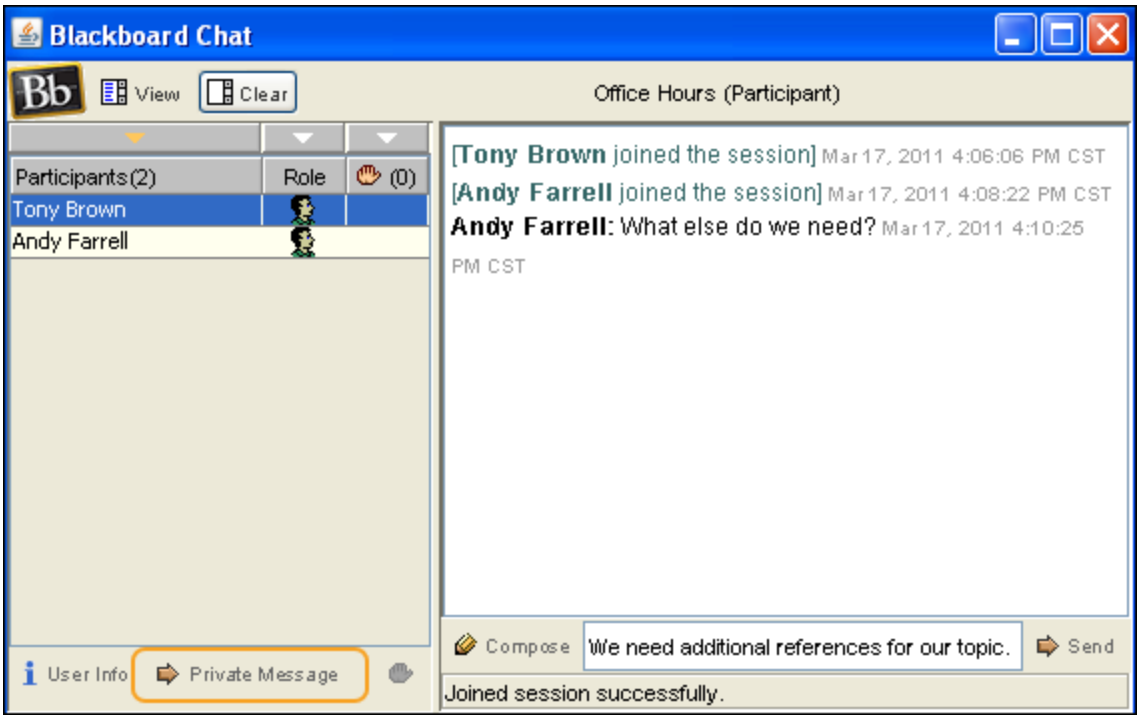


Sending a Private Message

You can send private messages to other users if your instructor enables this tool in the session controls. Private messages are not recorded or archived.

Note: Only users who have an active role can send private messages.



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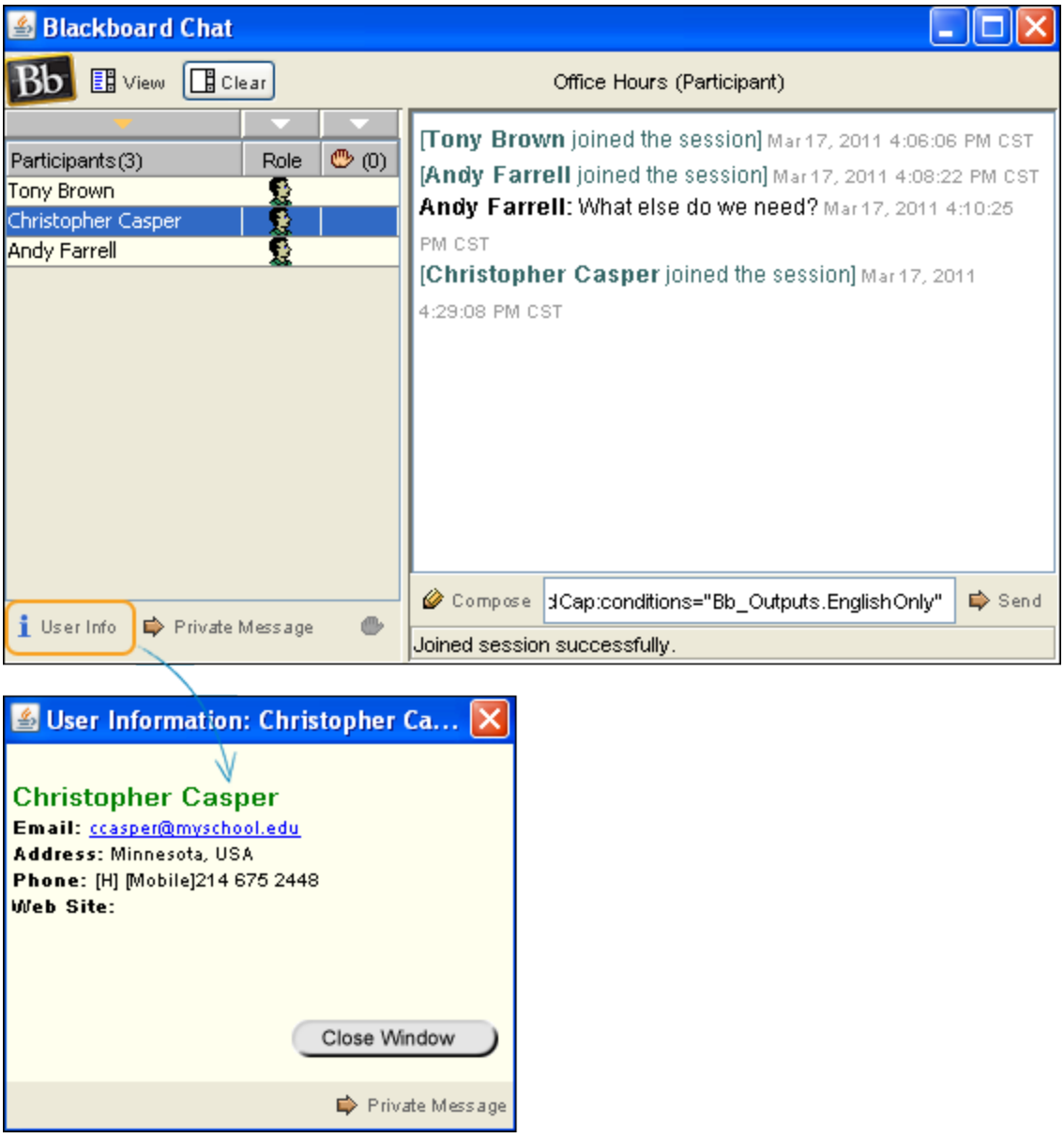
Viewing User Information

The User Information pop-up window displays personal information about a user such as name, email address, and any other information the user has chosen to add to their profile.

On the **Participants** column, click the name of the user. Click **User Info** in the Chat area and the **User Information** pop-up window appears.



Chat Functions

The following table details the functions available in the Chat.

Function	Action
Enter a message for the class to read	Type the message in the **Compose** field. Click **Send**. The message appears in the chat area. There is 1000 character limit for chat messages.

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Function	Action
Become an Active user	Click the hand symbol. A hand appears next to the username. The Blackboard administrator clicks on the hand to make the user active.
View user information	Select a username in the participant list and then click **User Info**.
Send a private message to a user	Select a username in the participant list and then click **Private Message**.

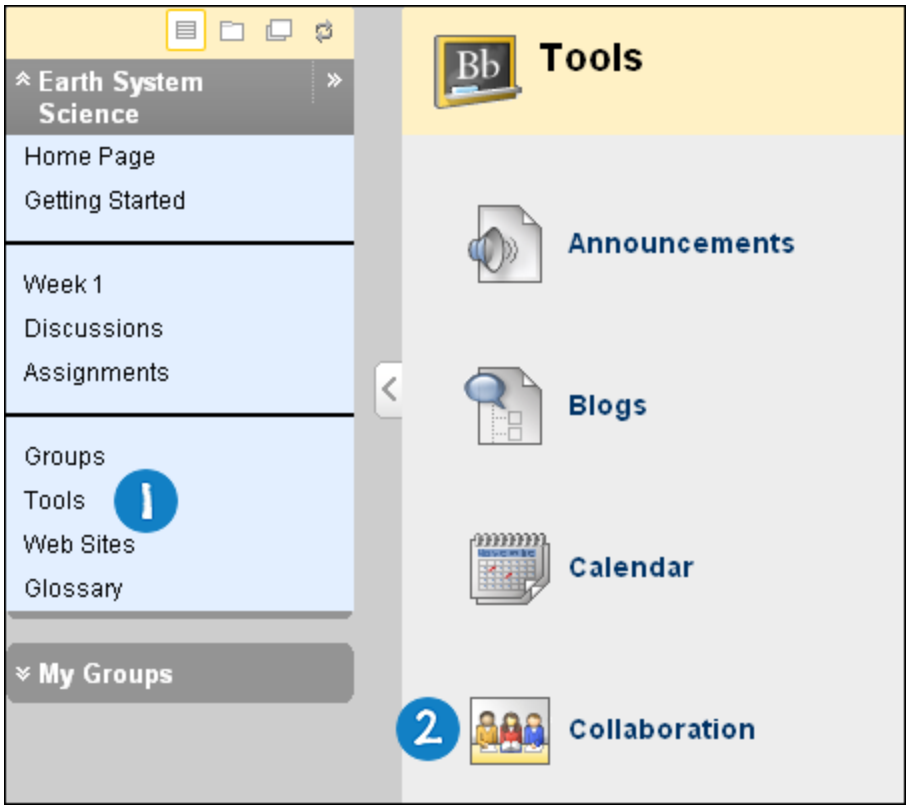
Accessing Recorded Collaboration Sessions

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

Recording sessions allow you to review the discussions and questions raised during a Collaboration session. Sessions are listed by date. Recordings created by groups using Collaboration tools can be deleted by any group member.

How to Access Collaboration Session Recordings

1. On the Course Menu, select **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Collaboration**.



3. On the contextual menu for the session, select **Recordings**.
4. On the **Session Recordings** page, select the **Recording Name** of the recording that you want to view.

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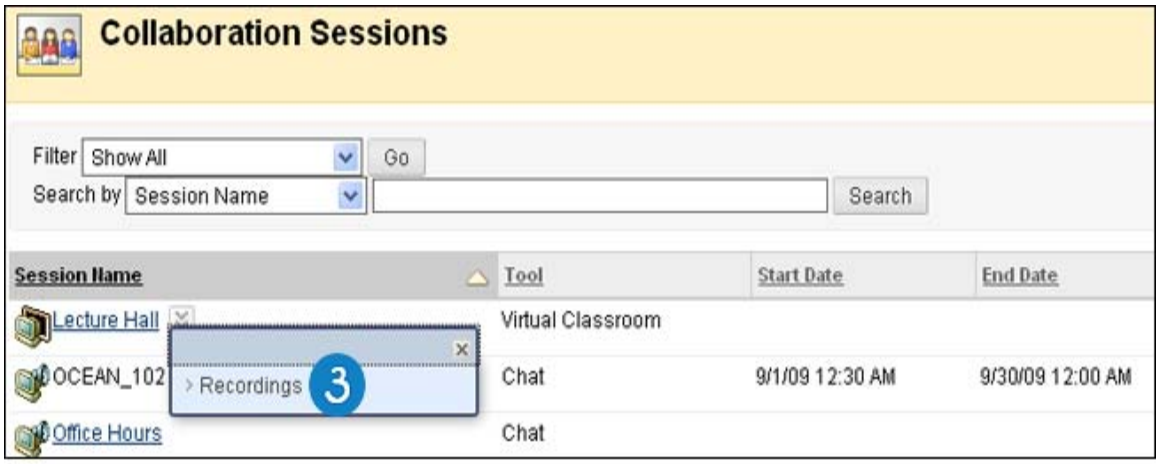

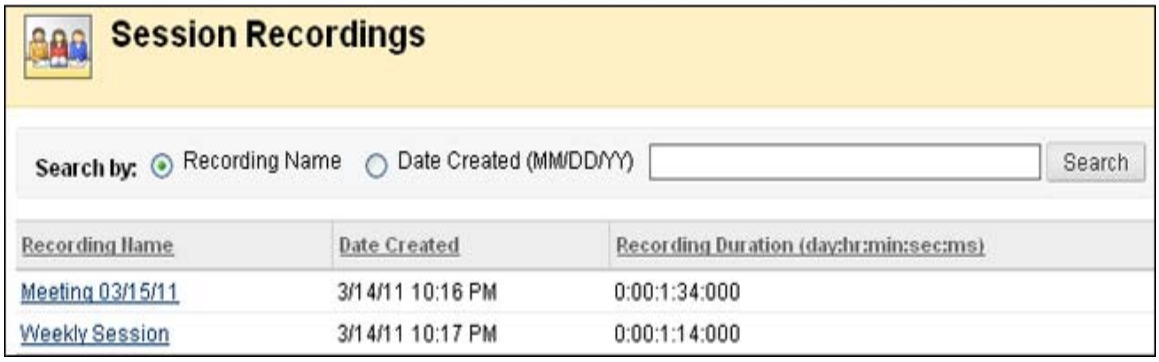

How to Access Collaboration Session Recordings for a Group

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.

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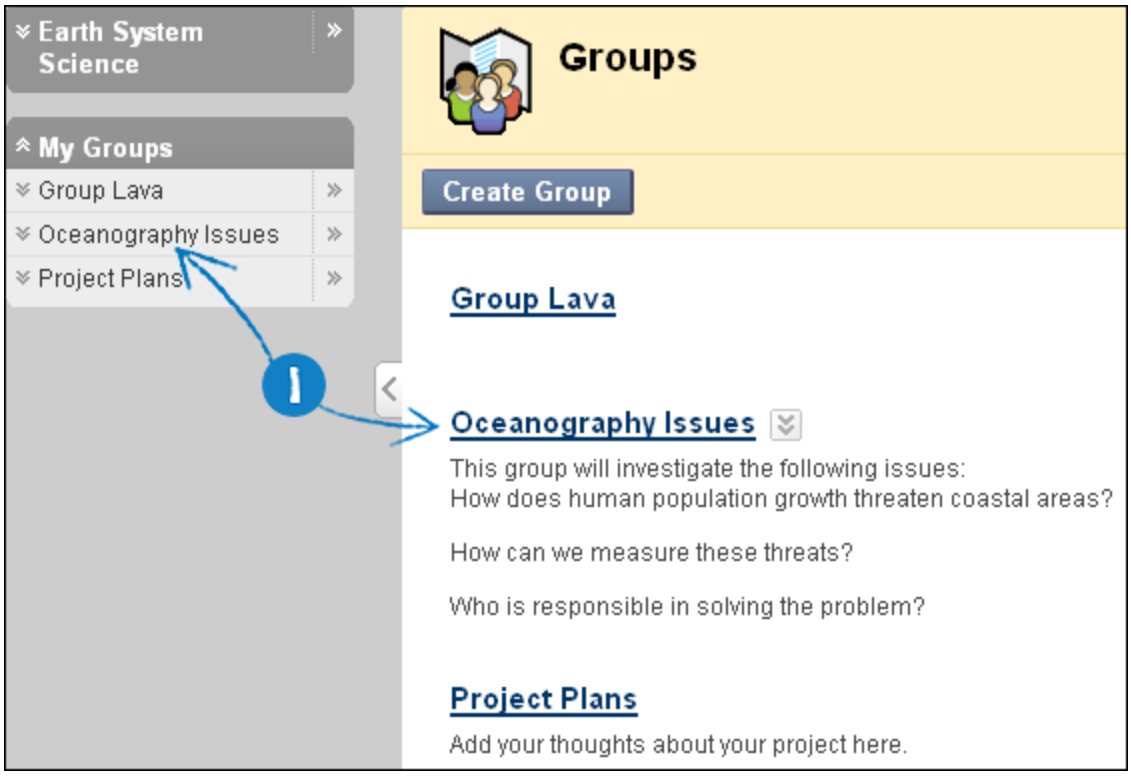

2. On the **Group Tools**, select **Collaboration**.

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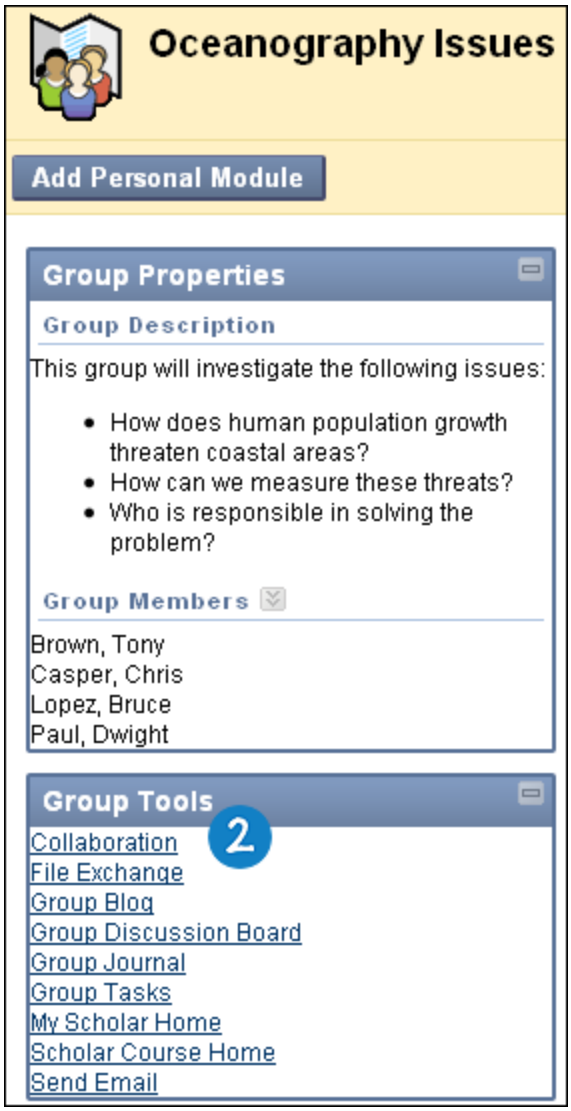

3. On the contextual menu for the session, select **Recordings**.
4. On the **Session Recordings** page, select the **Recording Name** of the recording that you want to view.

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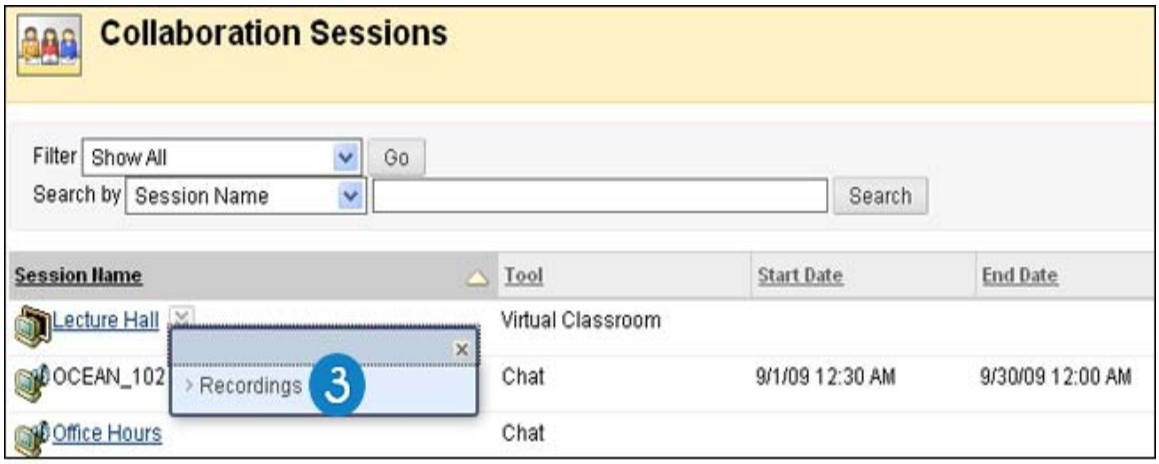

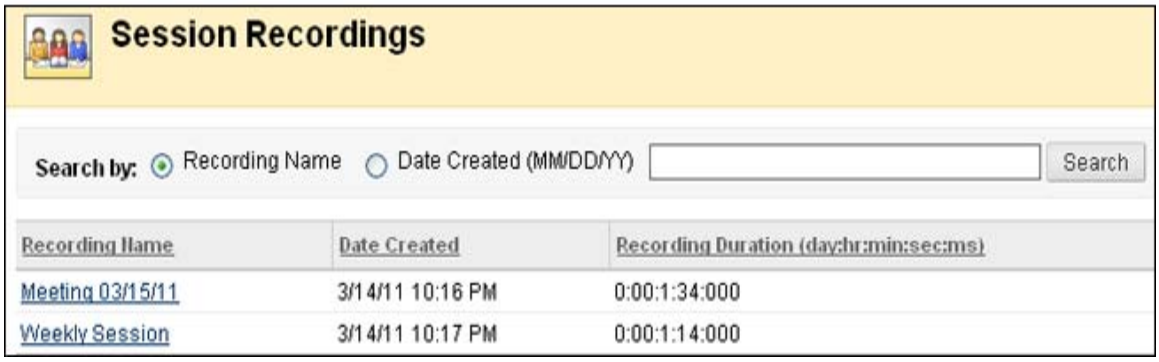

How to Create a Recording

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.

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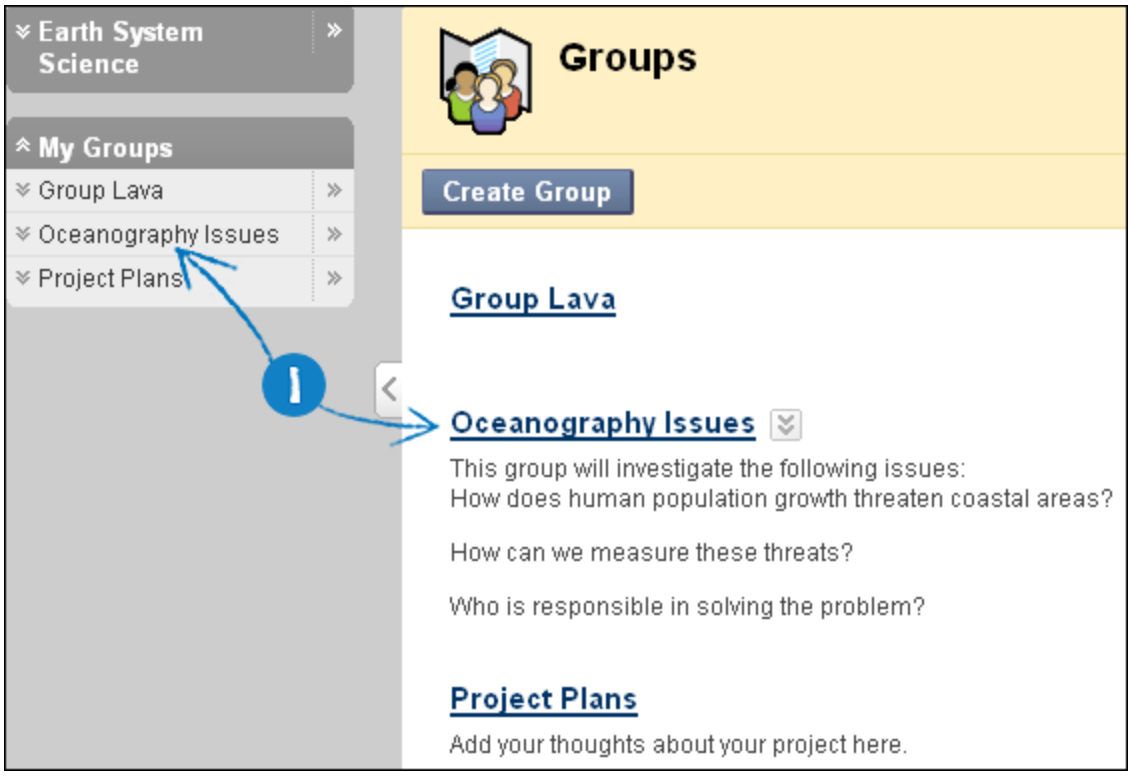

2. On the **Group Tools**, select **Collaboration**.

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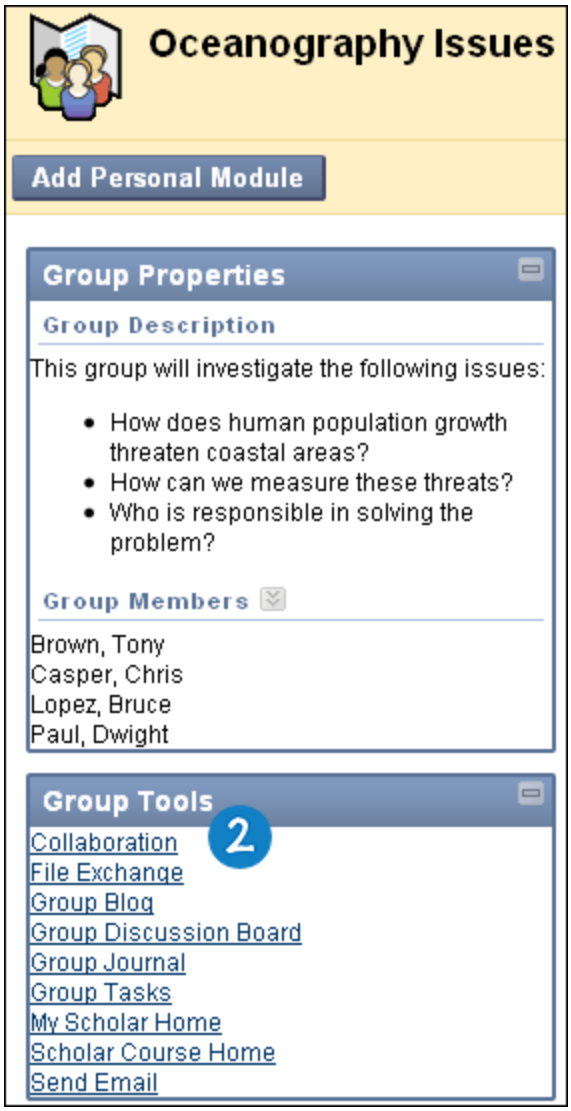

3. On the **Collaboration Sessions** page, click the session name to join.

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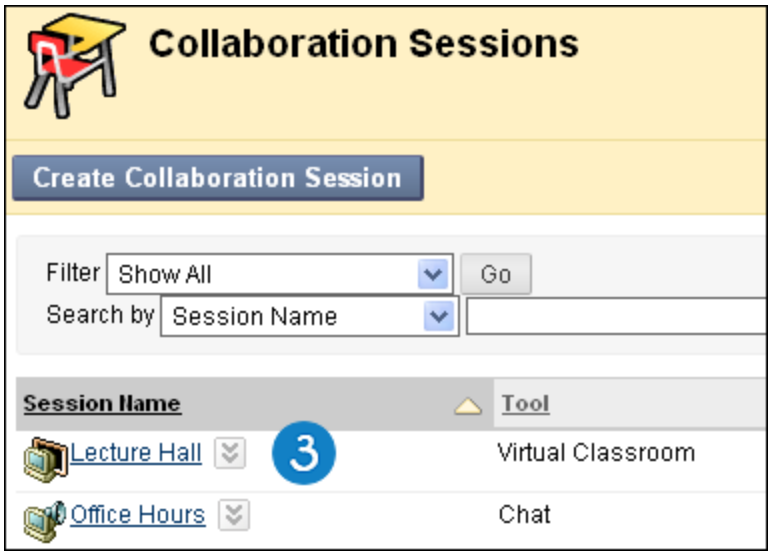

4. After joining the session, click **Begins recording** function.
5. On the **Name Recording** pop-up window, type the name of the recording or the date it was created.
6. Click **OK**.

How to Search for a Recording

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.

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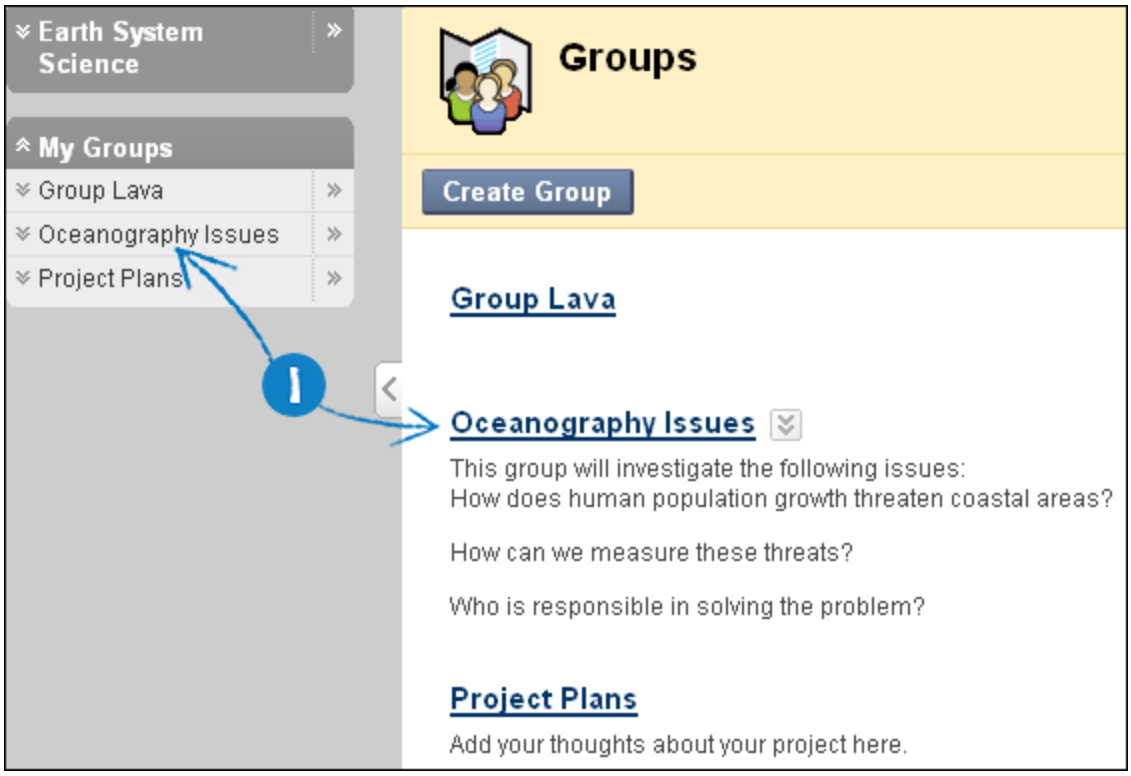

2. On the **Group Tools**, select **Collaboration**.

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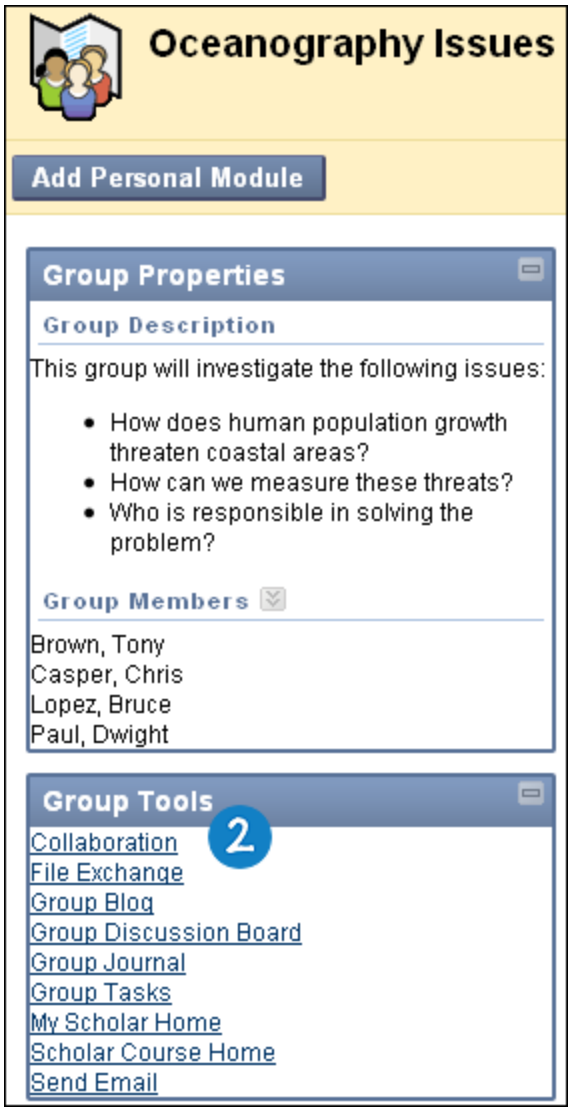

3. On the contextual menu for the session, select **Recordings**.

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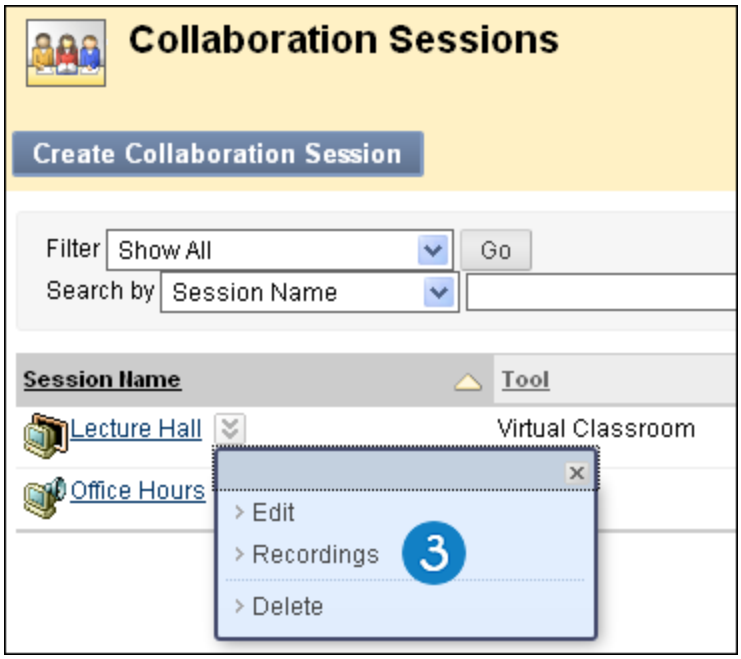
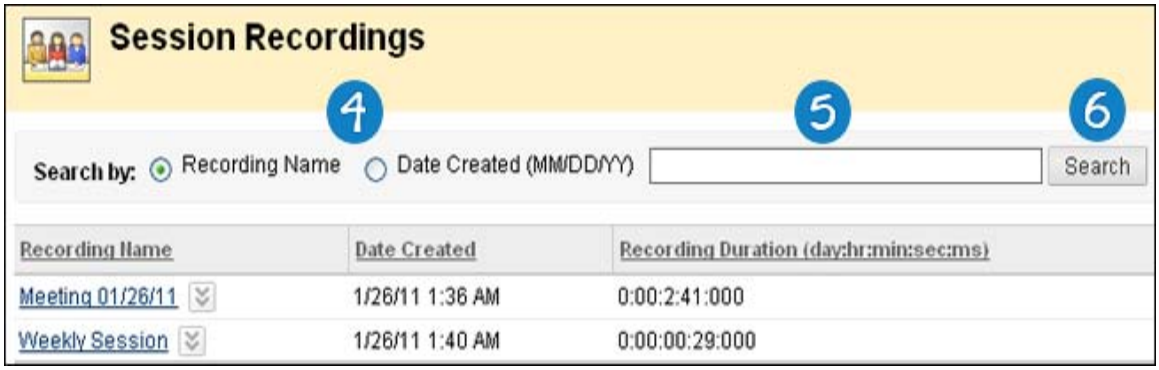


4. On the **Session Recordings** page, click the **Recording Name** or **Date Created** option in the **Search by** field.
5. Type the name of the recording or the date it was created.
6. Click **Search**.



How to Edit a Recording

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.

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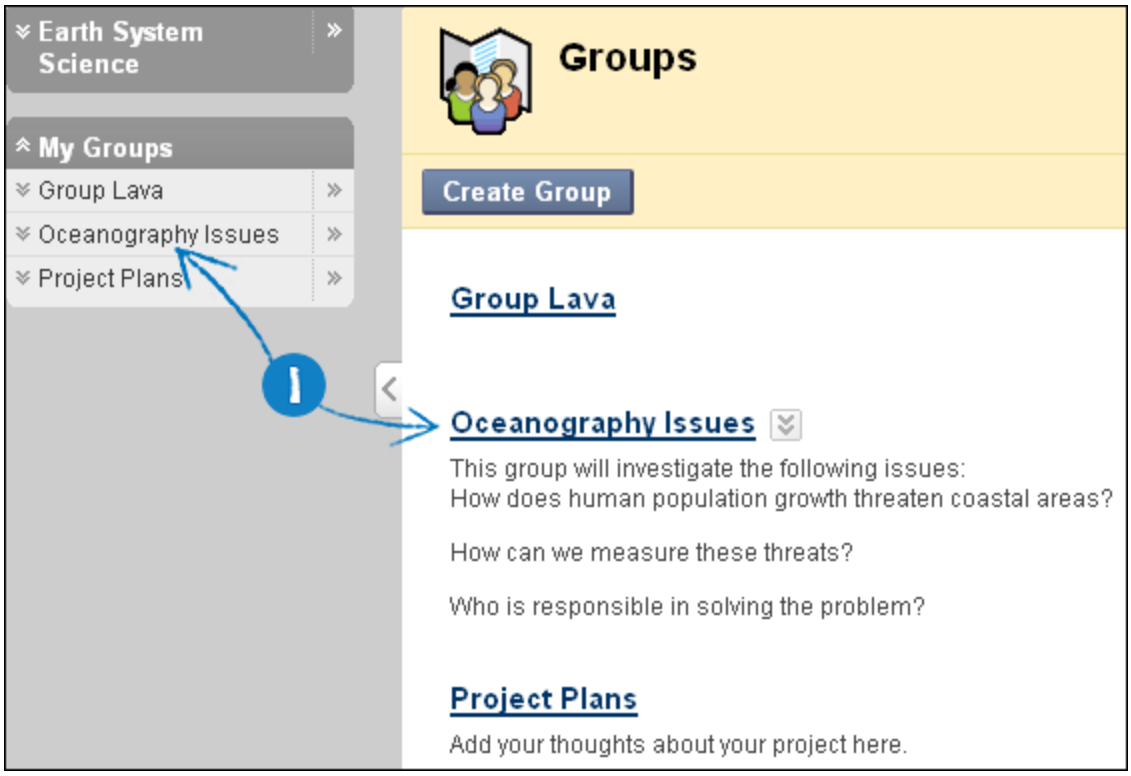

2. On the **Group Tools**, select **Collaboration**.

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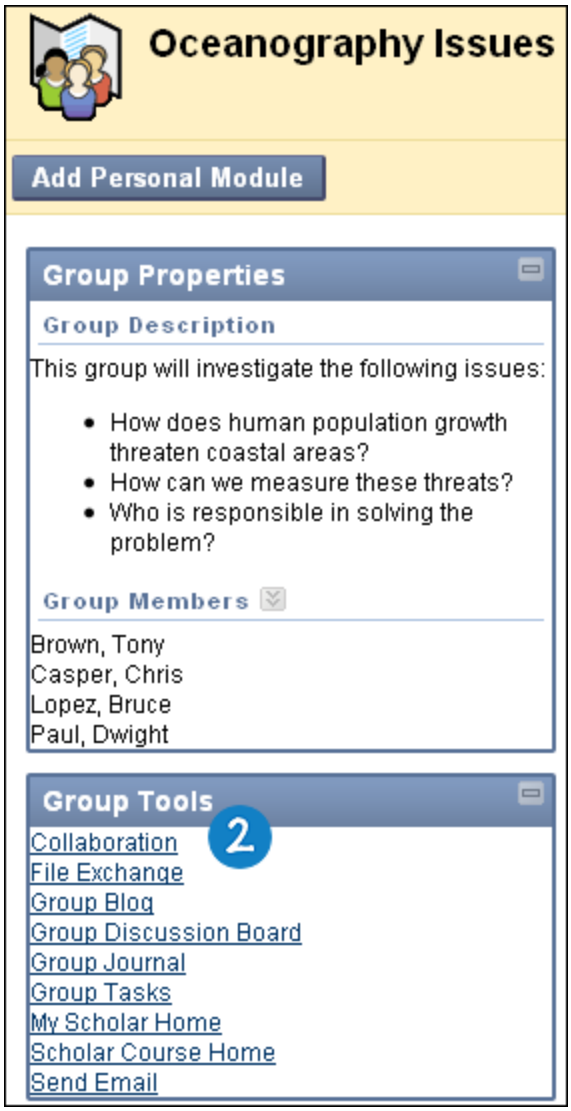

3. On the contextual menu for the session, select **Recordings**.

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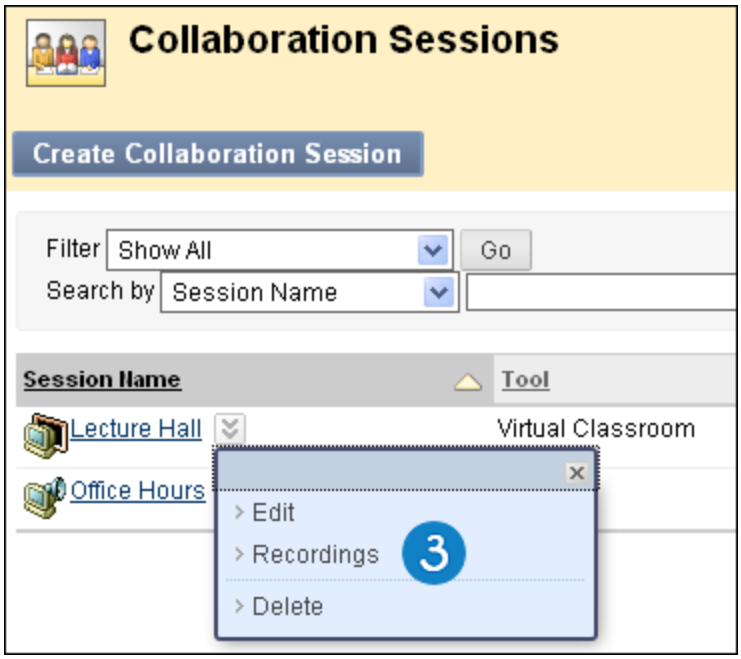
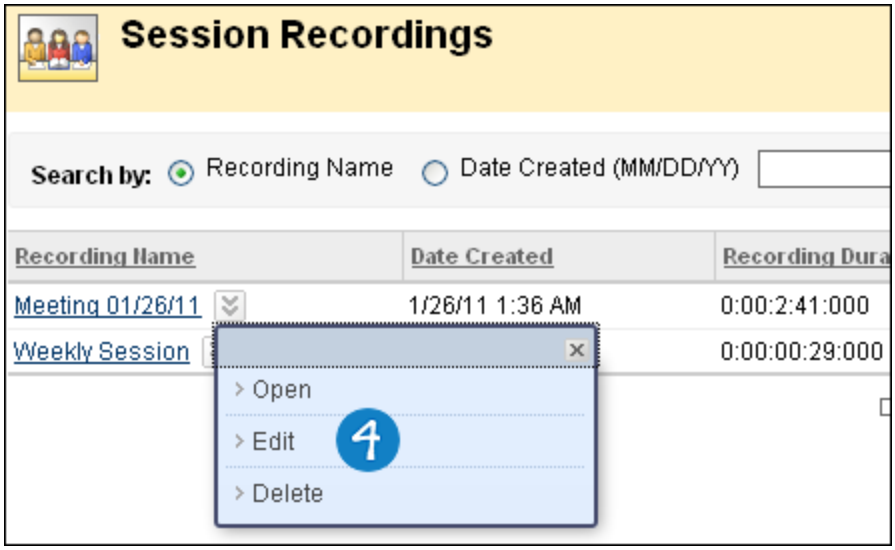


4. On the **Session Recordings** page, select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the appropriate recording.



5. On the **Recording Properties** page, type a name in the **Recording Name** field.
6. Choose whether to **Permit Participants to View Recording**.
7. Click **Submit**.

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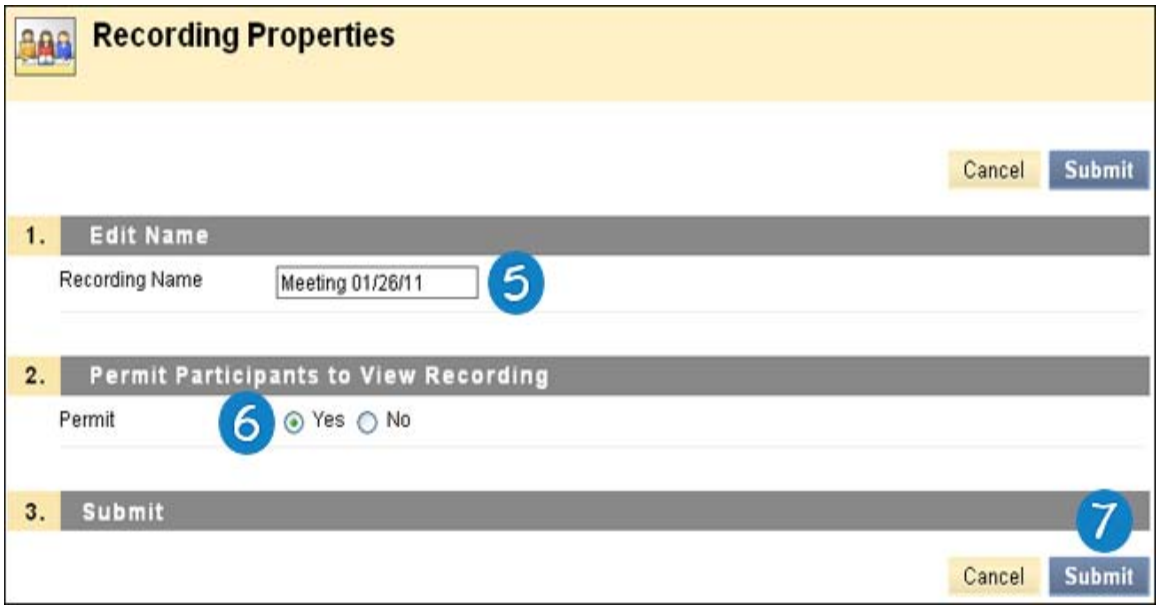
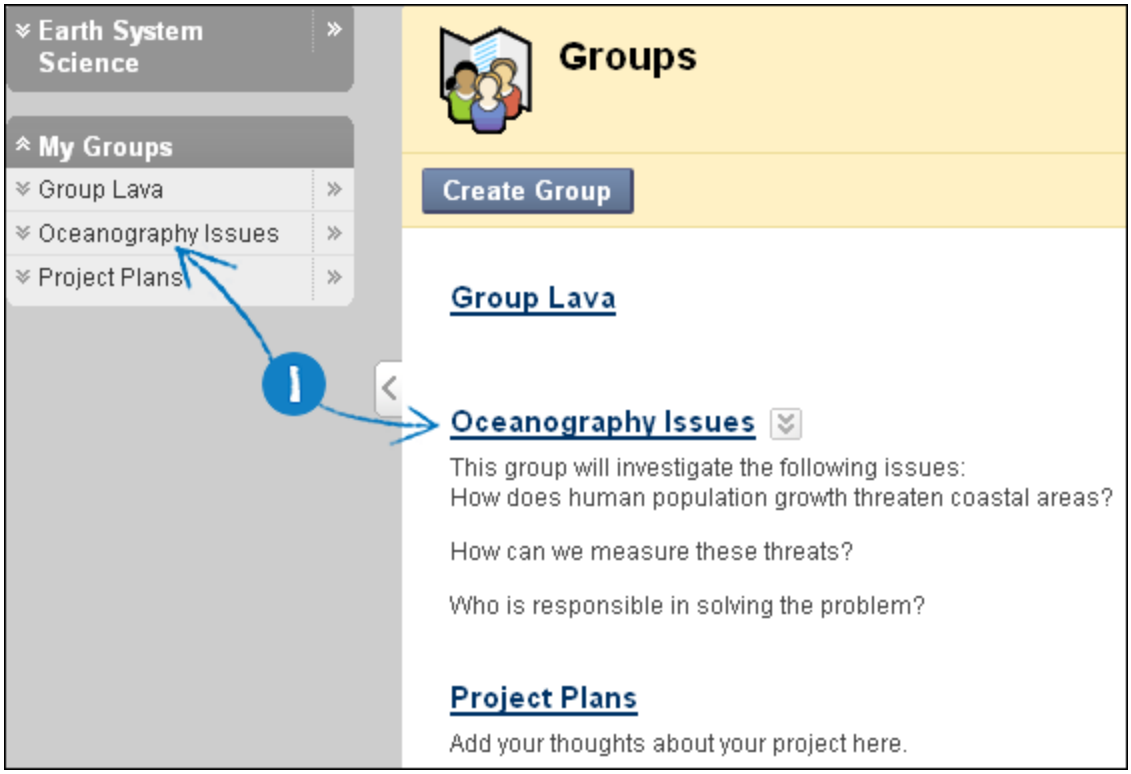


How to Delete a Recording

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.



2. On the **Group Tools**, select **Collaboration**.

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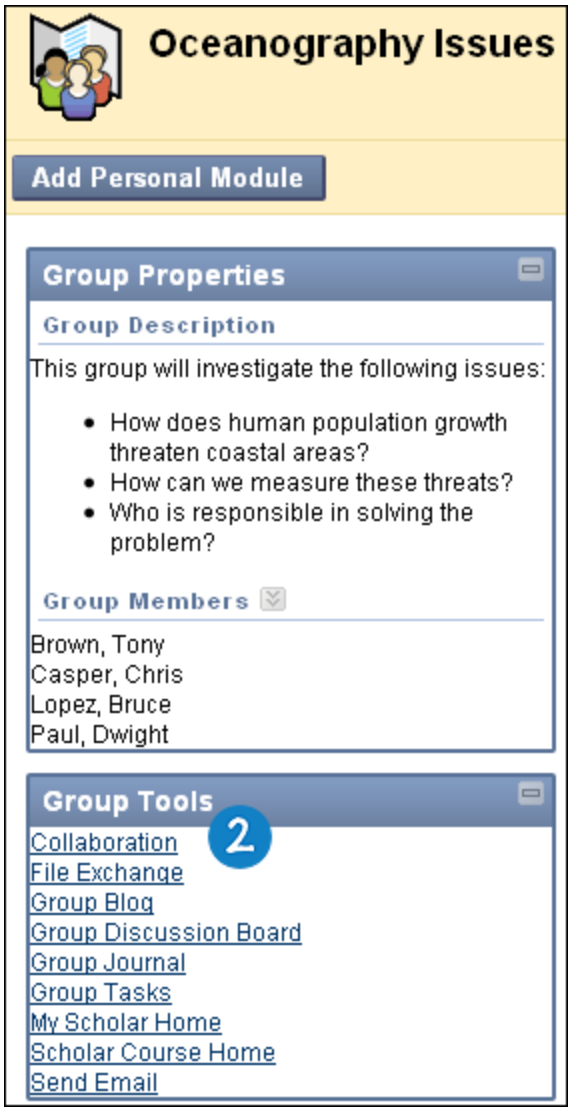

3. On the contextual menu for the session, select **Recordings**.

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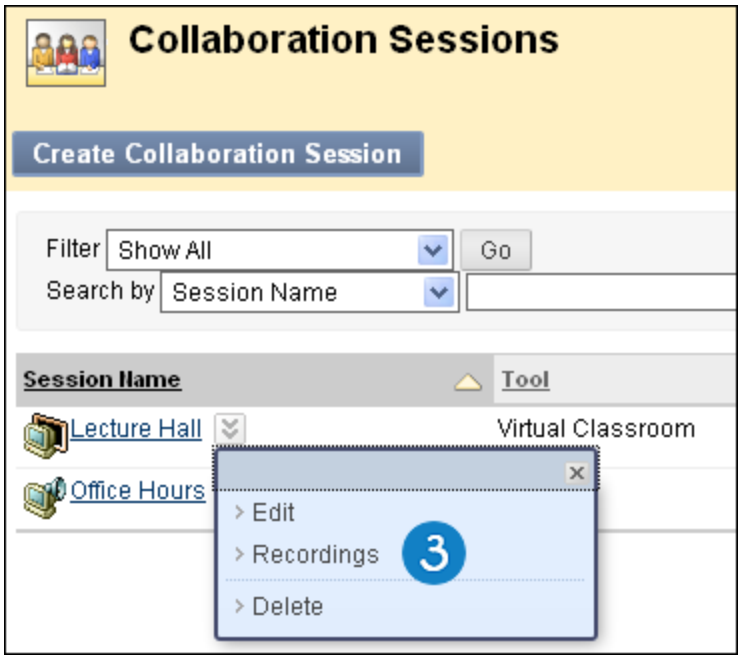
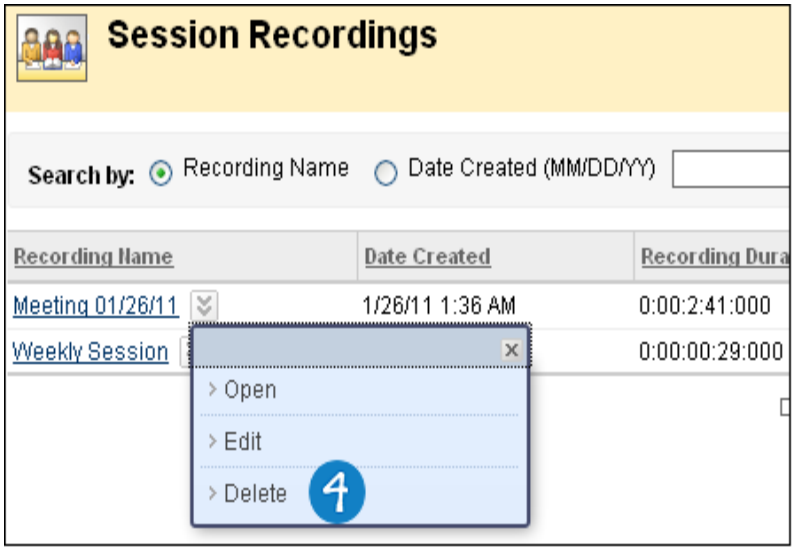
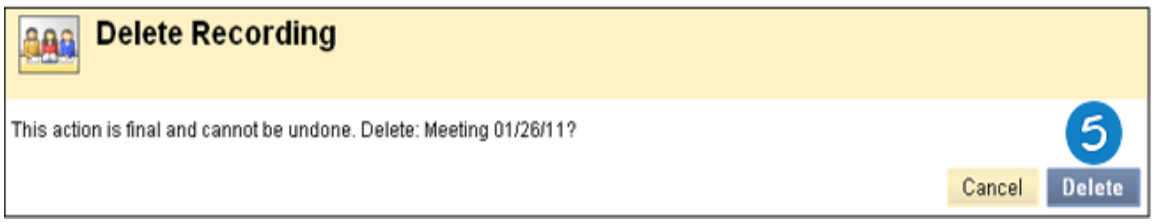


4. On the **Session Recordings** page, select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the appropriate recording.
5. On the **Delete Recording** page, click **Delete** to confirm the deletion.





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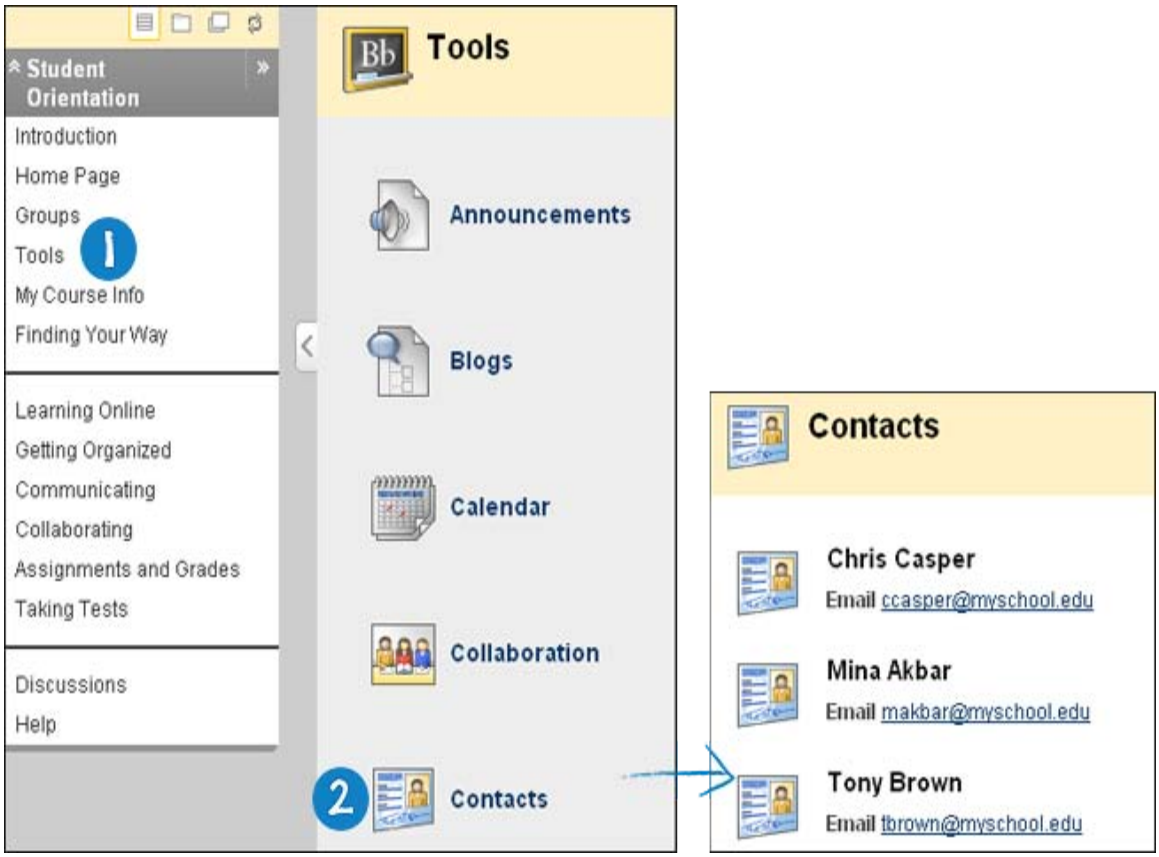
Contacts

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

You can store contact information in an address book. The address book is empty until you create contacts. You must create a profile for anyone you want to add to your address book, even if the contact is a Blackboard Learn user.

How to View Contacts

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Contacts**.



-OR-

On the **Tools** panel, click **Address Book**.

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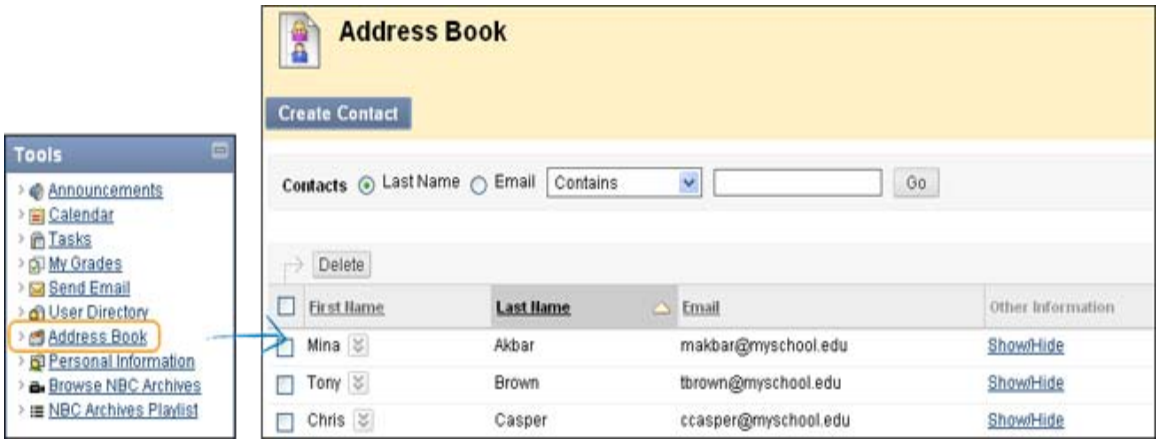
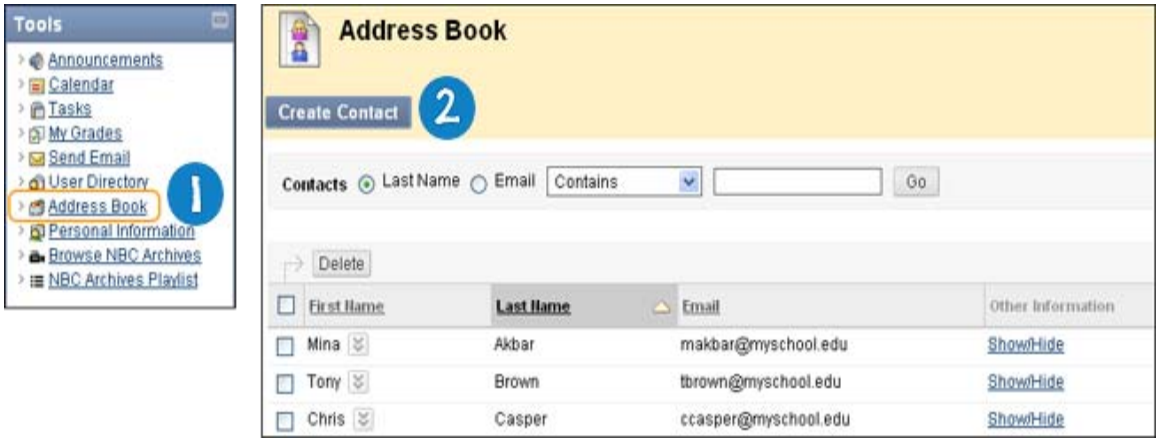


How to Create or Edit a Contact

1. On the **Tools** panel, select **Address Book**.
2. On the **Address Book** page, click **Create Contact**.



-OR-

To edit an existing contact, on the **Address Book** page, select **Edit** in the contextual menu for the contact.

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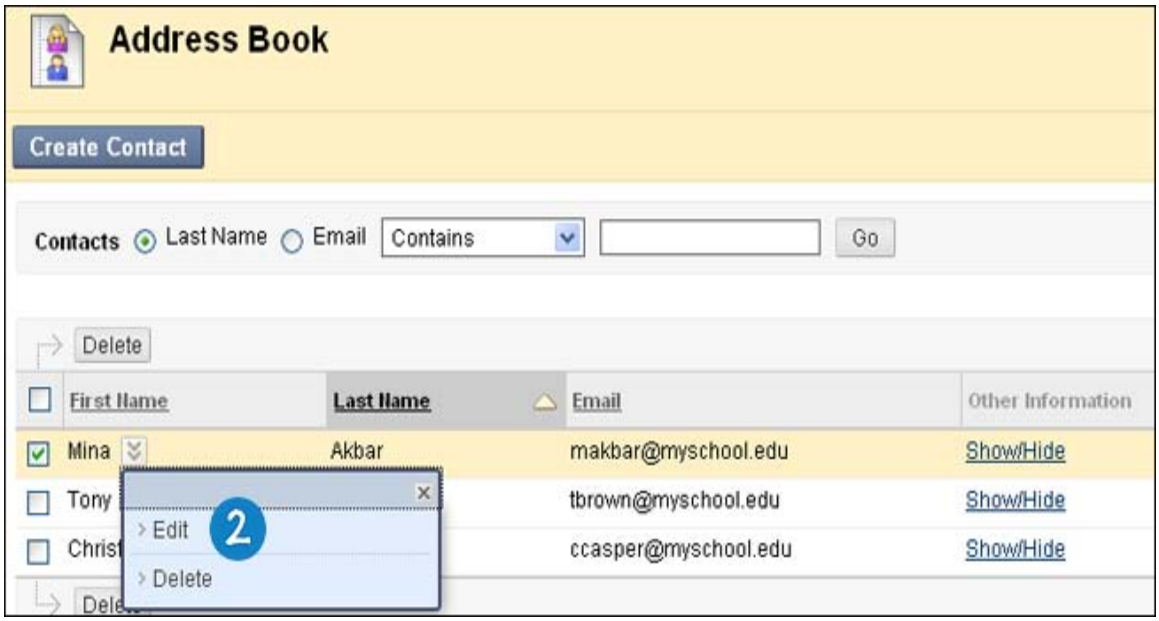

The following table details the available fields that may appear. Fields can be changed by the Blackboard administrator.

Field	Description
Personal Information	
First Name [r]	Contact's first name.
Last Name [r]	Contact's last name.
Email	Contact's email address.
Other Information	
Company	Contact's company.
Job Title	Contact's job title.
Address	Contact's address.
Address (cont.)	Contact's additional address information.
City	Contact's city.
State/Province	Contact's state or province.
Zip/Postal Code	Contact's ZIP code or postal code.
Country	Contact's country.
Website	URL of the contact's personal website. When adding a URL, include the HTTP protocol. For example: http://www.blackboard.com
Home Phone	Contact's home phone number. The phone number displays exactly as entered.
Work Phone	Contact's work phone number. The phone number displays exactly as entered.
Work Fax	Contact's fax number. The fax number displays exactly as entered.
Mobile Phone	Contact's mobile phone. The phone number displays exactly as entered.

3. Click **Submit**.

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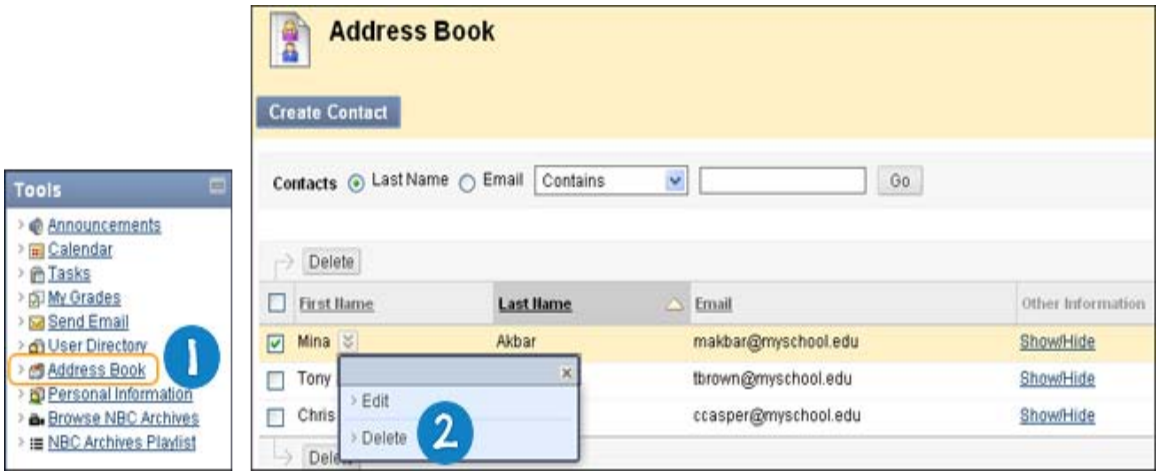
How to Delete a Contact

Note: This action is final and cannot be undone.

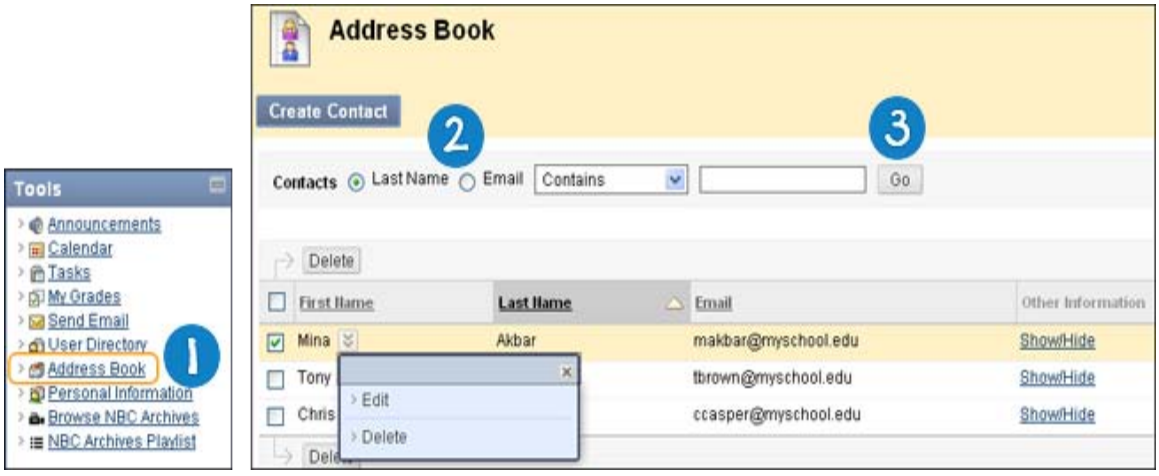
1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Address Book**.
2. On the **Address Book** page, click **Delete** in the contextual menu for a contact.



How to Search for a Contact

The Address Book contains a search function on the Action Bar. You may search using different variables selected from the search tabs.

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Address Book**.
2. On the **Address Book** page, search using the **Last Name** or **Email** options of your contact.
3. Click **Go**.



Discussion Board

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

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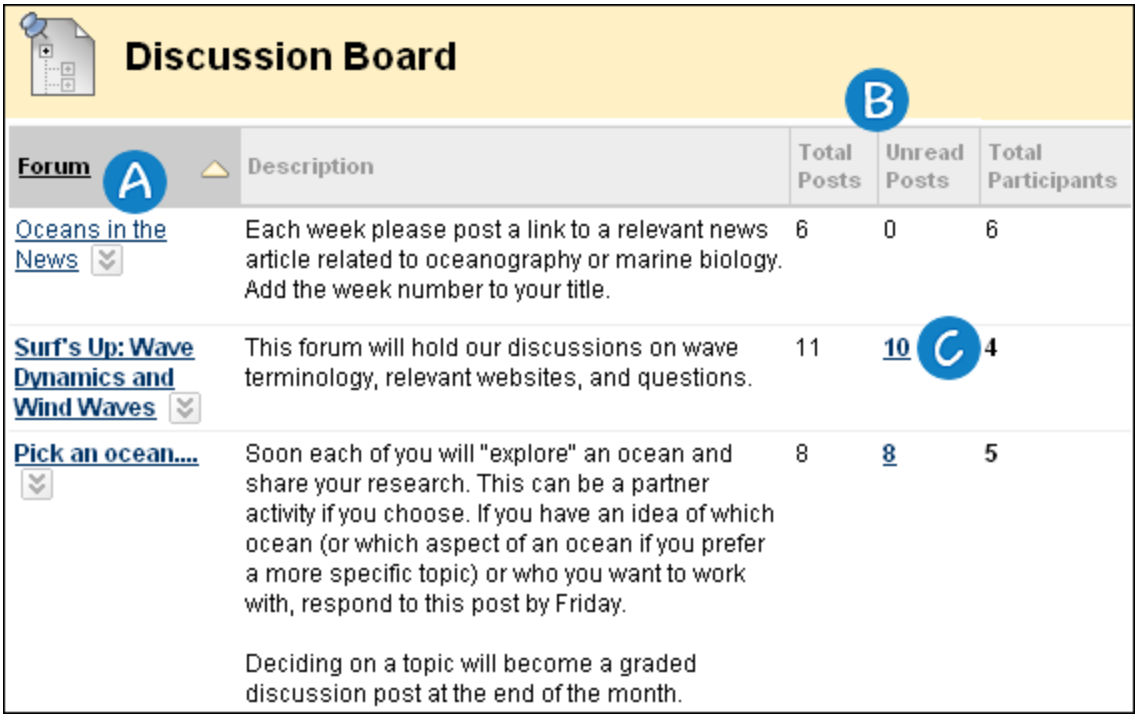
The Discussion Board is a tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class materials. The main Discussion Board page displays a list of available discussion forums that may appear anywhere in the course. A forum is an area where a topic or a group of related topics are discussed. A Discussion Board can contain one or more forums. For each forum, the page displays the total number of posts, the number of unread posts, and the number of users who have participated in the forum.



A **Forum title**: Click the forum title to view the messages. Forums containing unread posts appear in bold.

B **Total Posts / Total Participants**: View data on the number of posts and participants.

C **Unread Posts**: The **Unread Posts** column provides one-click access to the forum's unread messages.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school and your instructor control whether this tool is available. If this tool has been turned off, it will not appear in the interface and will not be available for you to use.

Within each forum, users can create multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and any replies to it. When creating a forum, your instructor has the option of allowing or not allowing you to start threads. If threads are graded, you cannot start threads. Generally, the purpose of the forum will dictate whether or not you can start threads. A moderated, graded forum used to evaluate student performance will usually be tightly controlled, and you cannot create threads. Other forums are designed for users to share opinions and thoughts on tangential or unrelated topics.

Course groups can have their own Discussion Boards that can be set up using the **Groups** tool. Group Discussion Boards are available only to users who are members of the group. If a Group Discussion Board has been set up, access it from the groups link in the Course Menu or in the **My Groups** area.

Note: When moving through the different parts of the Discussion Board, use the internal navigation, such as the breadcrumbs, Course Menu, and other page links to return to a previous page. Using the browser navigation controls can result in page load errors.

How to Access the Discussion Board

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.

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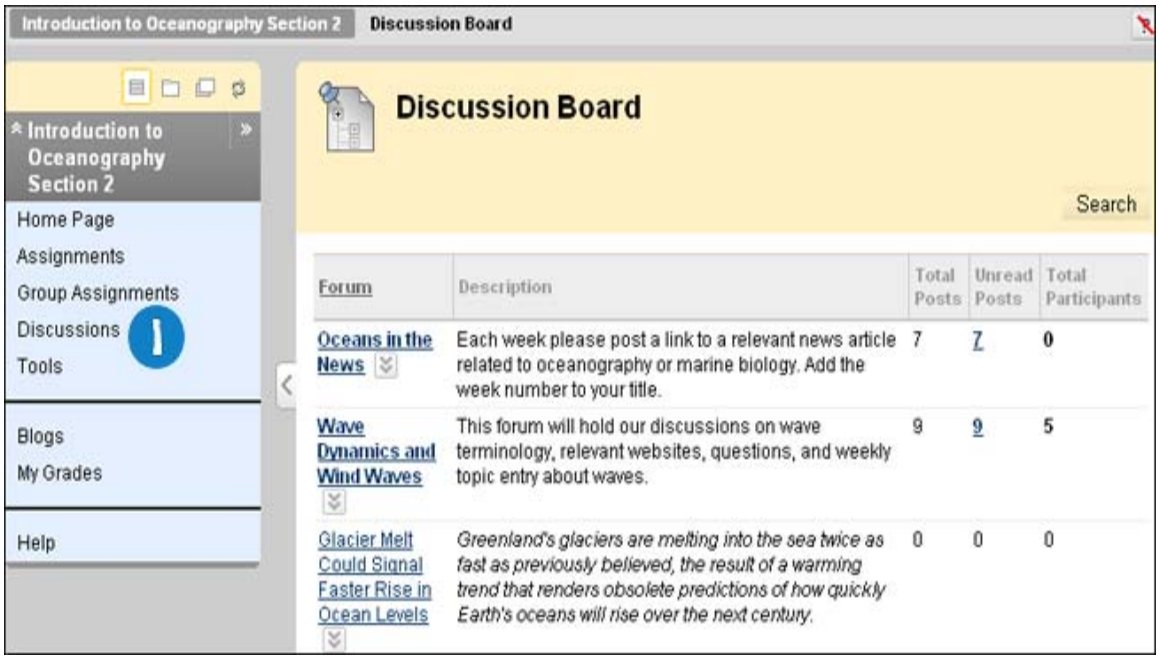

-OR-

On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Discussion Board**.

Viewing a Discussion Forum

When you access a forum in the Discussion Board, a list of threads appears. The following columns display information for each thread:

- **Date**: Displays the date that the thread was created.
- **Thread**: Displays the name of the thread.
- **Author**: Displays the name of user who created the thread.
- **Status**: Indicates whether the thread is published, locked, hidden, or a draft.

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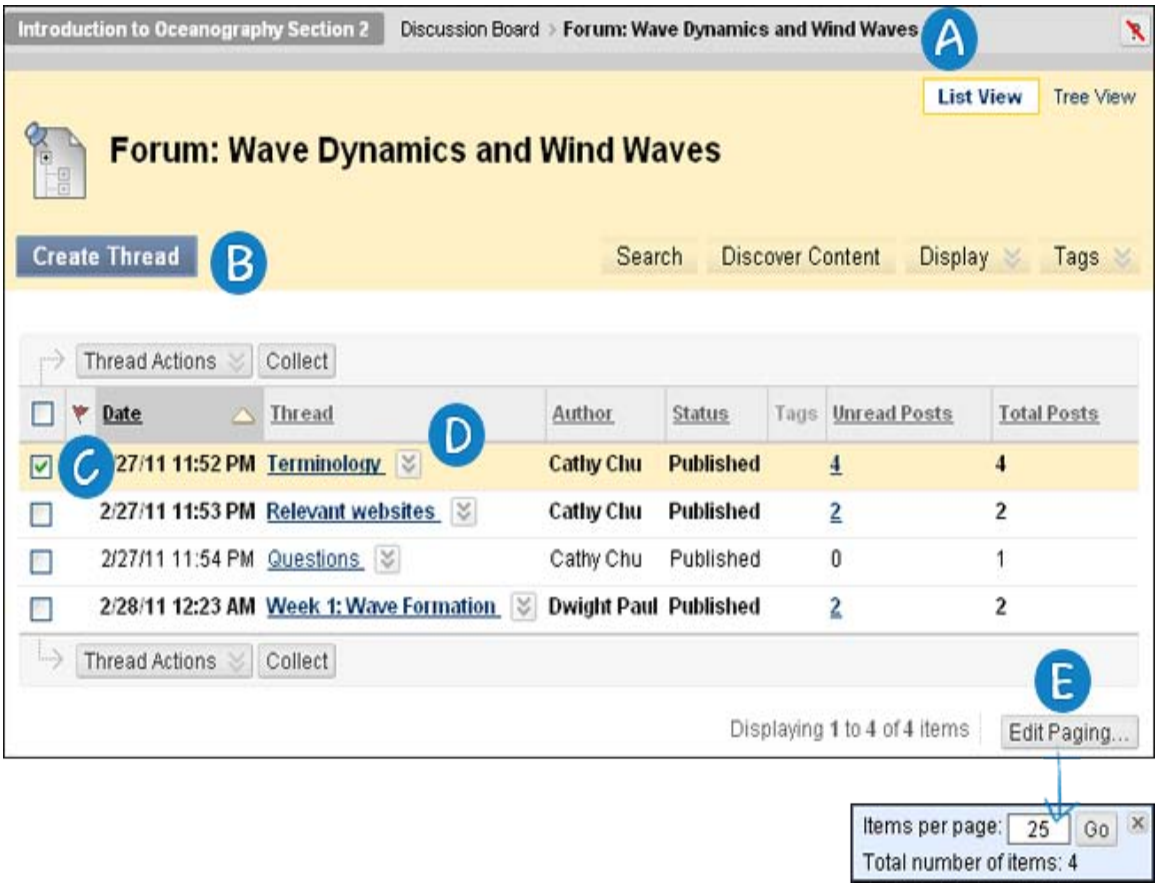
- **Unread Posts**: Displays the number of posts not yet accessed.
- **Total Posts**: Includes both read and unread posts.

Forum Features



A Use the breadcrumbs to navigate to a previous page. Do not use the browser navigation controls because page load errors may occur.

B Use the Action Bar functions to perform various actions, including:

- **Create Thread**: Add a new thread to a forum.
- **Search**: Search for Discussion Board content. The search field is collapsed by default to save screen space.
- **Thread Actions**: Make a selection from the drop-down list. Edit the status of the selected threads and perform other actions, such as marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.
- **Collect**: Gather selected threads onto one page where posts can be sorted, filtered, or printed.

C Select one or multiple threads' check boxes or select the check box in the header row to select all threads for an action, such as collecting.

D Click a thread title to read the posts. Forum titles containing unread posts appear in bold type.

E Click **Edit Paging** to determine the number of items to view per page. Type a number in the box and click **Go**. Click the **X** to close the pop-up box.

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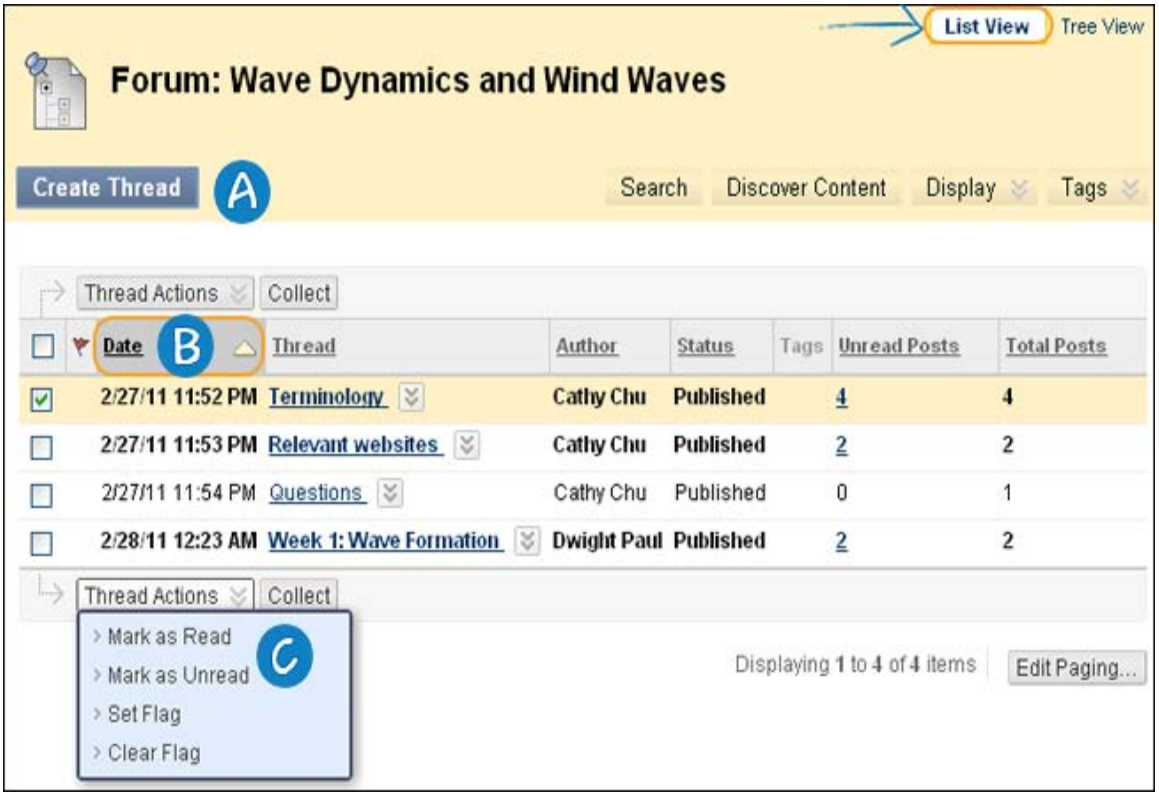
Using List View and Tree View in Discussions

After you click a forum title, a page loads displaying all forum threads. You can view the page in either **List View** or **Tree View**. This choice remains in effect until you change it and you may change it at any time. On the forum page, in the upper-right corner, toggle between the two views.

List View

Click **List View** to present the threads in a table format. Threads containing any unread posts appear in bold type.



A From the Action Bar, you can create threads, or collect posts.

Depending on the settings your instructor made when creating the forum, different functions appear on the Action Bar. For example, if your instructor allowed tagging, a **Tags** function appears.

B To sort a column, click the column heading or caret.

C Select the check box next to a thread and make a selection from the **Thread Actions** drop-down list. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads. The actions include:

- Marking threads read or unread.
- Setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.

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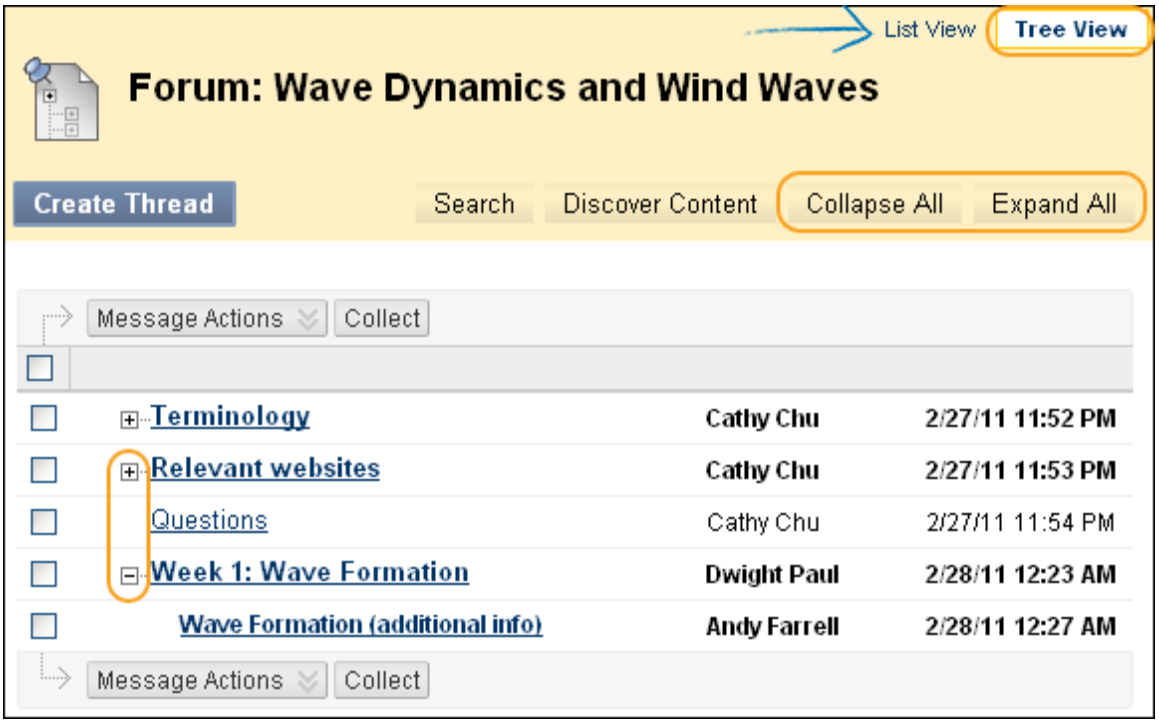
Tree View

Click **Tree View** to show the thread starter messages and their replies. From the Action Bar, you can create threads, or collect posts.



You can expand and collapse threads by using the plus and minus icons next to the titles. If a thread starter message contains unread posts, the thread starter title appears in bold type. On the Action Bar, use the **Collapse All** and **Expand All** functions to hide or see all posts included in all threads.

Select the check box next to a thread and make a selection from the **Message Actions** drop-down list on the Action Bar. You can select multiple threads or select the check box in the header to select all threads. Actions include marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention.

Viewing a Discussion Thread

When you click a thread, the **Thread Detail** page appears. The page is divided into three sections:

Section 1:

The Action Bar contains functions that allow you to select, flag, mark read/unread, and collect posts.

Section 2:

The Message List contains a list of all the posts in a thread, beginning with the initial post. The selected post is highlighted. Use the plus and minus icons to expand and collapse the posts.

Section 3:

The Current Post contains the text of the selected post and information about the post.

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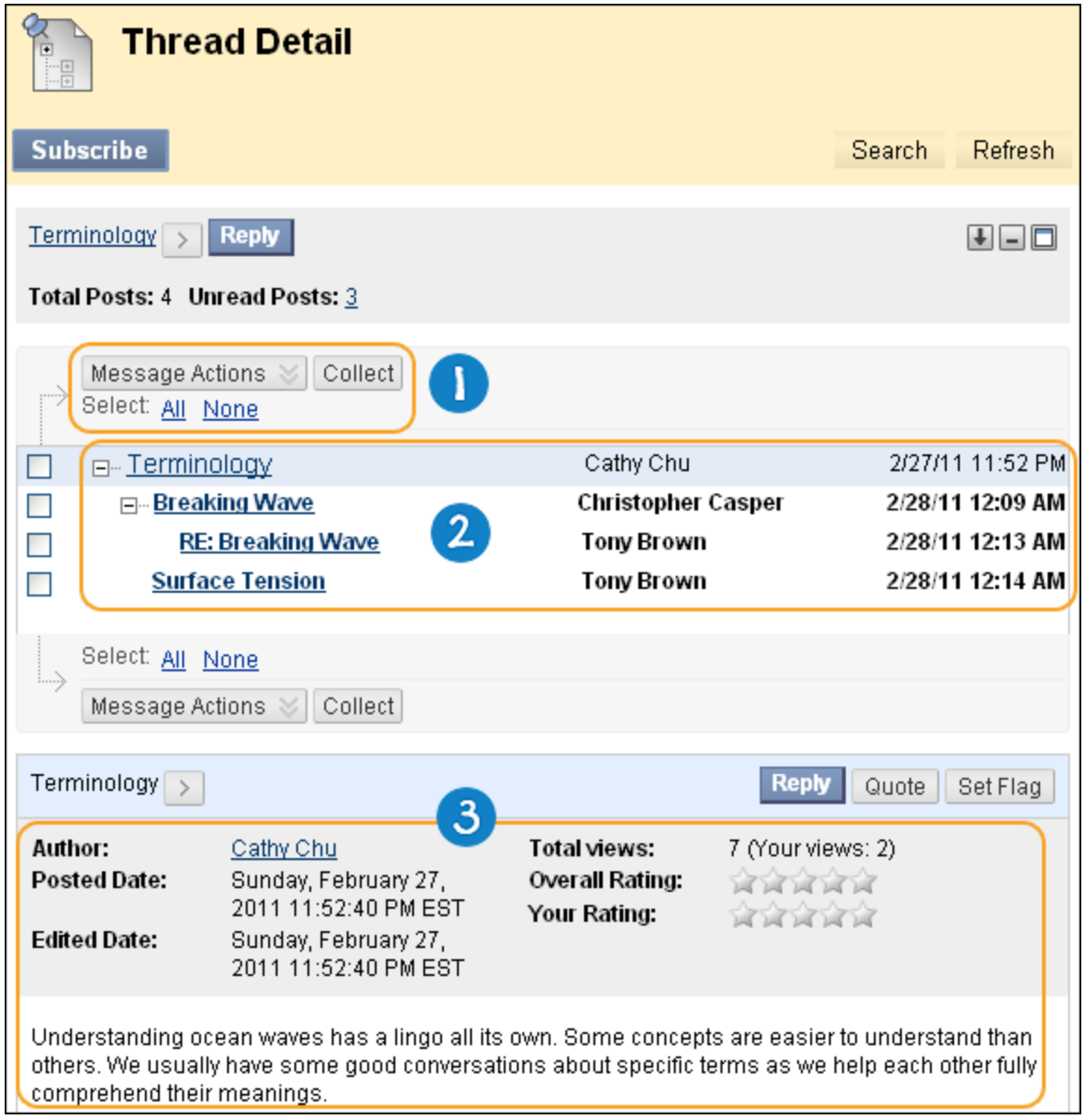

About the Thread Detail Page

On the **Thread Detail** page, you can navigate from post to post, adjust your view of the page, view information about the selected post, and reply to others.

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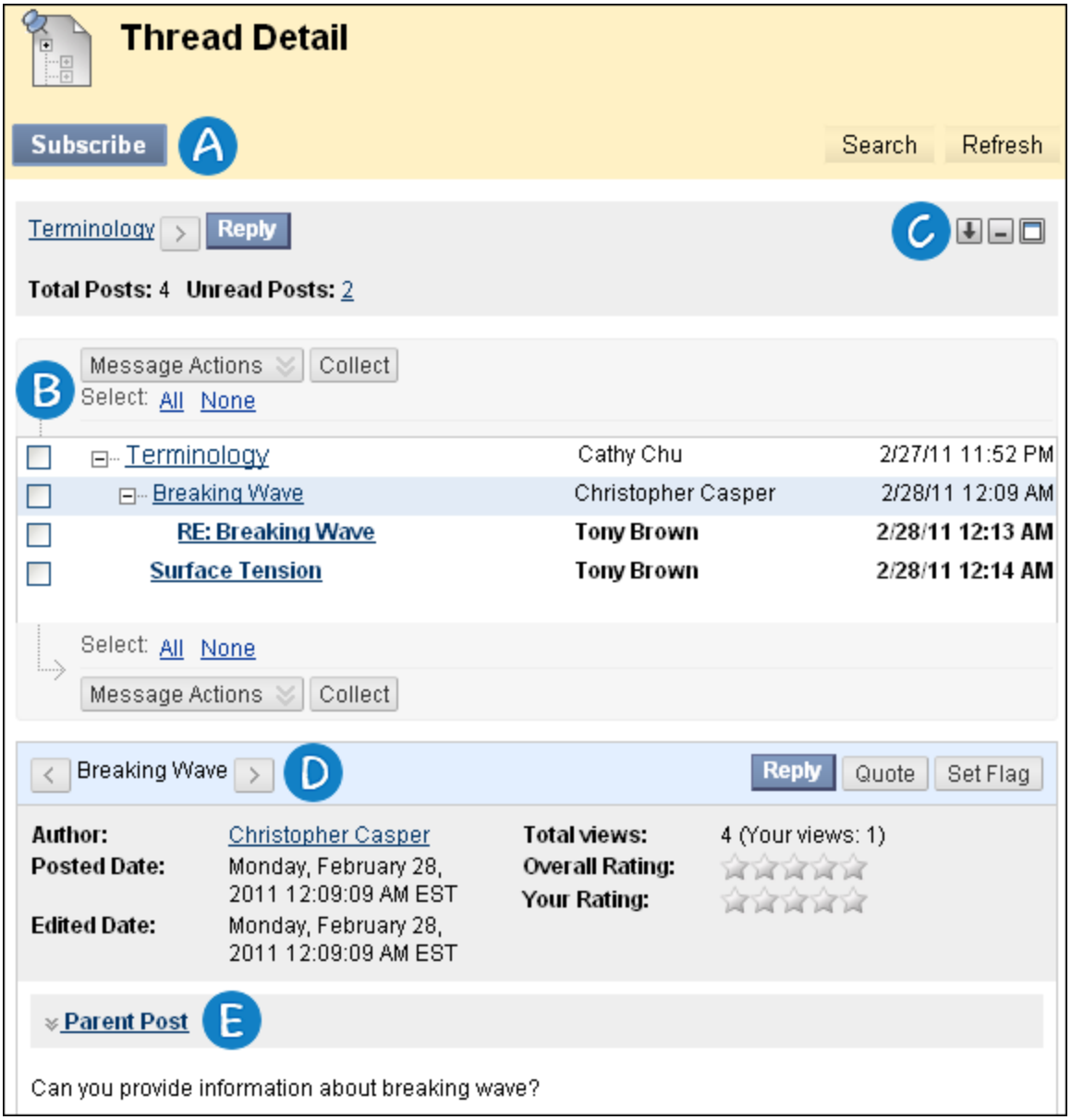

A On the Action Bar, you can access functions such as **Subscribe**, **Unsubscribe**, or **Search**. When subscribed to a thread, you receive an email alert when a post is updated or a reply is posted. Your instructor must enable this function when creating a forum. The search field is hidden by default to save screen space.

B Select one or multiple threads' check boxes and make a selection in the **Message Actions** drop-down list. Actions include marking threads read or unread and setting or clearing flags. Flags mark threads for later attention. You can also use the functions for collecting posts and selecting all posts.

C Arrange your view using the icons on the Action Bar.

- **Swap Up** or **Down**: Switches the message tree section and the reply section of the screen.
- **Hide** or **Restore to Minimum**: Collapses or displays the message tree section of the screen.
- **Maximize** or **Minimize**: Displays the message tree fully or just a portion of the message tree.

D Use the **Move to previous message** or **Move to next message** arrows for navigating between messages in the thread.

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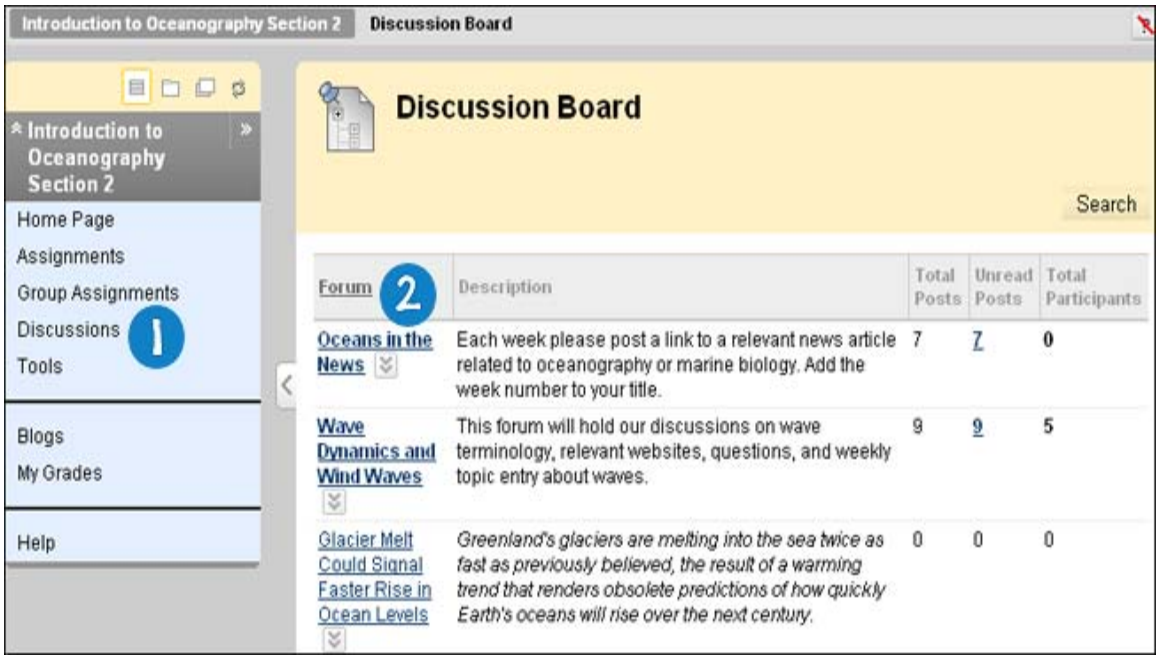
E Click **Parent Post** to display or hide the parent message in the thread.

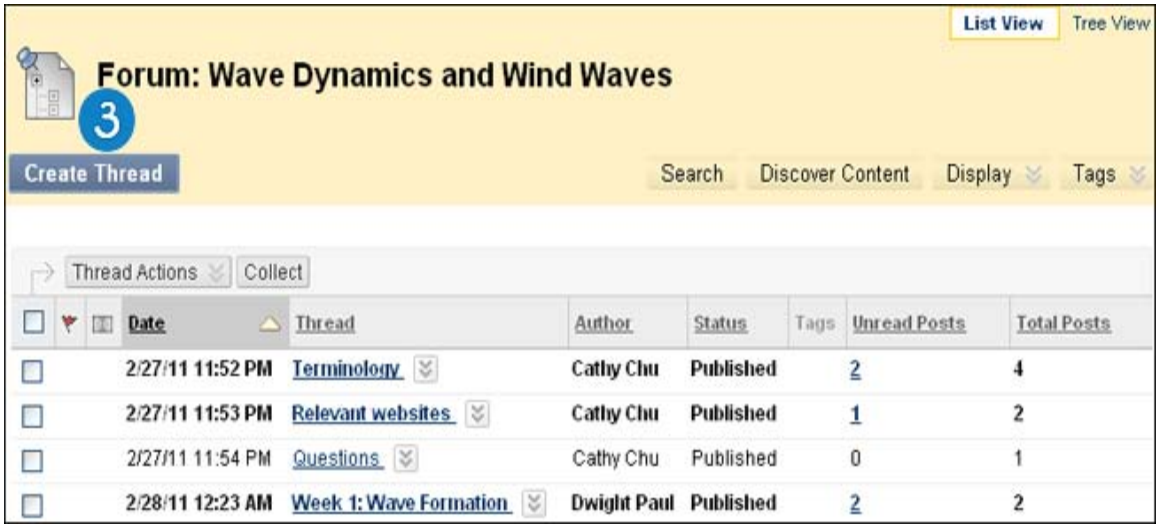
How to Create Threads in a Discussion Forum

Forums have many settings that control who can post, and what other types of actions you can take, such as editing your own threads, posting anonymously, or rating posts. Depending on which forum settings your instructor has selected, you may be allowed to create a new thread.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click **Create Thread**.



4. On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**.

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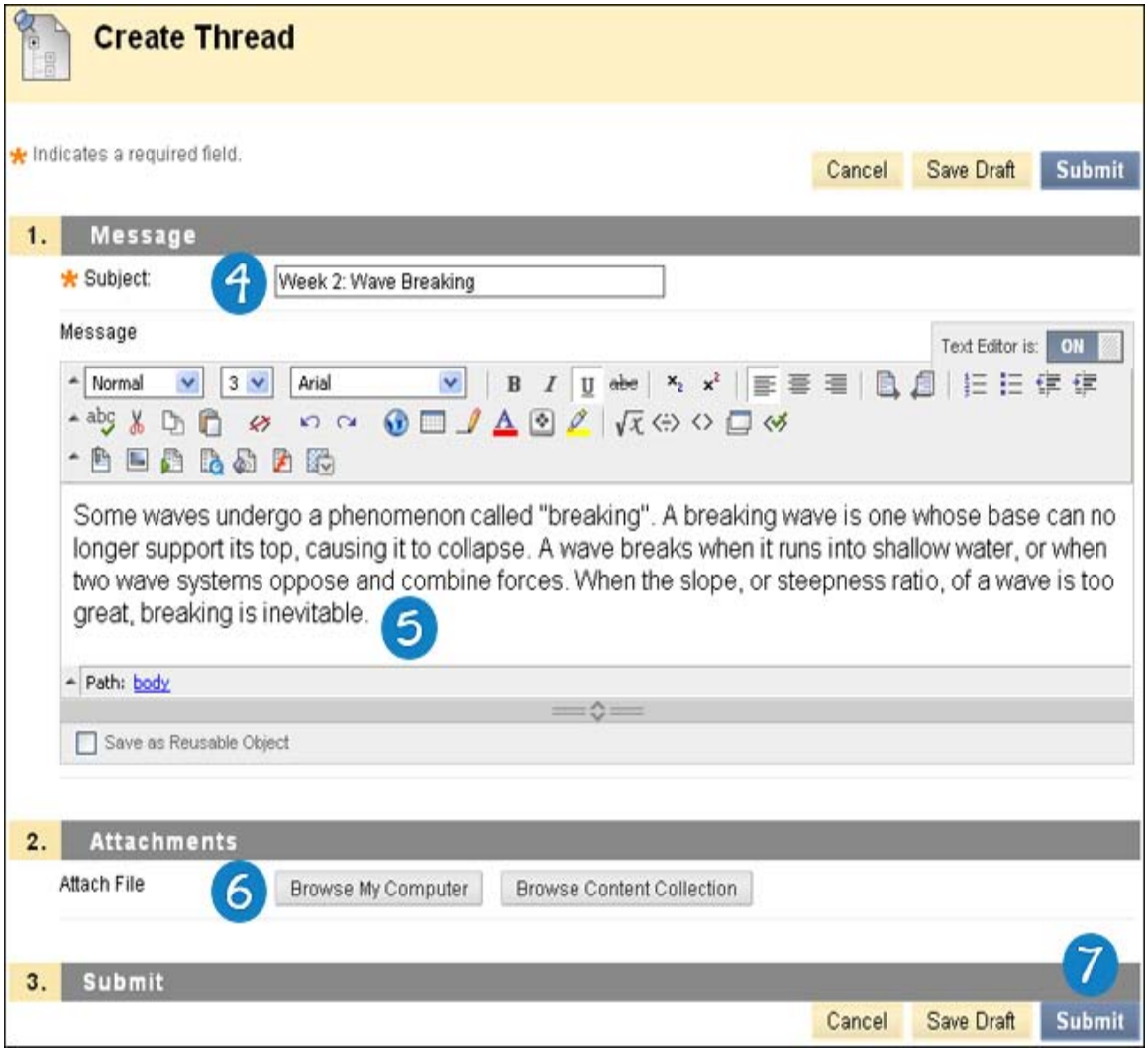
5. In the **Message** text box, type your reply. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
6. Alternatively, under **Attachments**, attach a file using one of the following options:
    - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
    - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.
7. Click **Submit** to create the thread.



Result

The newly created thread appears in the forum

How to Save Posts as Draft and Submit Later

The **Save Draft** function is available if you need to return to your post at a later time. This function saves your comments and files on the page.

When you finish your post, you must click **Submit** to publish the thread in the forum.

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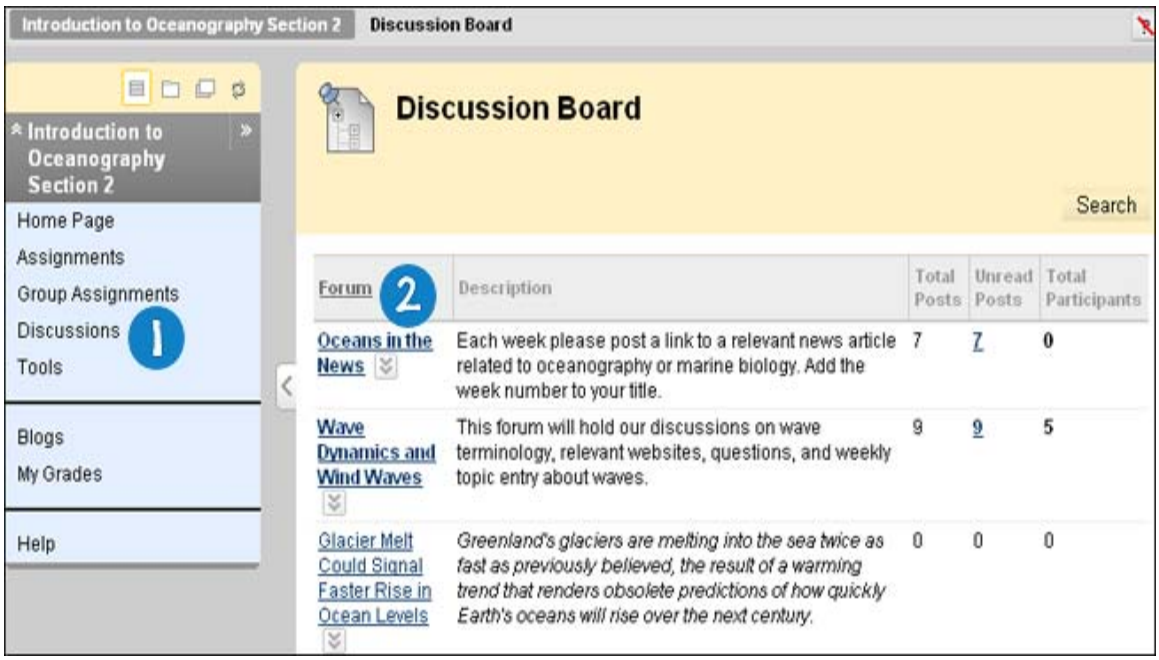
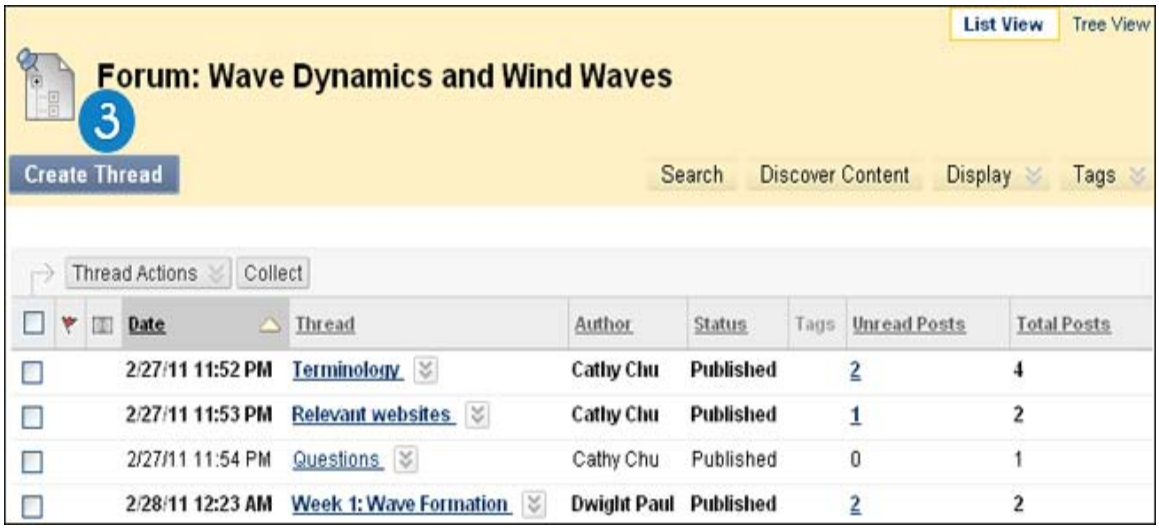
Saving a Post as Draft

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click **Create Thread**.



4. On the **Create Thread** page, type a **Subject**.
5. In the **Message** text box, type your reply. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
6. Alternatively, under **Attachments**, attach a file using one of the following options:
    - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
    - If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

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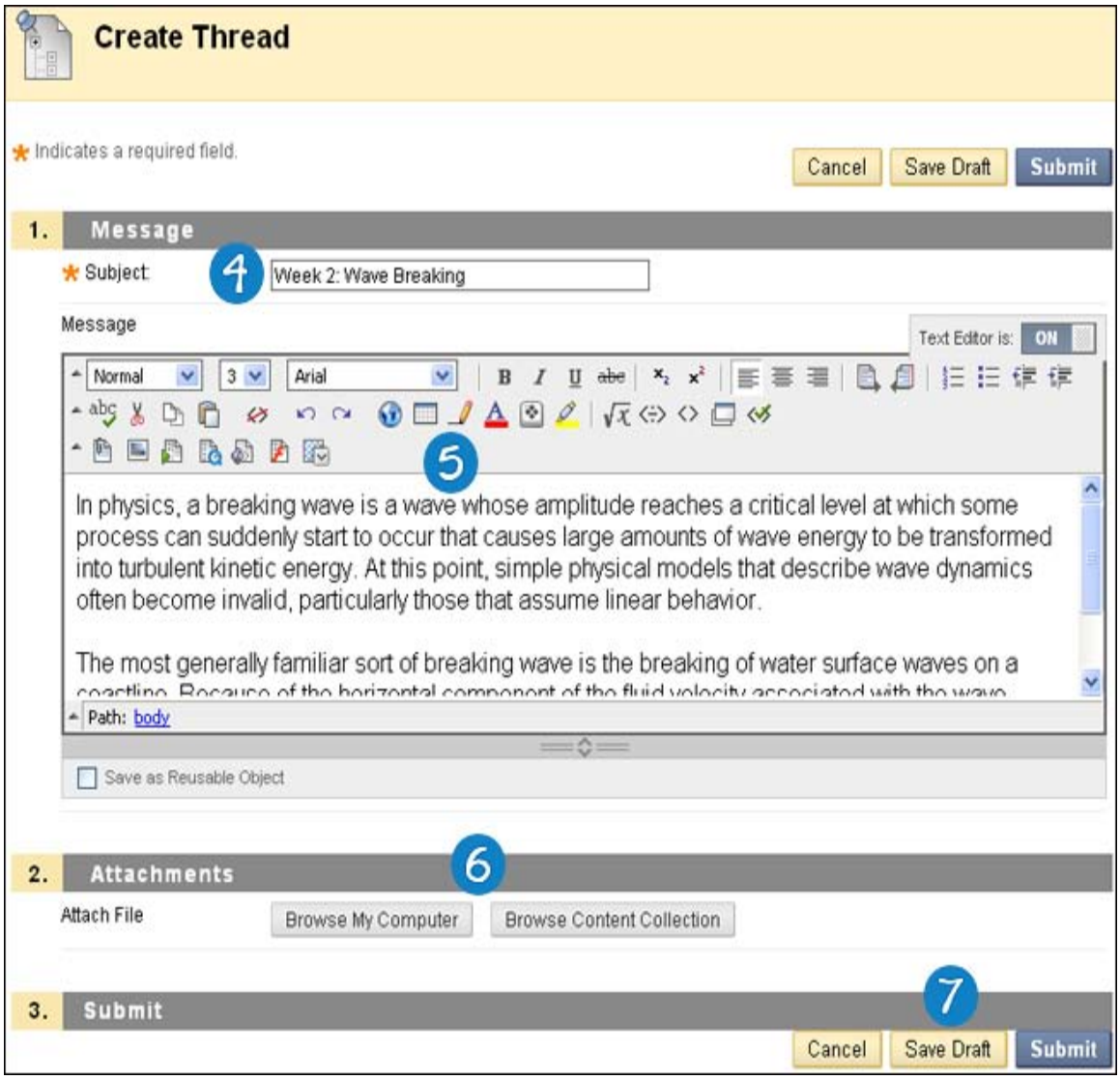
7. Click **Save Draft** to store a draft of the post and continue working later.



Submitting a Draft Post

1. Return to the **Forum** page. On the **Forum** page, point to **Display** to access the drop-down list.
2. Select **Drafts Only** to view the saved post.
3. On the **Thread** column, click the name of the draft post.

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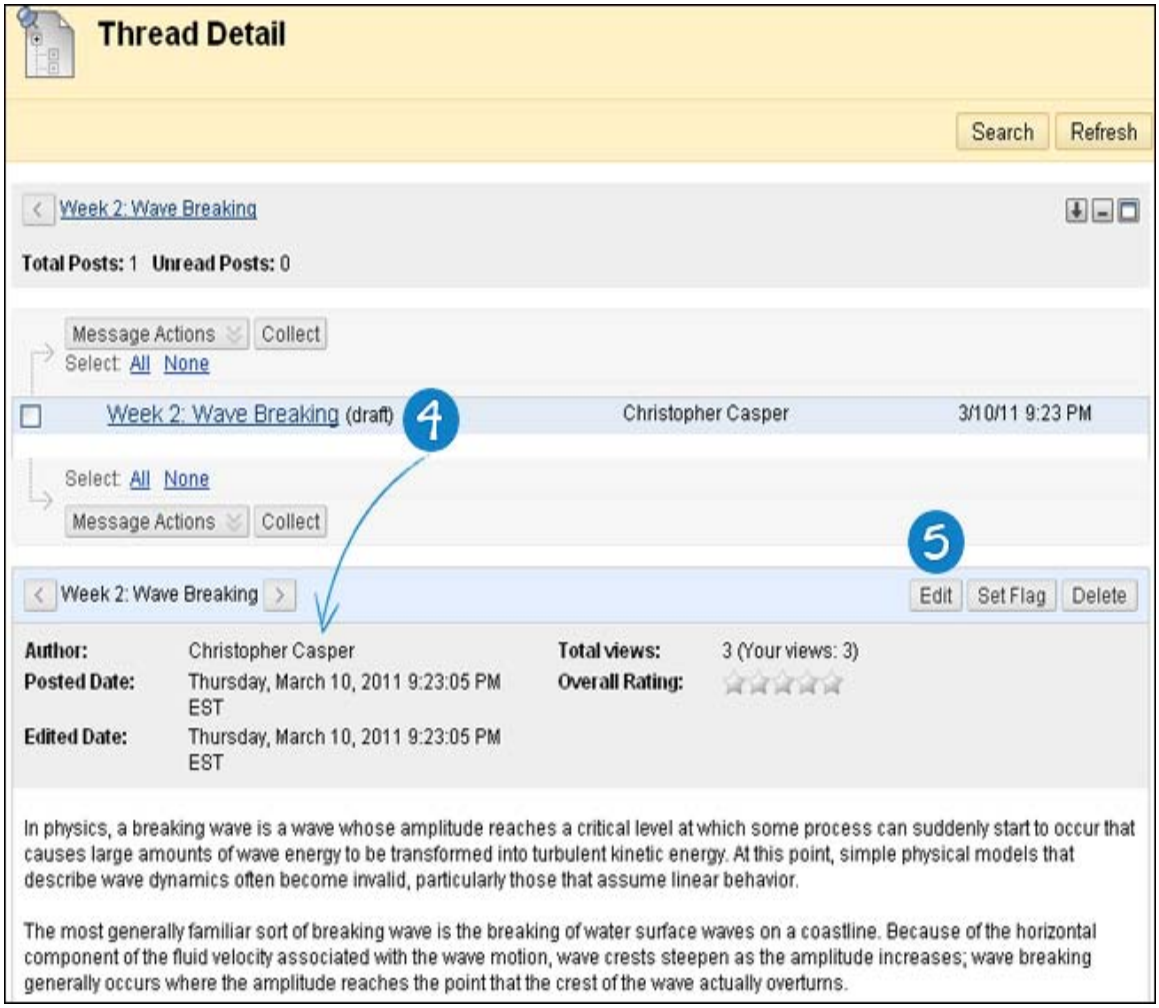
4. On the **Thread Detail** page, click the post's title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame. You can view the text of the post and information about the post, such as the **Author** and **Posted Date**.
5. Click **Edit**.



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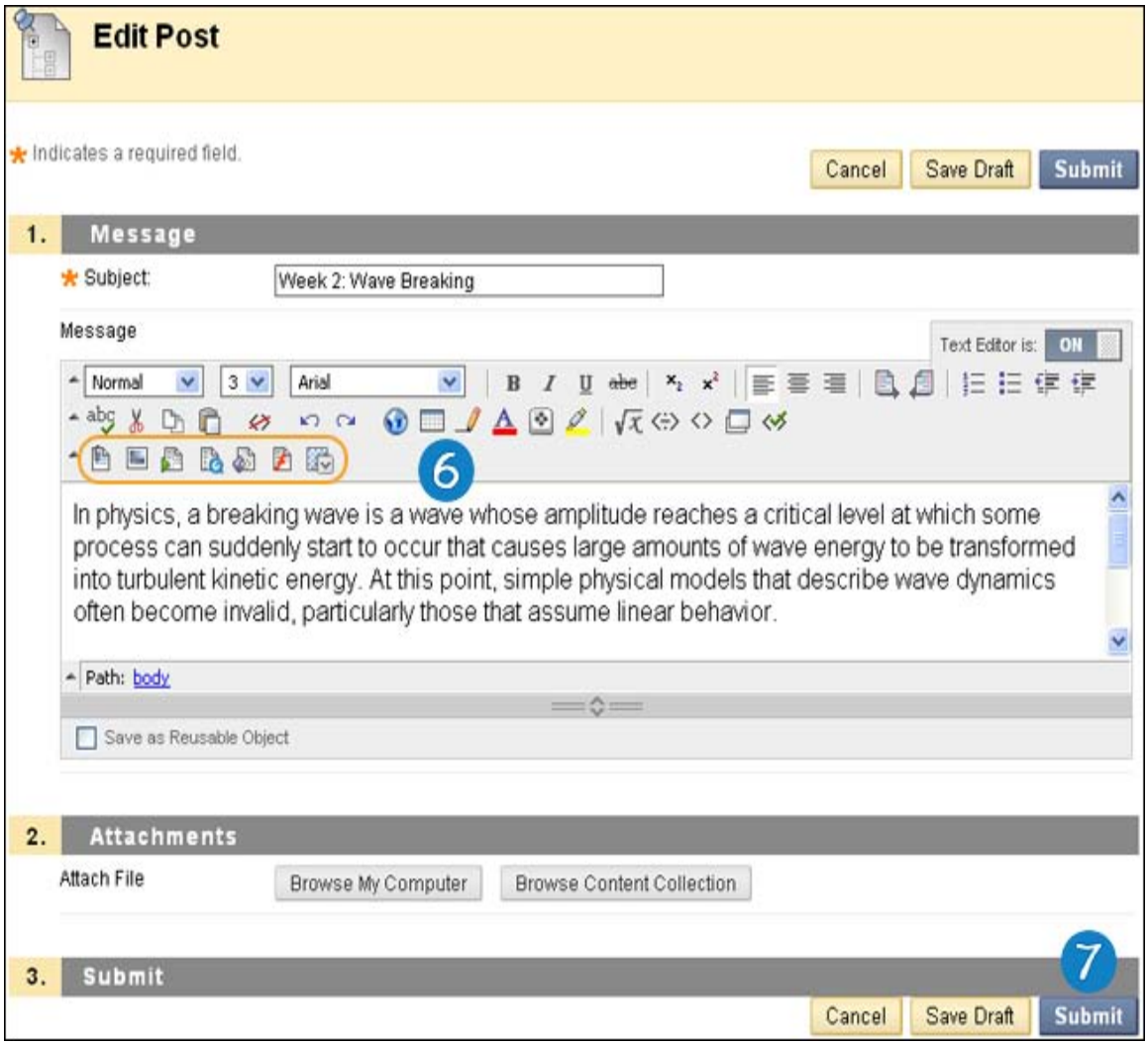
6. On the **Edit Post** page, make the necessary changes in your post. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
7. Click **Submit**.



How to Change the Displayed Threads

Your instructor sets the thread status as published, hidden, or draft, but you can choose which type of threads will appear. By default, published threads appear.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.

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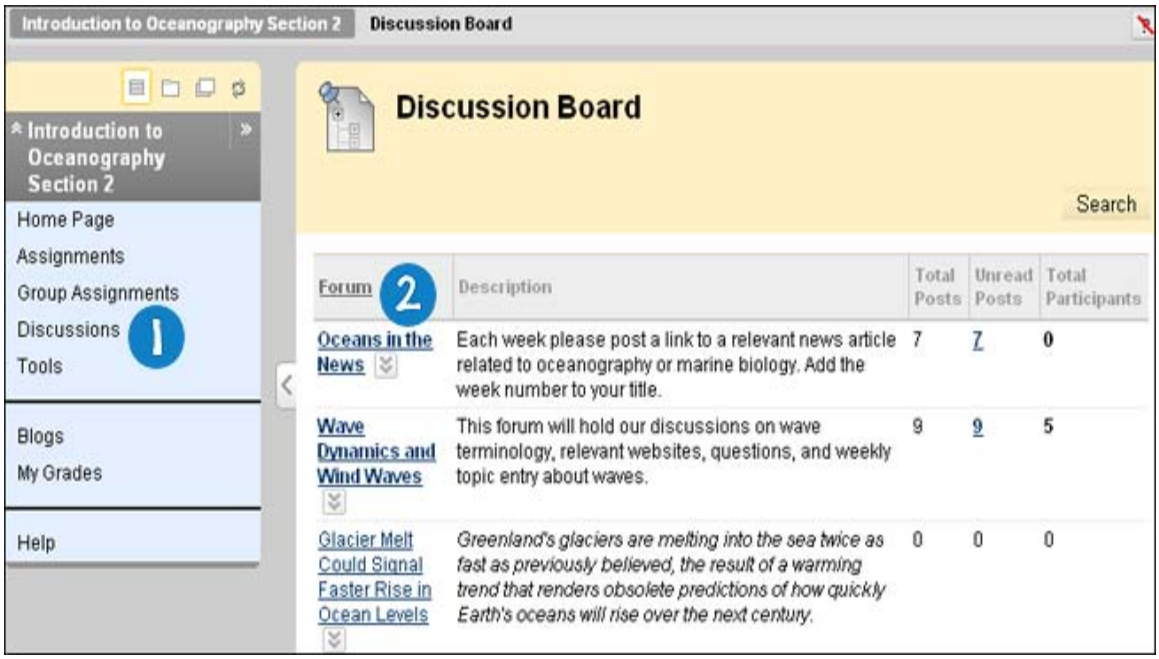

3. On the **Forum** page, select **List View**.
4. On the Action Bar, point to **Display** to access the drop-down list.
5. Select the type of threads to view in the forum.
    - **Published**: A post with a Published status is available to users.
    - **Hidden**: A thread that is locked and not visible by default. You may choose to display Hidden threads in List View. Hidden threads cannot be edited, even if editing has been enabled for the thread. Hiding threads helps you find relevant content, as unneeded content is hidden from view.
    - **Draft**: A Draft thread is saved to Blackboard Learn by the author for future editing, but is not submitted for publication. It becomes available to other users when it is published.

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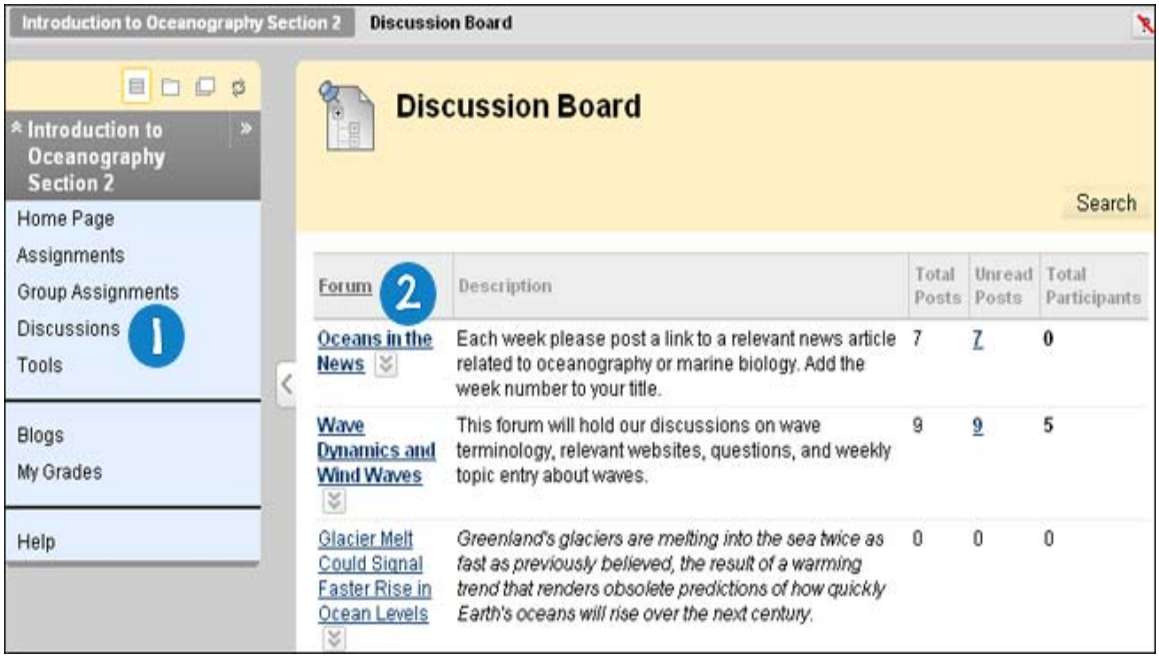
Result

The forum page displays only those threads that have the status selected from the **Display** drop-down list.

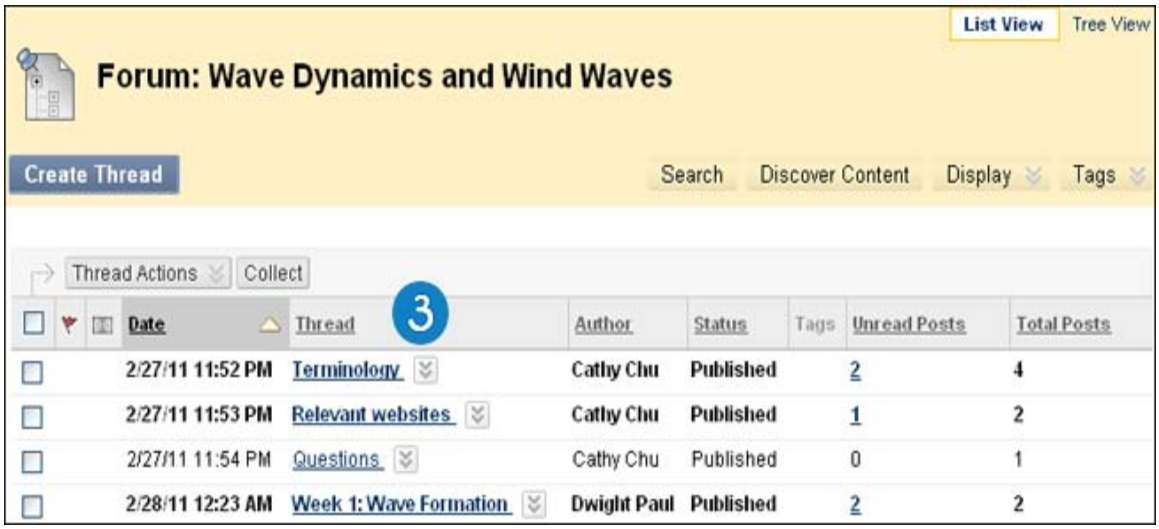
How to Reply to Discussion Posts

Note: You can reply to published threads, but cannot reply to locked or hidden threads.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click the name of the thread.



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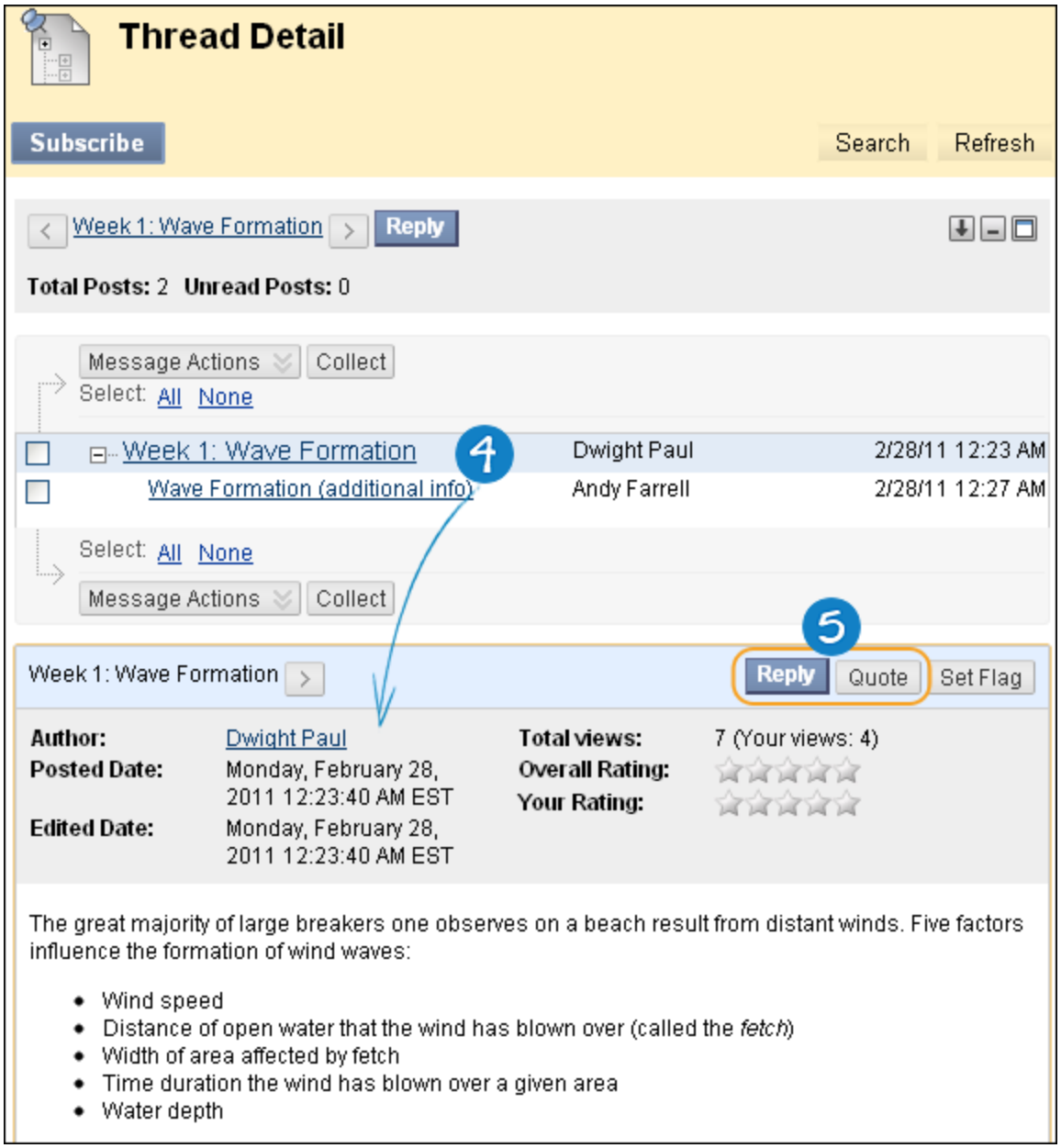
4. On the **Thread Detail** page, click a post's title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame. You can view the text of the post and information about the post, such as the **Author** and **Posted Date**.
5. Click **Reply**. Alternatively, click **Quote** to include the post's text as part of your reply.



6. On the **Reply to Post** page, click **View Original Post** on the Action Bar to include the original message on the page while replying. Click **Close Original Post** to hide the original post from view. If needed, edit the **Subject**.
7. In the **Message** text box, type your reply. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
8. Alternatively, under **Attachments**, attach a file using one of the following options:

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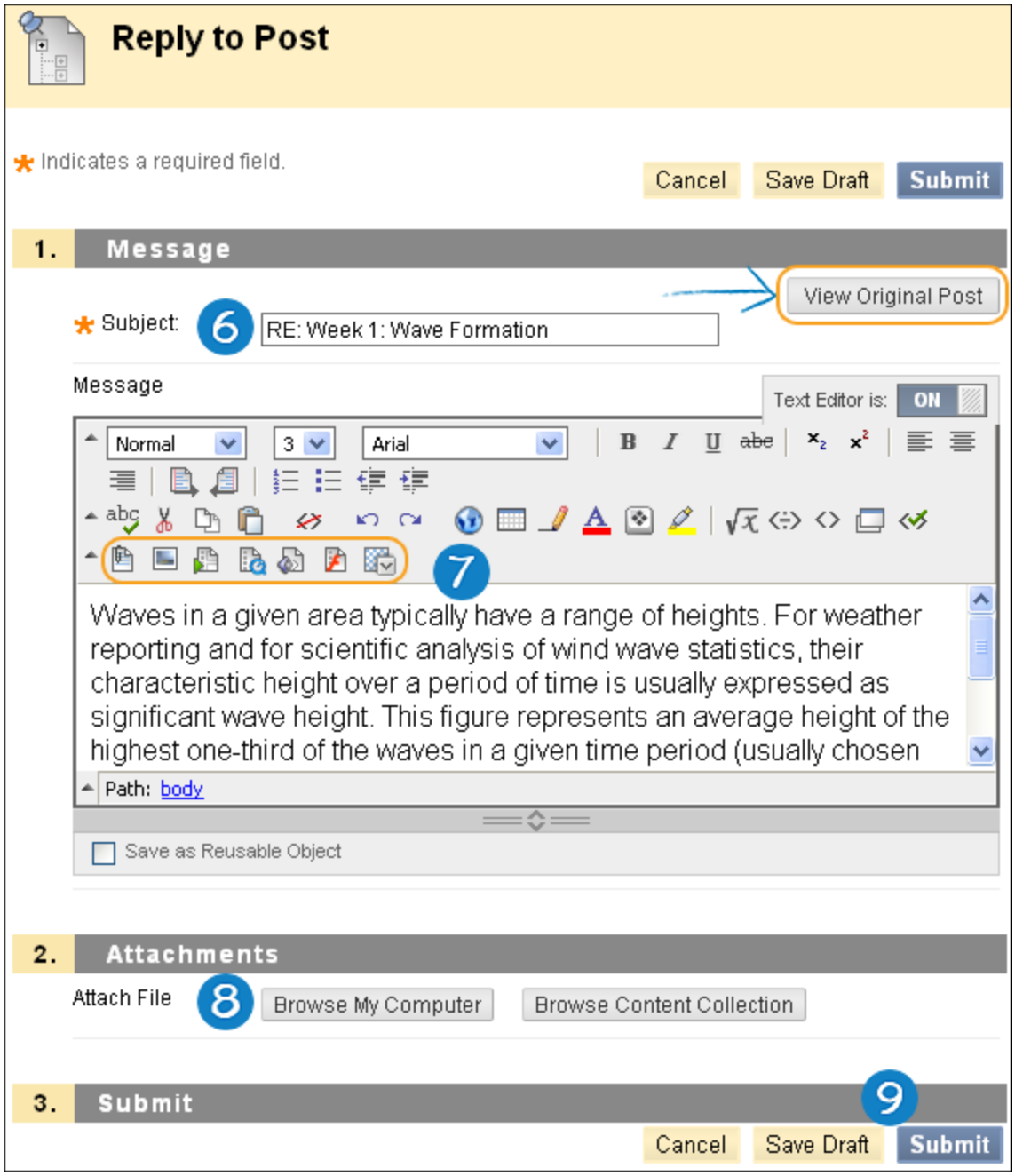
- To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
- If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

9. Click **Save Draft** to store a draft of the post or click **Submit** to create the thread.



Result

Your reply appears on the **Thread Detail** page, indented under the parent post. If you attached a file, a paper clip icon appears in the post's row. Click the title to open the post in the Current Post portion of the content frame. Use the **Move to previous** and **Move to next** arrows to view another post or use the breadcrumbs to return to the forum or the **Discussion Board** page.

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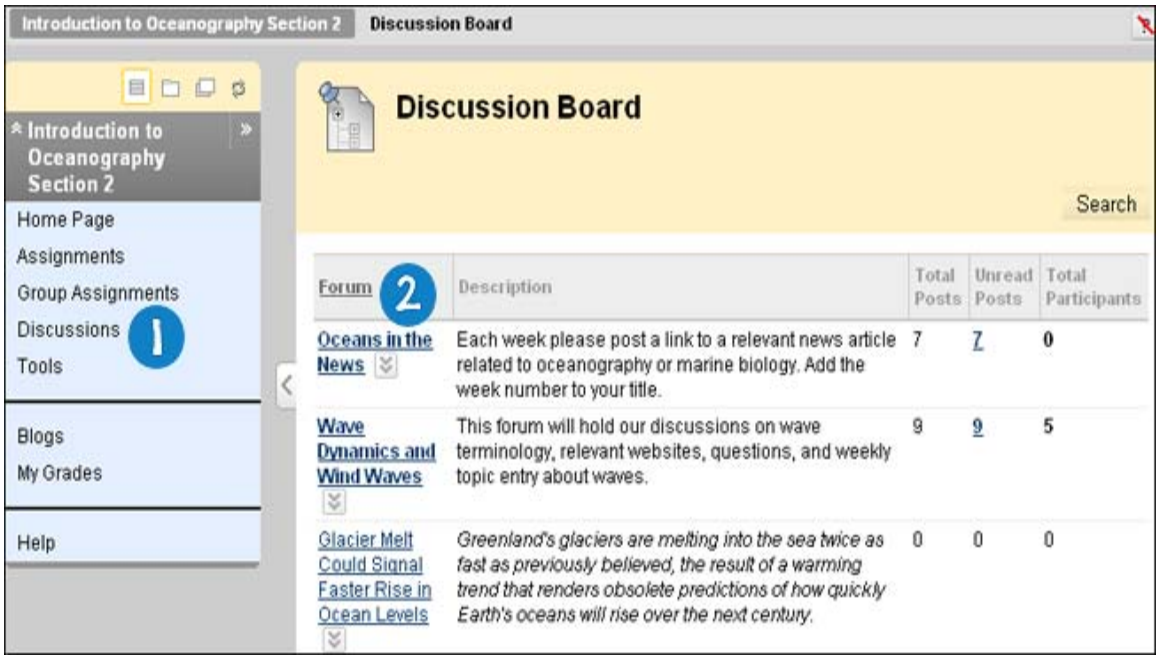
How to Rate Discussion Posts

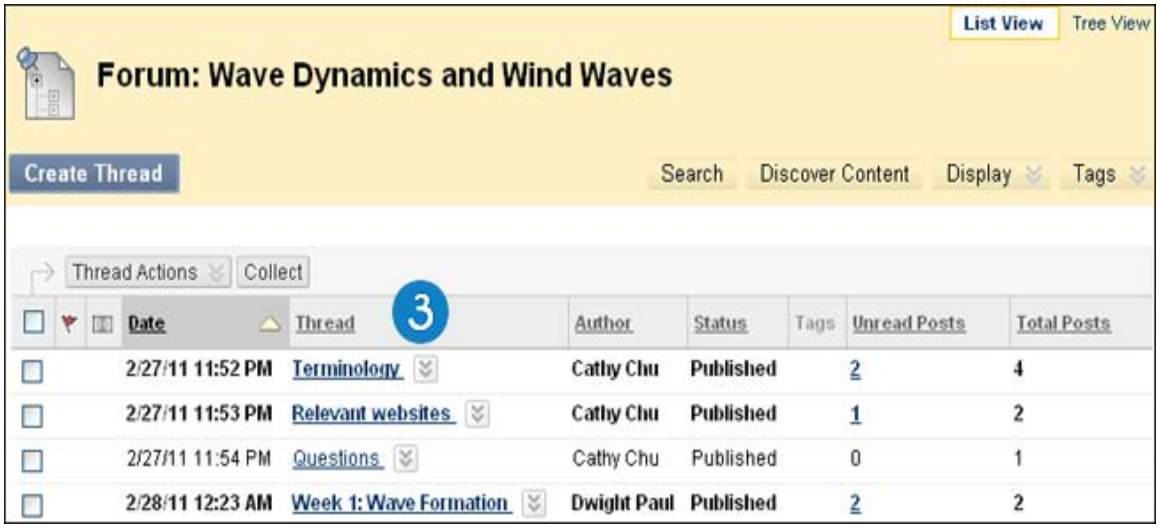
You can use the Discussion Board for peer review. Students start threads and include their work in their initial posts. Other users review the work, assign a rating to the initial post, and may include comments in a response.

Rating posts also allows you to focus on messages considered especially informative or useful by others. Depending on the forum settings, you can rate a post using a five star system. Your instructor can also rate posts.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click the name of the thread.



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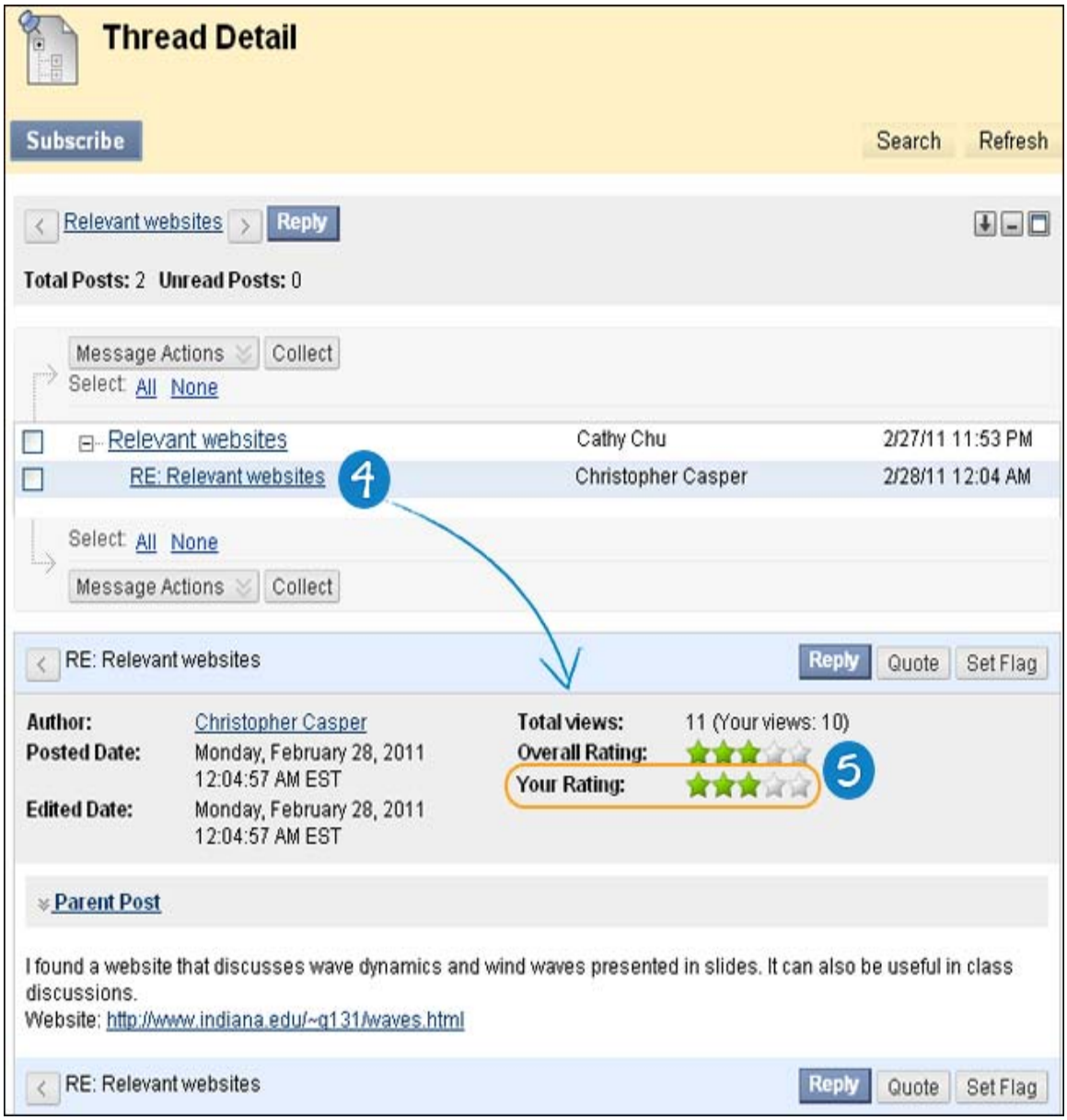
4. On the **Thread Detail** page, click a post's title. The post appears in the Current Post portion of the content frame.
5. For **Your Rating**, select one to five stars. You can add and delete stars at any time.



Result

Your rating is now included in the **Overall Rating**, which is the combined rating of all users. The individual rating appears in **Your Rating**. Use the **Move to previous** and **Move to next** arrows to view another post.

How to Search Discussion Posts

You can search for specific text—a phrase, word, or part of a word—in the Discussion Board. The results appear on a **Search Results** page.

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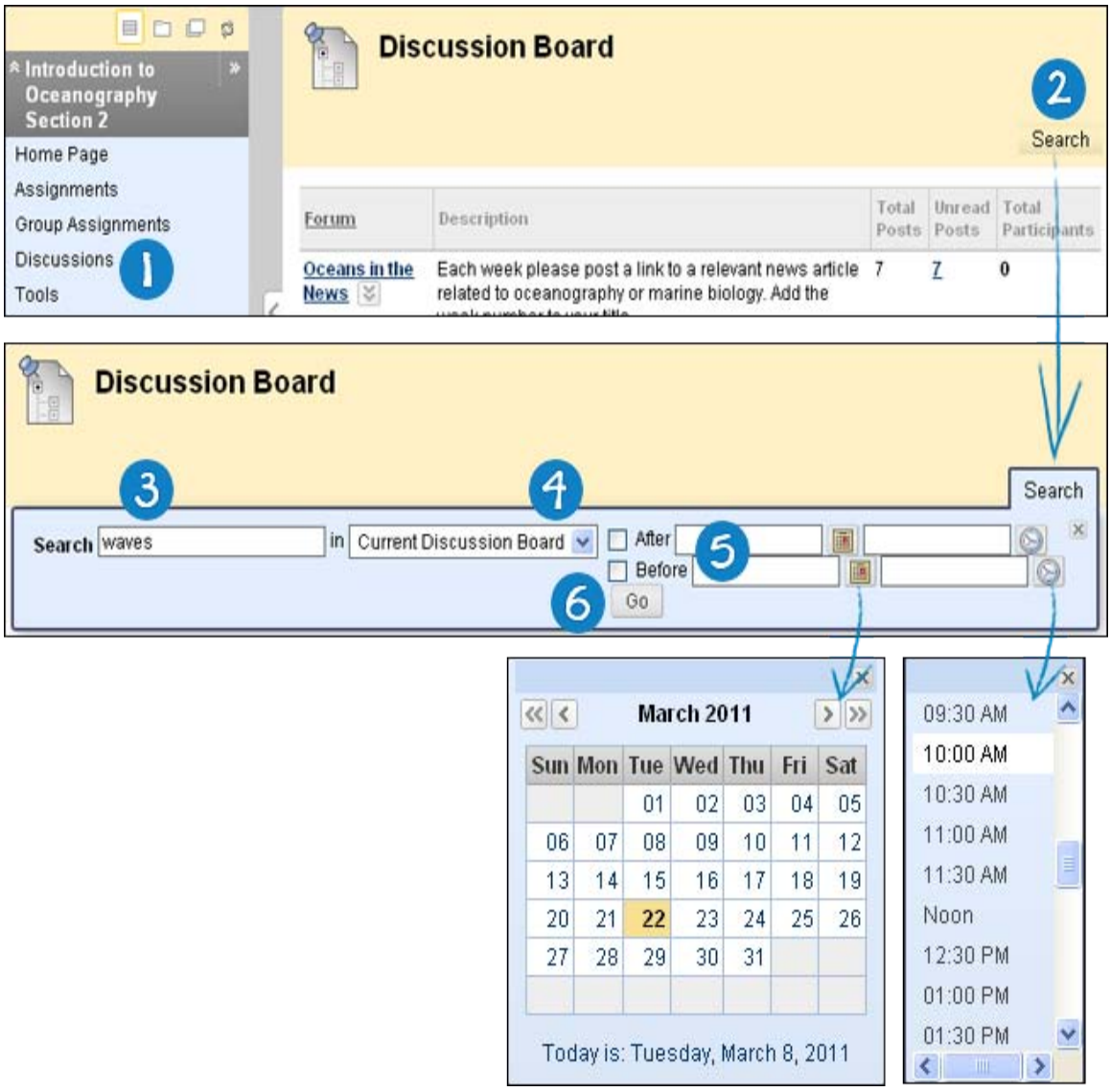
1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click **Search**. The **Search** field expands.
3. In the **Search** text box, type a search criterion.
4. In the drop-down list, select an area to search.
    - **Current Discussion Board**
    - **All Forums in Course**
5. To further narrow your search results, select the **After** and **Before** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times.
6. Click **Go**.



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Result

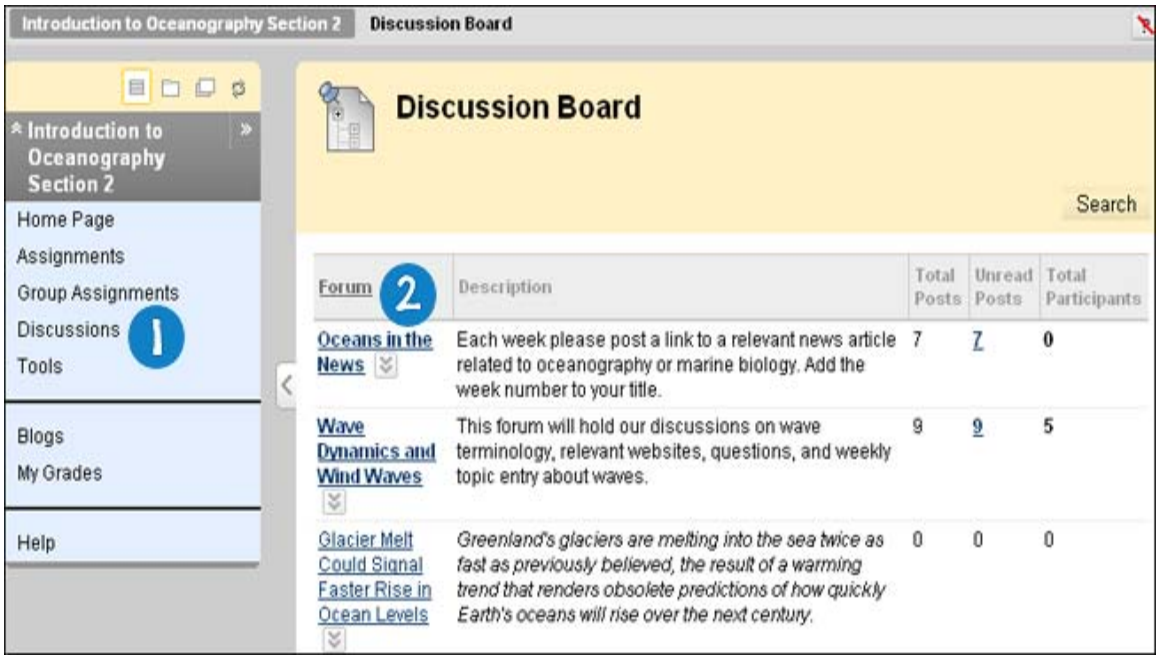
On the **Search Results** page, you can read and print the results. On the Action Bar, click **Print Preview** to open the page in a new window in printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the Filter function and the Sort by and Order drop-down lists on the Action Bar.

On this page, you can also reply to posts and mark messages read or unread. Click the **Quote** function to include the post's text as part of your reply. To view the responses to a post, click the post's hyperlinked title to navigate to the **Thread Detail** page.

How to Collect Discussion Posts

On the **Thread Detail** page, you can read only one post at a time. Use the **Collect** function to read multiple posts from the same page. Once posts are collected, you can filter, sort, and print them.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click the name of the thread.

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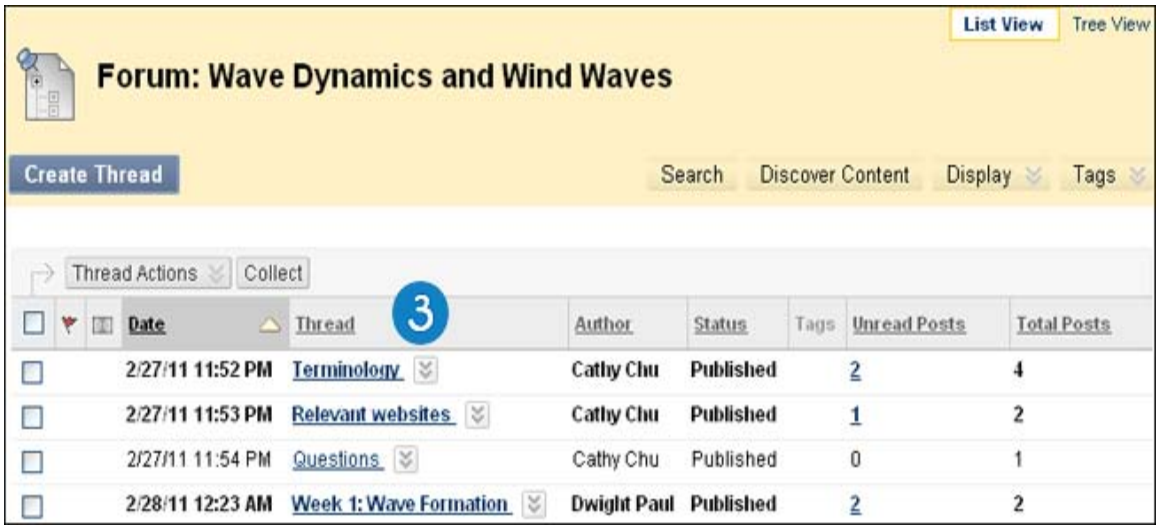
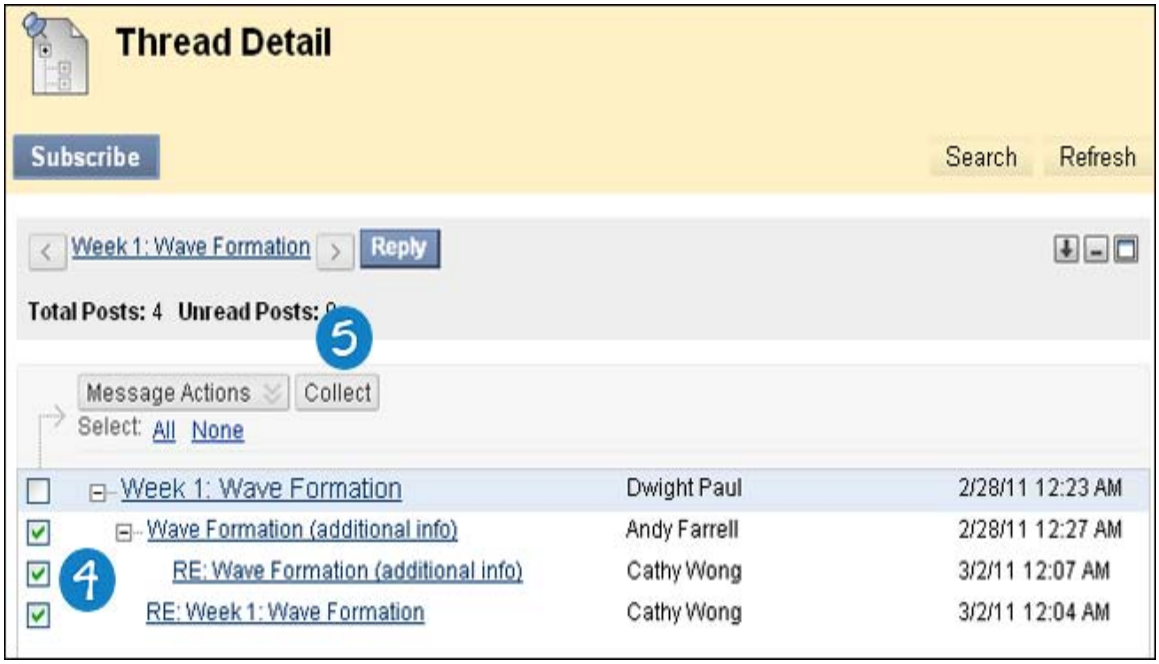


4. On the **Thread Detail** page, select the check boxes of the posts to collect. If a post has replies and you want them to appear on the **Collection** page, click the plus sign to expand the post and select the check boxes for those messages.

   Note: To select all the posts in a thread, click **Select: All** above the Message List. All check boxes for all the posts are selected whether they are expanded or collapsed.

5. On the Action Bar, click **Collect**.

   Note: The **Collect** function is also available in the forum page, where it is used to gather all the postings made to different threads. Once collected, sort the messages to further organize them.



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Result

On the **Search Results** page, you can read and print the results. On the Action Bar, click **Print Preview** to open the page in a new window in printer-friendly format. Posts print in the order they appear on the page. To select which posts appear and in which order, you can filter and sort posts using the Filter function and the Sort by and Order drop-down lists on the Action Bar.

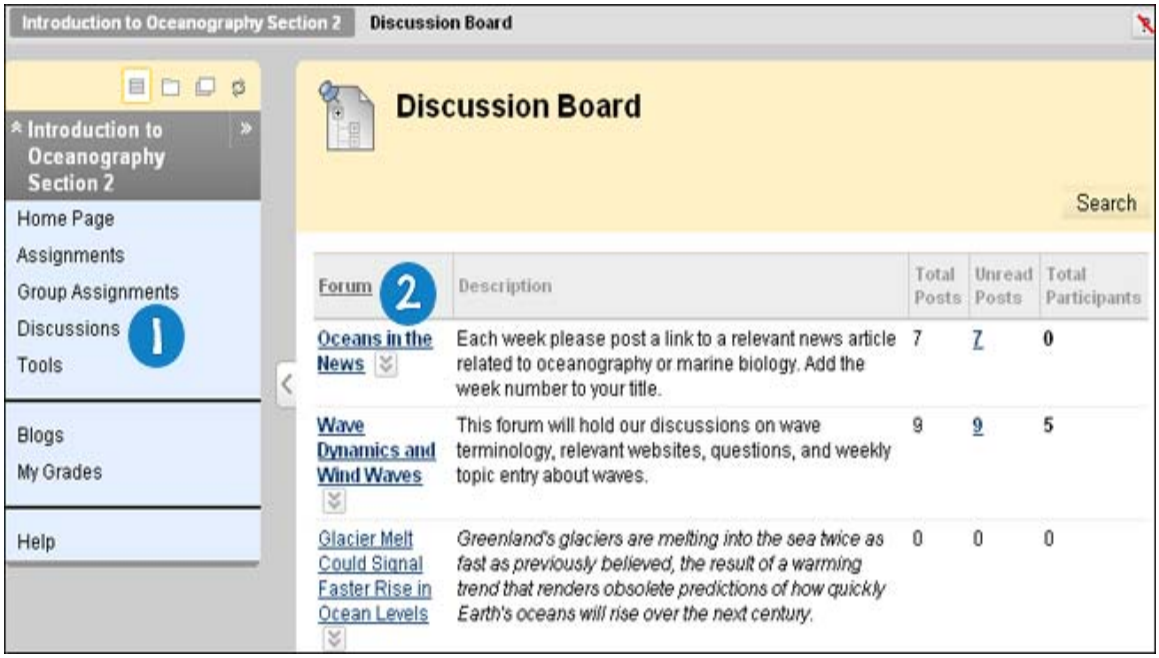
On this page, you can also reply to posts and mark messages read or unread. Click the **Quote** function to include the post's text as part of your reply. To view the responses to a post, click the post's hyperlinked title to navigate to the **Thread Detail** page.

How to Filter Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting

You can filter collected posts to narrow your search results or sort a collection. If you print the posts after filtering, the posts print in the order they appear on the page.

Note: If the author or authors of some posts are no longer enrolled in the course, the posts may appear out of order.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click the name of the thread.

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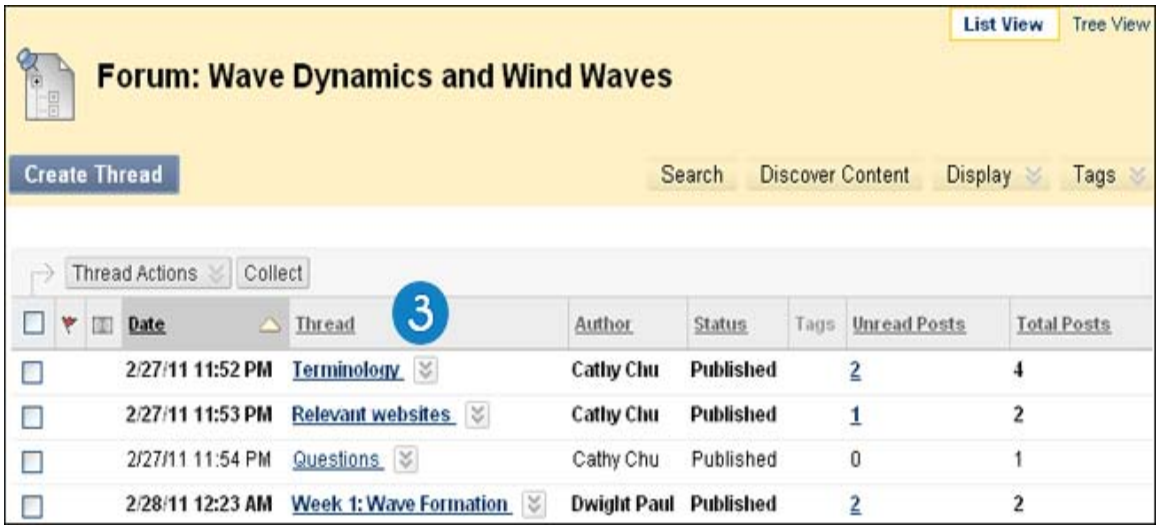
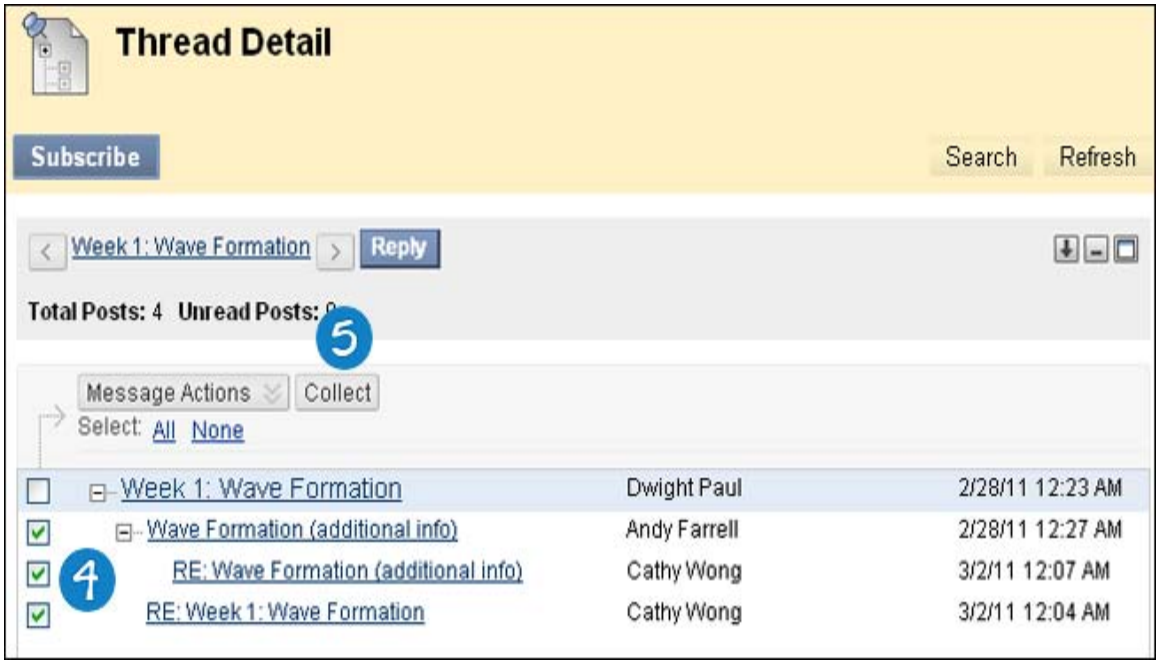


4. On the **Thread Detail** page, select the check boxes of the posts to collect.
5. On the Action Bar, click **Collect**.

   Note: The **Collect** function is also available from the forum page, where it is used to gather all the postings made to different threads. Once collected, sort the messages to further organize them.



6. On the **Collection** page, click the **Filter** function on the Action Bar to expand the field and select options from the following drop-down lists:
   - **Author**: Select All or select an author.
   - **Status**: Show All or select a status.
   - **Read Status**: Select Show All, Read, or Unread posts.
   - **Tags**: Show All tags or select a tag.

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7. Click **Go** to apply the selections. You can further organize the results using the Sort by and Order drop-down lists.
8. Click the **X** to close the **Filter** field.

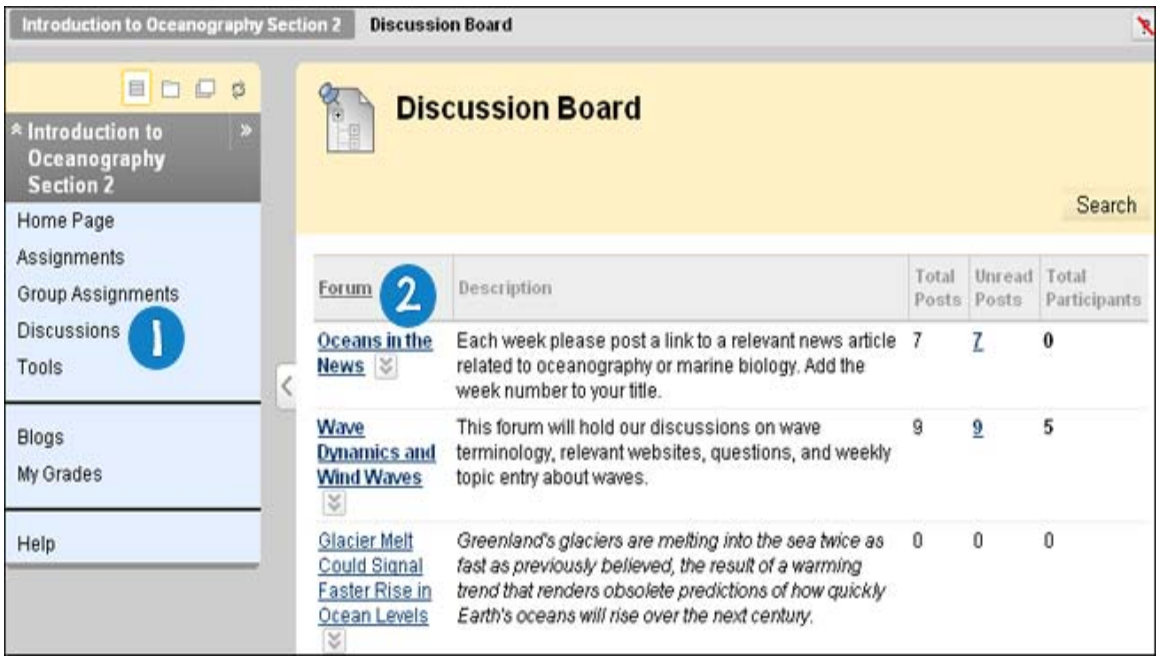
Note: You can select **Tags** if your instructor has enabled post tagging for the forum.

How to Sort Discussion Posts After Searching or Collecting

To narrow your search results or sort a collection, you can use the **Sort by** and **Order** drop-down lists. If you print the posts after sorting, the posts print in the order they appear on the page.

Note: If the author or authors of some posts are no longer enrolled in the course, the posts may appear out of order.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Discussions**.
2. On the **Discussion Board** page, click the name of the forum.



3. On the **Forum** page, click the name of the thread.

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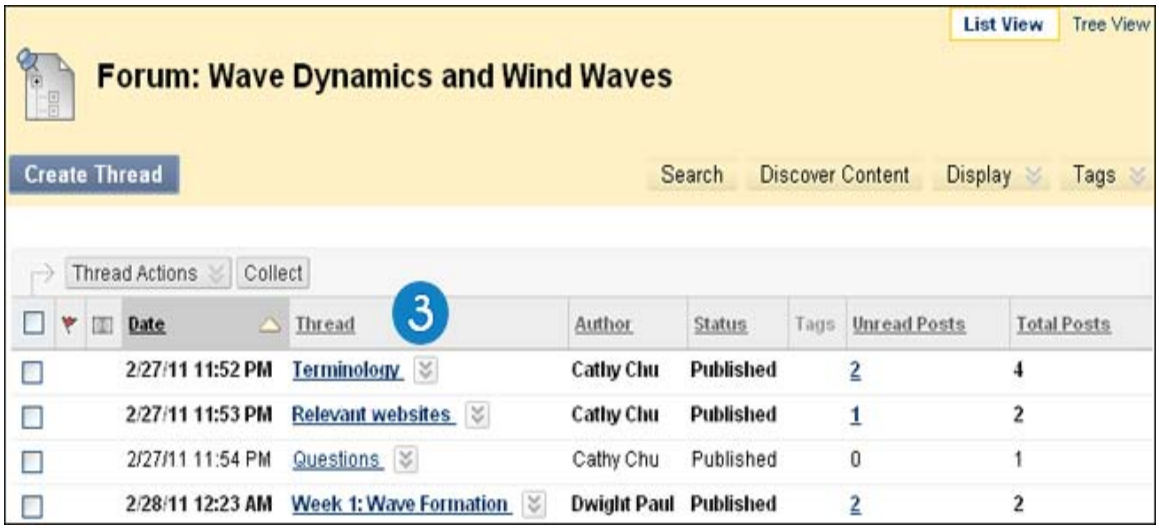
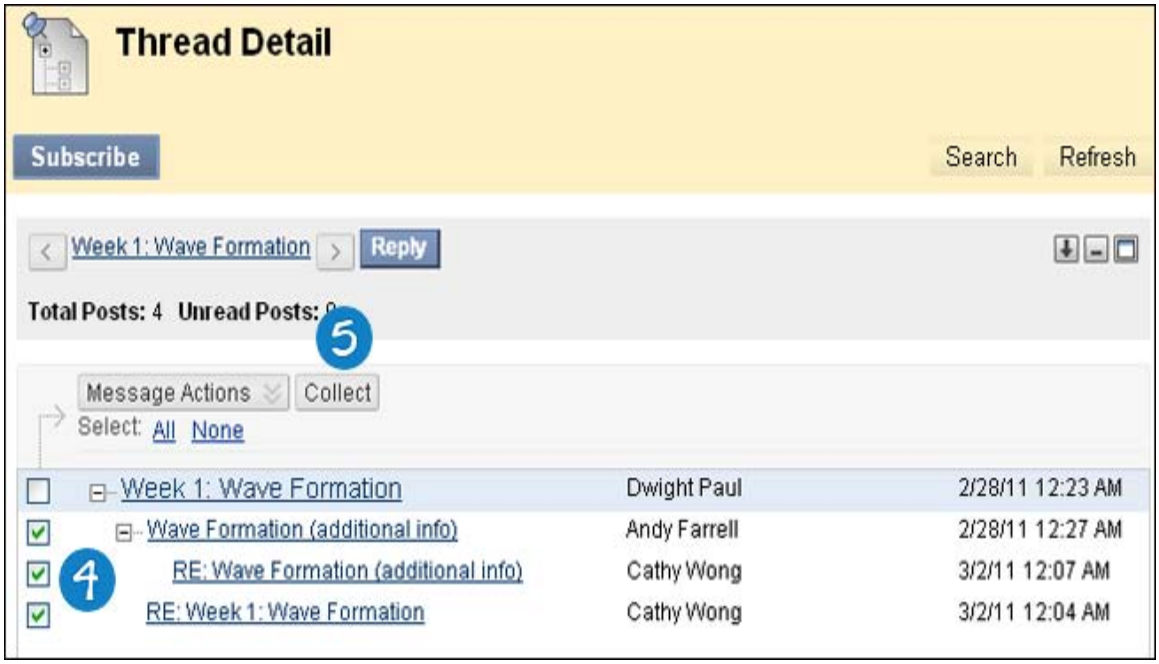


4. On the **Thread Detail** page, select the check boxes of the posts to collect.
5. On the Action Bar, click **Collect**.

   Note: The **Collect** function is also available from the forum page, where it is used to gather all the postings made to different threads. Once collected, sort the messages to further organize them.



6. On the **Collection** page, point to **Sort by** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list. Select an option:
   - **Author's Last Name**
   - **Author's First Name**
   - **Subject**
   - **Date of Last Post**
   - **Thread Order**

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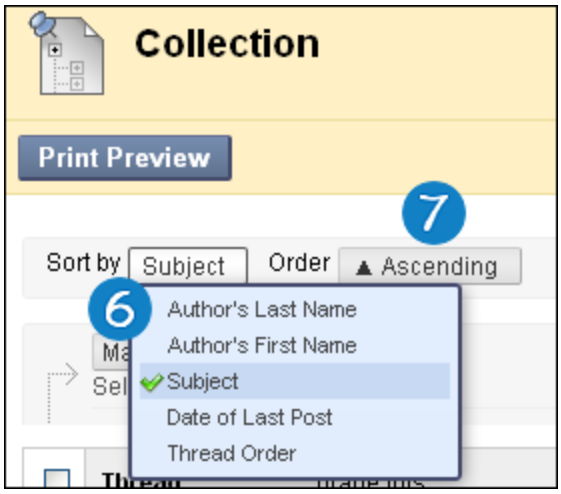
7. On the Action Bar, point to **Order** to access the drop-down list. Sort posts in ascending or descending order.



How to View Discussion Board Grades

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

3. If your posts to the forum have not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your post has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the post's **Grade Forum** page. This page includes:
    - **Forum Statistics**: This section shows information about your posts, such as **Date of Last Post**, **Average Post Length**, and **Average Post Position**.
    - **Forum Grade**: This section provides information about your **Grade**, instructor's **Feedback**, and **Grading Notes**.
    - **Contributors**: This section shows other users who participated in the forum.

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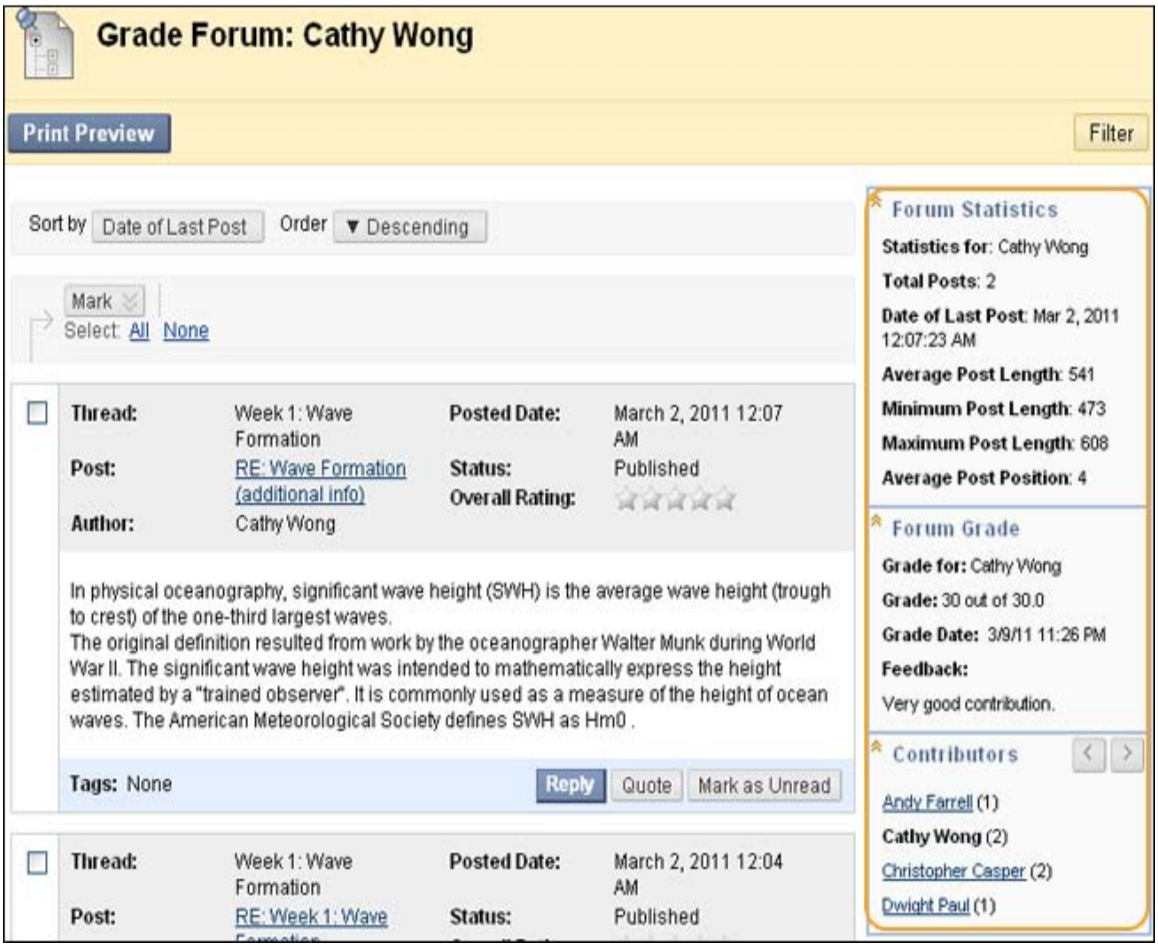
My Grades

Item Name	Details	Last Student Activity	Last Instructor Activity	Grade	Points Possible	Comments
Oceans in the News, Part Two	Details			-	10	
Wave Dynamics and Wind Waves	Details	Mar 9, 2011 11:26 PM	Mar 9, 2011 11:26 PM	30.00	30	Very good contribution.



Note: If you see feedback for an item but do not see a grade, contact your instructor.

Related Tutorials Creating a New Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 1m 52s | 4,750 KB) | Replying to a Discussion Board Thread (Flash movie | 1m 59s | 5,083 KB) | Creating a Discussion Board Post (Flash movie | 2m 40s | 5,135 KB) | Organizing Discussion Board Posts (Flash movie | 2m 27s | 4,624 KB) | Viewing Discussion Board Grades (Flash movie | 1m 38s | 3,181 KB)

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Email

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

You can send email to the following people in a course:

- **All Users**: Sends email to all users in the course.
- **All Groups**: Sends email to all of the groups in a specified course.
- **All Student Users**: Sends an email to all students in the course.
- **All Teaching Assistant Users**: Sends email to all of the Teaching Assistants in a specified course.
- **All Instructor Users**: Sends email to all of the instructors for a specified course.
- **Select Users**: Sends email to select users.
- **Select Groups**: Sends email to select groups.

Note: Recipients of each email will not see the email addresses of other recipients.

Before You Begin

- Blackboard Learn keeps no record of sent emails. You will receive a copy of your email in the Inbox of your external email account. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date.
- Blackboard Learn will NOT recognize files or email addresses with spaces or special characters, such as #, &, %, and $. In general, use only alphanumeric file names and addresses in Blackboard Learn.
- Do not send email through Blackboard Learn without content in the subject line. Leaving the subject line blank can prevent the message from being delivered.

How to Send Email

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Send Email**.

   Note: You can also access the Send Email feature for all of your courses through the **Tools** panel on the **My Institution** tab. The Email tool may also be available directly from the Course Menu when added by your instructor.

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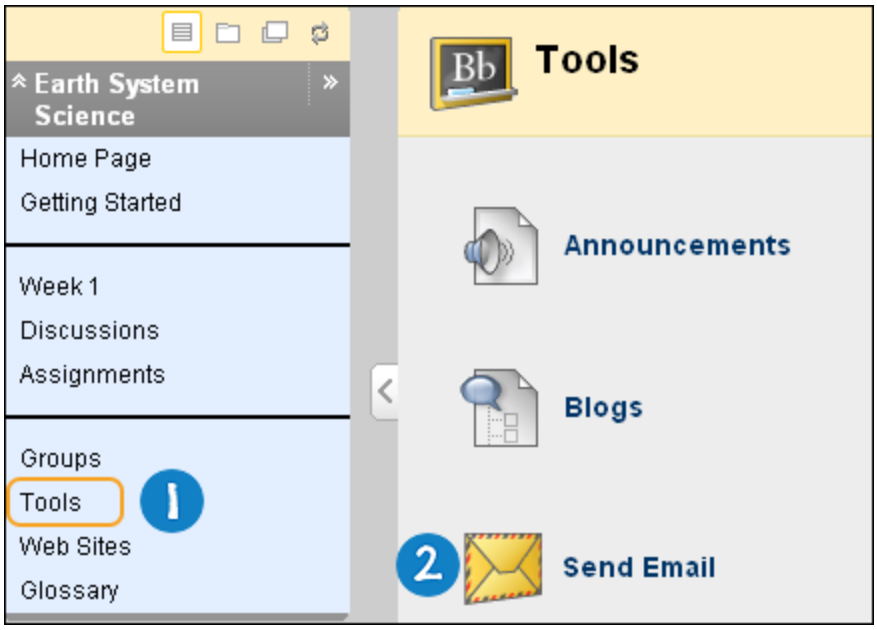

3. For the Select Users or Select Groups, select the recipients in the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the **Selected** box. A back arrow is available to move a user out of the recipient list. Click **Invert Selection** and highlighted users are no longer highlighted and those users that are not selected will be highlighted.
4. Type your **Subject**.
5. Type your **Message**. A copy of the message is sent to the sender. A receipt page appears after the message is sent listing all recipients. The receipt page does not confirm that users received the message. It only confirms that the message was sent.
6. Click **Attach a File** to browse for file from your computer. You can attach multiple files. After you add one file, the option to attach another file appears.
7. Click **Submit**.

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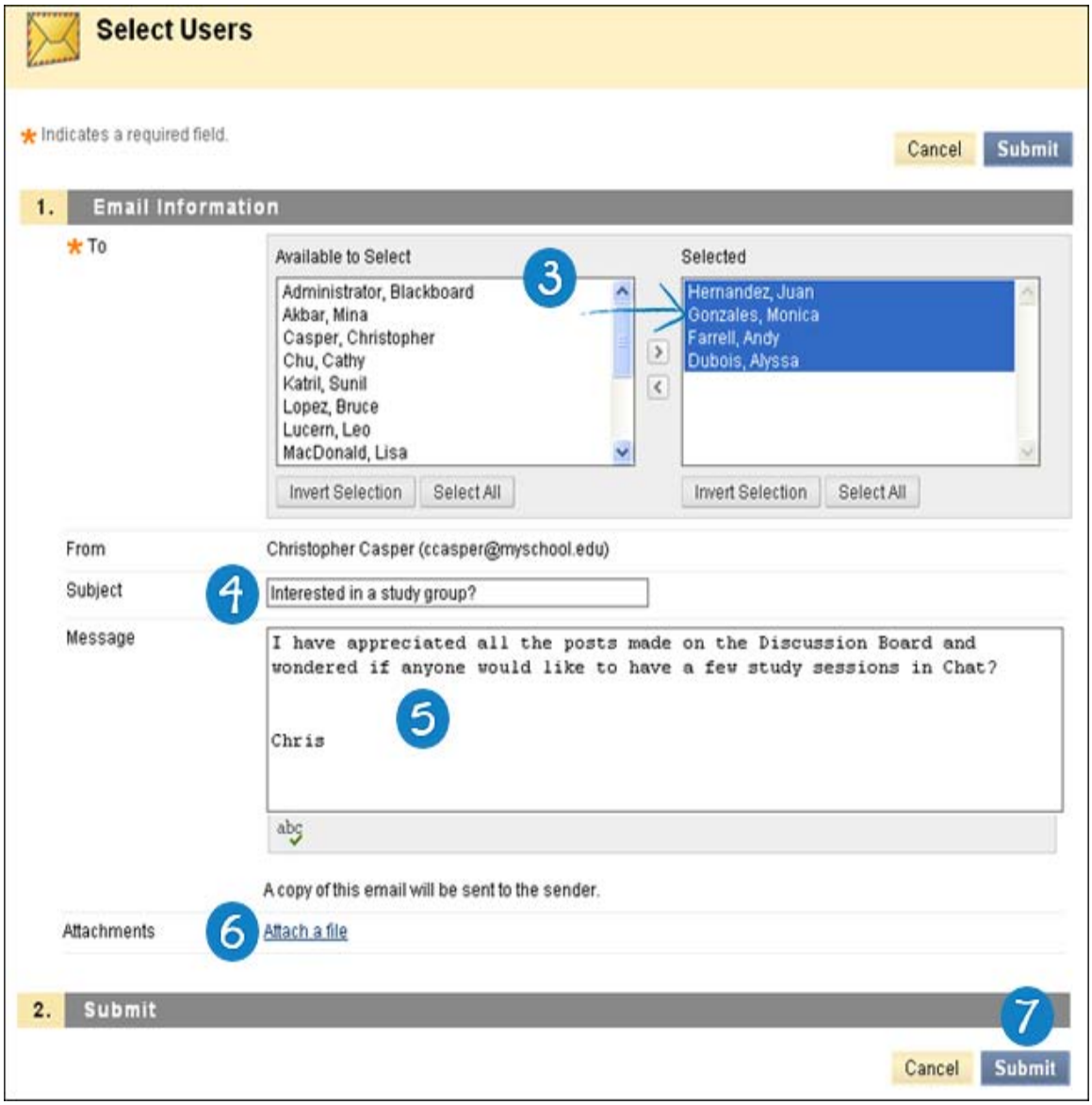

To select multiple users in a row, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each name needed. You can also select all course members with the **Select All** function.

Troubleshooting

- Your email address is not visible unless you choose to make it visible to course members. Find this setting in the page header above the tabs at: **My Places** > **Personal Information** > **Set Privacy Options**. From this page, you can choose the information you want course members to see.
- You can change your external email address used in your course. Change your email address by going to **My Places** > **Personal Information** > **Edit Personal Information**. Type your preferred email address and click **Submit**.
- Email clients, such as Hotmail, Yahoo, and AOL may identify email from Blackboard Learn as junk mail and either automatically delete the email or move it to a junk mail folder. If you have problems,

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check your user preferences or options for settings regarding the handling of junk email. You can also change your email address.

Journals

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

Journals are a personal space for you to communicate privately with your instructor. You can also use a journal as a self-reflective tool to post your opinions, ideas, and concerns about your course, or discuss and analyze course related materials. For example, you can describe problems faced and how you solved them. Your instructor can direct journal entries to be more formal in nature and narrower in focus by listing topics for discussion.

Your instructor can choose to make journal entries public, allowing all course members to view all entries. You can read what other students wrote and build upon those ideas.

When used in the group area, members of a group can view and comment on each other's entries for a group journal. The group can communicate with their instructor as a whole and all members can benefit from the comments made.

Your instructor can grade group journals and apply the grade to every member of the course group. Journal entries can also be used solely for communication. In either instance, you can make multiple entries for one journal topic.

The Journal topic page is divided into two main sections. You can view the **Instructions** in the content frame. Click the **X** to collapse the field. In the side panel, you can view information about the journal. You can expand and collapse sections in the side panel using the double arrows.

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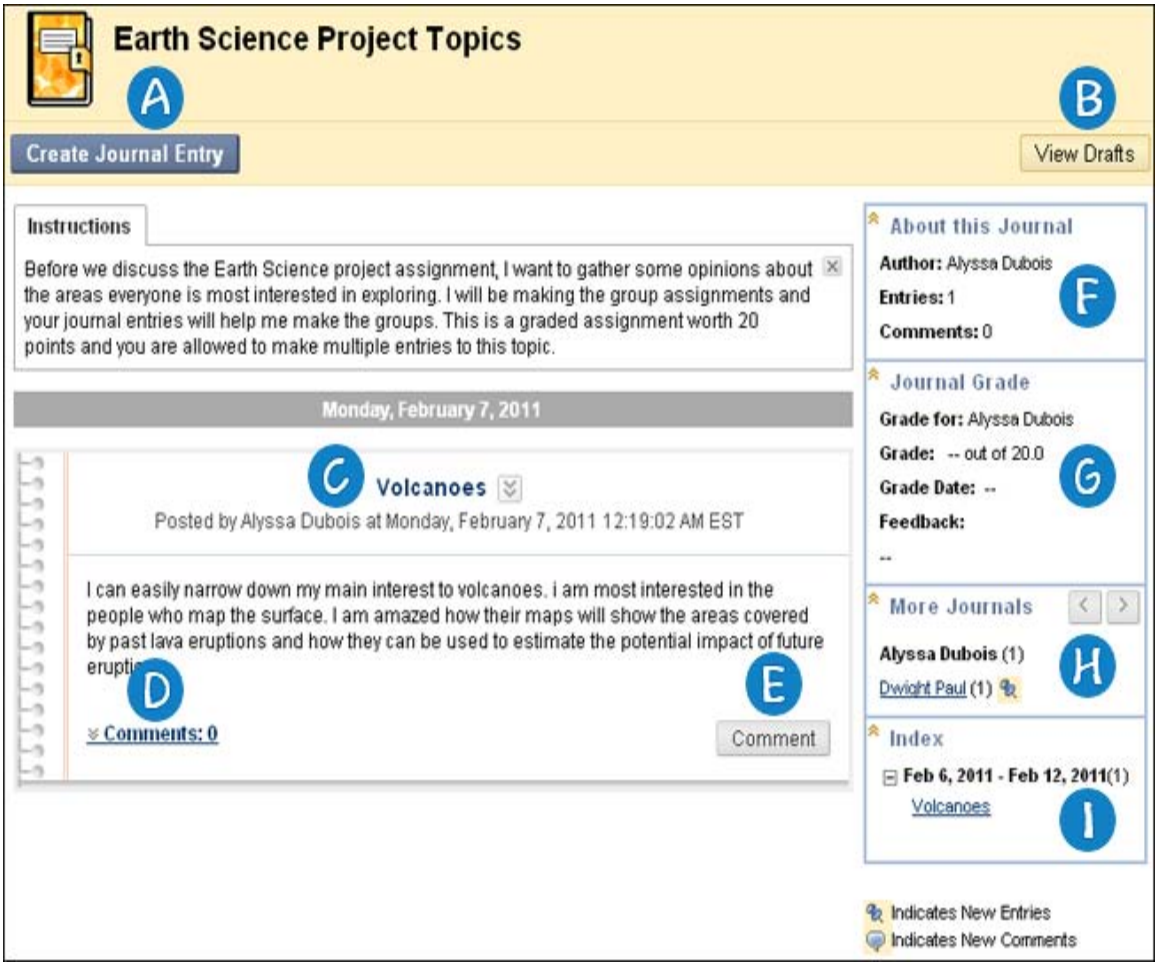

A **Create Journal Entry**: You can make a journal entry using the **Create Journal Entry** function. You can make another journal entry for a topic at any time. For example, your instructor may add a comment requesting that you clarify what has been written before a grade is assigned or suggest a topic for another entry.

B **View Drafts**: You can access any entries saved as drafts. Click **View Drafts** on the Action Bar.

C **Journal Entry**: Your journal entries appear in the content frame following the **Instructions**.

D **Comments**: Following an entry, you can see if comments were made. Click the link to view comments.

E **Comment**: You can add comments by clicking **Comment**.

F **About this Journal**: In the side panel, you can see the journal information in the **About this Journal** section.

G **Journal Grade**: The **Journal Grade** section appears if a journal is set to be graded. You can see if your journal entries have been graded..

H **More Journals**: You can see other journal entries made by other course members in the **More Journals** section.

I **Index**: You can see the titles of your selected entries for either the week or the month in the **Index** section, determined by the settings your instructor makes during journal creation. The most recent entry title appears first.

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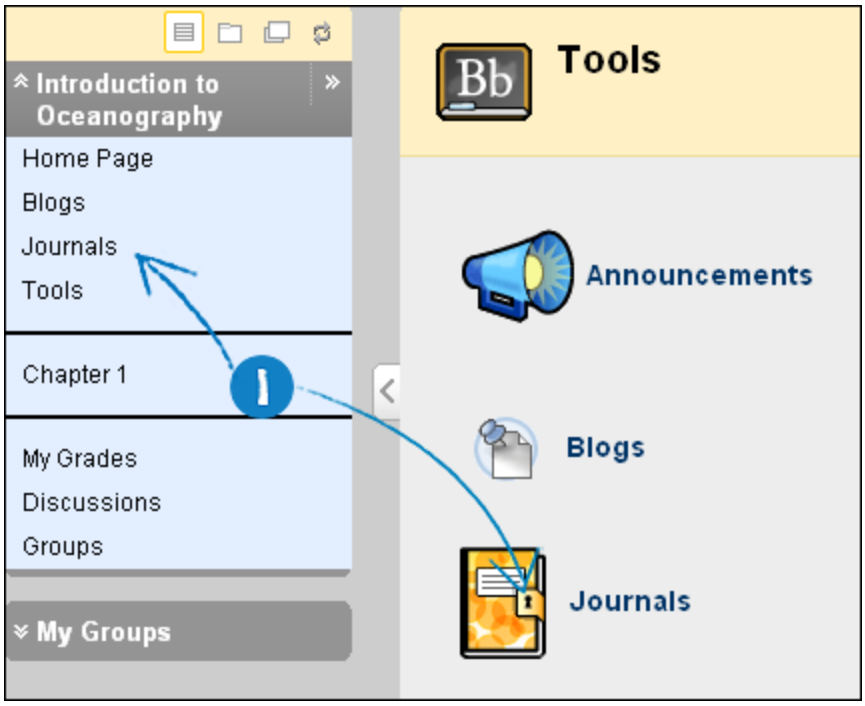
How to Access a Journal

1. On the Course Menu, click **Journals**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Journals**.



2. On the **Journals** listing page, select a journal to open.

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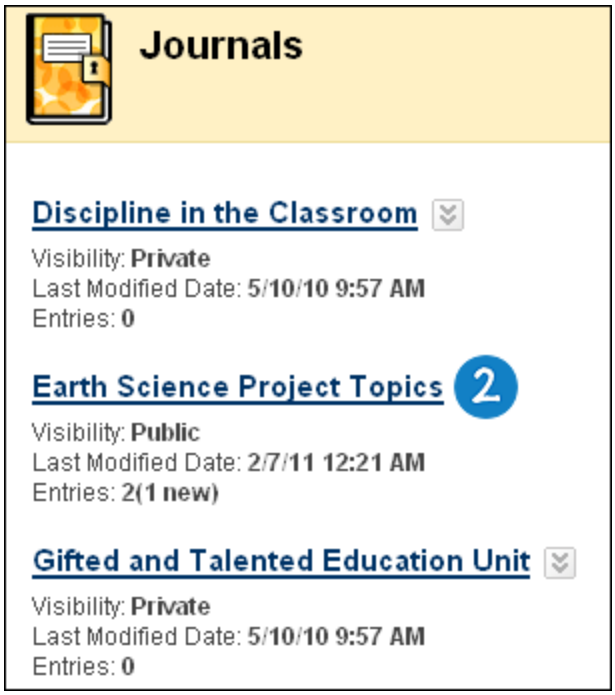

How to Create a Journal Entry

Only your instructor can create a journal topic, but once created, you can create entries. The journal topics appear in alphabetical order on the Journals listing page. Instructors and users can create and post journal entries or save them in draft form for later posting.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Journals**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Journals**.

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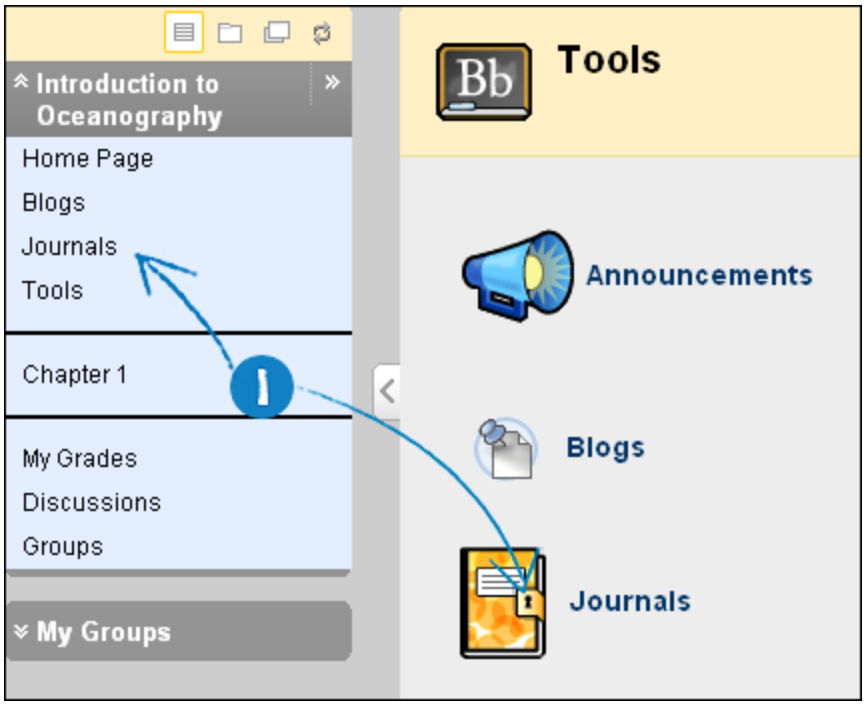
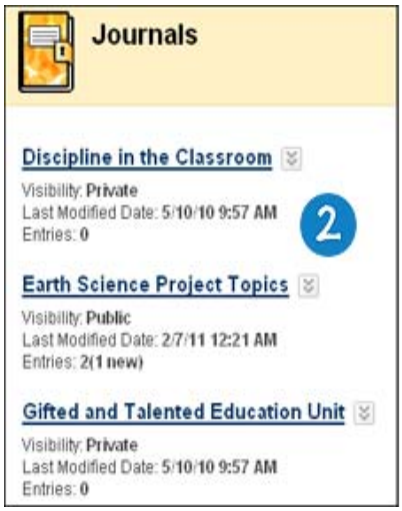
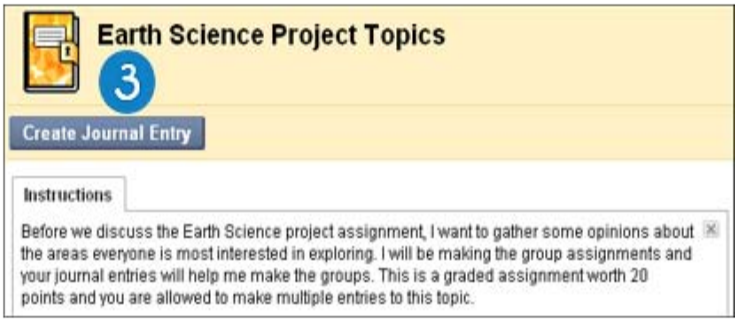


2. On the **Journals** listing page, select a journal to open.
3. On the **Journal** topic page, click **Create Journal Entry**.





4. On the **Create Journal Entry** page, type an **Entry Title**.
5. Type the text in the **Entry Message** text box.
6. Alternatively, in the **Attach File** field, attach a file using one of the following options:
    - To upload a file from your computer, click **Browse My Computer**.
    - To upload a file from the course's storage repository:
        - If Course Files is the course's storage repository, click **Browse Course**.

        -OR-

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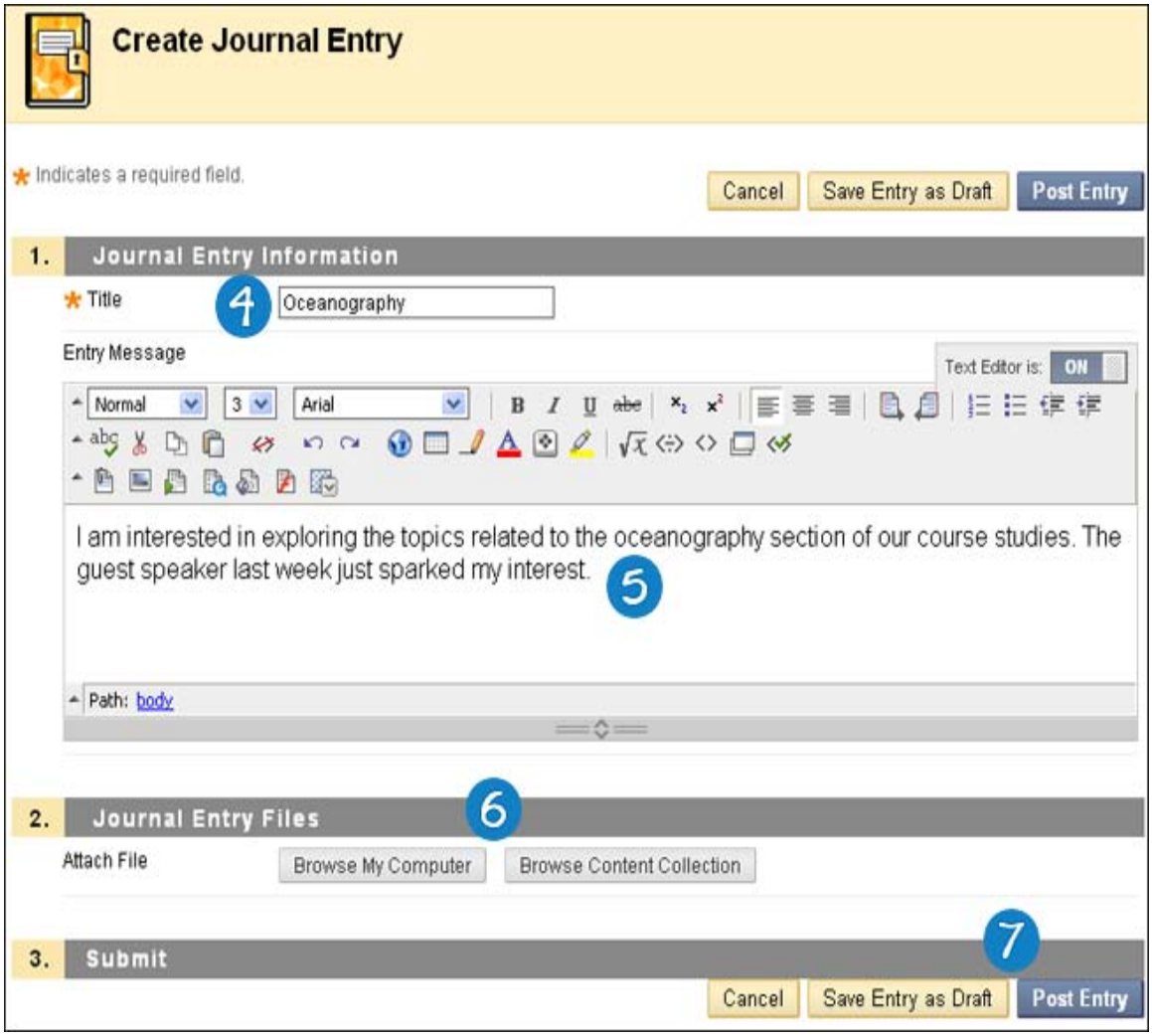
- If your school licenses content management, click **Browse Content Collection**.

Note: Files added by students are not uploaded to the course repository.

7. Click **Post Entry**.

   -OR-

   Click **Save Entry as Draft** to save the entry for later posting.



Viewing Journal Drafts

You can save journal entries for later posting by clicking **Save Entry as Draft**. You can view these drafts by clicking **View Drafts** on the main journal page.

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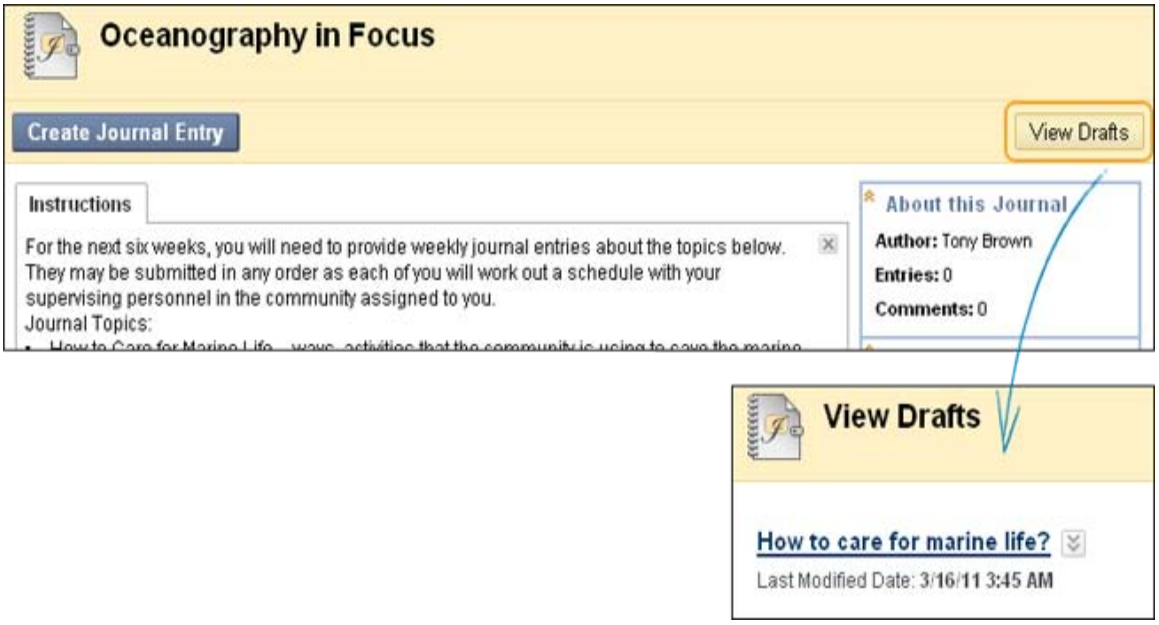

How to Comment on a Journal Entry

You can create comments to journal entries if commenting is allowed by your instructor. You can make a comment after your instructor comments on an entry to continue the conversation.

You cannot make comments on another user's journal entry, even if the journal has been made public. Users can only comment on another user's entry when they are members of a group. For group journals, all group members and their instructor are allowed to make comments on individual entries.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Journals**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Journals**.

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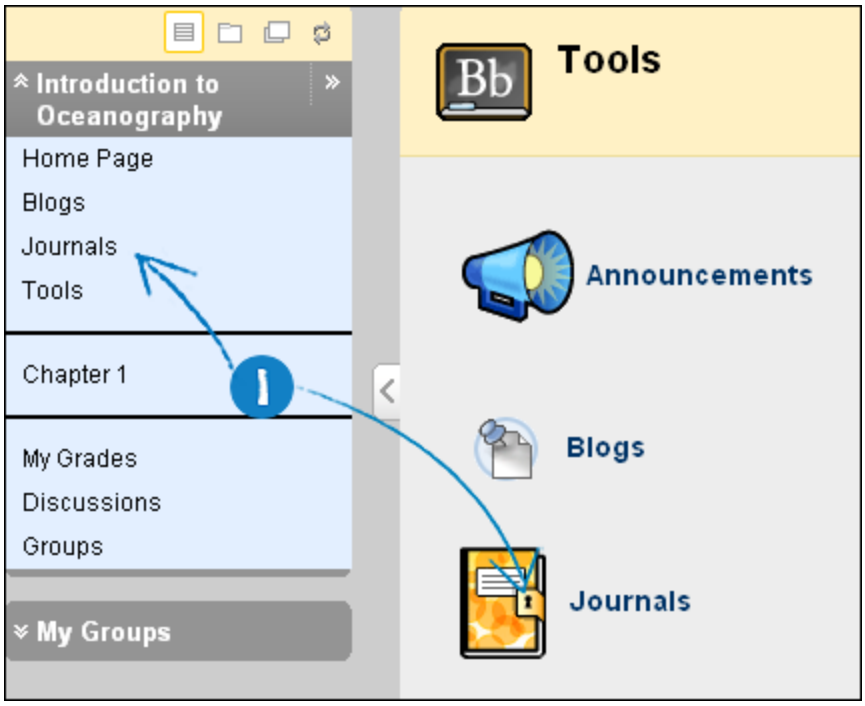
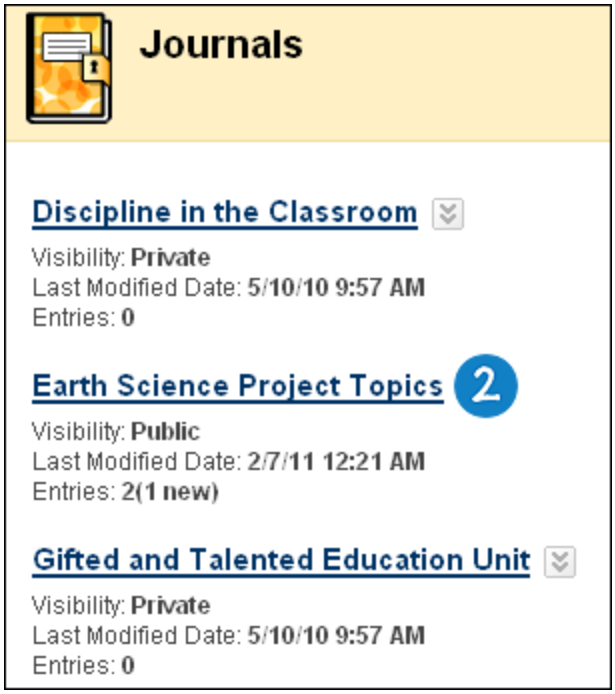


2. On the **Journals** listing page, select a journal to open.



3. On the **Journal** topic page, click **Comment** for the selected entry.
4. Type a comment in the **Comment** field.
5. Click **Add**.

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How to Edit a Journal Entry

You can edit your journal entries if your instructor allows it. However, if you edit gradable journal entries, the original graded entry will be lost.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Journals**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Journals**.

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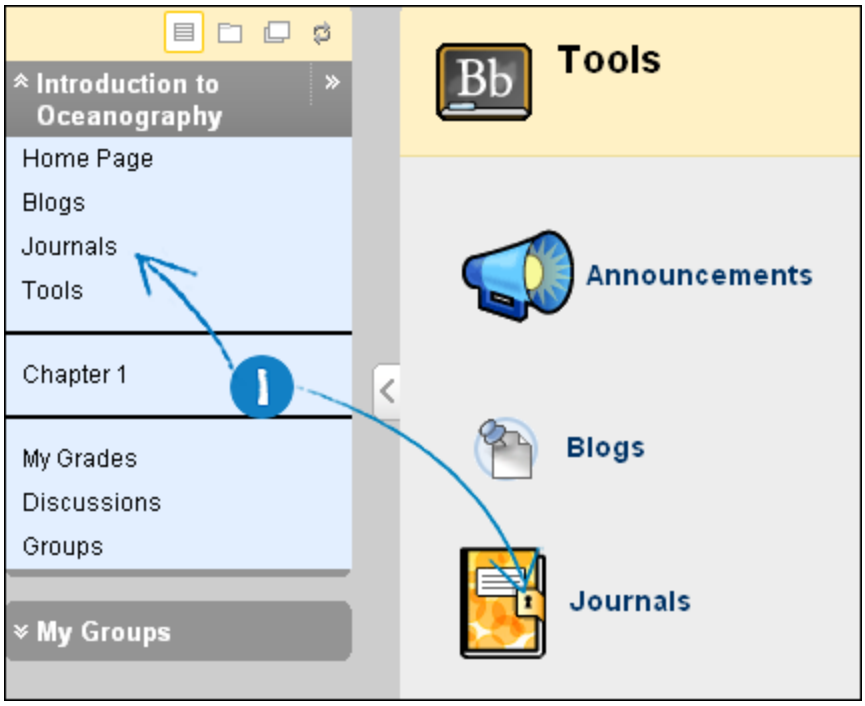
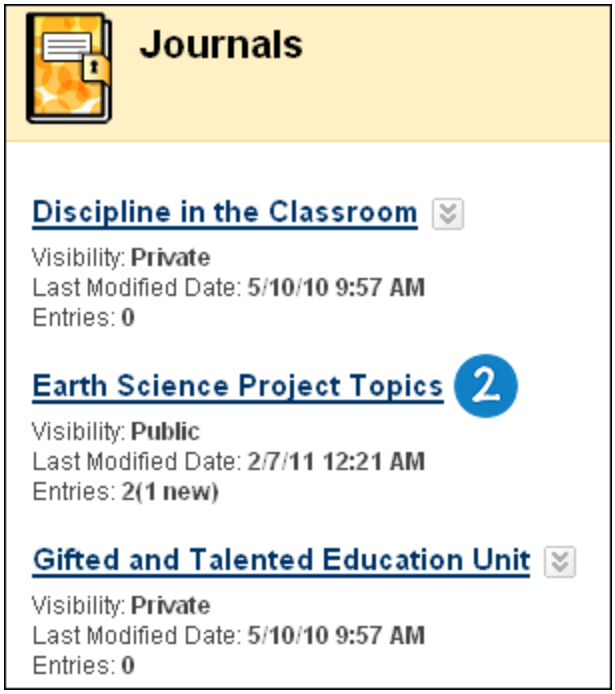


2. On the **Journals** listing page, select a journal to open.



3. On the **Journal** topic page, select **Edit** from the contextual menu for the journal entry.

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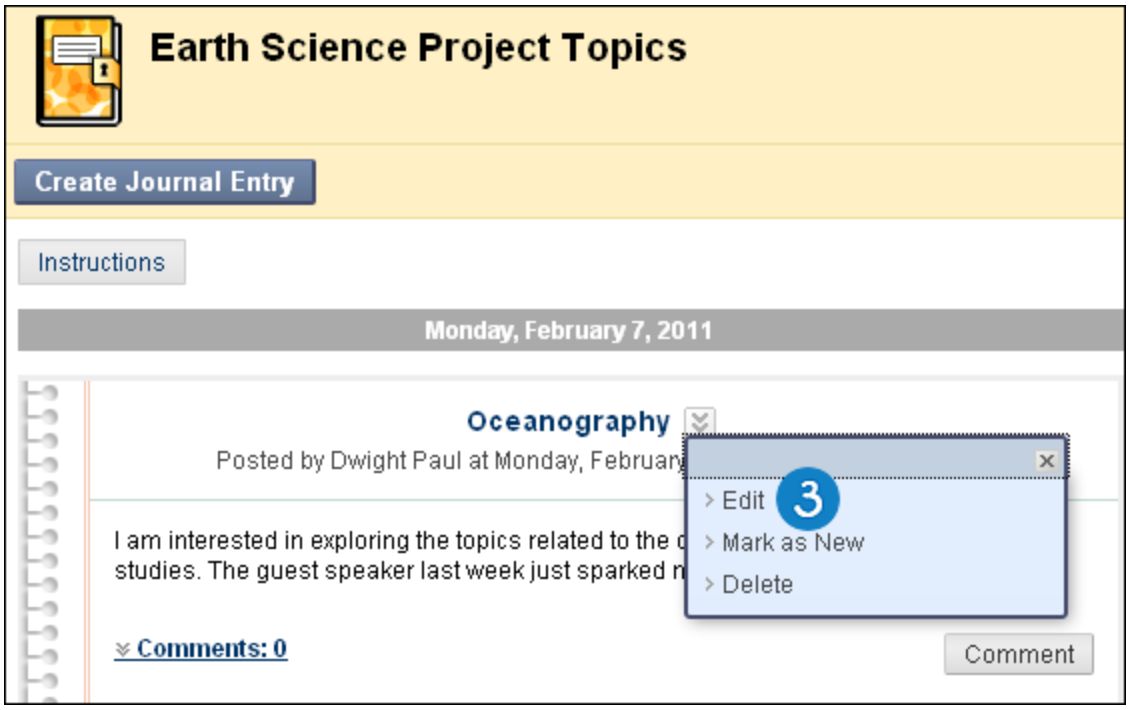

4. On the **Edit Journal Entry** page, make the necessary changes.
5. Click **Post Entry**.

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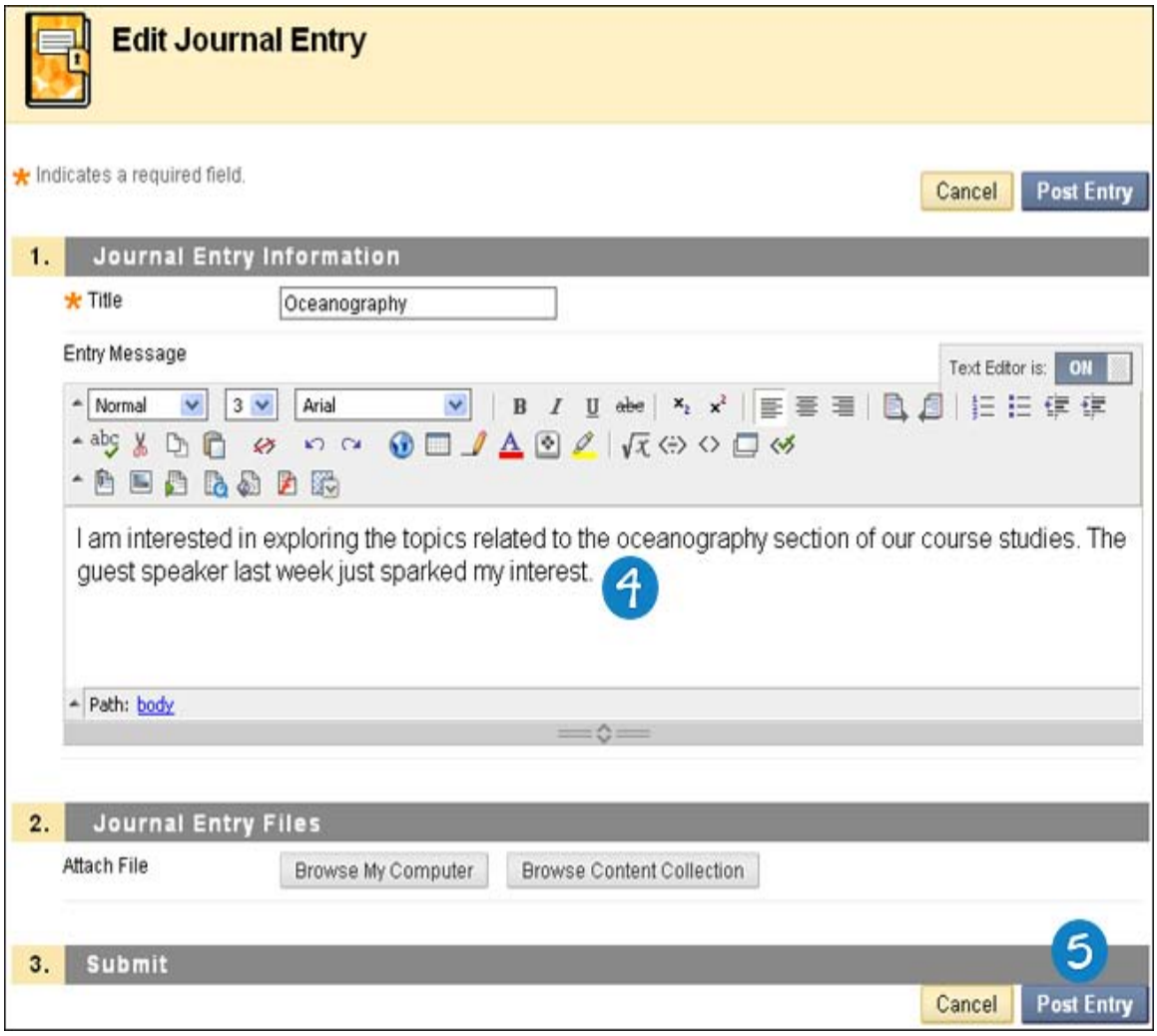

How to Delete a Journal Entry

You can delete your journal entries if your instructor allows it. However, if you delete gradable journal entries, the original graded entry will be lost.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Journals**.

   -OR-

   On the Course Menu, click **Tools** and then click **Journals**.

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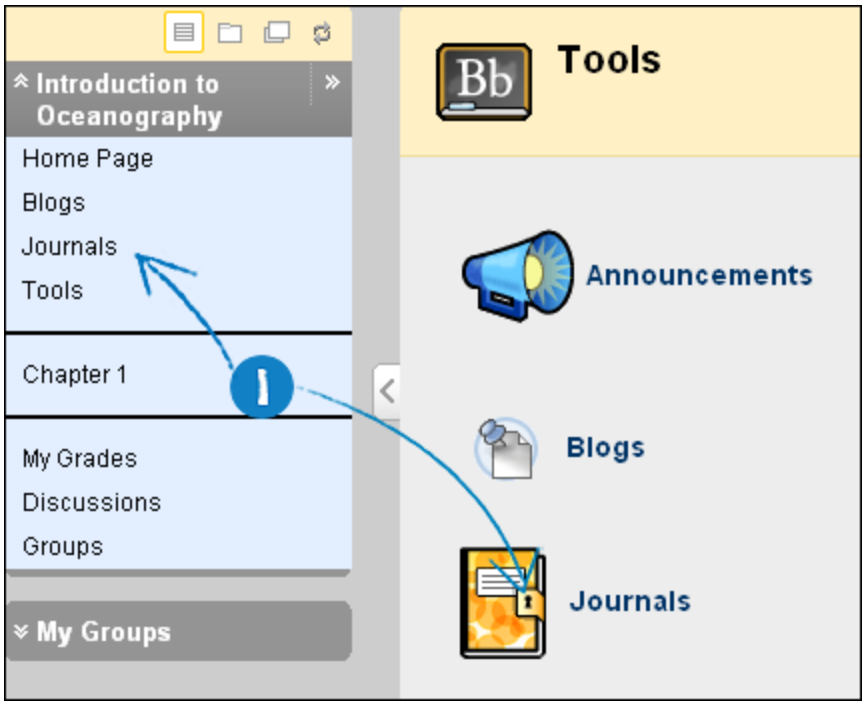
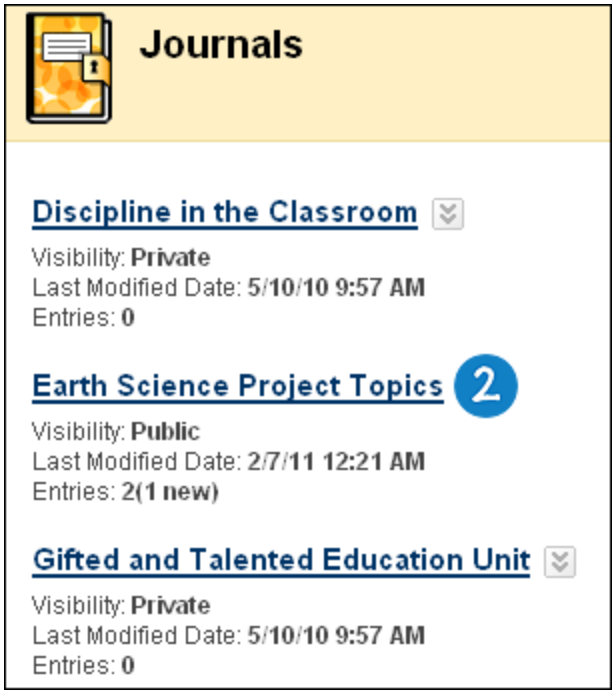


2. On the **Journals** list page, select a journal to open.



3. On the **Journal** topic page, select **Delete** from the contextual menu for the journal entry. This action is final and cannot be undone.

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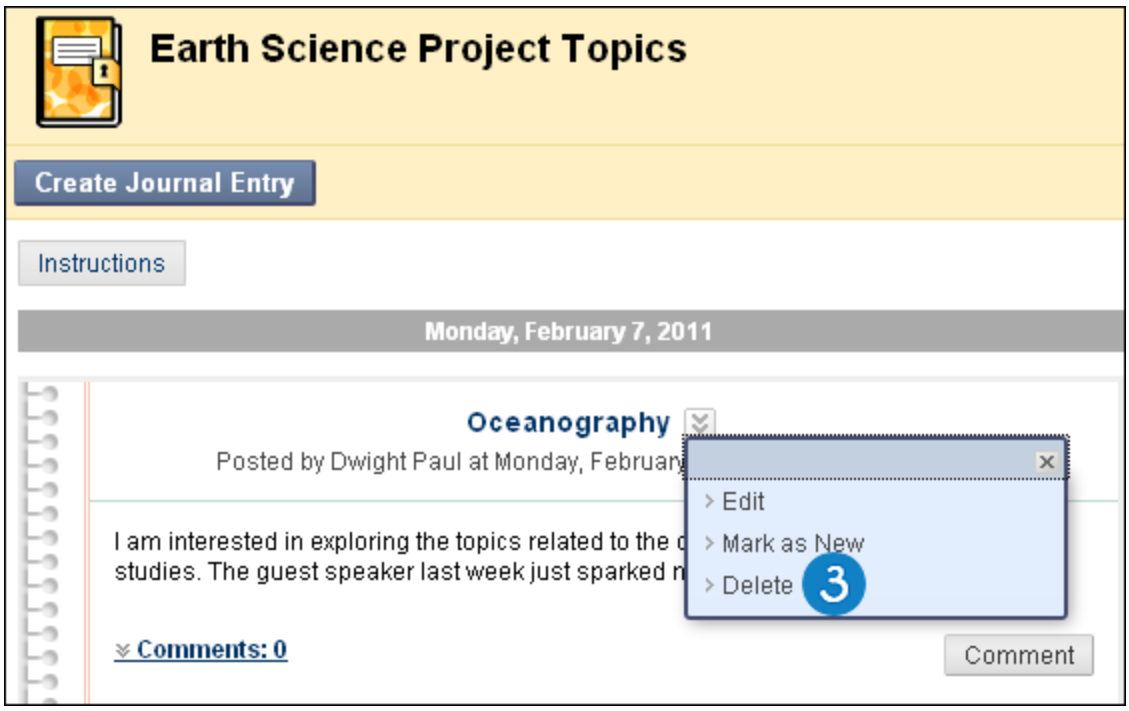
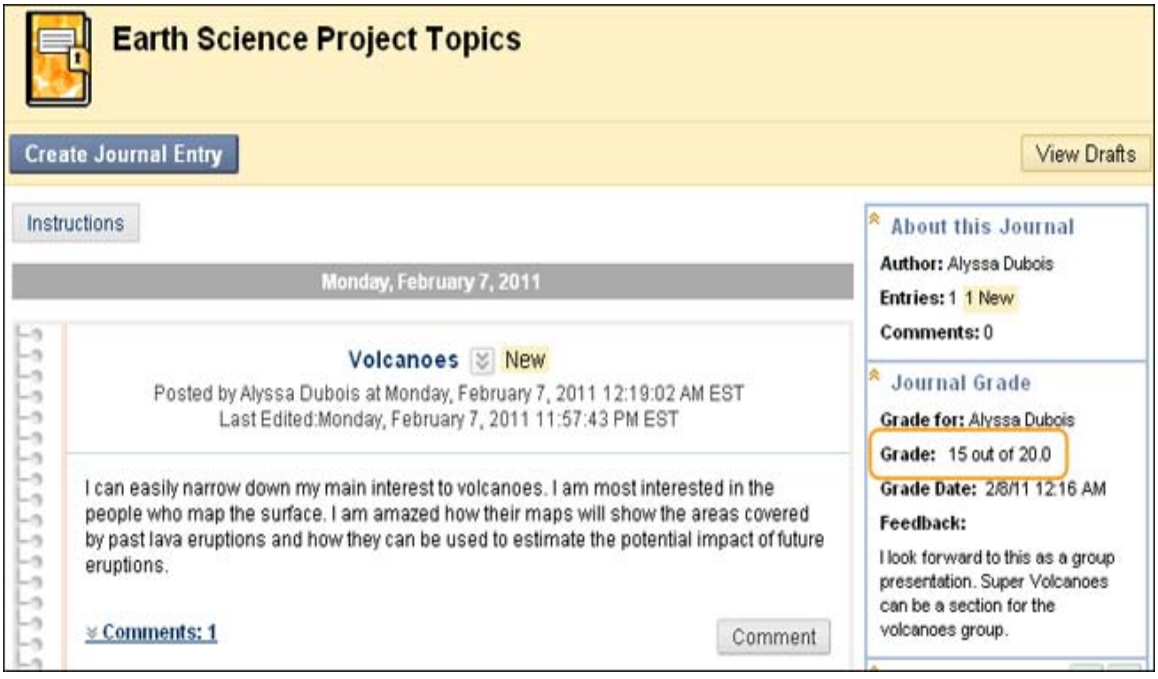


Viewing Journal Grades

When your journal entries have been graded, you can view your grade in two places . The grading information appears under **Journal Grade** section on the **Journal** topic page and in the **My Grades** tool. Any feedback and the date the grade was assigned also appear in these areas.



Troubleshooting Journal Management

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- If your instructor deleted the journal while you are posting, the journal and all comments are deleted.
- If a journal is made unavailable while you are posting, the journal remains visible to your instructor in **Edit** view but is not displayed to you.
- If the **Allow Users to Edit and Delete Entries** setting is changed, entries remain but you cannot edit them.
- If the **Allow Users to Delete Comments** setting is changed, comments remain but you cannot edit them.

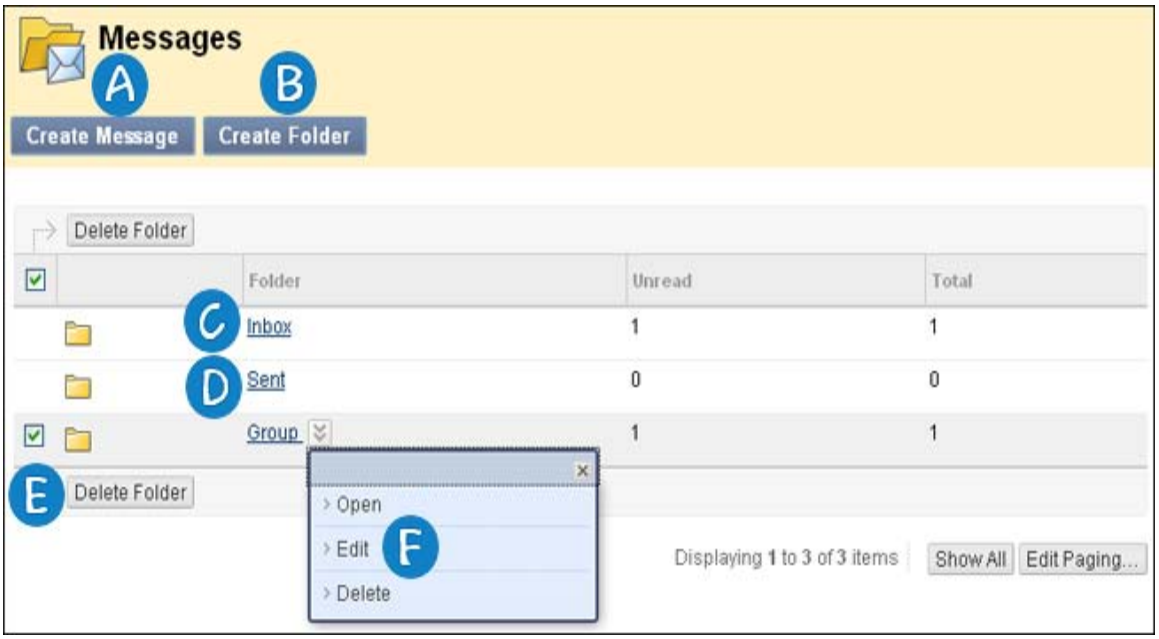
Messages

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

The Blackboard Learn **Messages** tool provides you with a familiar, email-like environment that you can use for course communication. Accounts are automatically created for each member of the course, and messages are sent and received using that account. This provides additional privacy because external email addresses are not used, so external factors will not affect course communication.

You cannot receive messages outside your course and you are not notified if you receive a new message, so make routine checks for new messages.

Messages are usually accessed through the tools area of a course. However, your instructor can restrict access or create a link on the Course Menu so that messages are directly accessible .



Ⓐ **Create Message**: Use the **Create Message** function to create new messages.

Ⓑ **Create Folder**: Use the **Create Folder** function to add a new folder. You can use folders to organize messages.

Ⓒ **Inbox**: The **Inbox** folder opens with a list of messages received.

Ⓓ **Sent**: The **Sent** folder opens with a list of messages sent.

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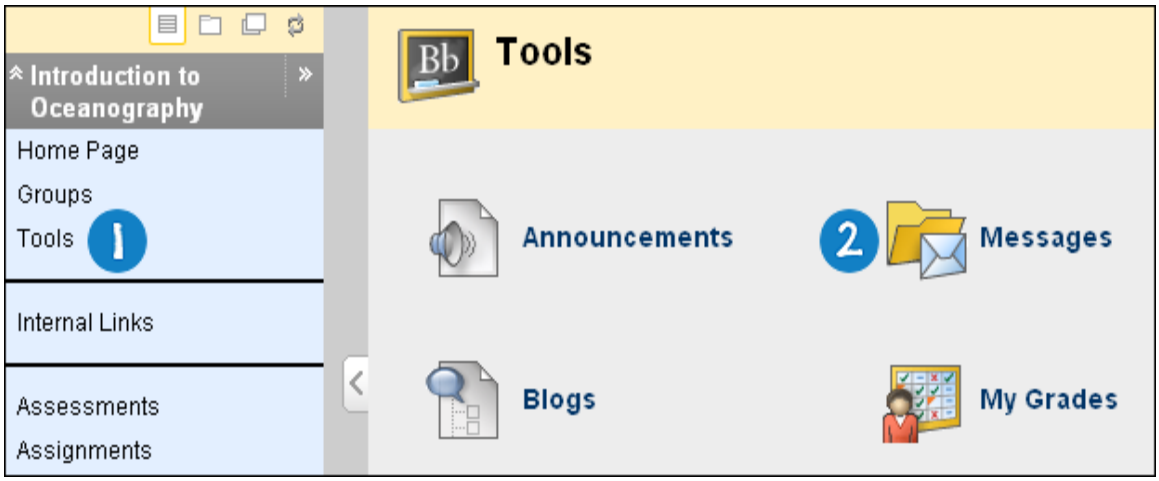
E **Delete Folder/ Delete**: The **Delete Folder** or **Delete** function in the folder contextual menu removes the folder. To delete personal folders, select the check box next to each folder that will be deleted. Then click **Delete Folder** in the action bar. The folders, and any messages in the folders, are deleted.

F **Edit**: The **Edit** function changes the name of a personal folder. It is not possible to modify the **Inbox** folder or **Sent** folder.

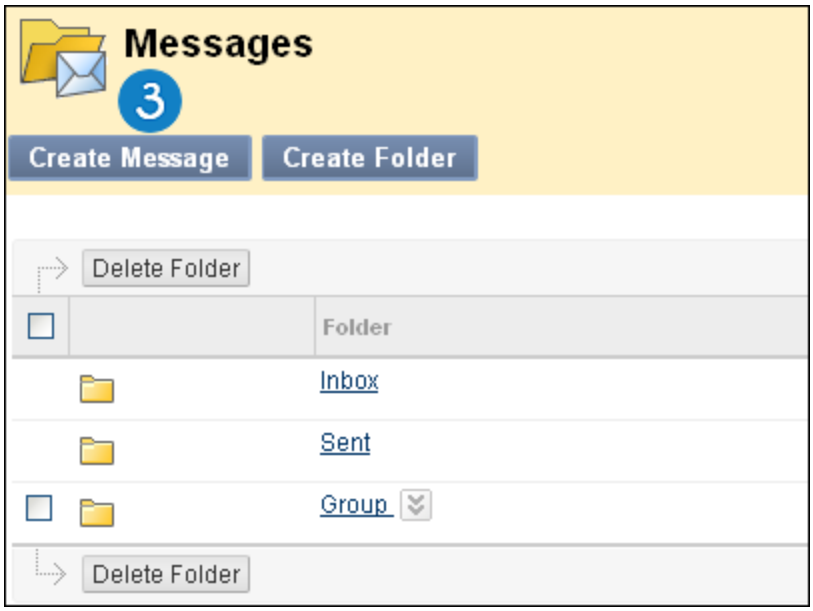
How to Create a Message

You can also send messages to course members using the **Messages** tool. Using the **Messages** tool instead of the **Email** tool can also be more reliable. Problems with incorrect or out-of-date student email addresses will not affect course communication.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.



3. On the **Messages** page, click **Create Message** on the Action Bar.



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4. On the **Compose Message** page, click **To**, and a list of course members appears.
5. In the **Select Recipients: To line** box, select the recipients and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the **Recipients** box. You can use the **Cc**, and **Bcc** functions to send the message to those users that may be interested in the message, but are not the primary recipients. When using **Bcc**, other recipients do not know that the users listed in the **Bcc** field are receiving the message.
6. Type a **Subject**.
7. Type a message. You can use the **Text Editor** to format the **Body** text, if you want.
8. Click **Browse** to select a file to attach to the message. If the message is a reply or a forward, you have the option of including the original attachment.

   Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school and your instructor control whether this tool is available. If this tool has been turned off, it will not appear in the interface and will not be available for you to use.
9. Click **Submit**.

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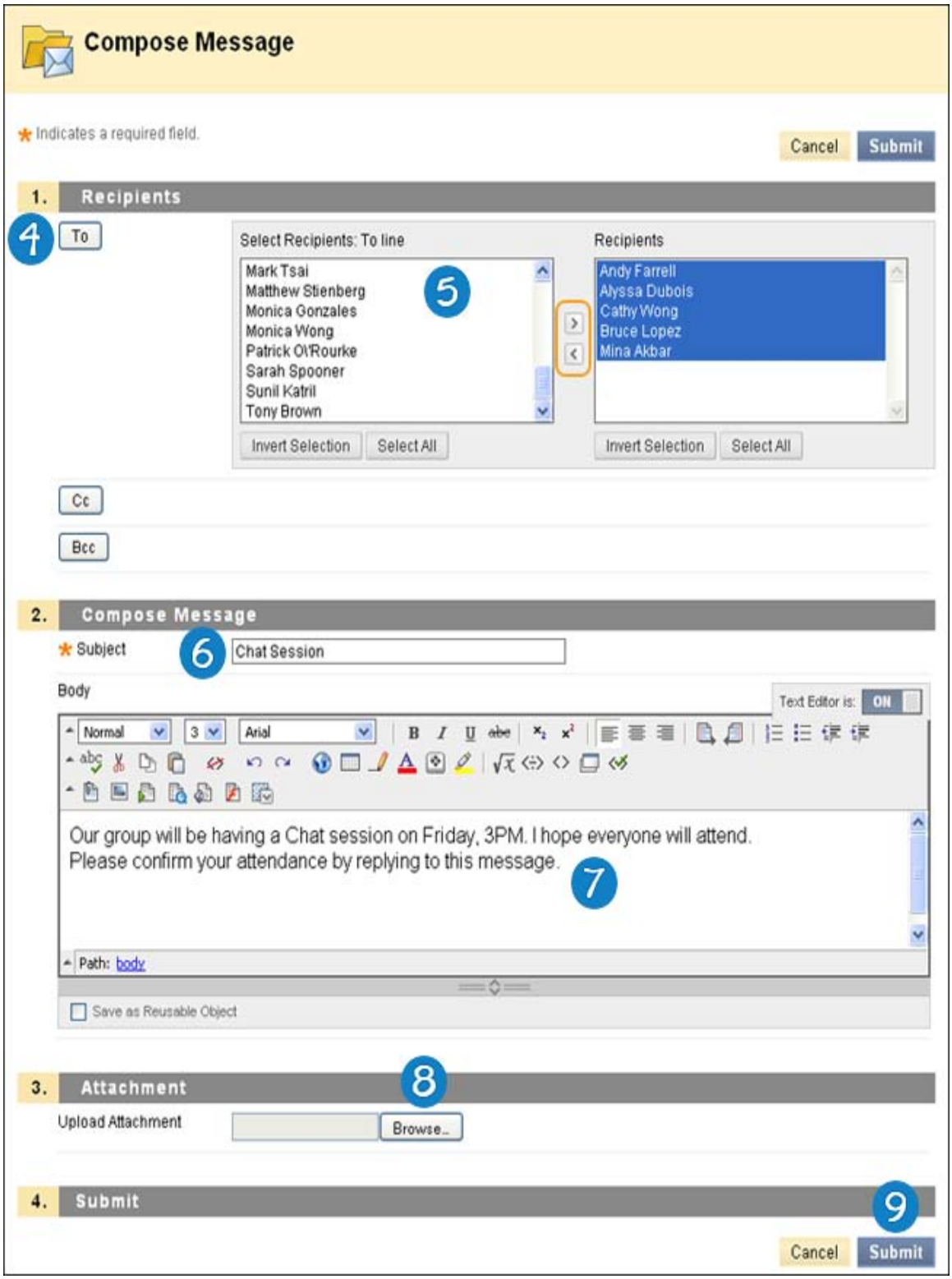

Note: To select multiple users in a row, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each name needed. You can also select all course members with the **Select All** function.

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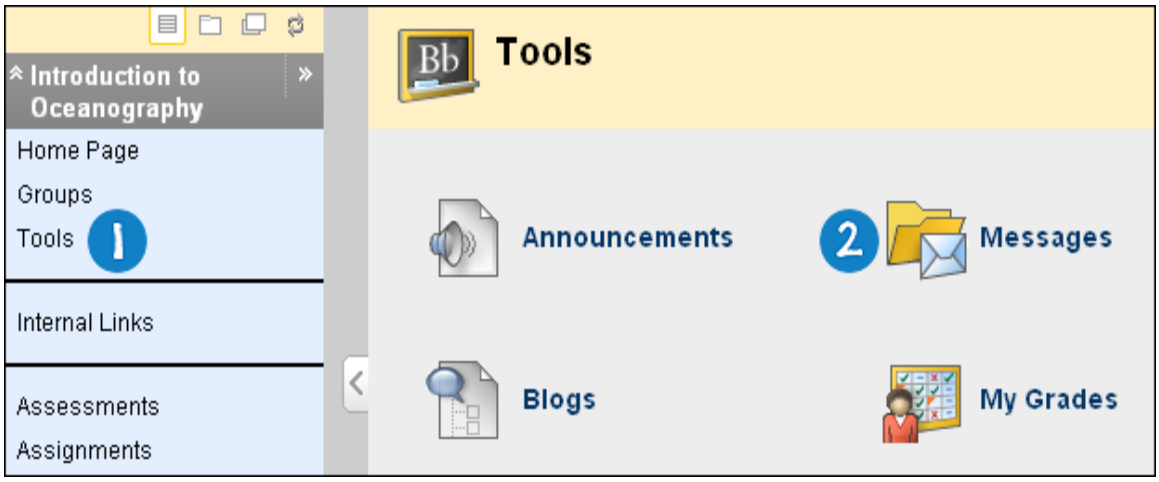
How to Create a Message Folder

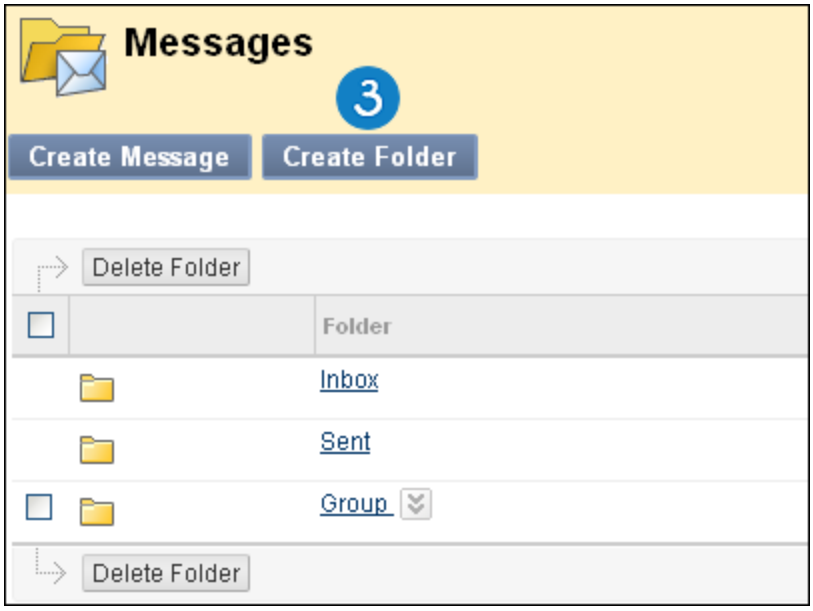
You can create personal folders to help organize your messages. Personal folders are only for storing messages. Messages received always appear in the **Inbox** folder first and messages sent always appear in the **Sent** folder. Once a message appears, it can be moved into a personal folder.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school and your instructor control whether this tool is available. If this tool has been turned off, it will not appear in the interface and will not be available for you to use.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.



3. On the **Messages** page, click **Create Folder** on the Action Bar.



4. On the **Add Folder** page, type the name of the new personal folder in the **Name** box.

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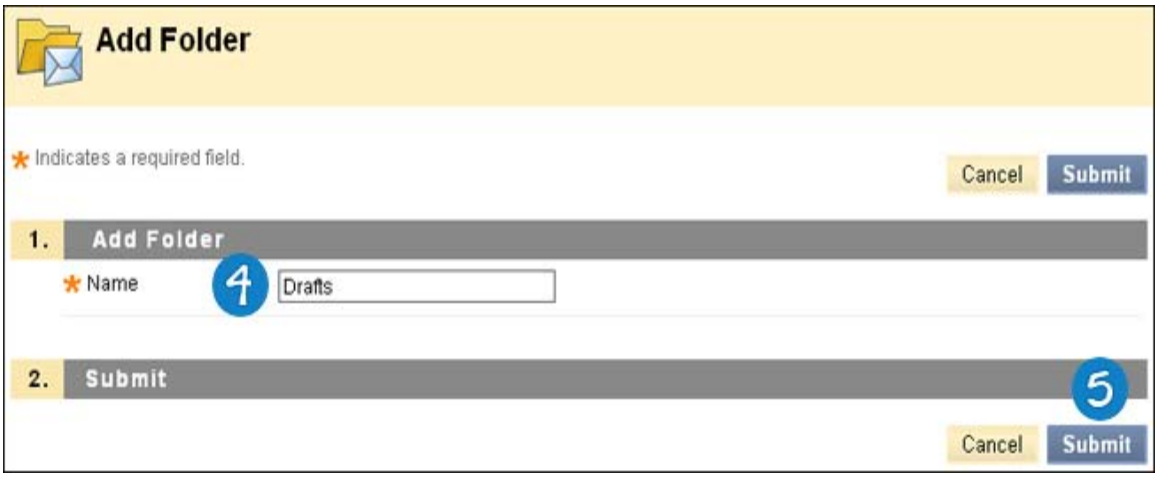
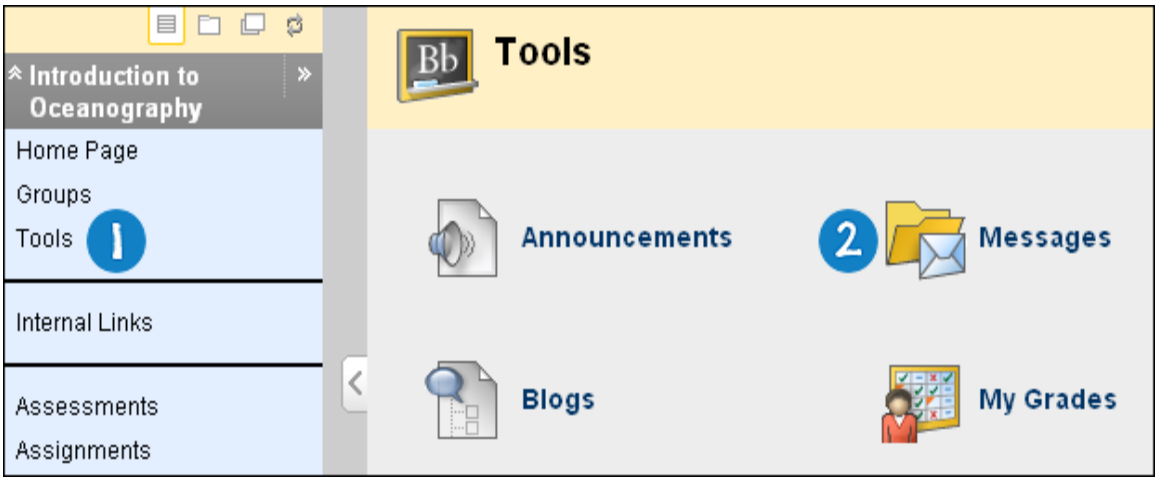
5. Click **Submit**.



How to View a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.



3. On the **Messages** page, select a folder.

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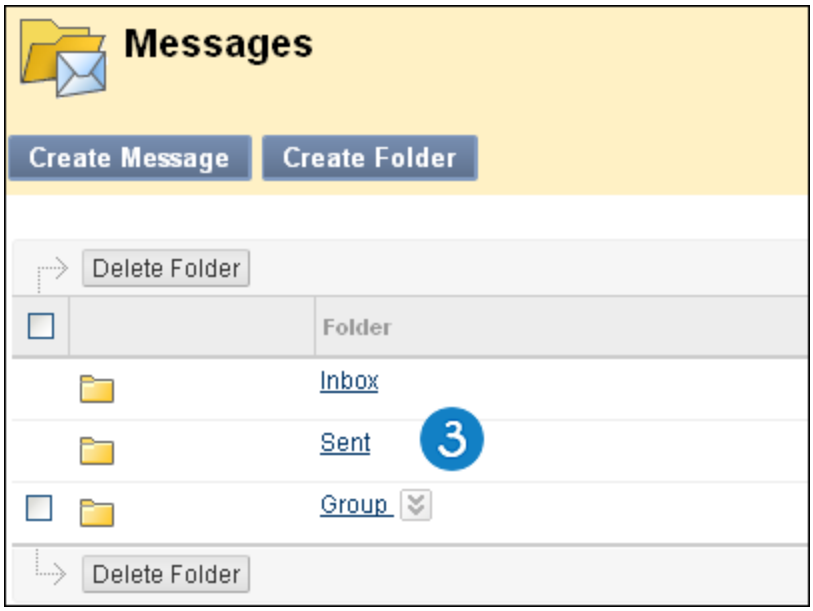

4. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message's **Subject** column.

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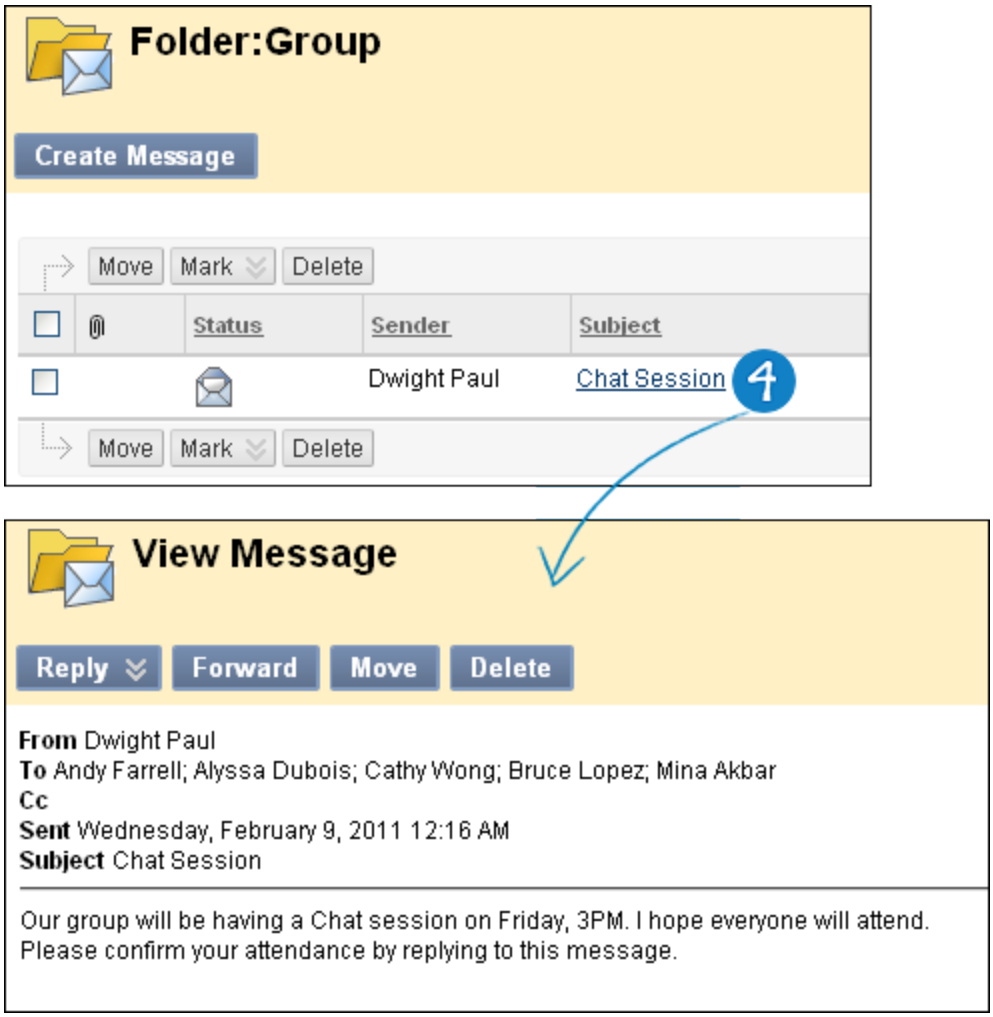

How to Reply to a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.

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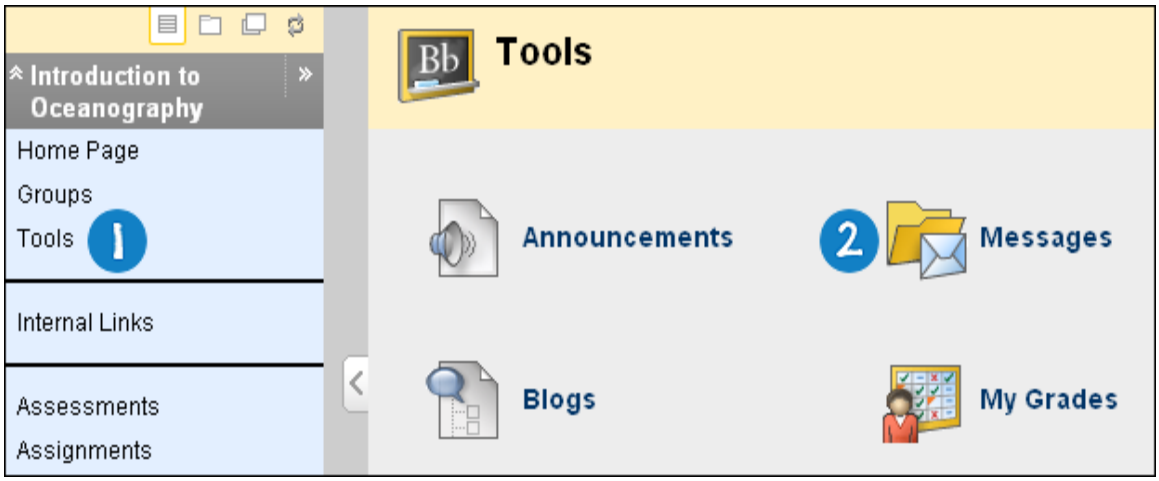
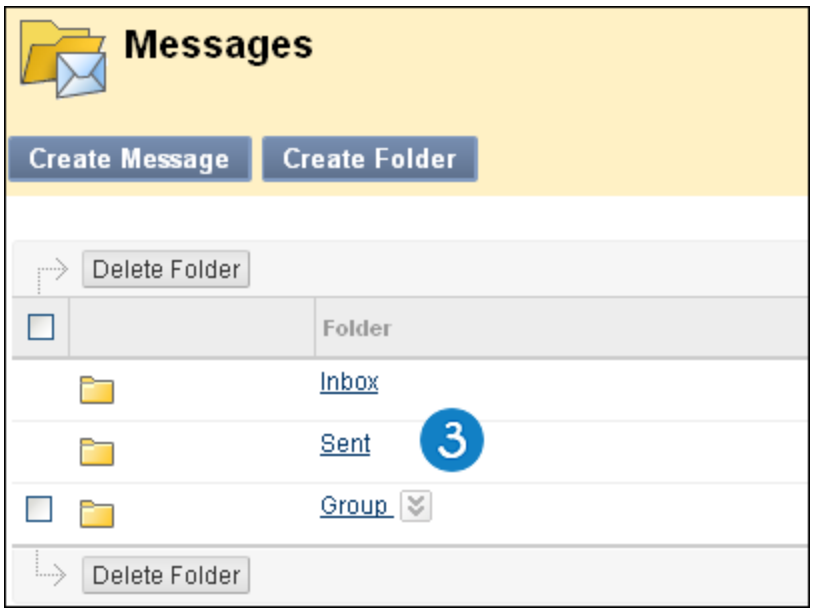


3. On the **Messages** page, select a folder.



4. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message's **Subject** column.

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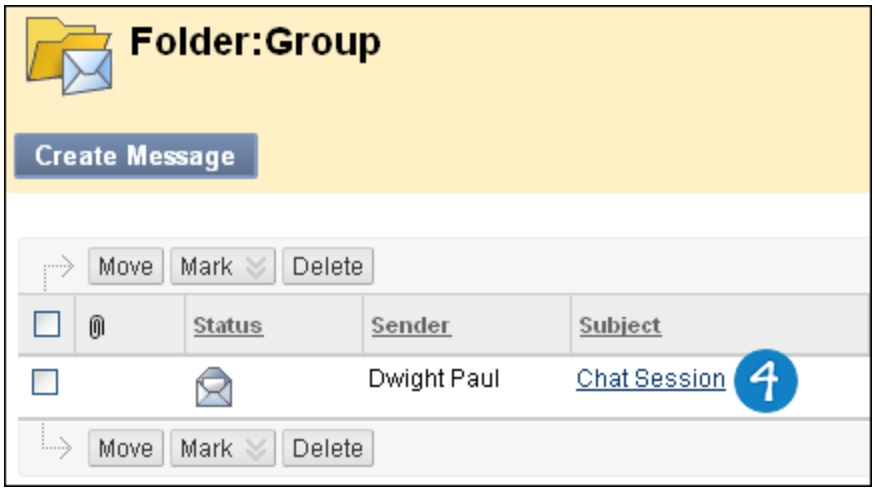
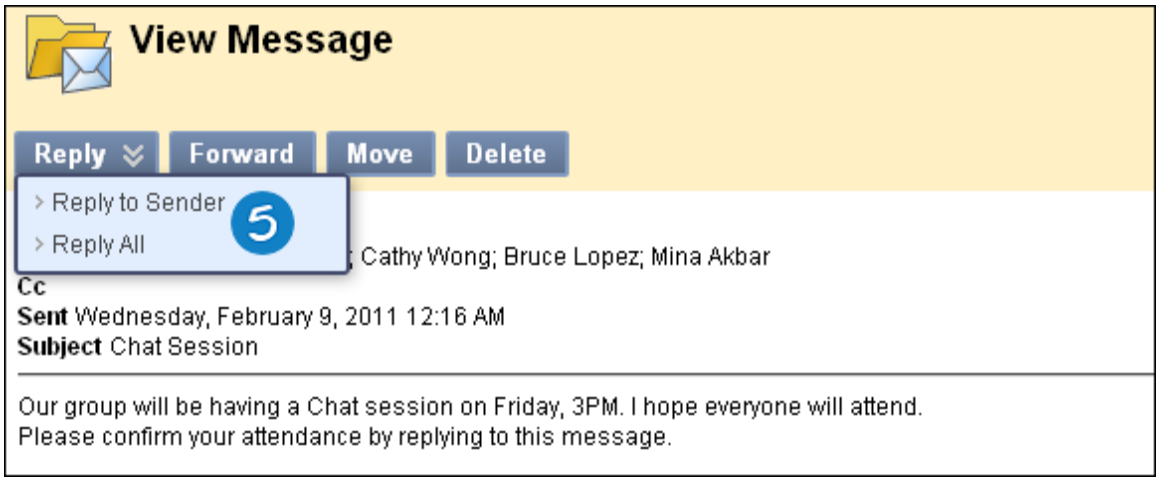


5. On the **View Message** page, click **Reply** to compose a message to the sender or **Reply All** to reply to the sender and all other recipients of the message already populated in the **To:** field.

   Note: You can add other users to the message. The text of the message is already populated with the text of the original message. Additional text may be added.



6. On the **Reply to Message** page, compose your message.
7. Click **Submit**.

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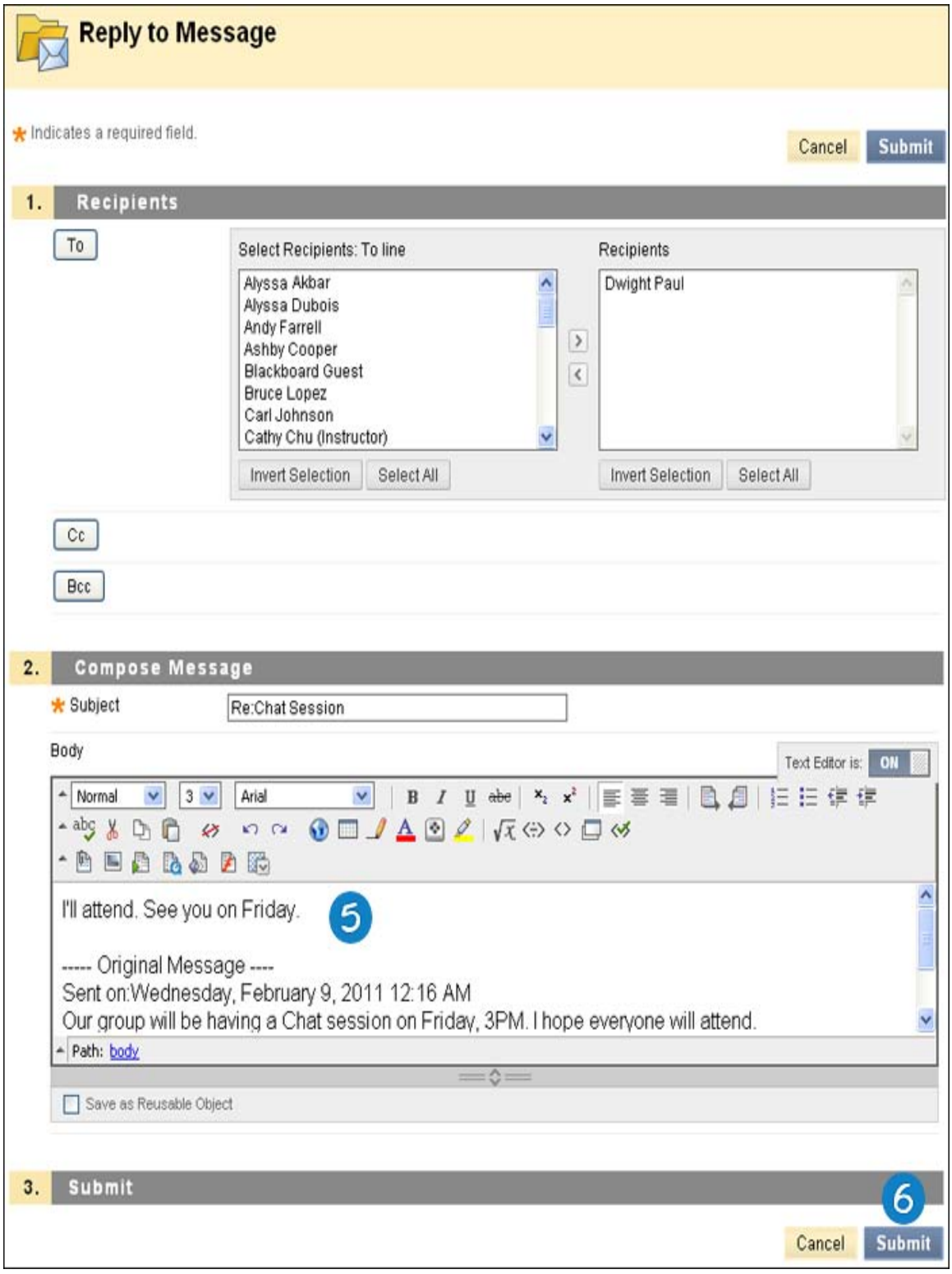

How to Forward a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.

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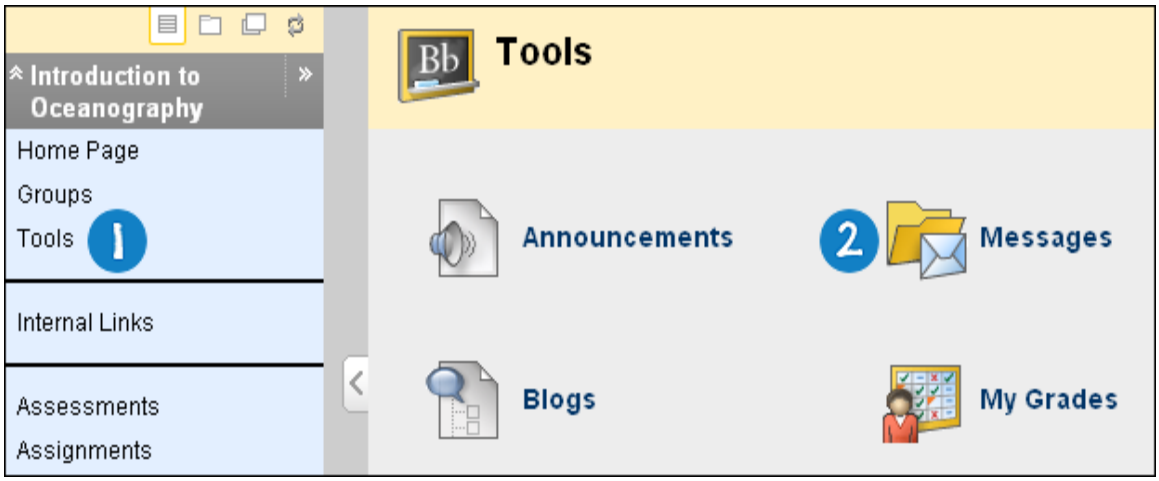
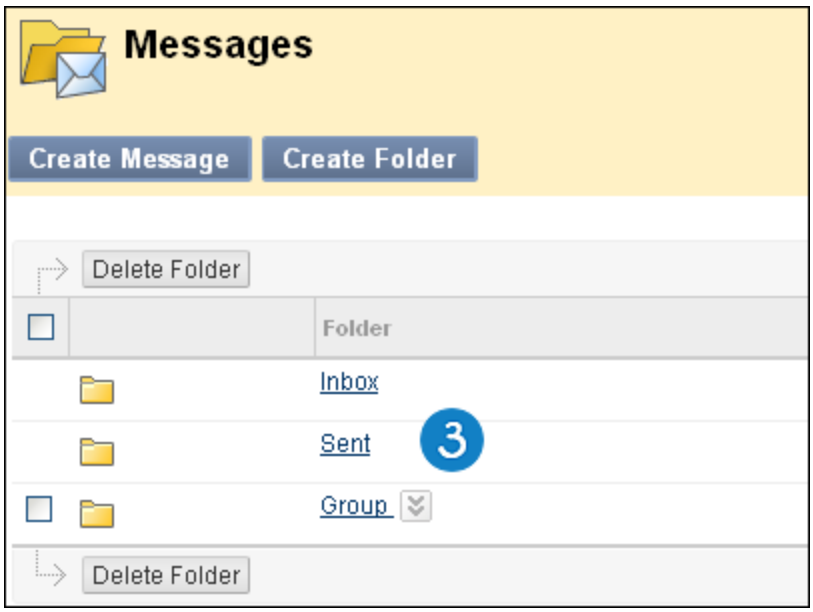


3. On the **Messages** page, select a folder.



4. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message's **Subject** column.

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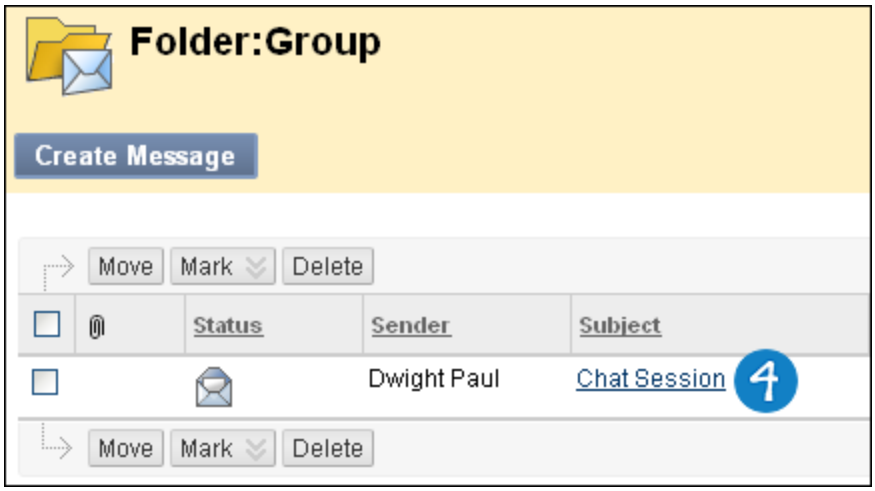

5. On the **View Message** page, click **Forward** to send a copy of the message to someone else.

6. On the **Forward Message** page, select the recipients in the **Select Recipients: To line** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them to the **Recipients** box.
7. Click **Submit**.

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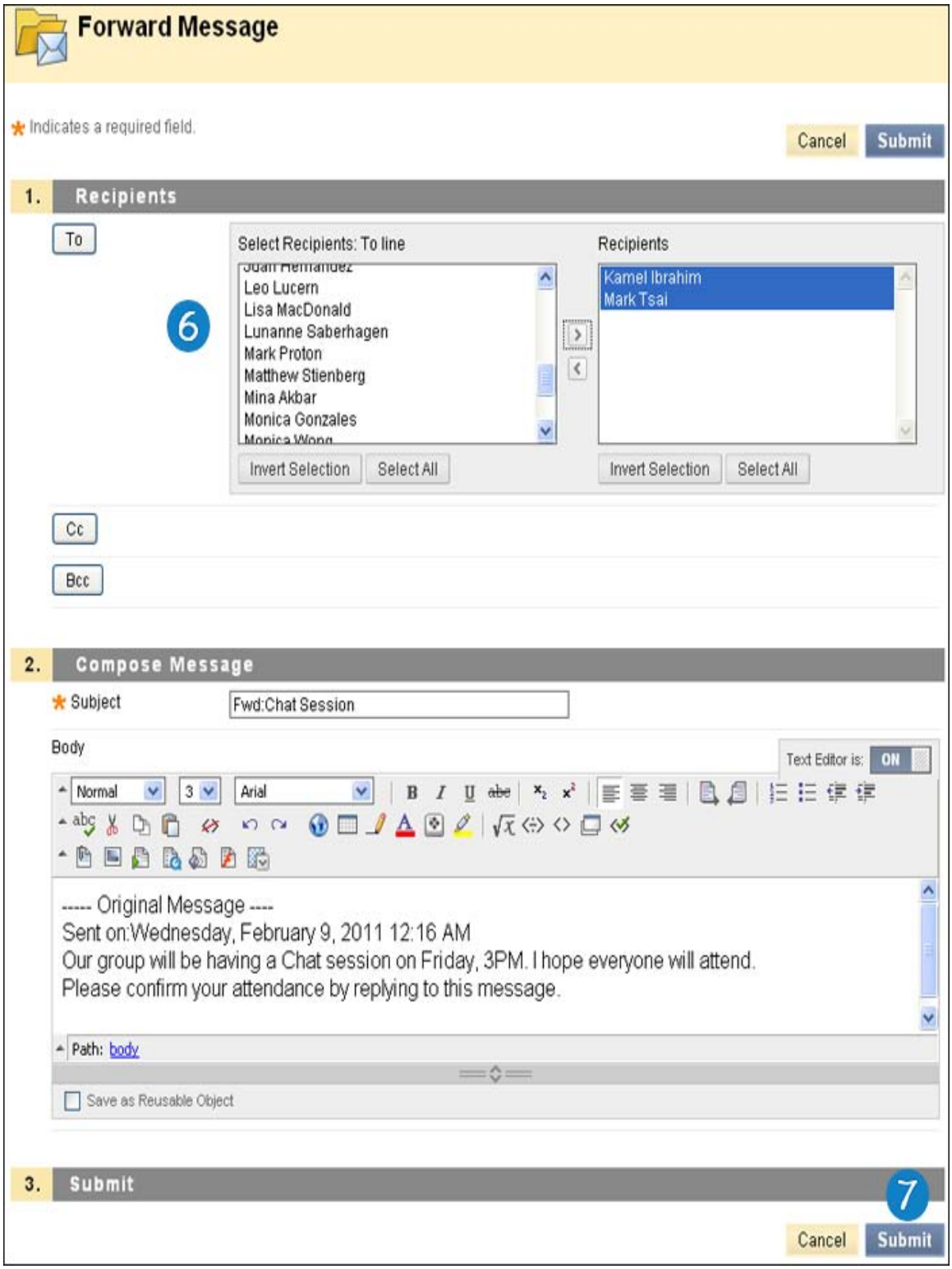

To select multiple users in a row, press the SHIFT key and click the first and last names. To select users out of sequence, press the CTRL key and click each name needed. You can also select all course members with the **Select All** function.

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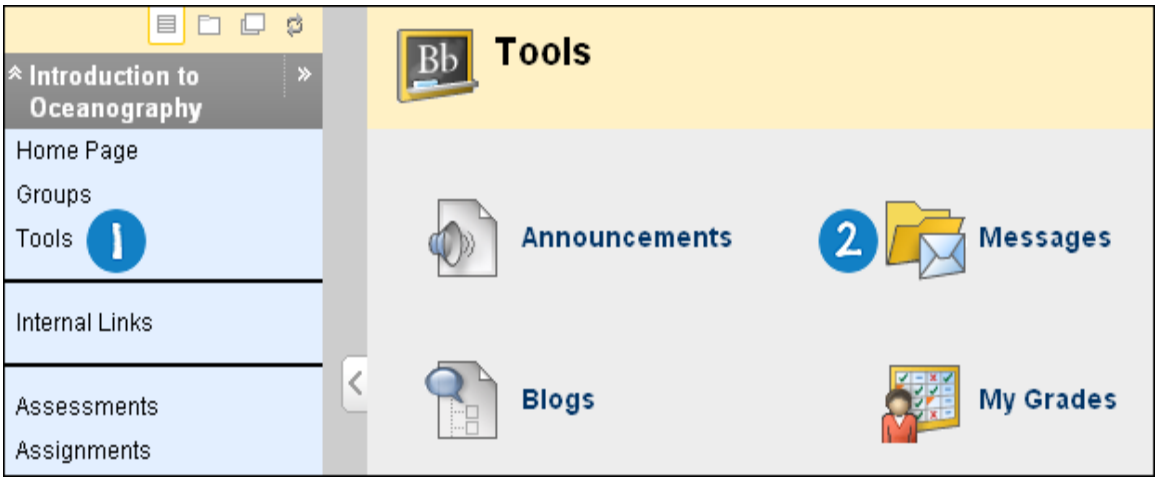
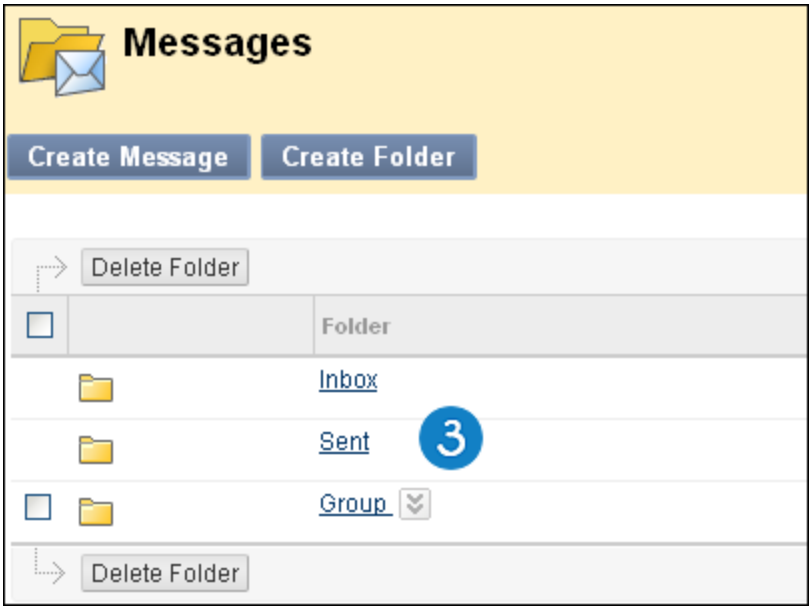
How to Move a Message

You can move messages from any folder to a personal folder. Using personal folders is a good way to organize messages so they are easy to find later. Use the **Move Message** function to move messages from one folder to another. Messages cannot be moved to the **Sent** folder or the **Inbox** folder.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.



3. On the **Messages** page, click a folder to view the messages in that folder.



4. On the **Folder** page, select the check box for each message and click **Move**.

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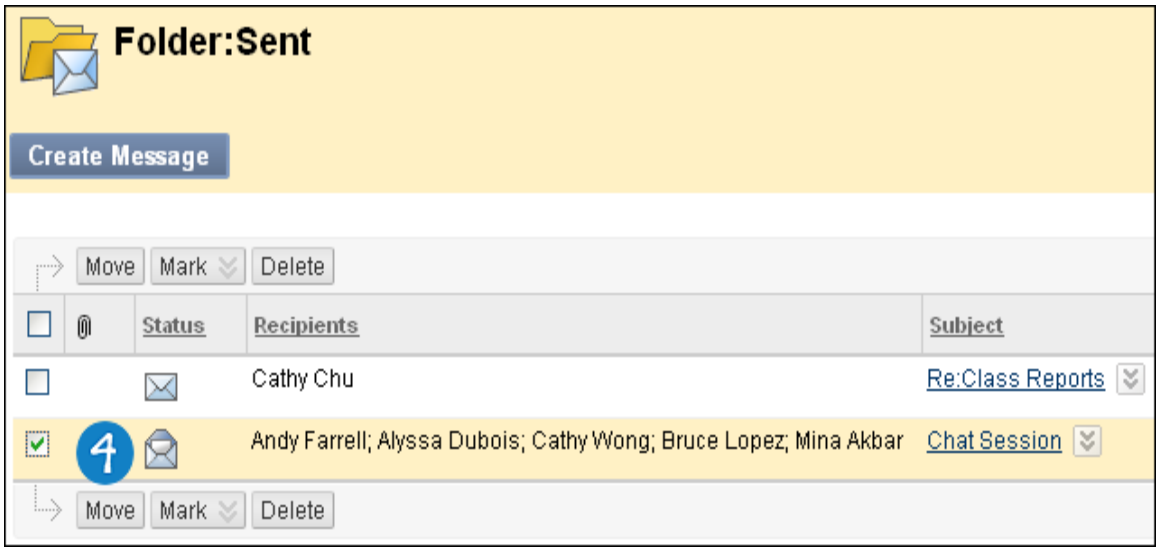
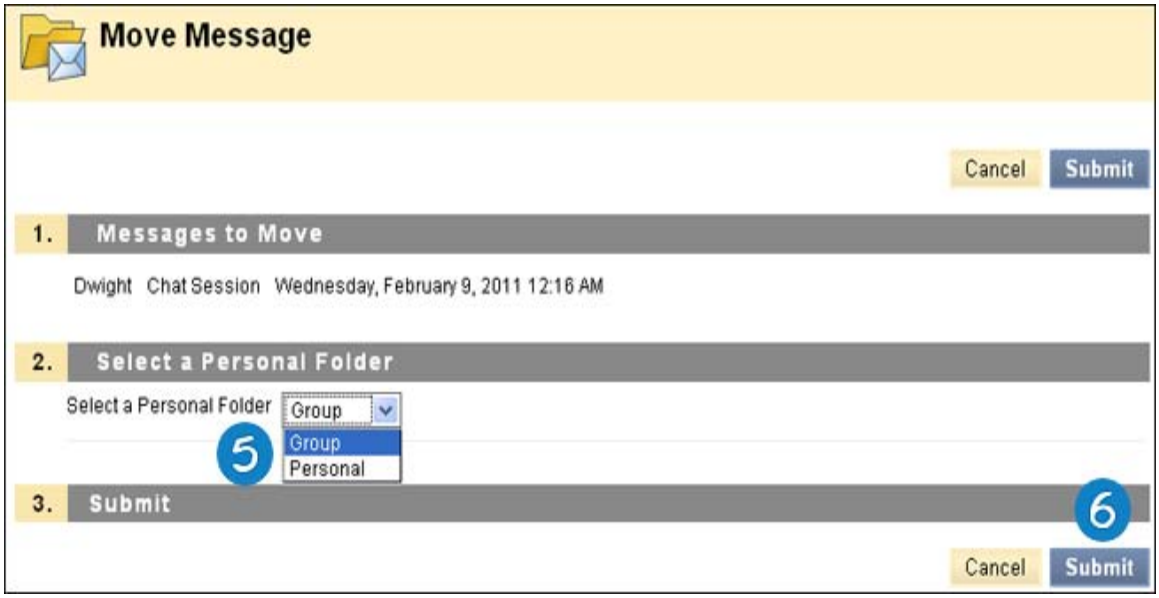


5. On the **Move Message** page, select a folder from the **Select a Personal Folder** drop-down list. This is the folder where you will store your messages. The messages are deleted from the old folder after they have been moved to the new folder.
6. Click **Submit**.



How to Delete a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.

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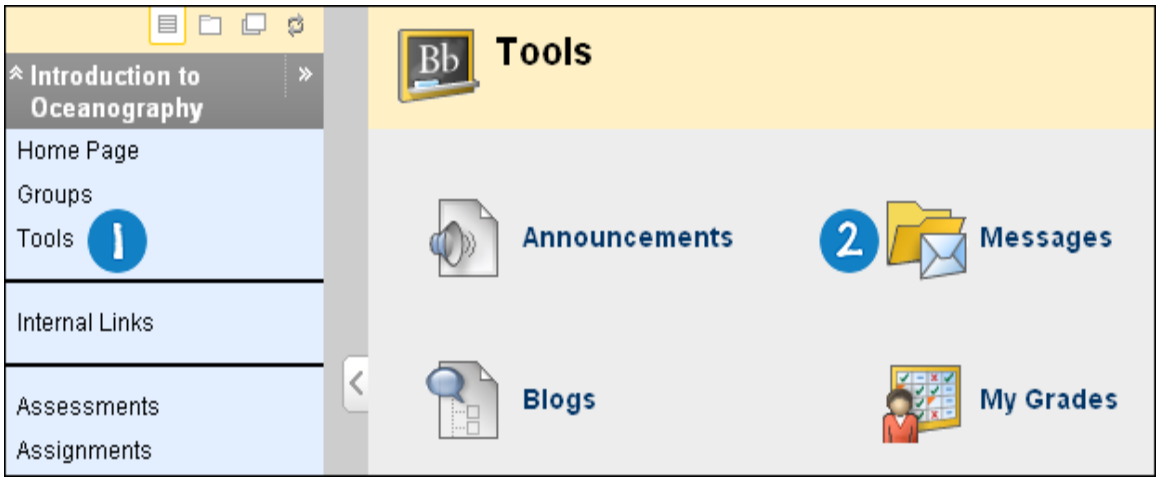
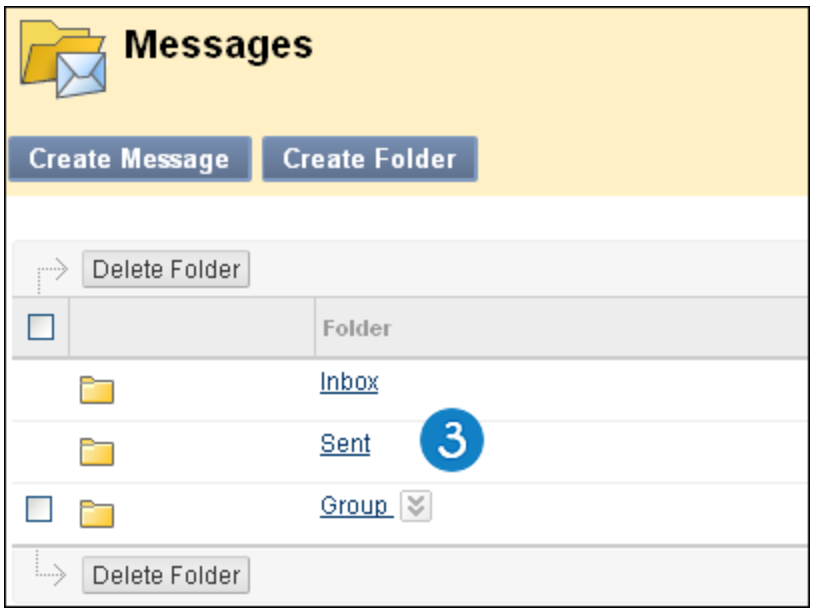


3. On the **Messages** page, click a folder to view the messages in that folder.



4. On the **Folder** page, select the check box for each message and click **Delete**.

Note: This action is final and cannot be undone.

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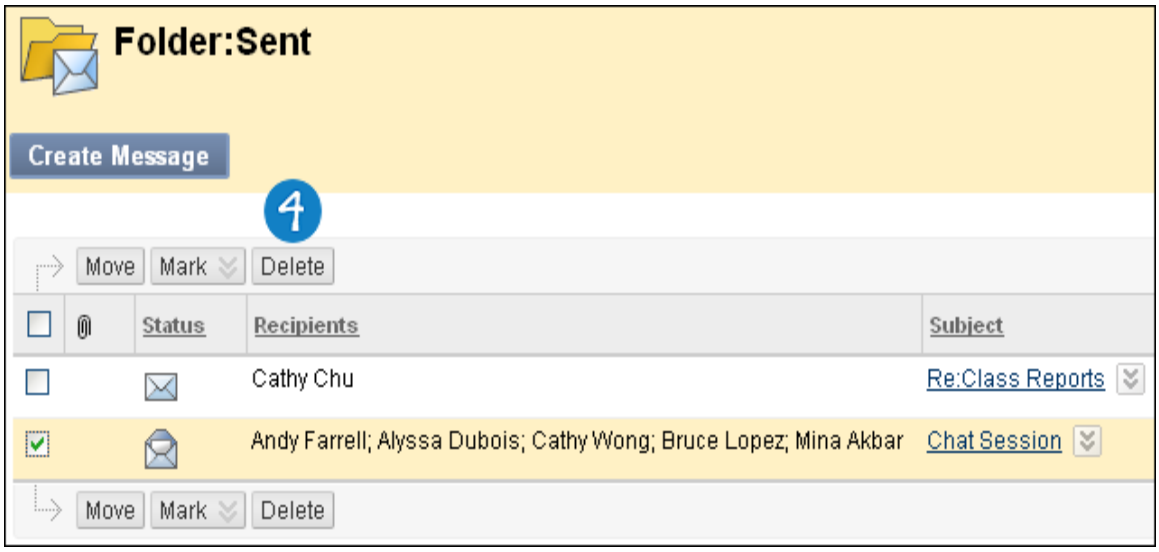
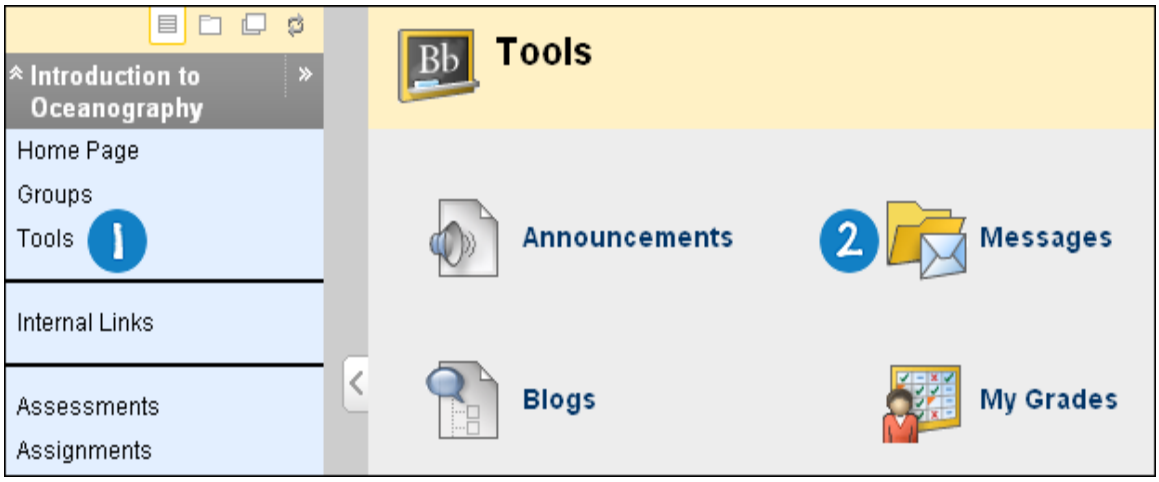


How to Print a Message

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Messages**.



3. On the **Messages** page, select a folder.

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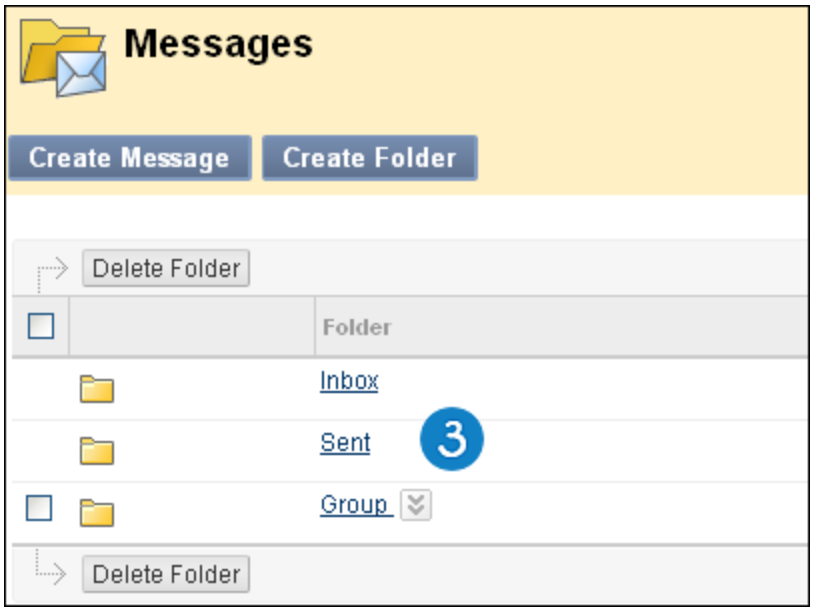
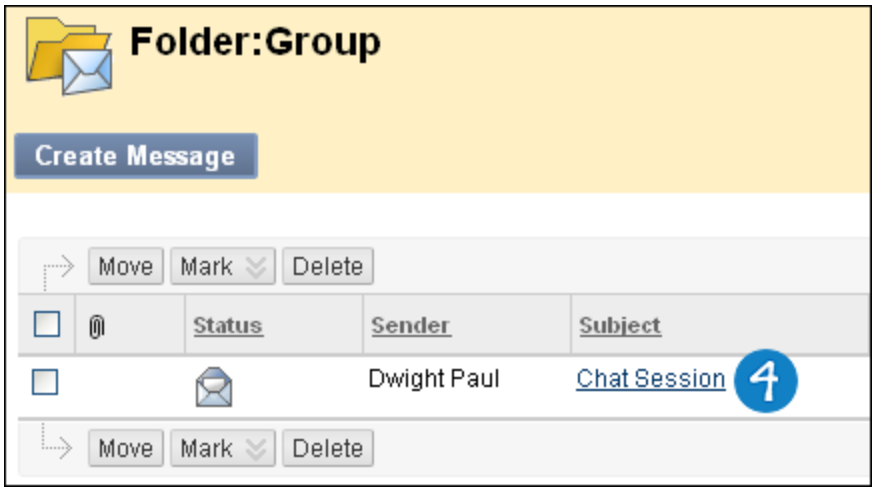


4. On the **Folder** page, click the link in the message's **Subject** column.



5. On the **View Message** page, click **Print**. The message is printed using the Web browser's print settings.

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My Grades

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

The **My Grades** page shows the status of gradable items, such as tests, assignments, journal and blog entries, and discussion posts.

The **My Grades** page may include item names, details, due dates, student and instructor dates of activity, posted grades, points possible, and your instructor's comments about the items.

How to Access My Grades

Accessing My Grades From Within Your Course

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

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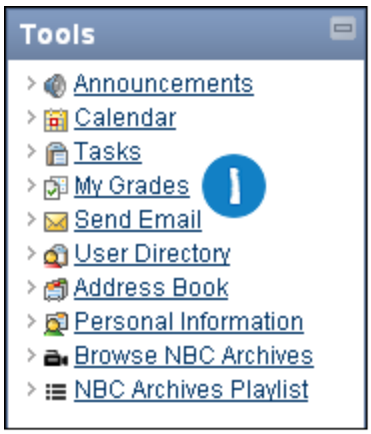
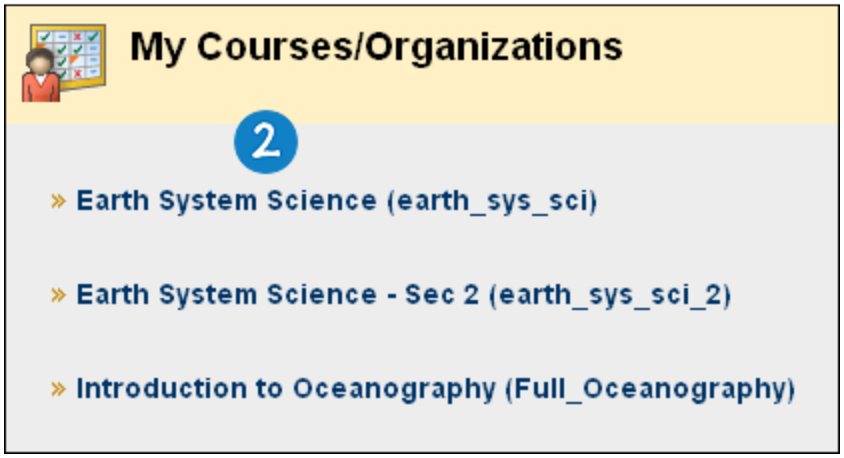
Accessing My Grades From Outside Your Course

1. On the **My Institution** tab, click **My Grades** on the **Tools** panel.
2. On the **My Courses/Organizations** page, click the name of your course.





How to View Grade Details

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

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3. If your assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's **Review Submission History** page. This page includes:
    - **Instructor Feedback**: This section lists your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor.
    - **Attached Files**: This section provides links to open or download any files attached by you or your instructor. For example, your instructor might provide comments in a file that you submitted with your assignment. In the following image, notice that the student included his last name in the file name before uploading it.

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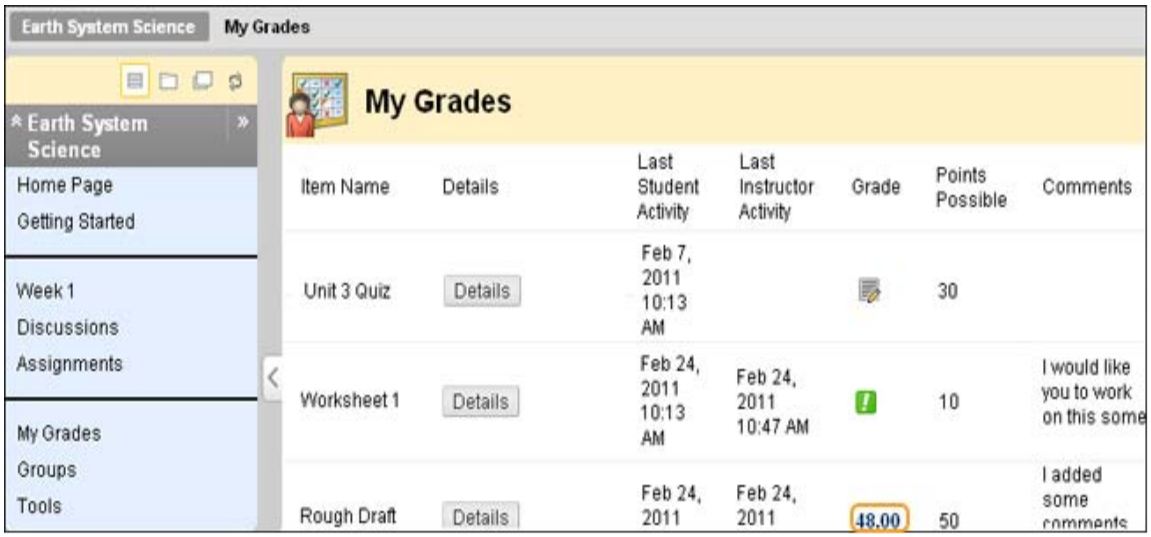

Note: If you see feedback for an item but do not see a grade, contact your instructor.

My Grade Item Status

The following table describes the symbols appearing on the **My Grades** page.

Symbol	Description
-	Item has not yet been completed. No information is available.
✓	Item has been completed, but will not have a grade (for items such as surveys).
!	Item has been submitted. This item is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor. -OR- Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review this item but may not be provided a grade (for items such as surveys).

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Symbol	Description
Grade	Item has been graded. Click the grade to view detailed feedback.
	Attempt is in progress. This item has not been submitted. To submit the item, see Submitting a Draft Assignment.
	Grade is exempted for this user. If you do not complete this assignment, it will not affect your grade.
	Error has occurred. Contact your instructor.

Related Tutorials Checking Your Grades (Flash movie | 2m 18s | 4,007 KB)

Search for Users

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If these tools are not available, your instructor may have disabled them.

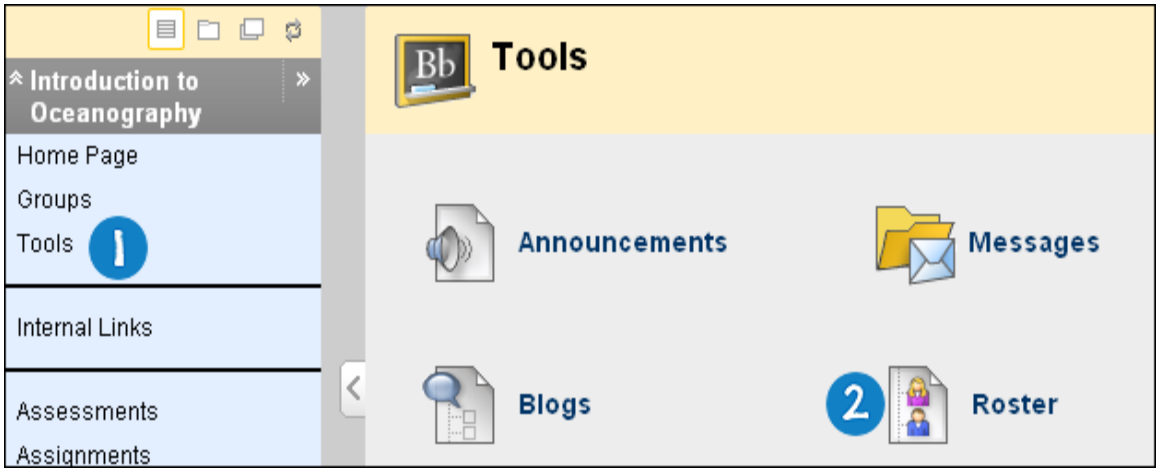
To search for other students in your course, use the Roster. The name of each student is included in the Roster automatically. You cannot remove your name from the Roster, but you can choose to make your email address available.

To search for other students and instructors in the entire Blackboard system, use the User Directory. You can choose whether to be included and what information to share by setting your privacy options. To learn more, see How to Set Privacy Options.

For your personal information to appear in the Roster or User Directory, it must be appear on the **Edit Personal Information** page. To learn more, see How to Edit Personal Information.

How to Search for Other Students in Your Course Using the Roster

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools.**
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Roster**.



3. On the **Roster** page, use the following parameters to search for users, or click **Go** to list all students:

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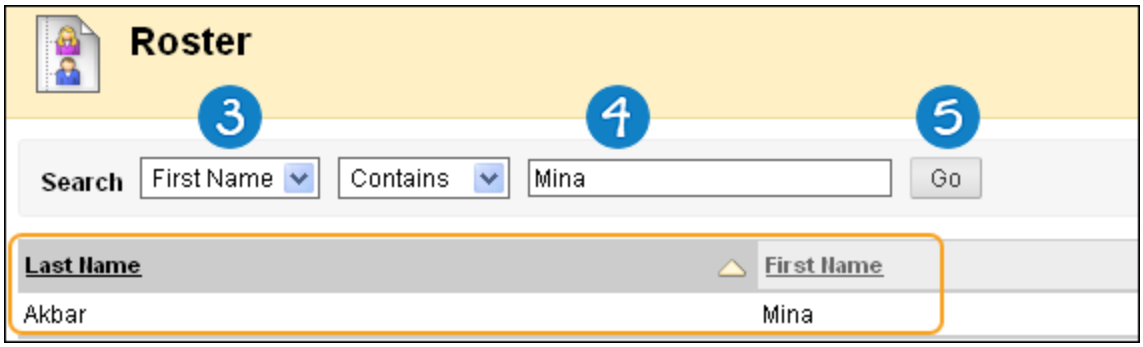
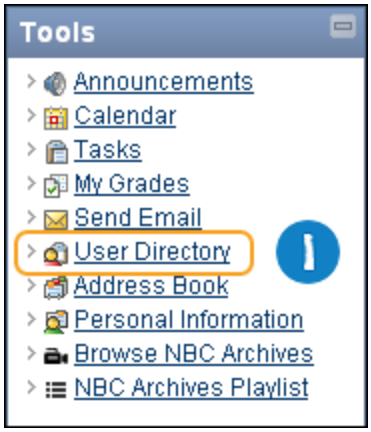
- First Name
- Last Name
- Contains
- Equal to
- Starts with
- Not blank

4. Type a keyword or text string in the box.
5. Click **Go**.



How to Search for Users Using the User Directory

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **User Directory**.



2. On the **Users** page, use the following parameters to search for users, or click **Go** to list all students:
   - Username
   - First Name
   - Last Name
   - Email
   - Contains

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- Equal to
- Starts with

3. Type a keyword or text string in the box.
4. Click **Go**.

Tasks

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

The **Tasks** page organizes projects (referred to as tasks), defines task priority, and tracks task status. Your instructors can post tasks to users participating in their course. Tasks can also be assigned to all members of a course group.

From the **Tools** panel you can view all of your tasks, including those from the courses you are participating in, tasks posted by the Blackboard administrator at your school, and your personal tasks. You can create your own tasks and post them to the **Tasks** page. When you access tasks through the course, you view tasks for that specific course.

How to Open the Task List

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Tasks**.

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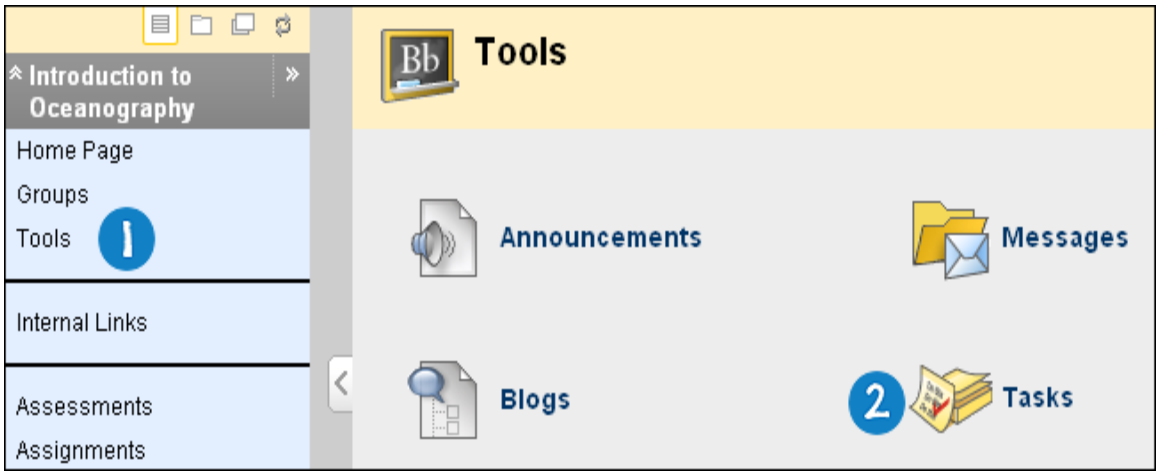
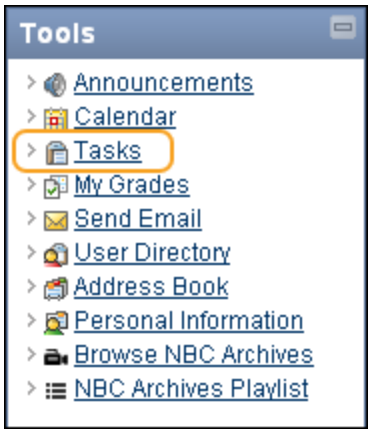


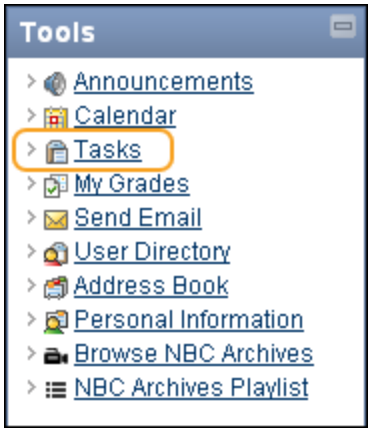
-OR-

On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.



How to Create or Edit a Personal Task

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.



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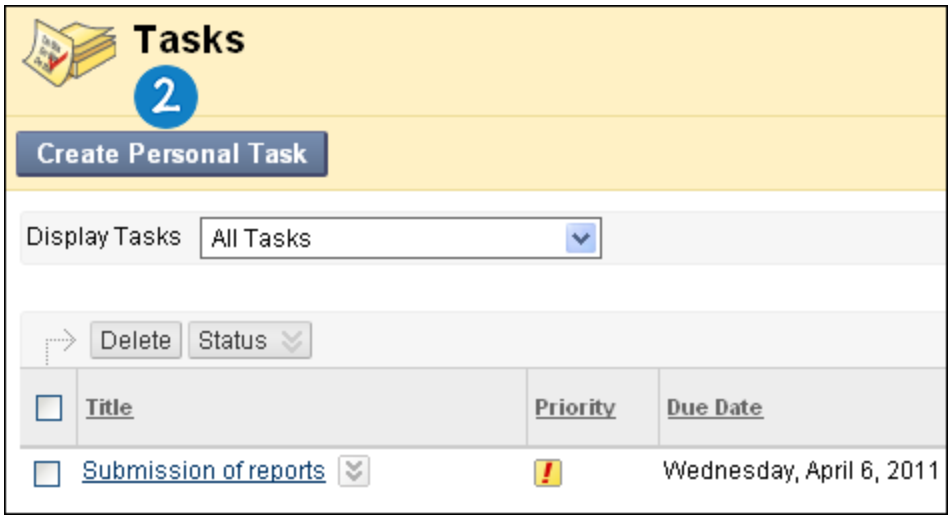
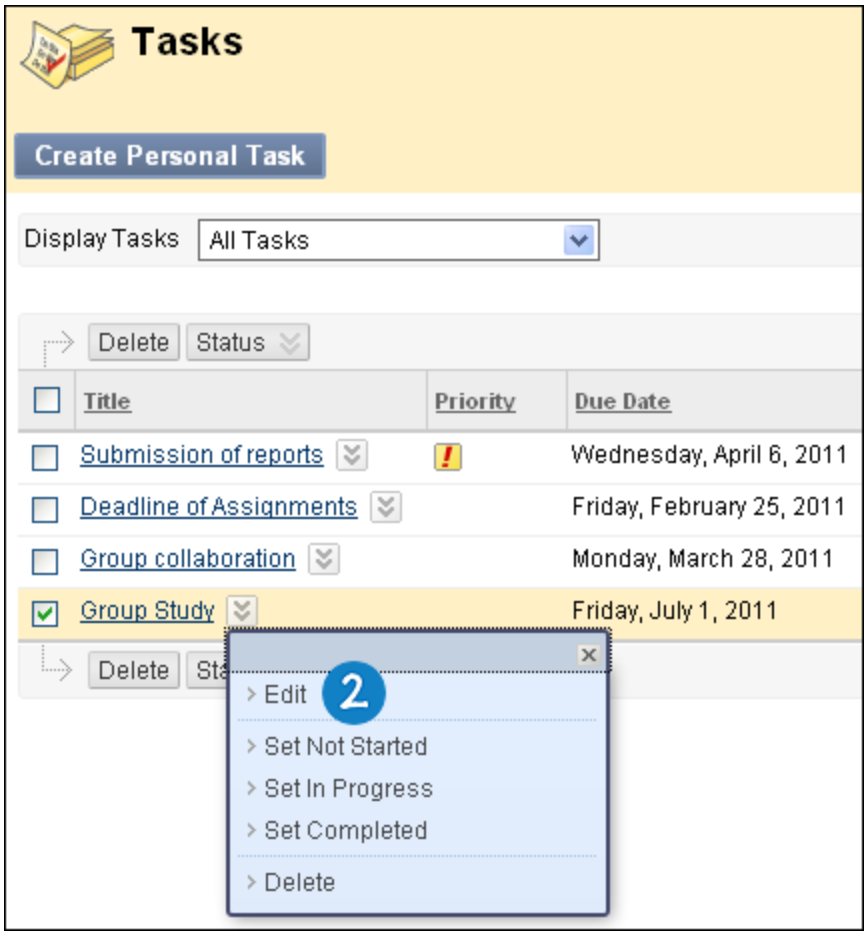
2. To create a task, on the **Tasks** page, click **Create Personal Task**.



-OR-

To edit an existing task, click **Edit** from the contextual menu for a particular task.



Note: You can only edit personal tasks.

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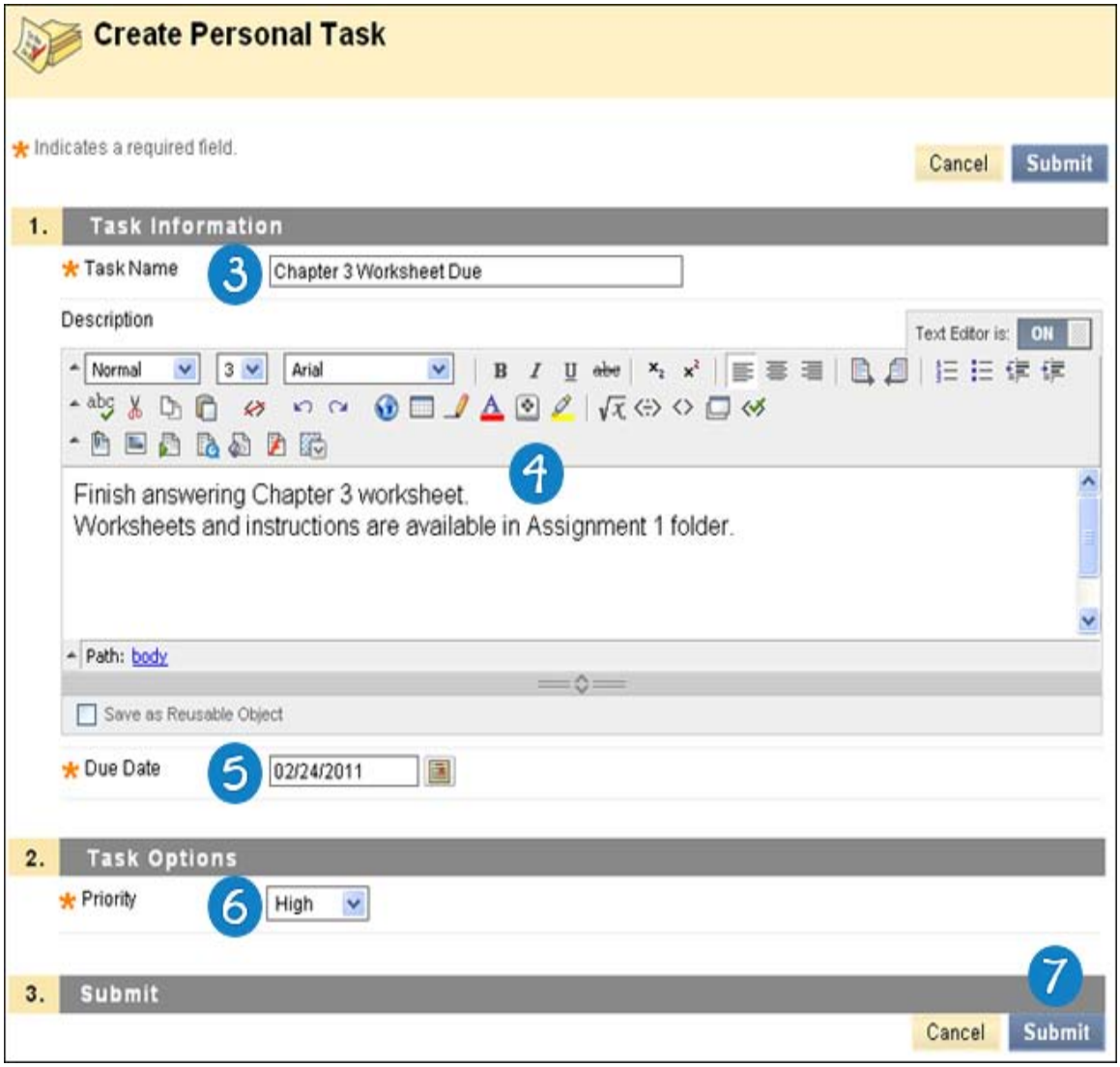
3. On **Create Personal Task** page, type your **Task Name**.
4. Type a **Description**.
5. Type a **Due Date** or use the **Date Selection Calendar** to set the due date.
6. Select the level of priority for your task from the **Priority** drop-down list.
7. Click **Submit**.



How to Sort the List of Tasks

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.

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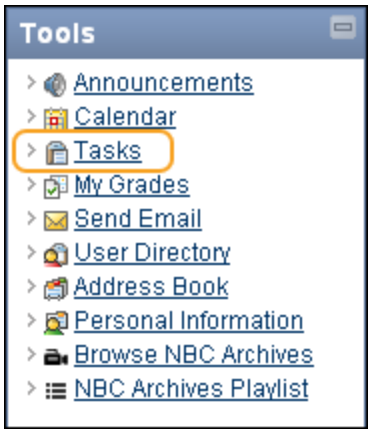
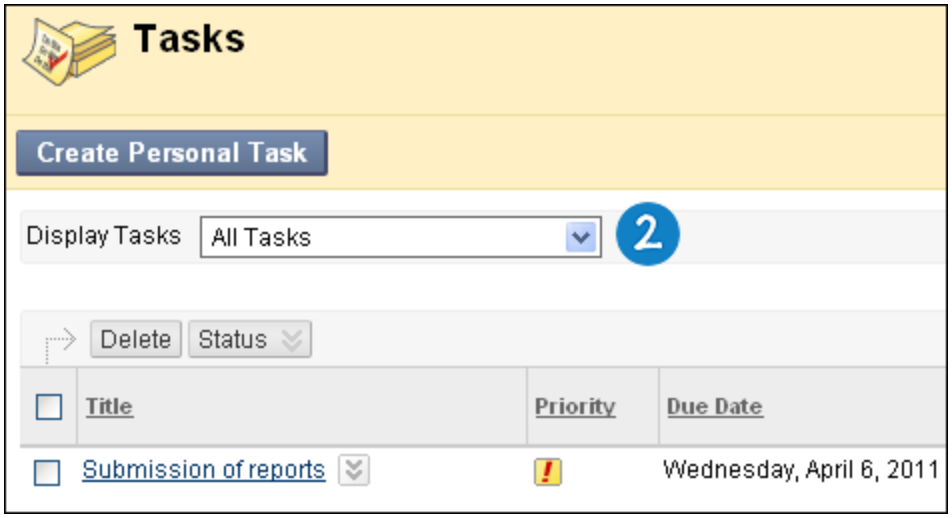


2. On the **Tasks** page, click the drop-down arrow and select a task category. Categories include: **All Tasks**, **My Tasks**, and **By Course**.



How to Change the Status of a Task

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.

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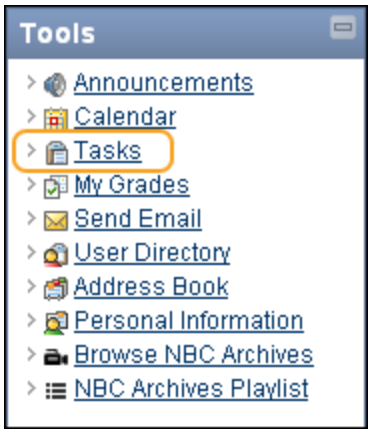
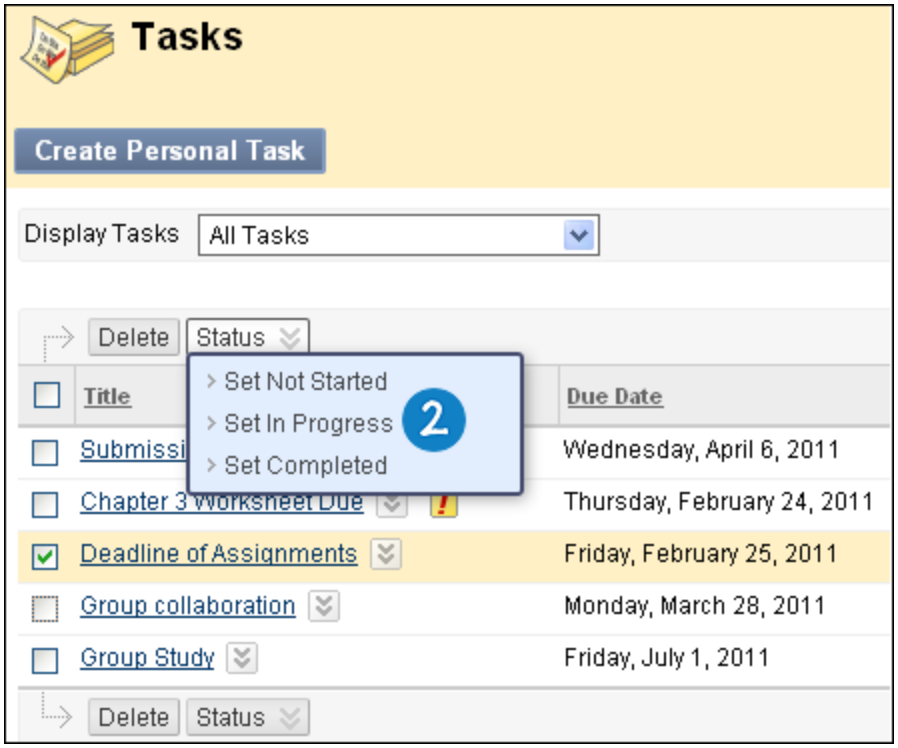


2. On the **Tasks** page, select the tasks and click **Status** to select the current status: **Set Not Started**, **Set In Progress**, and **Set Complete**.



How to Delete a Personal Task

Note: This action is final and cannot be undone.

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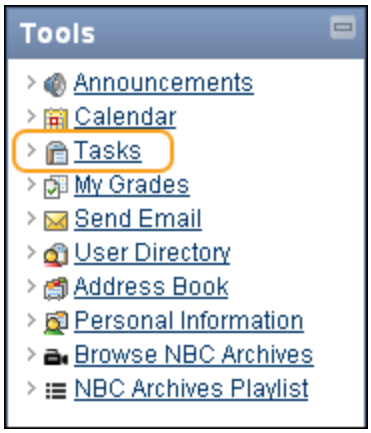
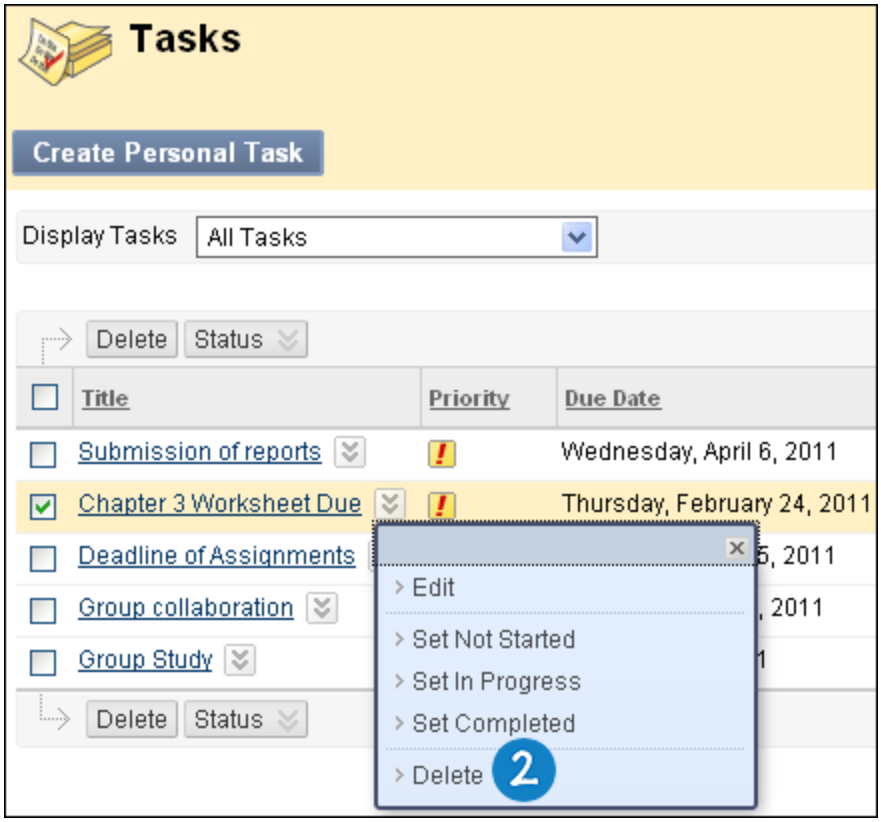
1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.



2. On the **Tasks** page, select **Delete** in the contextual menu for a task.



How to View Task Details

1. On the **Tools** panel, click **Tasks**.

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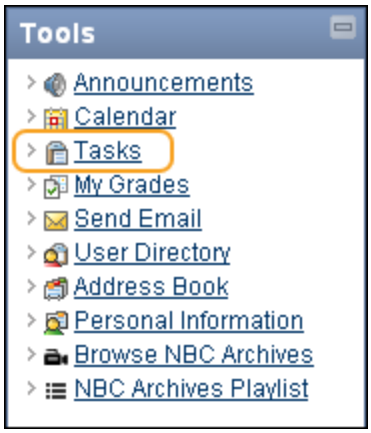
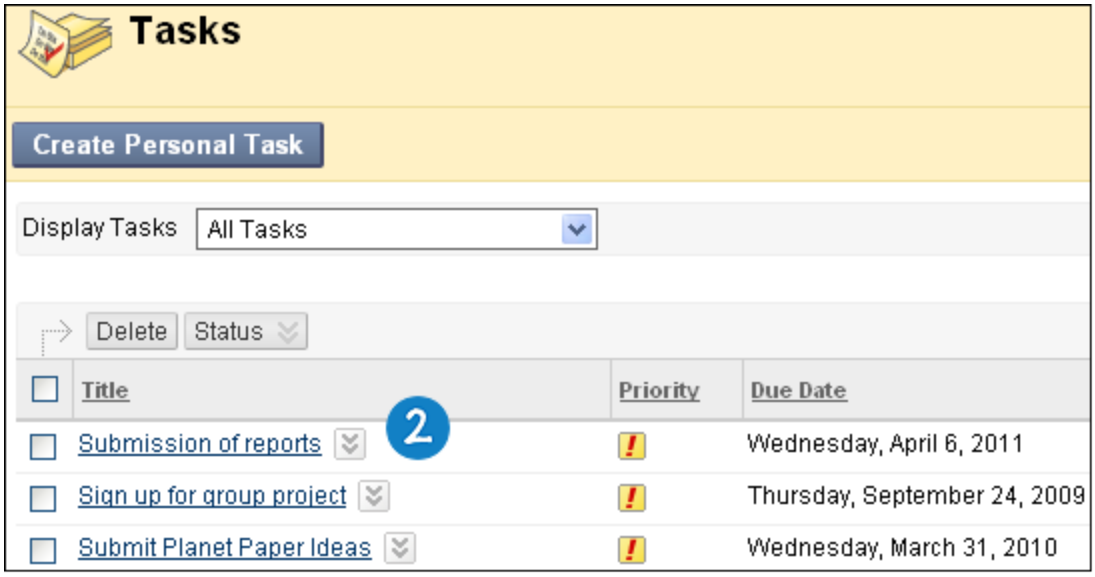
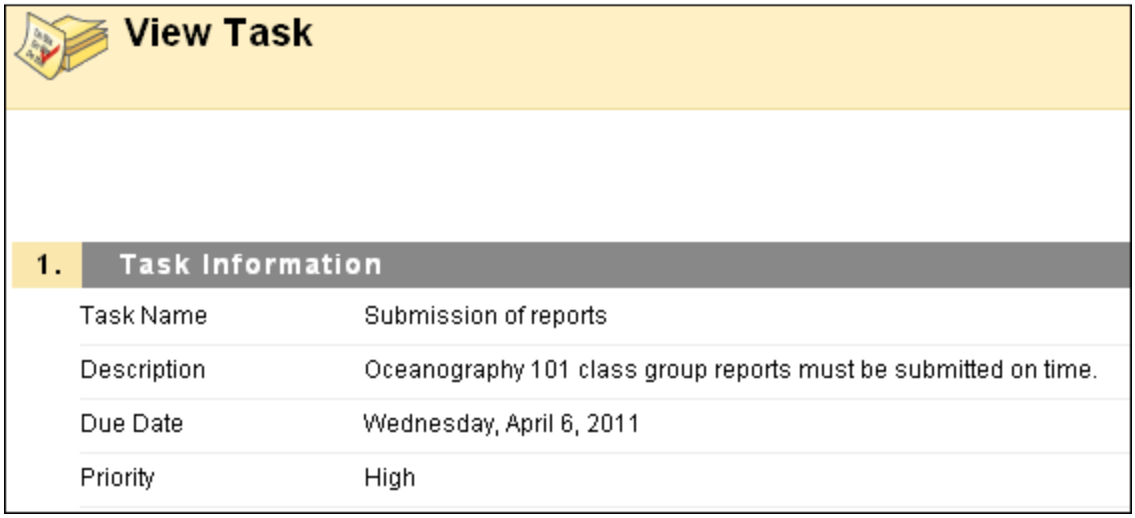


2. On the **Tasks** page, click on a task.





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Related Tutorials Stay Organized by Managing Your Course and Personal Tasks (Flash movie | 3m 02s | 4,994 KB)

Wikis

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

A wiki is a collaborative tool that allows you to contribute and modify one or more pages of course related materials. The wiki page is an area where users can collaborate on content. Users within a course can create and edit wiki pages in the course or within a course group. Instructors and students can offer comments and your instructor can grade individual work.

Wikis are an effective way to contribute and modify one or more pages of related material.

How to Create a Wiki Page

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.

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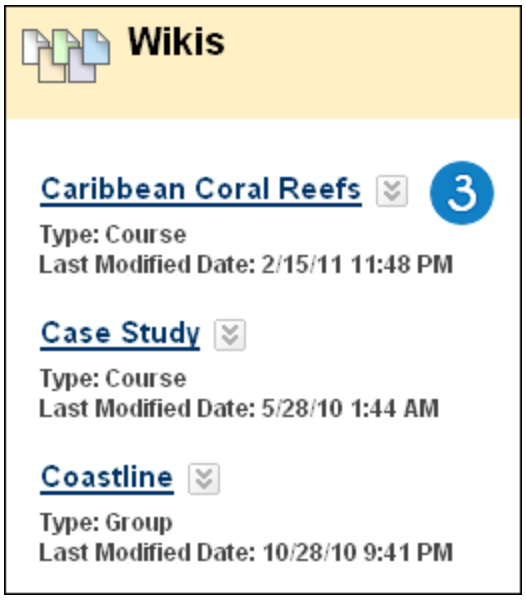
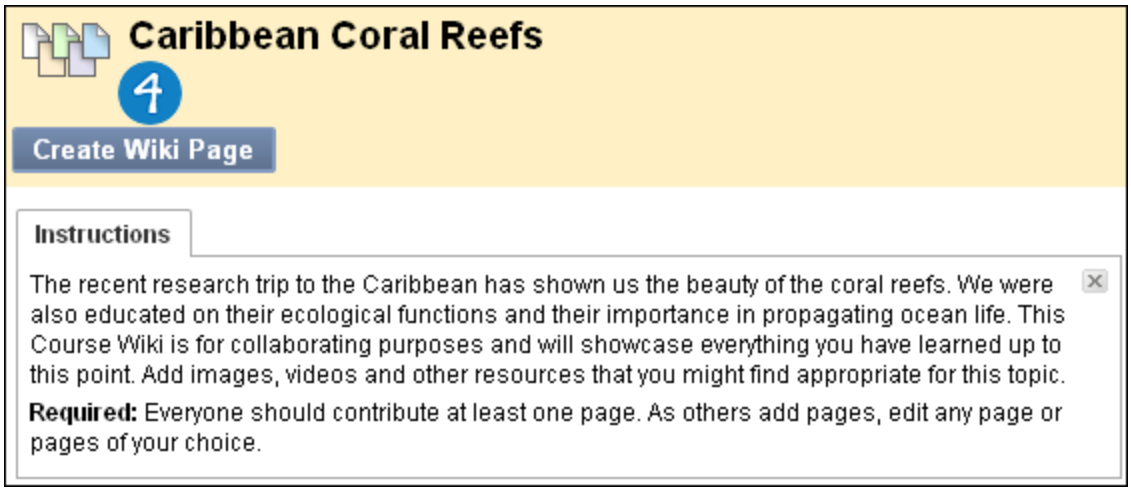


4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, click **Create Wiki Page**.



5. On the **Create Wiki Page**, type a **Name** for the wiki page.
6. Type text in the **Content** text box. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
7. Click **Submit**.

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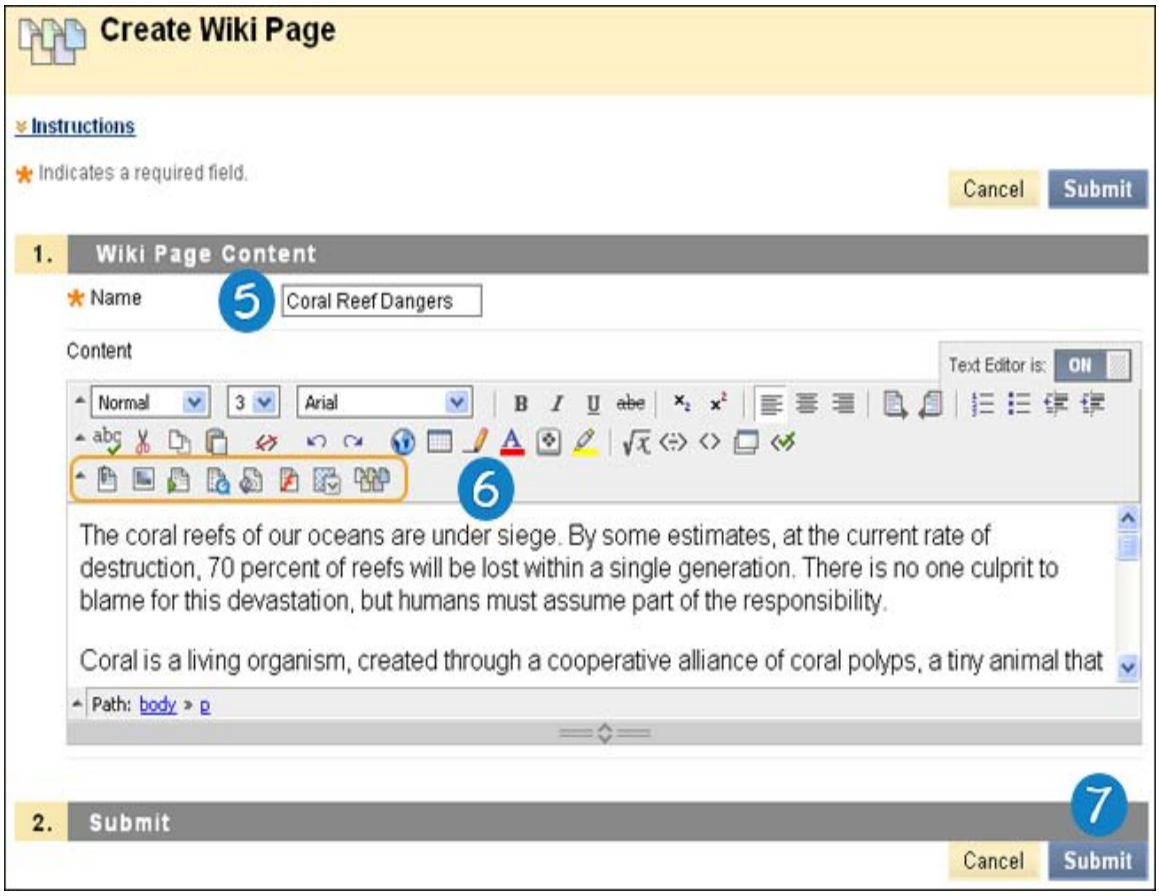

How to Edit Wiki Content

Any course member can edit a course wiki page and any group member can edit a group wiki page. All course members, including your instructor, edit in the same way.

Note: The Blackboard administrator at your school and your instructor control whether this tool is available. If this tool has been turned off, it will not appear in the interface and will not be available for you to use.

When a wiki page is being edited by one user, it is locked to prevent others from editing the same page. If you try to edit a page someone else is editing, you are informed that the page is currently being edited by another user.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

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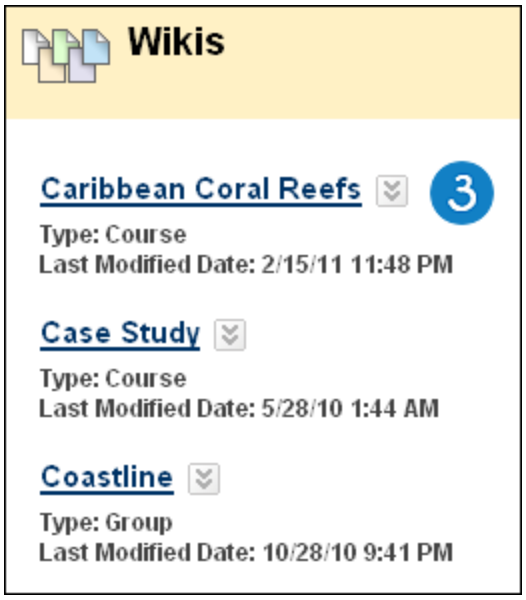
3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.



4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, select the wiki page that you like to edit.
5. Click **Edit Wiki Content**.

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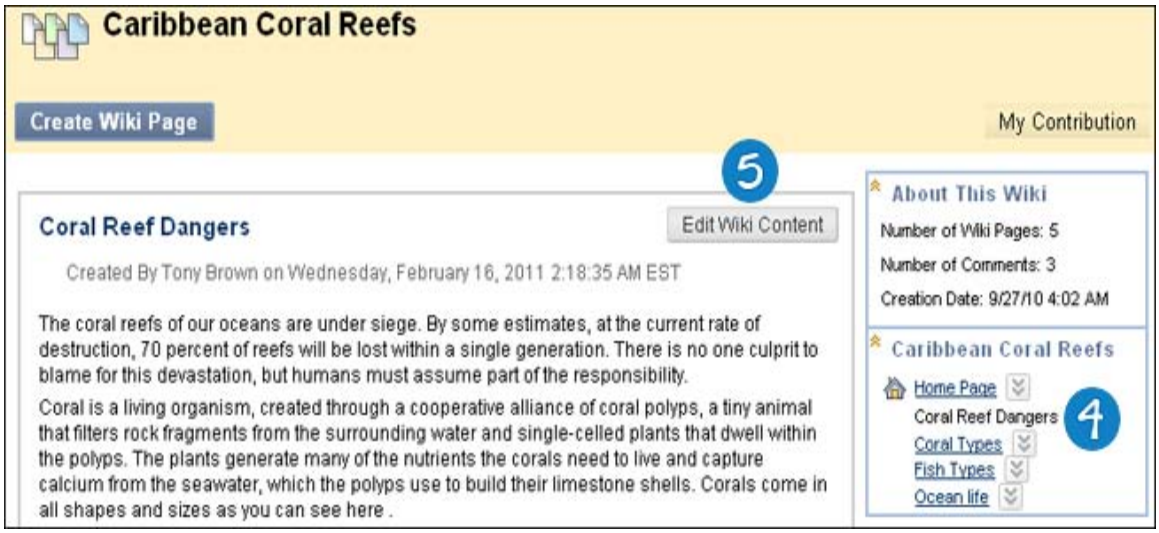
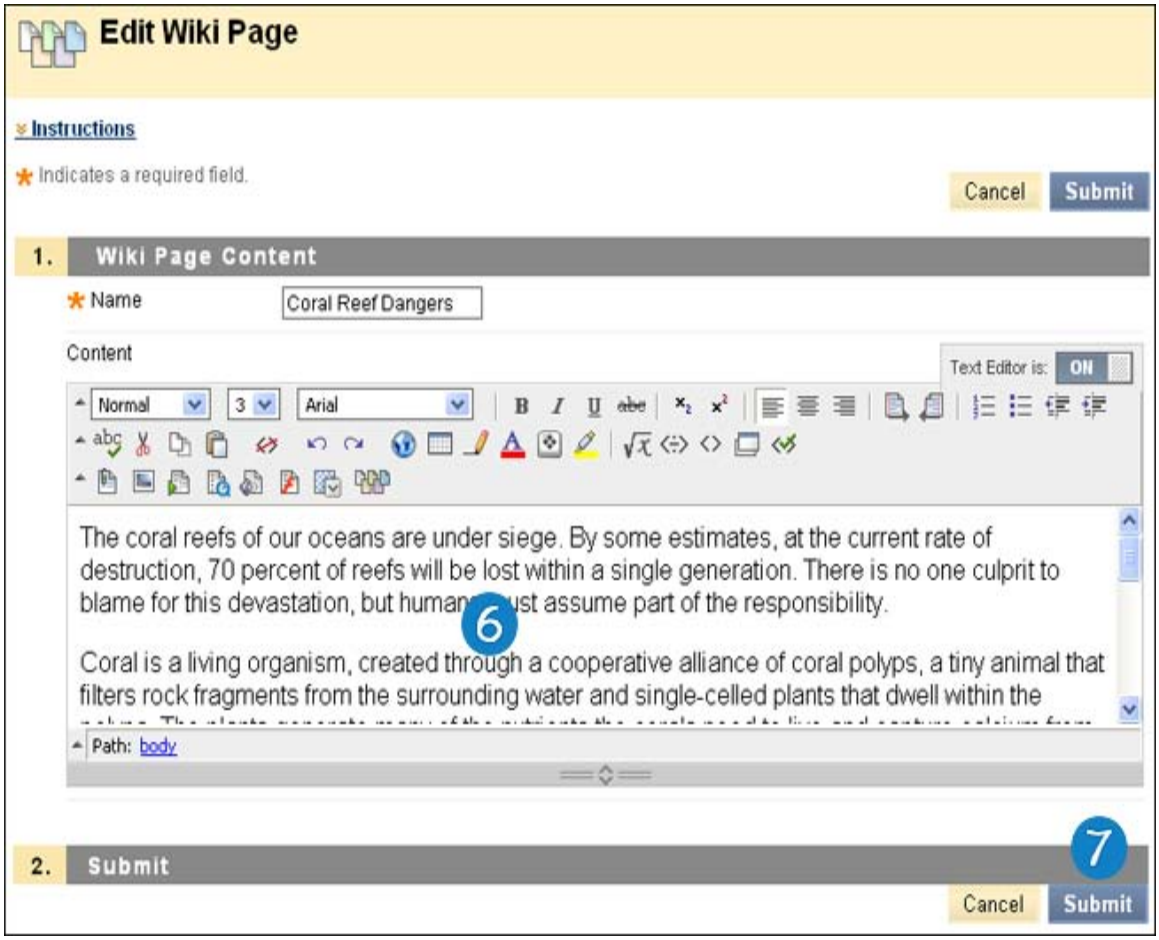


6. On the **Edit Wiki Page**, make the necessary changes.
7. Click **Submit** to save your work.



How to Link to other Wiki Pages

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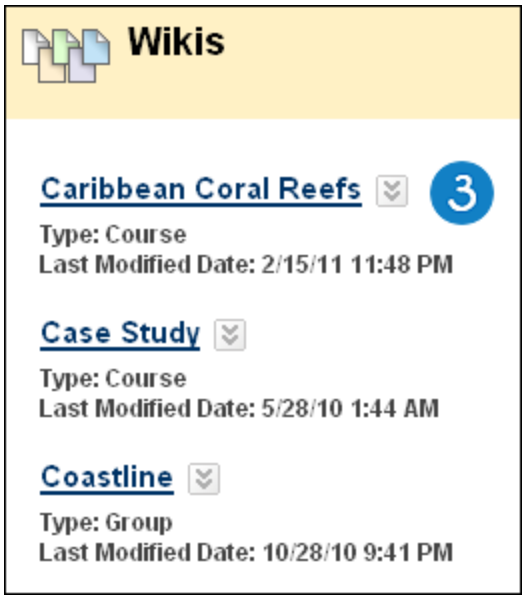
If the wiki consists of many pages, it can be helpful to insert a link to that page right on the page currently being viewed. You can only create links to other wiki pages when at least two pages exist. The link icon appears in the text editor of the page you are working on.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.



4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, select the wiki page where you want to place the link. The wiki page opens in the content frame.
5. Click **Edit Wiki Content**.

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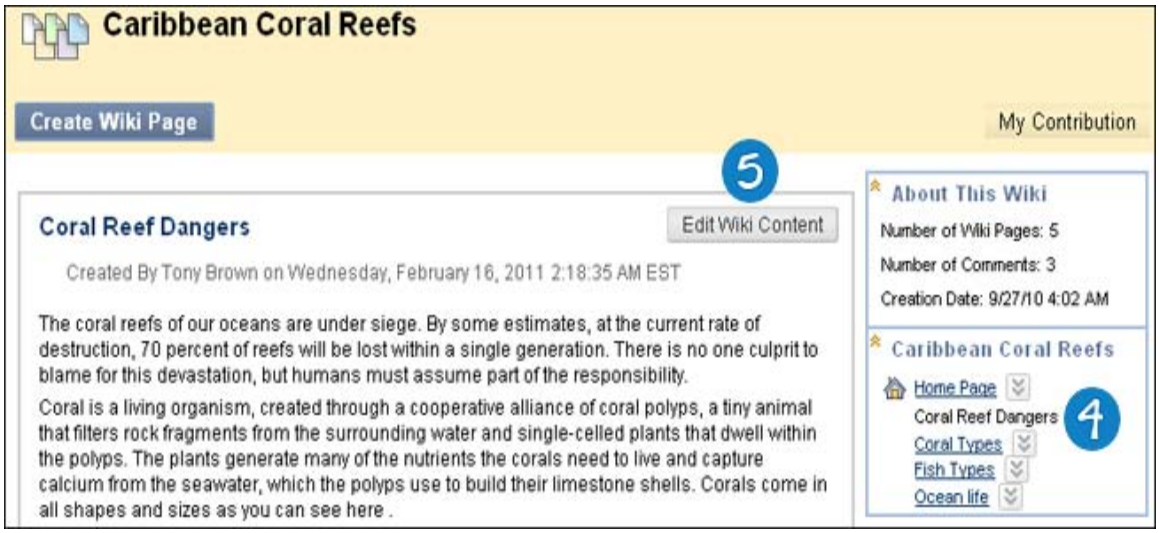
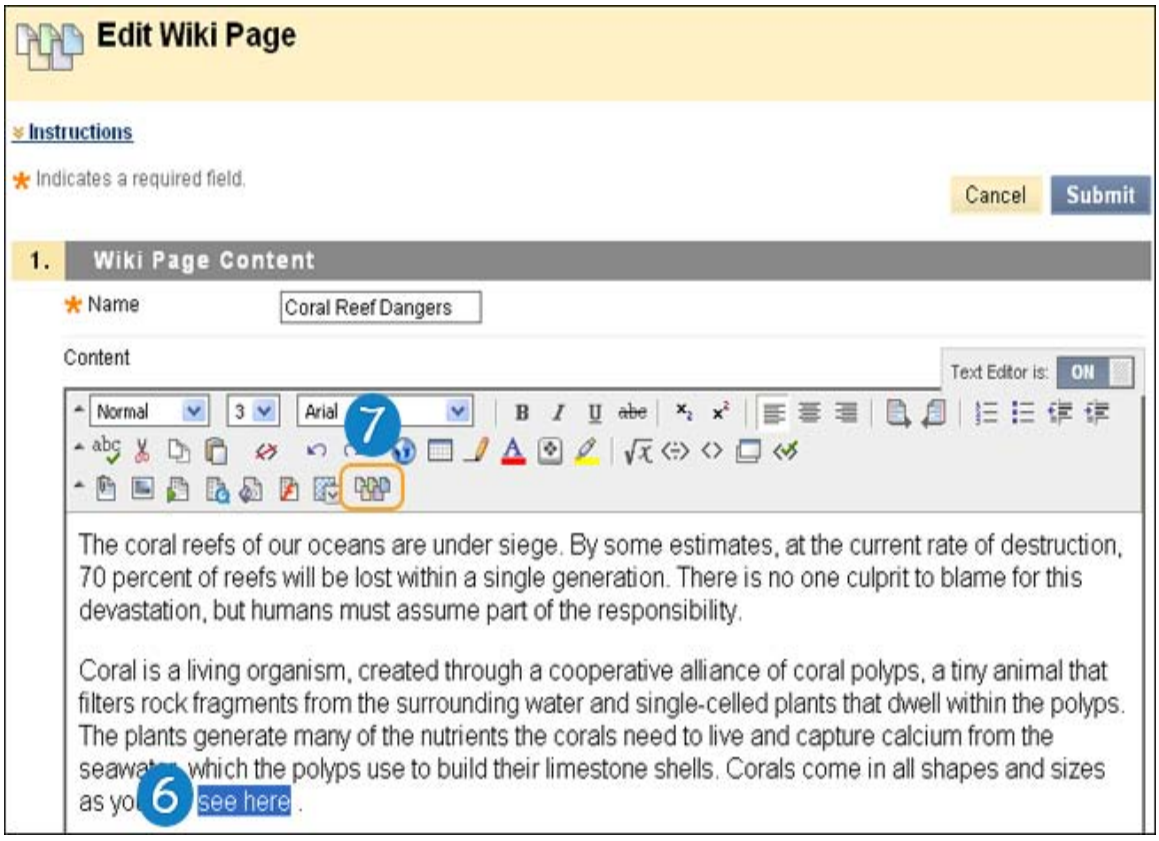


6. On the **Edit Wiki Page**, position your mouse pointer where you want to add a link to another wiki page.
7. Click the **Link to Wiki page** function in the **Text Editor**, represented by several sheets of paper. If there is only one page in the wiki, this function is disabled.



8. On the **Insert Wiki Page Link** pop-up window, select the wiki page to link to from the drop-down list.

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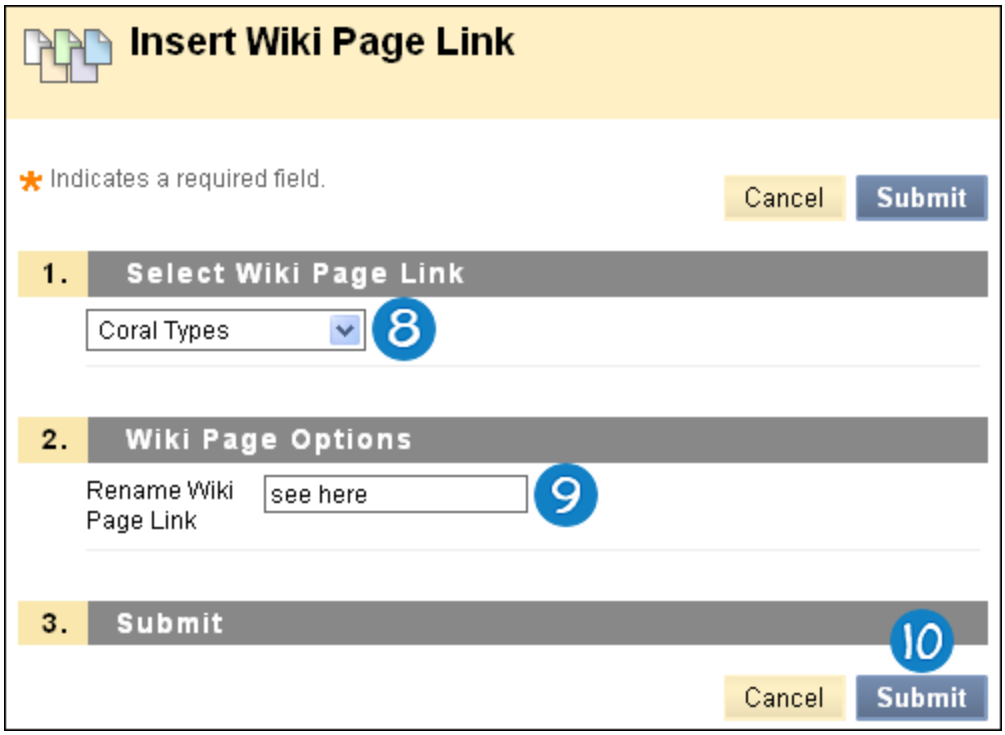
9. Optionally, type a name for the link in the **Rename Wiki Page Link** text box. If you do not rename the link, the original page title is used as the link.
10. Click **Submit**. The link appears in the **Text Editor**.



11. On **Edit Wiki Page**, click **Submit**. The new page with the link is added to the Wiki.

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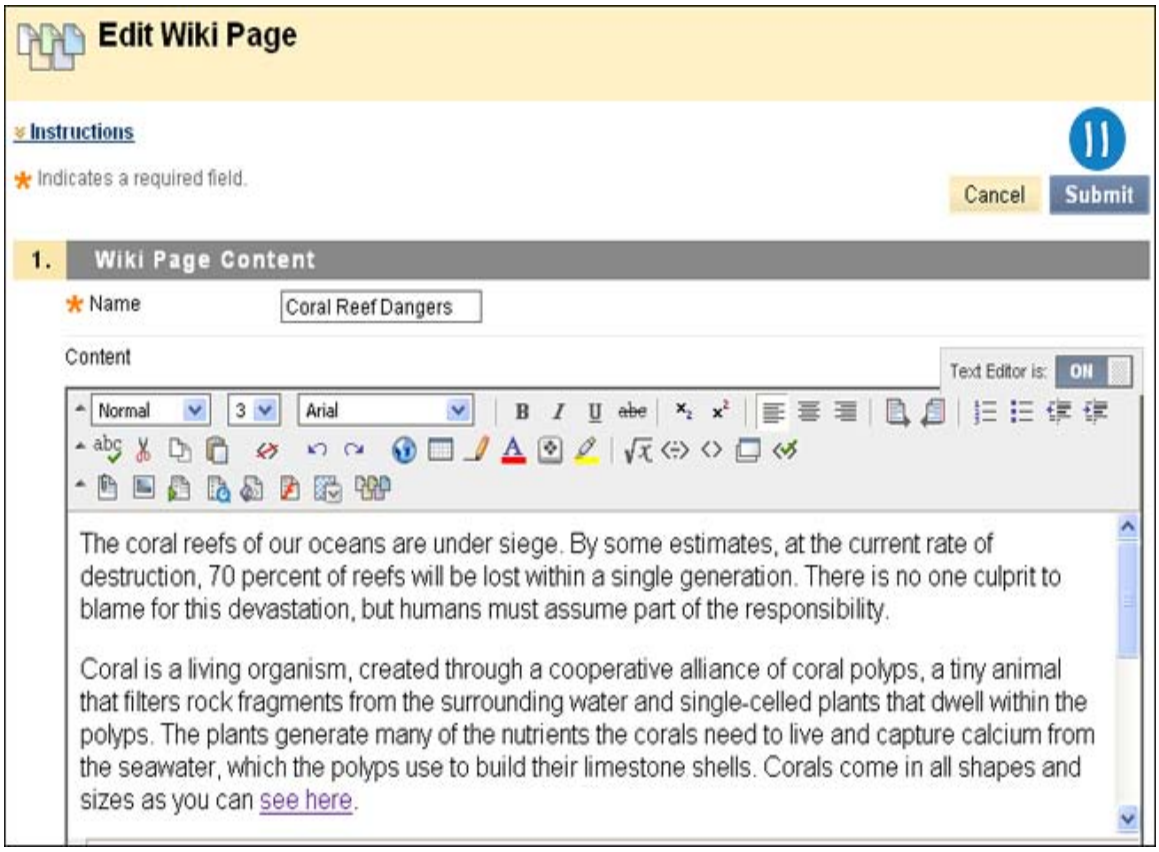

How to Comment on a Wiki Entry

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.

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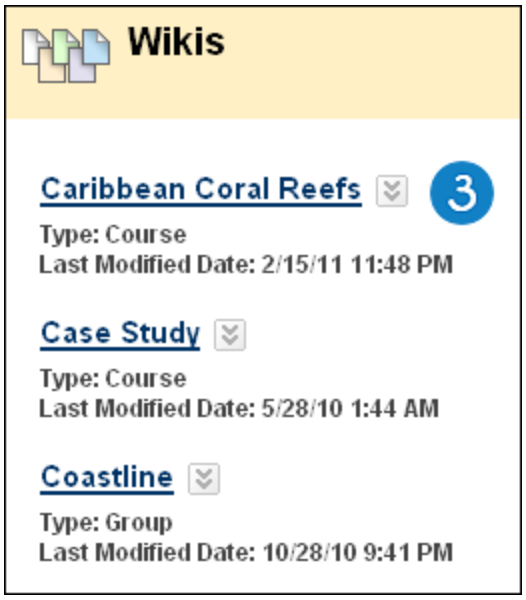

4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, select the wiki page where you want to place your comment. The wiki page opens in the content frame.
5. Click **Comment** following the user's entry.
6. Type your comments in the **Comment** text box.
7. Click **Add**. To view all the comments, expand the **Comments** link.

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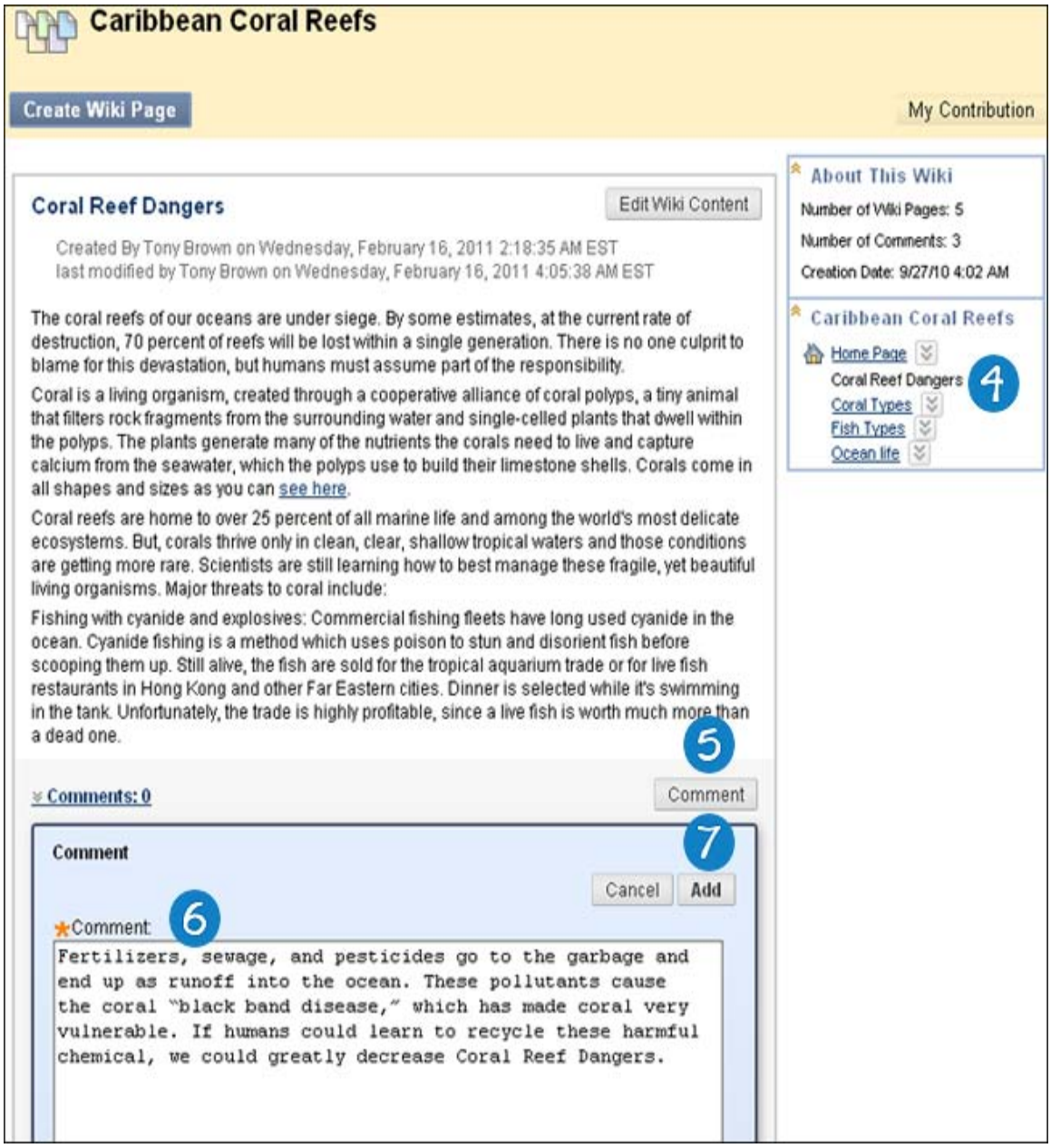

How to View Your Contributions

You can view a list of all the pages and versions you have contributed or modified and determine if proper effort was made.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

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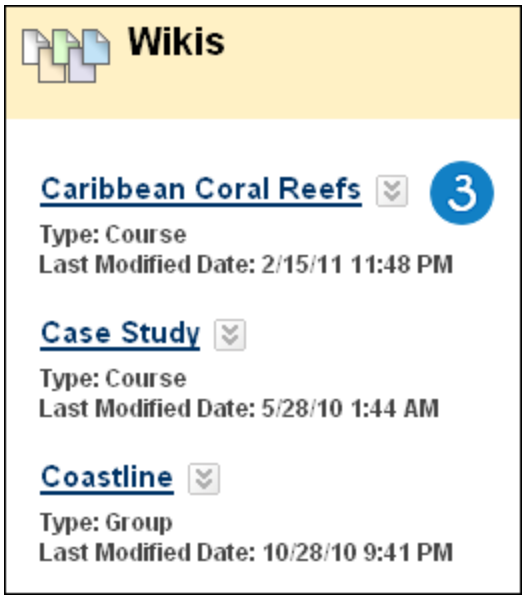
3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.



4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, click **My Contribution** on the Action Bar. On the **My Contribution** page, you can view information about your contribution to the wiki in the content frame and the side panel.

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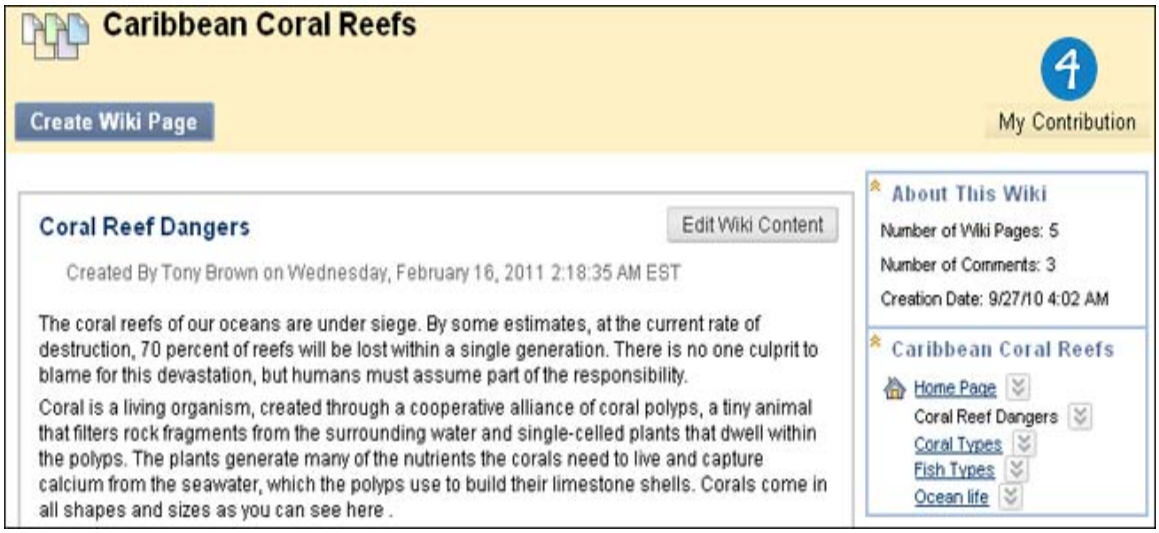
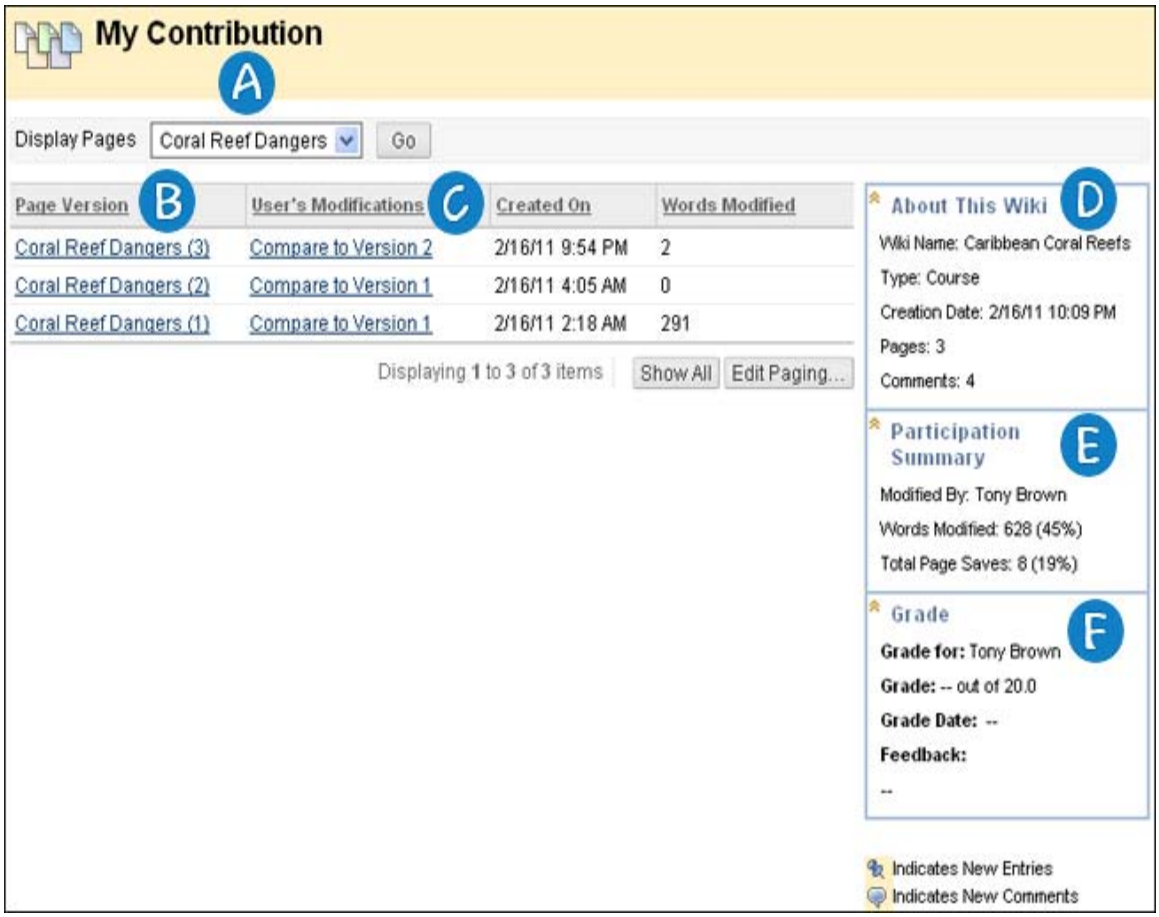


The My Contribution Page



A **Display Pages**: All pages and versions that you added and modified are listed in the **Display Pages**. Use the **Display Pages** drop-down list on the Action Bar to narrow what is shown in the **My Contribution** page..

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B **Page Version**: In the **Page Version** column, page titles appear with their corresponding version numbers. Click a title to view the page without annotated changes. The page opens in a new window. By default, the most recent page version is listed first.

C **User's Modification**: In the **User's Modifications** column, click a link to compare a page to its previous version. The **Page Comparison** page opens in a new window. Click the **Legend** tab to view the comparison with a legend or explanation of the formatting used to communicate version differences.

D **About This Wiki**: In the **About This Wiki** section, the you can view wiki information, how many pages you added and edited, and how many comments you added to the wiki.

E **Participation Summary**: In the **Participation Summary** section, you can view **Words Modified**, which tallies any word added, deleted, or edited in all pages and each page's versions, available in number count and percentage. **Total Page Saves** tallies any time **Submit** is clicked on any **Edit Wiki Page** in the wiki—regardless of content being changed—available in number count and percentage.

F **Grade**: The **Grade** section appears if the wiki is set to be graded.

How to View Grades for Wiki Contributions

Once wiki contributions have been graded, you can view the grade in two places. The grading information appears on the **My Contribution** page and in the **My Grades** tool.

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **Wikis**.

3. On the **Wikis** listing page, select a wiki title.

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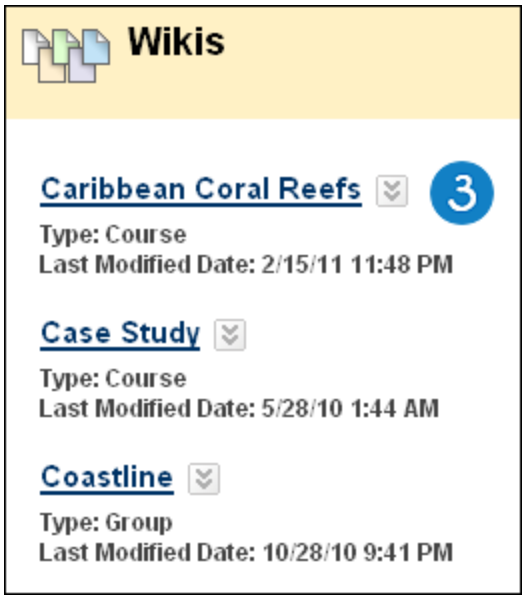

4. On the **Wiki's** topic page, click **My Contribution** on the Action Bar. On the **My Contribution** page's **Grade** section, you can view the assigned grade for the contributions listed in the content frame, feedback, and the date the grade was assigned.

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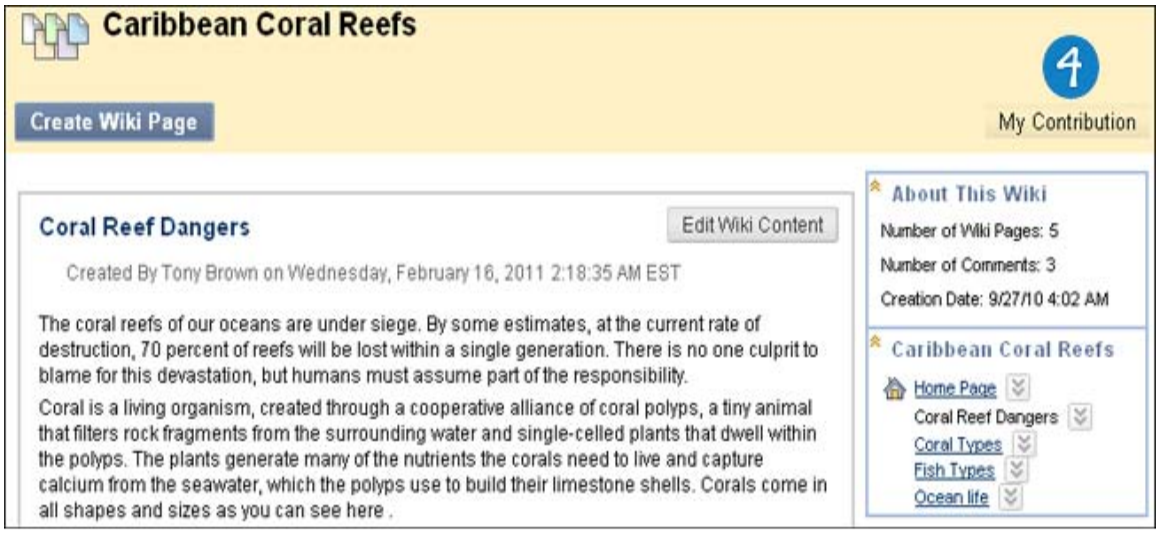

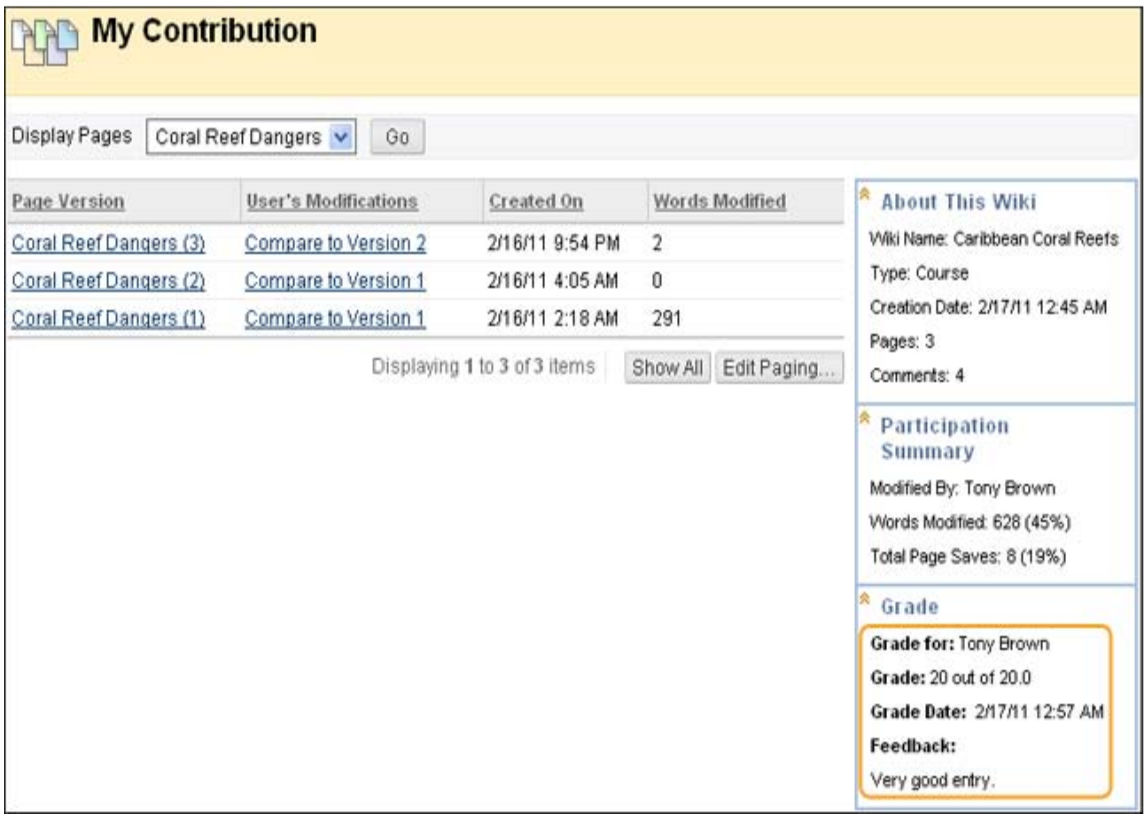

Related Tutorials Creating and Editing a Wiki Page (Flash movie | 2m 40s | 4,329 KB) | Linking Wiki Pages (Flash movie | 2m 10s | 16,272 KB)

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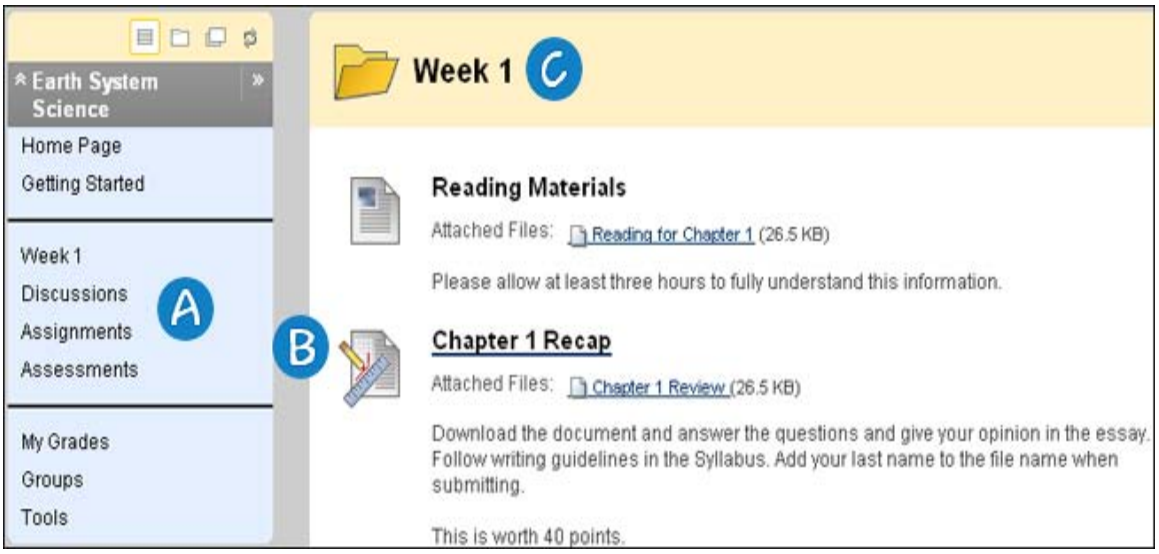
Courses and Content

About Courses

Courses contain content and tools for teaching and learning. Your instructor assigned to a course oversees the course through the Course Menu and Control Panel. While your instructor has control over the course, the Blackboard administrator at your school can set overrides that restrict or require course areas and tools.

A course consists of the Course Menu and a content frame. The Course Menu links users to content and tools. The content frame displays content and tools.



A **Course Menu**: The Course Menu appears on the left side of a course and contains links to materials and tools within the course.

B **Content Frame**: The content frame occupies most of the screen to display the current view. Users interact with content from this view.

C **Content Area**: Content Areas are top-level containers that organize and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. The content appears in the content frame.

Next Steps

To learn more, see About the Course Menu, About the Content Area.

About Course Content

A Content Item is any type of file, text, image, or link that appears to users in a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder. Your instructors can add a number of different types of content to these course areas.

Types of Content

You can view different types of content in a Content Area. All content shares a few similarities. Each piece of content has a name and description. Many types of content allow your instructor to set options, such as availability and date restrictions.

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Note: Icons may be different because the Blackboard administrator at your school selects which icon set to use.

Icon	Content Type	Description
	Item	A general piece of content, such as a file, image, text, or link to which a description and other items may be attached.
	File	An HTML file that can be used in the course. These files can be viewed as a page within the course or as a separate piece of content in a separate browser window.
	Audio	Audio file that can be played in a page. If **Autostart** and **Loop** are both set to **Yes**, the audio file will begin playing when users open the page and will continue to play until they stop it or navigate away from the page.
	Image	Image file that can be shown on the page.
	Video	Video file that can be played by the user. The video player will appear directly on the page.
	URL	Link to a website or resource to provide a quick access point to relevant materials.
	Learning Module	A set of content that focuses on a specific subject that you can navigate at your own pace. Instructors can set the path so students must view content sequentially, or permit users to view the content in any order. All types of contents, such as items, assignments, and tests, can be included in a Learning Module.
	Lesson Plan	A Lesson Plan is special content type that combines information about the lesson itself with the curriculum resources used to teach it.
	Syllabus	An outline of a course of study. It can contain course information, objectives, instructor contact information, assignments, class meeting dates, textbook information, and more.
	Course Link	A shortcut to an item, tool, or area in a course. A Course Link provides a quick access point to relevant materials and tools.
	Content Folder	A Content Folder is a way of organizing content items. Content folders and sub-folders set up a hierarchy to group related material together. Content folders can be used to group material based on a theme, such as media clips. Content folders can also be used to group material based on a schedule, for example, placing all items for "week 1" together. Using folders to organize content items can make materials easier to find and reduce the length of a Content Area page.
	Blank Page	A Blank Page can be added and customized it to fit your course.
	Module Page	Module Pages are specialized content pages that present content in discrete boxes. The modules that appear on this page can be arranged in any order. Module Pages can be personalized by students if the instructor permits it.
	Tools Area	A shortcut to a specific tool in the course, such as the Discussion Board or Messages. The link to a tool brings students to that tool and away from any other content they may be viewing unless the content has been set by the instructor to open in a separate window.
	Flickr® Photo	A link to a site for viewing and sharing photographic images.
	SlideShare Presentation	A link to a site for viewing and sharing Microsoft® PowerPoint®, Microsoft® OpenOffice, or Adobe® PDF presentations.

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Icon	Content Type	Description
	YouTube™ Video	A link to a site for viewing and sharing online videos.

Content Availability

Your instructors can limit the availability of content items based on date, time, individual users, course groups, and performance on graded items. This means that the content displayed in the Course Menu or Content Areas can change over time. For example, if your instructor restricts access to content until a test is complete, the content does not appear until you complete the test.

Review Status

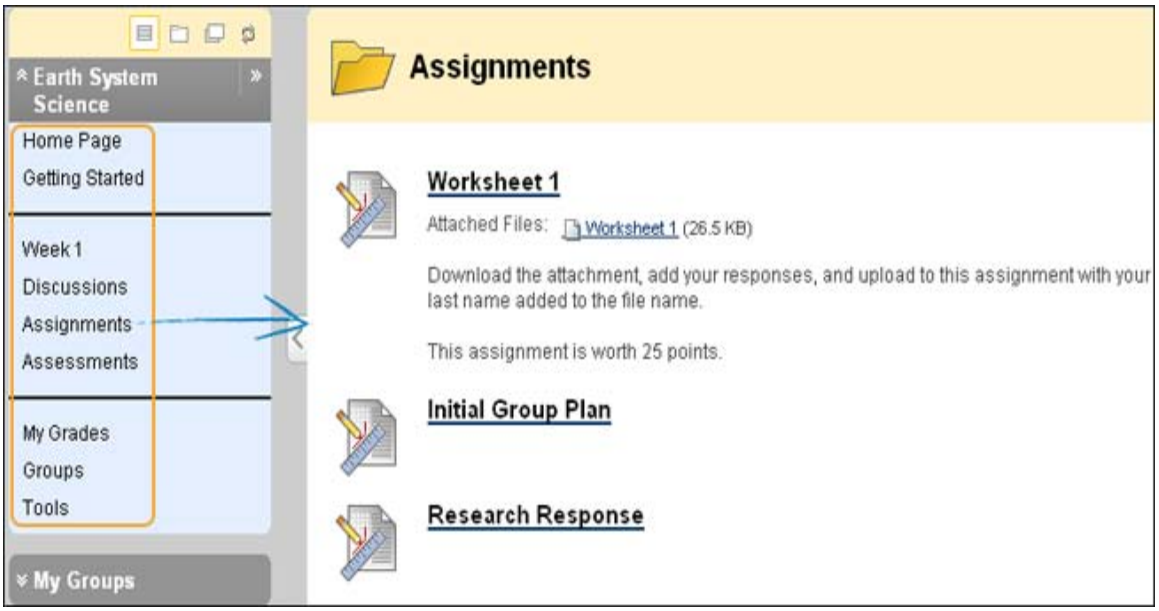
Review Status allows your instructor to track user review of specific content items and may affect the release of additional content. For example, your instructor can enable Review Status for an article added to a Content Area and can make the release of a quiz contingent upon you reviewing the article. After you mark the article Reviewed, the quiz appears.

A **Mark Reviewed** function appears on the item when it is opened. After reviewing the item, click the function to mark it as **Reviewed**.

Note: You can toggle between **Reviewed** and **Mark Reviewed**. You can use these functions if you want to go back to a content item and review it again. Your instructor only views the current setting. If the item is marked **Reviewed**, then switched to **Mark Review**, your instructor does not see that the item was marked **Reviewed** at any time.

Course Content Areas

Content Areas are top-level containers that organize and store course content, such as lecture notes, assignments, and tests. Content Areas that are available to users make up the Course Menu that appears as links in the frame on the left side of the course. To access a Content Area, click its name on the Course Menu. The content appears in the content frame.



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Your instructor or administrator creates the names of the areas in a course, which may differ from the names shown in this section.

Content Area Organization

You can access a Content Area item by clicking its link, such as a Discussion Board link or a file link. Your instructors can further organize content using folders, subfolders, Learning Modules, or Lesson Plans.

Breadcrumbs

As items and links are viewed in a Content Area, use the breadcrumbs to navigate to previous pages.

Next Steps

To learn more about content items, see About the Course Content.

Course Cartridges

Your instructors have the option of using Course Cartridge content in their courses. This content is created by publishers and is available for instructors to download. When you access this content within a course, you are prompted for an Access key. Cartridge content often includes:

- Slides
- Documents
- Quiz questions
- Lists of relevant links

Accessing a Course Cartridge

You should be enrolled in the course, and you must have an Access Key to open the course material. When you attempt to access Course Cartridge content the first time, you are prompted for a key. Access Keys are

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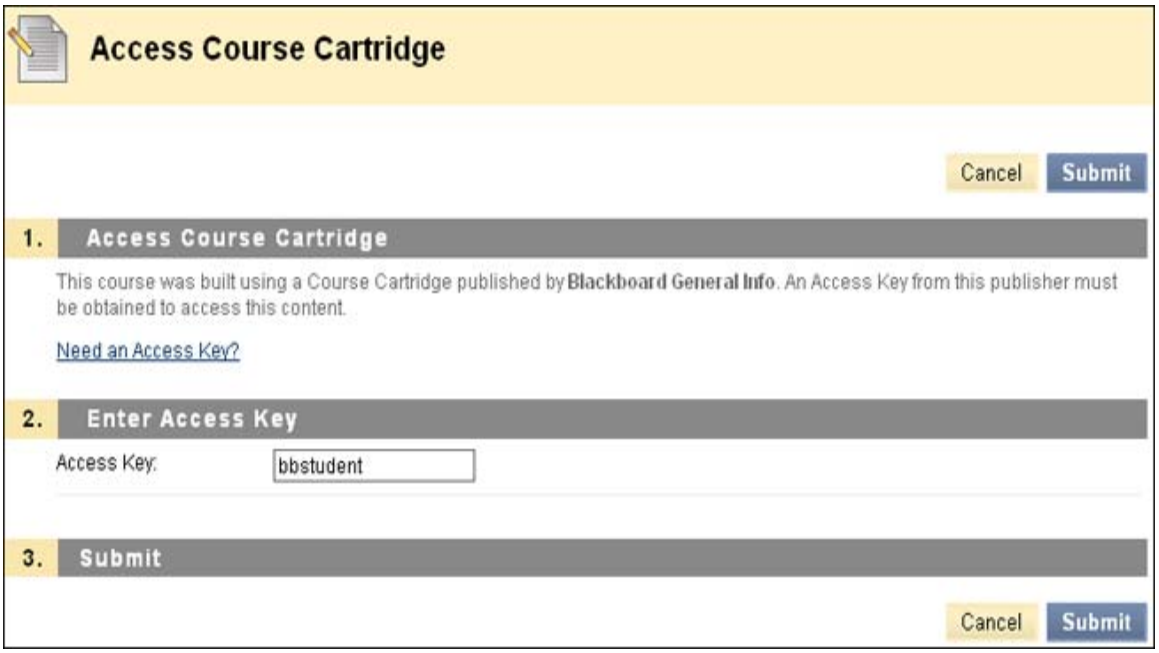
obtained from the publisher. Keys may be found in the course text book or on the publisher's website. Once the key is entered, the content is available.

After the key has been entered once, you can open any content in the course that comes from the Course Cartridge.



Lesson Plans

A Lesson Plan is a container for content similar to a Content Area or folder. This allows you to view the lesson profile, objectives, and content items you need to complete a lesson. Your instructor can provide you with information on how your knowledge will be measured, the needed materials, the duration of the instruction, and what you should have learned after the instruction.

Typically, Lesson Plans are added to Content Areas, but they can be added to Learning Modules and folders.

The Lesson Plan appears first in the content list and has its own unique icon. If a description was added to the Lesson Plan when it was created, it appears following the title.

1. Select the Content Area from the Course Menu that holds the Lesson Plan. For example, Week 2.
2. Click the name of the Lesson Plan.

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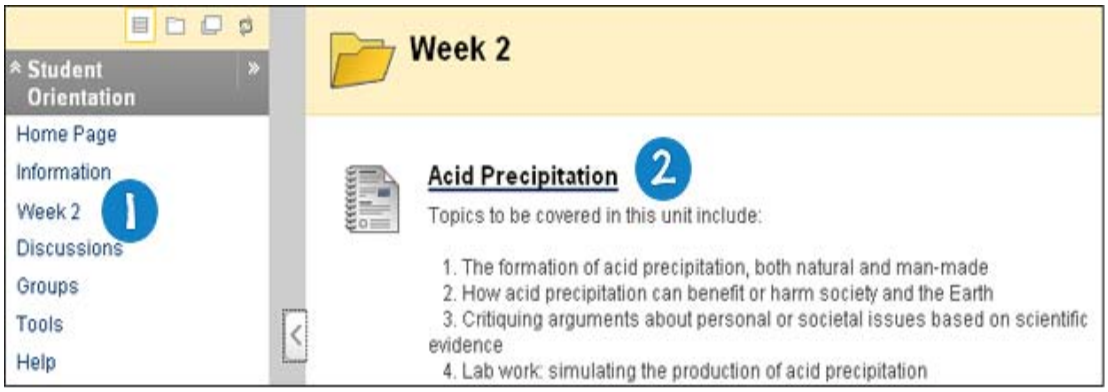

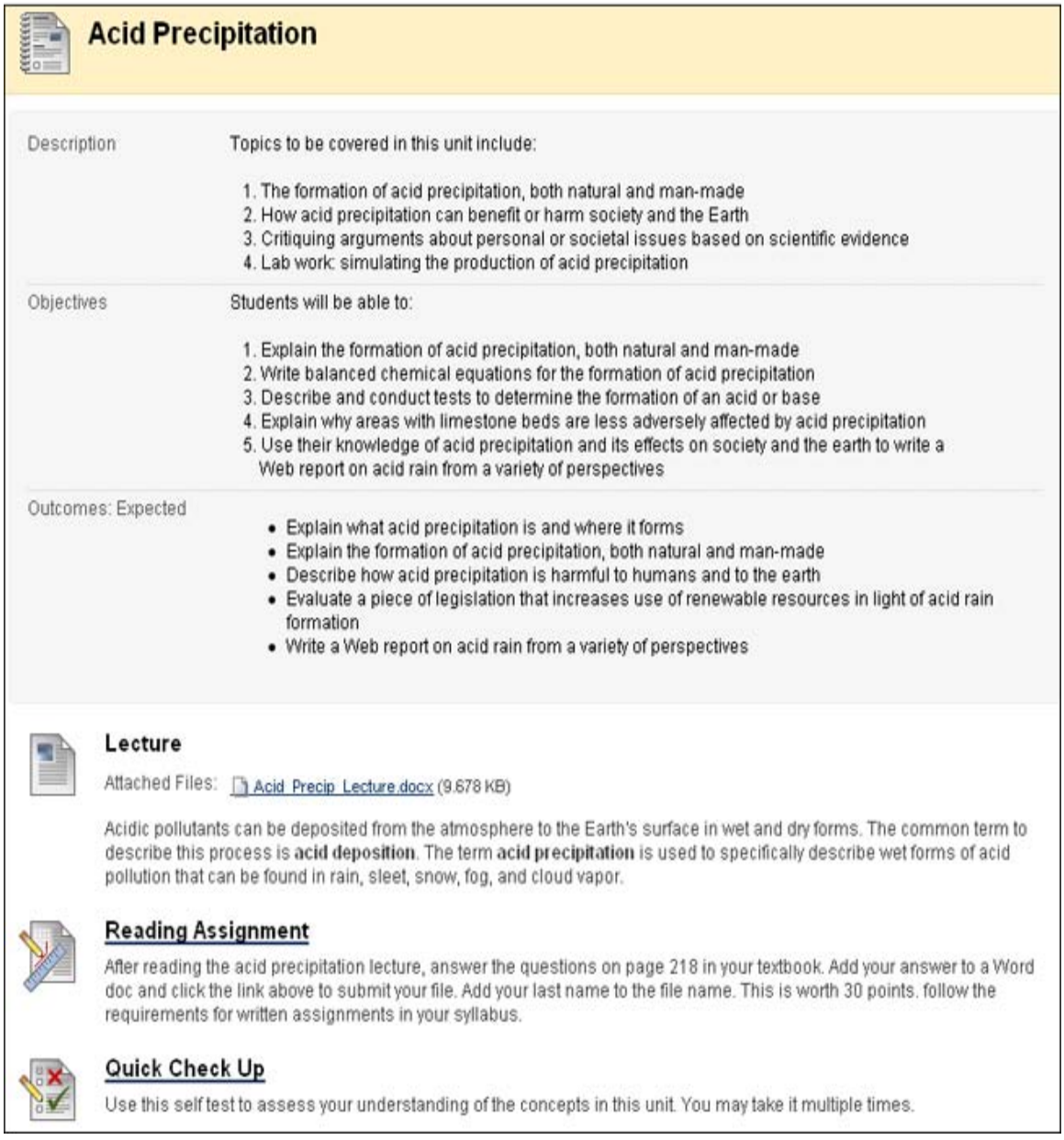

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The Lesson Plan's general information and content items are organized following the title. The top portion contains general information about the lesson, which appears in the gray area, while the bottom contains content items.

In this example, the content items for the lesson are shown with icons and text. Your instructor can select Icons Only, Text Only, or Icons and Text for the content view. By default Lesson Plans have four sections:

- Instructional Level
- Instructor
- Subject Area
- Objectives

Your instructor may customize the sections in the lesson plan, so you may see different sections.

Learning Modules

A Learning Module is an organized collection of content presented together. The Learning Module is a shell to which other content items such as files, folders and tools are added. It can support a course goal, a course objective, a subject, a concept, or a theme. Learning Modules enable you to follow a structured path for progressing through content.

Following a Sequential Path

The sequential path may be enforced or you may be allowed to access any item at any time. For example, your instructor may set up a Learning Module on Astronomy. This unit walks you through a series of articles about Astronomy, displays media files, and finally presents an assessment about the information covered. You must move through the contents in this order if the sequential path is enforced. If the sequential path is not enforced, you can view the material in any order.

Navigating within Learning Modules

To move from page to page within a module, click the right and left arrow buttons on the top right of the content area. Example: The button will appear next to the text, "Page 1 of 3."

Note: The name of a folder or subfolder will count as a page. For example, if the Learning Module contains two folders, each containing one file, there will be a total of 4 pages.

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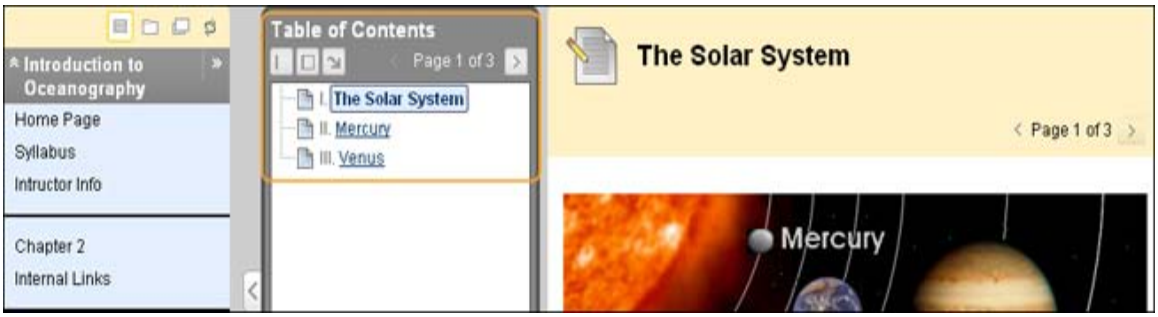
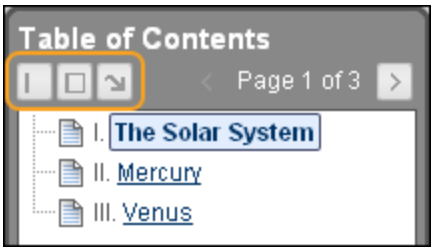
It is also possible to navigate by clicking the name of the page in the Table of Contents instead of clicking the forward or back arrow buttons.

Using the Table of Contents

The Table of Contents displays next to the Course Menu on the left-hand side of the page. It can also be moved below the Learning Module content area.



There are three display options available on the header of the Table of Contents:



- Minimize
- Maximize
- Move to the bottom or the left

How to Move the Table of Contents

Click the button with the arrow pointing down ( ) to move the Table of Contents to the bottom of the page. To move the Table of Contents back to the left, click the left-facing arrow ( ). The move to the left option will reposition the Table of Contents to the left of the content area.

Note: Your instructors can organize the Table of Contents however they see fit. The Table of Contents can be displayed using roman numerals, numbers, letters, or any combination of the three.

Mashups

Note: Your instructor controls which tools are available. If this tool is not available, your instructor may have disabled it.

A Mashup combines elements from two or more sources. When you view a YouTube™ video in a Blackboard Learn course as part of the course content, you are experiencing a Mashup. Mashups can also include Flickr® photos and SlideShare presentations.

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You can use this content in a variety of ways within a course: a standalone piece of content, part of a test question, a topic in a Discussion Board, or as part of an assignment. For example, you can include a clip of your favorite movie in a journal entry.

Mashups are displayed in the following ways:

- **Embed**: The Mashup displays directly on the page.
- **Thumbnail**: A small picture of the Mashup displays on the page with controls to launch it.
- **Text Link with Player**: A link to the Mashup is displayed on the page. Click the link to launch the Mashup.

Mashups are added through the Text Editor.

Default Mashup Types

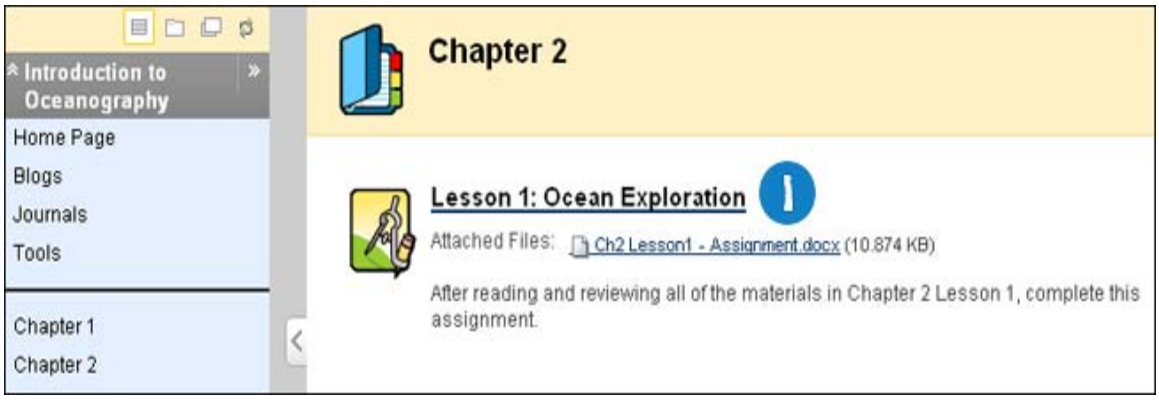
Blackboard Learn supports any file type available on the following websites:

- ***Flickr***: A website for viewing and sharing photographic images.
- ***SlideShare***: A website for viewing and sharing slide presentations and documents.
- ***YouTube***: A website for viewing and sharing online videos.

The Blackboard administrator at your school may enable other types of Mashups.

How to Create a Mashup Item Using the Text Editor

1. Navigate to an assignment, journal, or other piece of content, for example, Lesson 1: Ocean Exploration assignment in **Chapter 2** Content Area.



2. On the **Upload Assignment** page, click **Add Mashup** in the third row of Text Editor functions.
3. Select **Flickr Photo**, **SlideShare Presentation**, or **YouTube Video**.

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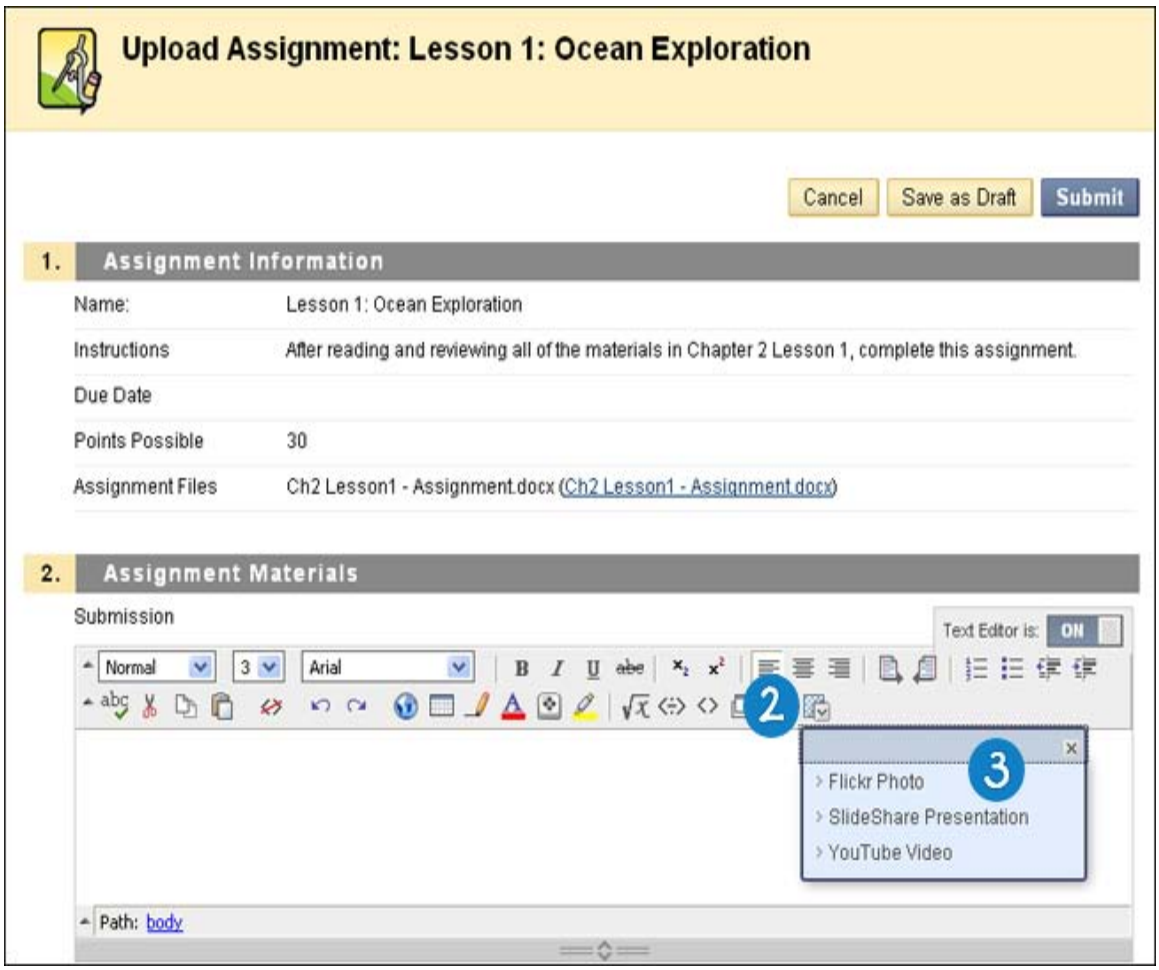
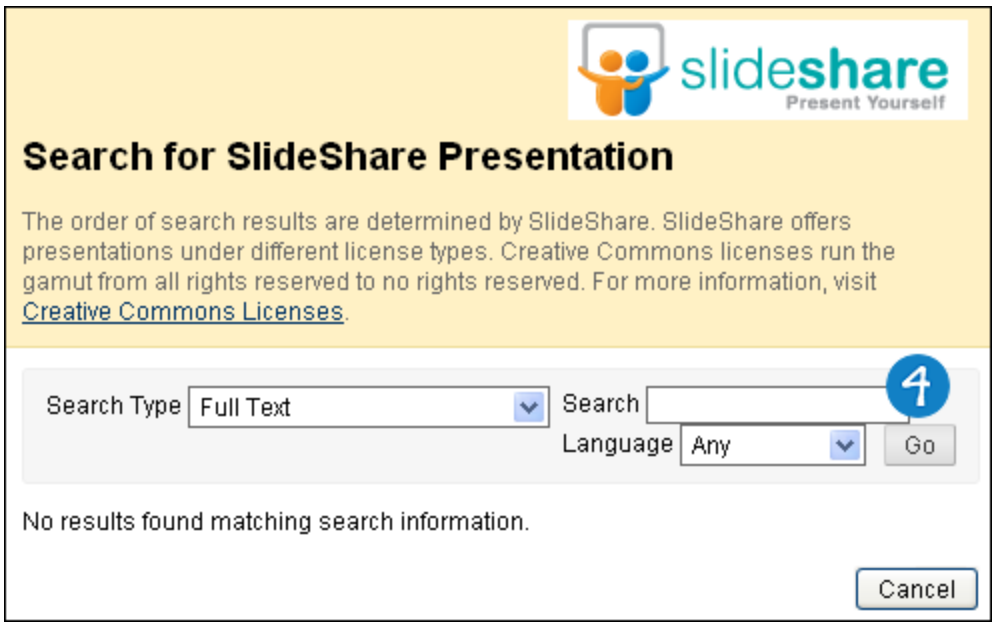


4. On the **Search for Mashup** pop-up window, search for content. Type the content name in the **Search** box and click **Go**.



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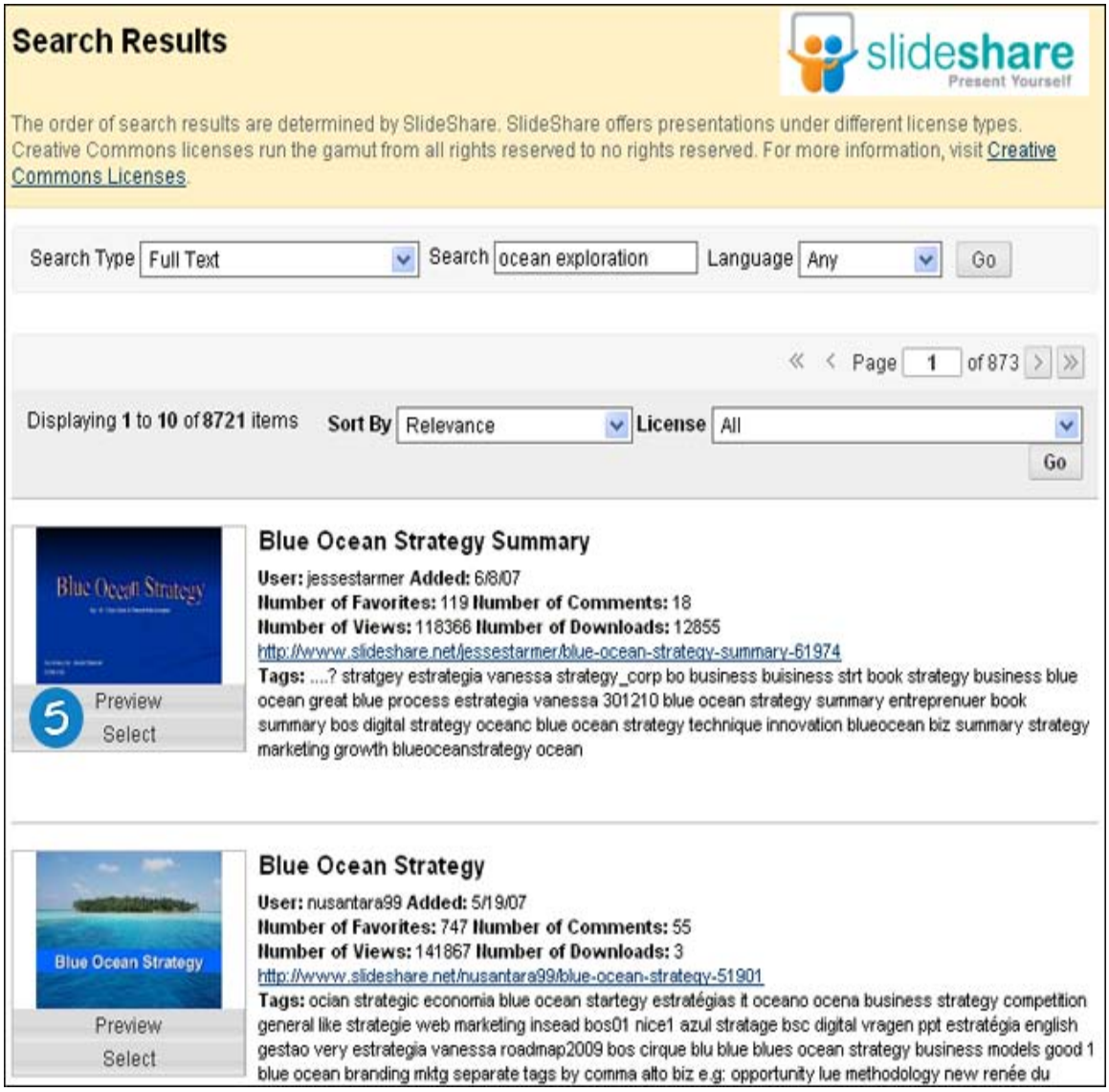
5. On the **Search Results** page, you can click **Preview** to examine the items, or click **Select** to include the appropriate item.



6. On the **Create Mashup Item** page, change the **Name** of the item. This is a required field.
7. Set the **Mashup Options**.
8. Click **Submit**.

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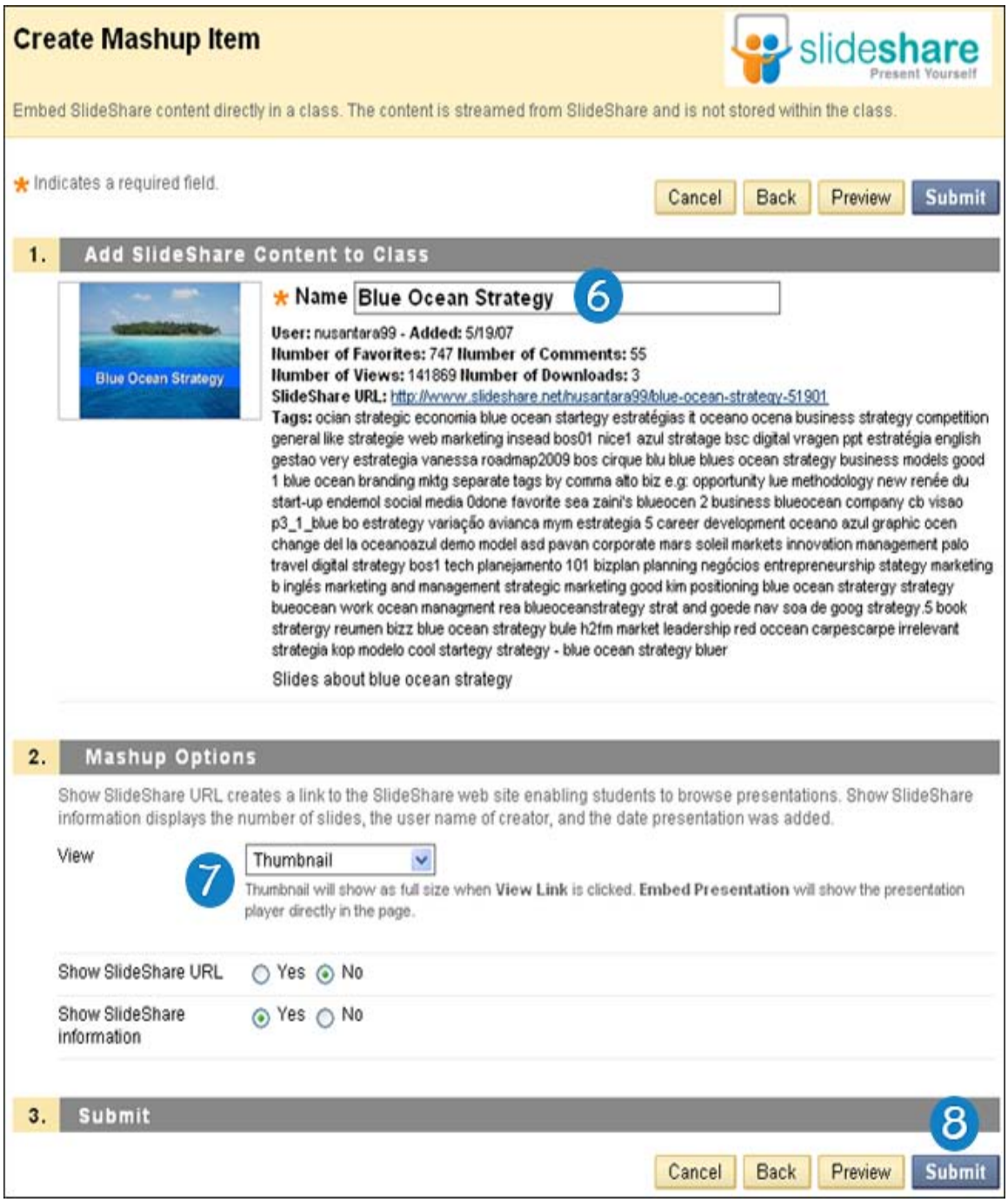

9. On the **Upload Assignment** page, click **Submit**.

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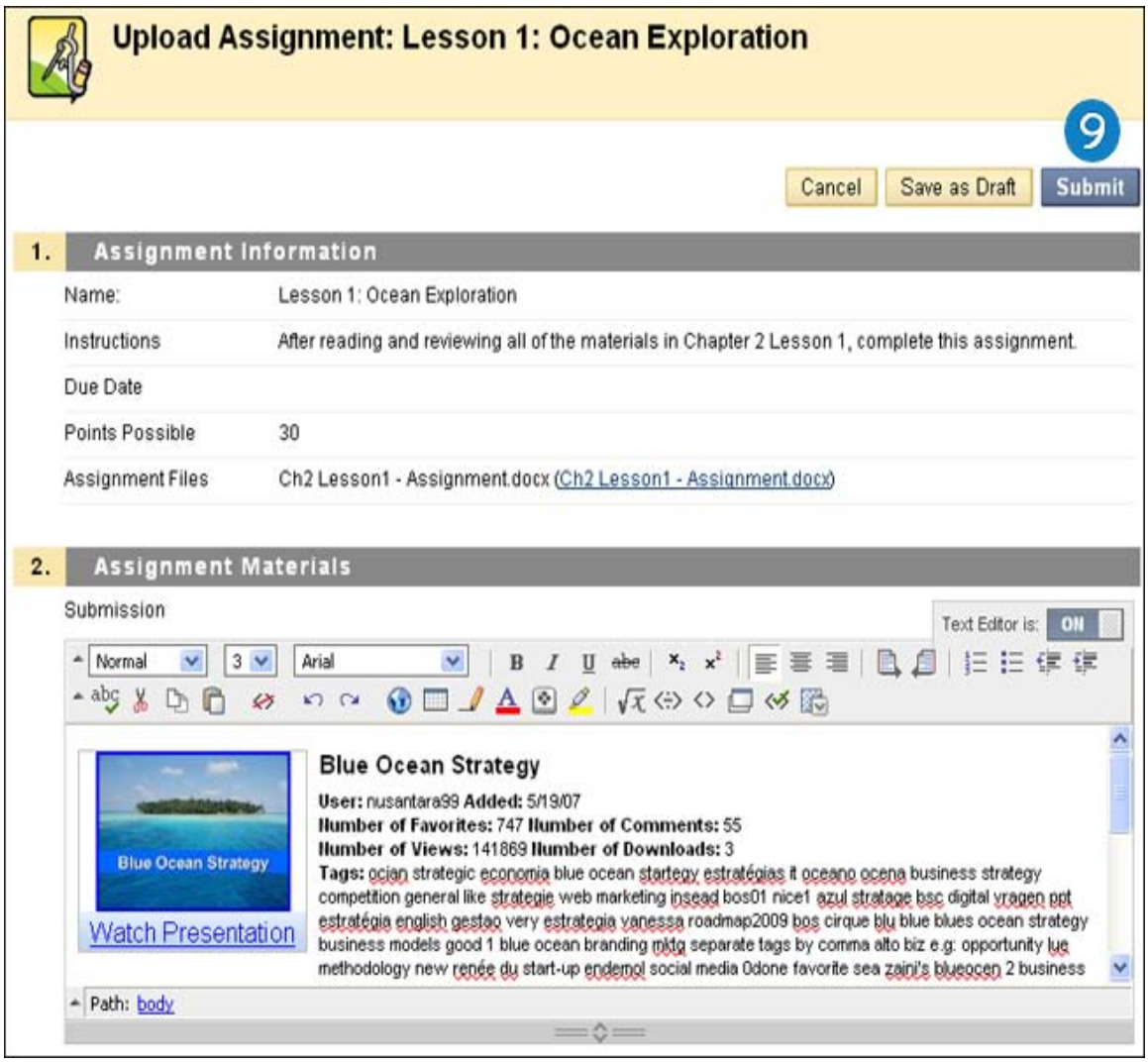

Result

The Mashup appears with your content.

If the Mashup does not appear or displays an error after initially appearing, it is possible that the URL has changed or the item was deleted from Flickr, SlideShare, or YouTube.

Course Groups

About Course Groups

Your instructor can create groups of students within a course. Groups usually consist of a smaller group of users in a course, such as study groups or project groups. These course groups have their own area in the course to collaborate. These spaces are equipped with tools that can assist each group member. From a **Group** page, you may:

- Send email
- Exchange files

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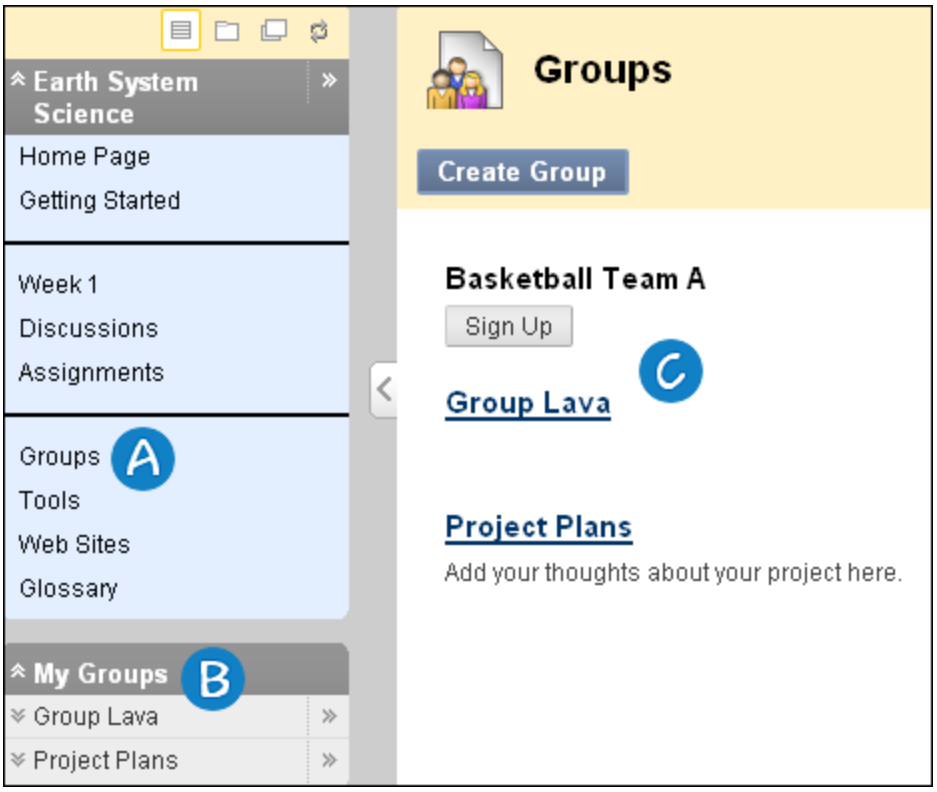
- Enter discussion forums
- Enter collaboration sessions
- Change the position of individual modules by dragging and dropping

Your instructor can provide Communication and Collaboration tools that only group members can access, such as a private File Exchange area, a Group Discussion Board, and a Group Journal.

Your instructor can assign specific students or random groups of students to a course group, or they can allow students to sign up for a course group.

Accessing Groups

You can only access a group within a course, and you have several ways to access a group.



Ⓐ **Groups page link**: The **Groups** page link appears on the Course Menu or in a course area, such as a Content Area. The **Groups** page lists all available groups and sign-up sheets for self-enroll groups.

Ⓑ **My Groups panel**: The **My Groups** panel appears following the Course Menu. The **My Groups** panel provides direct links to the group space for each group you belong to. You can expand the panel to reveal all the tools that are available for the group to use. If you are enrolled in a group, the panel appears automatically.

Ⓒ **Group Link**: A Group Link is a link to a single group, sign-up sheet, or the **Groups** page made available in a course area.

Group Homepage

A Group Homepage is the center for group activity and can contain a description of the group, a list of members, and tools. The Home Page opens to a module page. If your instructor permits, this page can be customized by adding a banner, by selecting a color scheme, and by adding Personal Modules, such as My Calendar or Report Card, which are visible only to the member who added the modules. Access to the **Group Tools** and **Group**

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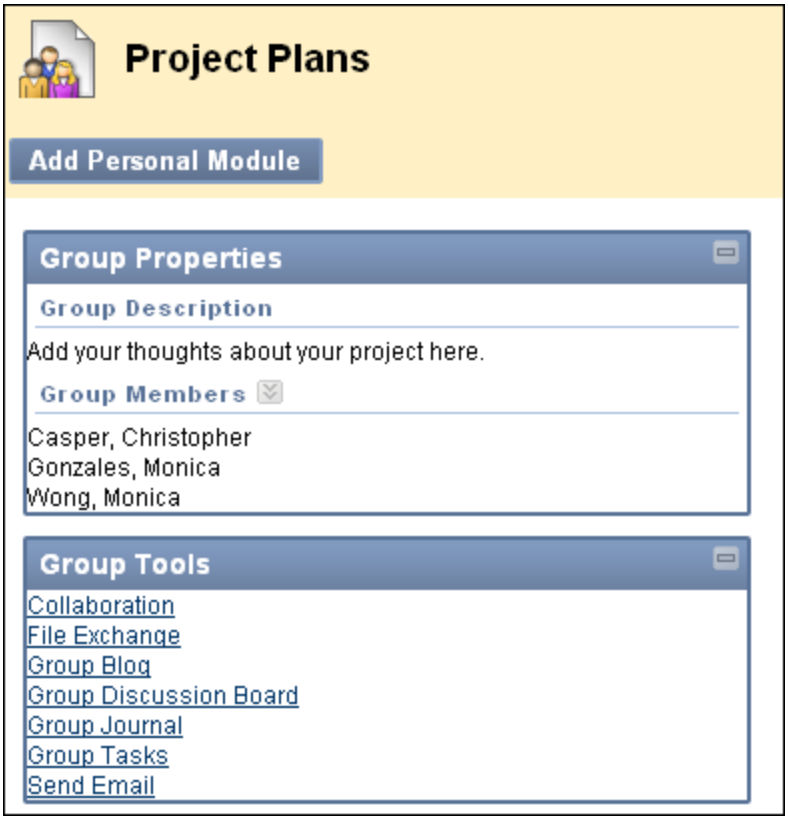
Members occurs here.



Group Tools

Each group has its own space in the course to work together. When inside your group, you will find the tools your instructor has made available to you. Your instructor may not turn on all the available tools. Be sure to ask about any tools you want to use but do not find on your groups page. Review any instructions provided by your instructor on how to utilize these tools to complete group work. Tools that can be made available to a group include:

- **Collaboration**: Users within the group can create and attend chat sessions and virtual classroom sessions.
- **File Exchange**: Group members and your instructor can share files in this area. All members, as well as your instructor, can add files. They can also delete files, regardless of who added them.
- **Group Blog**: In the group area, all members of a group can create entries for the same blog, building upon one another. Any course member can read and comment on a group blog, but cannot make

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entries if they are not a member of the group. Your instructor can select the grade option for group blogs.

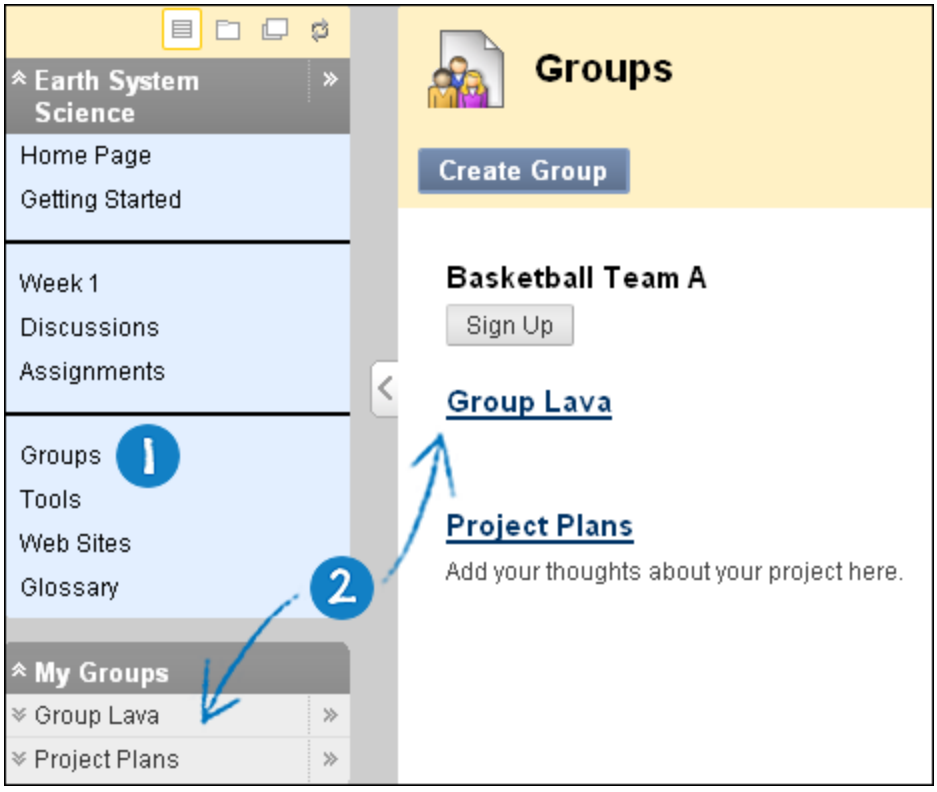
- **Group Discussion Board**: Users within the group can create and manage their own forums and discuss topics with only the group members.
- **Group Journal**: When used in the group area, all members of a group can view each other's entries, but the group journal can only be viewed by the group and your instructor. Your instructor can select the grade option for journals.
- **Group Task**: Users within the group can create tasks that are distributed to all group members.
- **Group Wiki**: Users within the group can edit, and view their group wiki. Your instructor can view and edit a group wiki and can select the grade option for group wikis.
- **Send Email**: Users within the group can email individual members or the entire group.

How to Open a Group Page

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group, for example, the **Groups** Content Area.
2. On the **Groups** page, click the name of a group.

   -OR-

   On the **My Groups** panel, click the name of a group.



How to Create a Group

You can create course groups that other users in the course can sign up to join on the **Groups** page.

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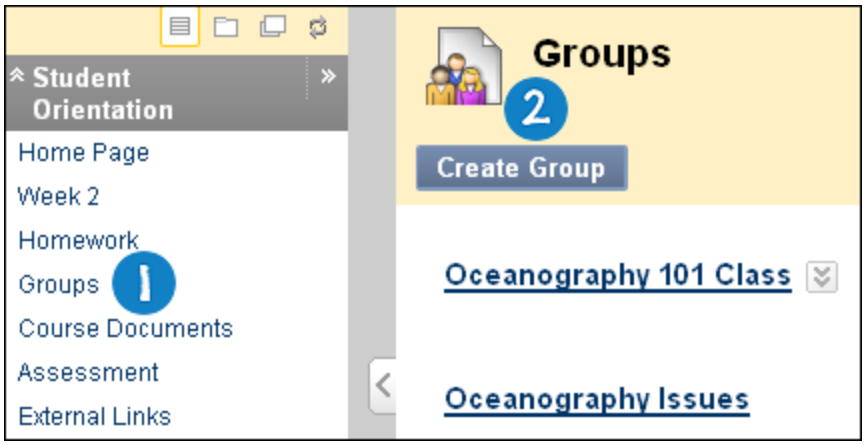
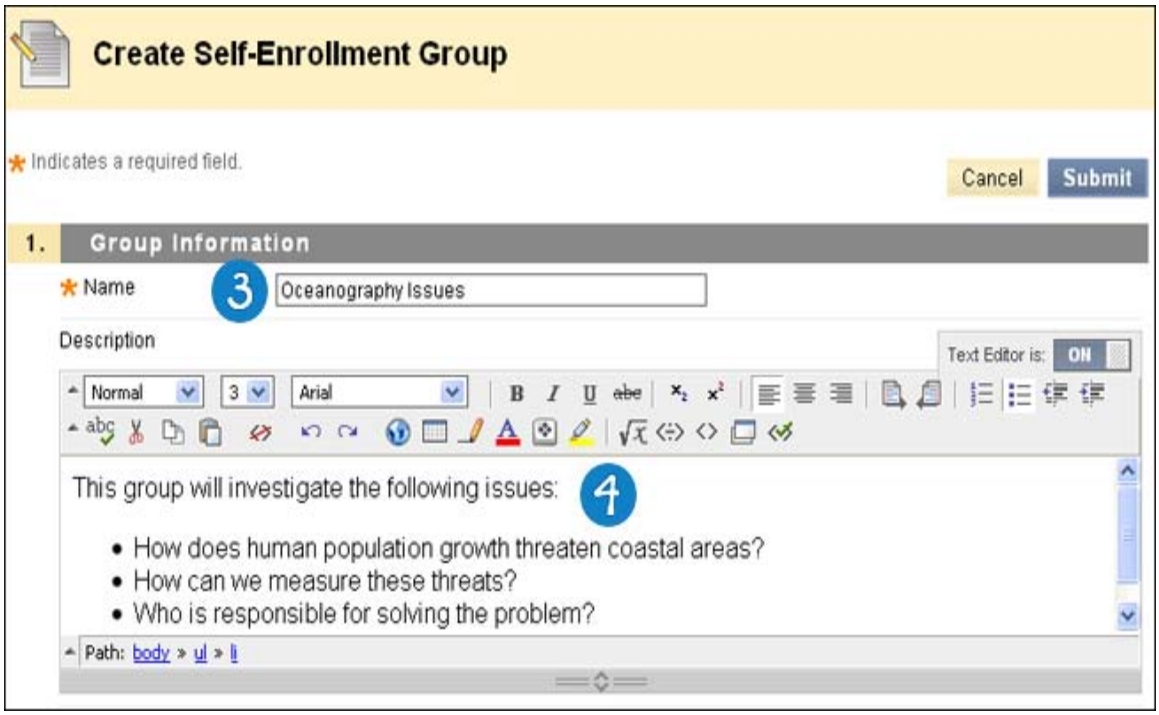
1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group, for example, the **Groups** Content Area.
2. On the **Groups** page, click **Create Group**.



3. On the **Create Self-Enrollment Group** page, type the group **Name**.
4. Type a **Description** of the group.



5. Type a **Name of Sign-up Sheet**.
6. Type **Sign-up Sheet Instructions**.
7. Type the **Maximum Number of Members**.
8. Click **Submit**.

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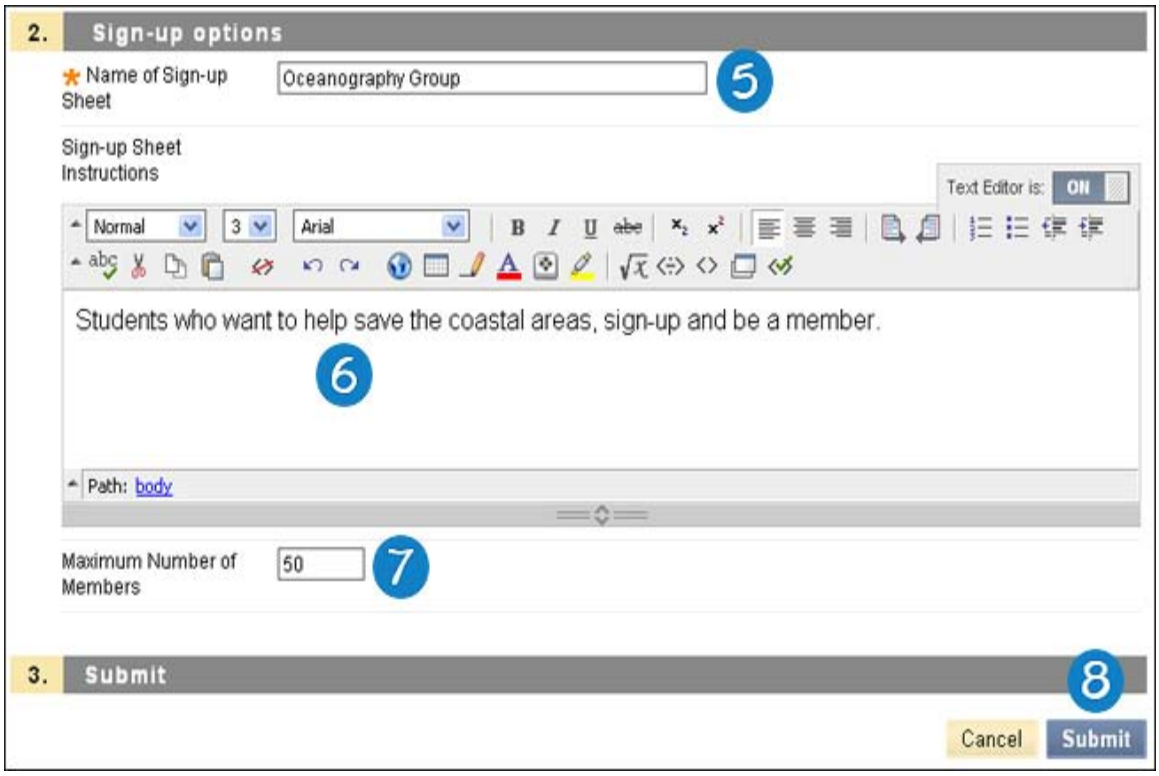

Signing Up to Join a Course Group

The course group creator can choose whether to allow you to self-enroll in a course group. The creator also has the option to display the names of other members of the group to help you choose which group to join.

The creator can choose whether to display the sign-up sheet on the groups listing page. The creator can also add the sign-up sheet as a link from other areas, such as a Content Area, folder, Learning Module, or Lesson Plan.

On the **Groups** page, click **Sign Up** to access the sign-up sheet. On the **Sign Up Sheet** page, when you click **Sign Up**, you are automatically added to the group.

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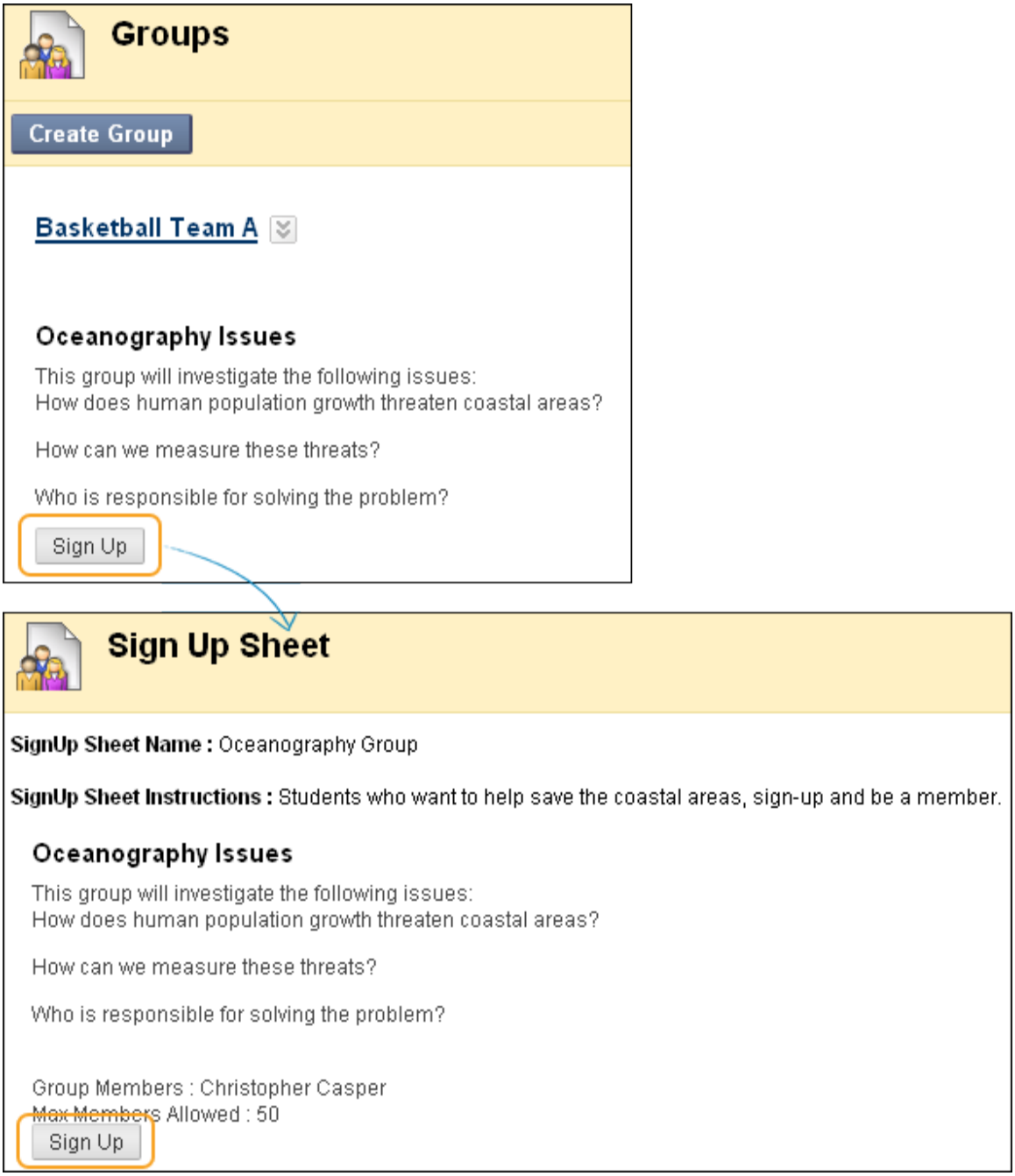

Next Steps

To learn more about Group page functions, see these topics:

Managing Group Collaboration Sessions

Exchanging Files within a Course Group

Sending an Email to a Course Group

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Managing Group Collaboration Sessions

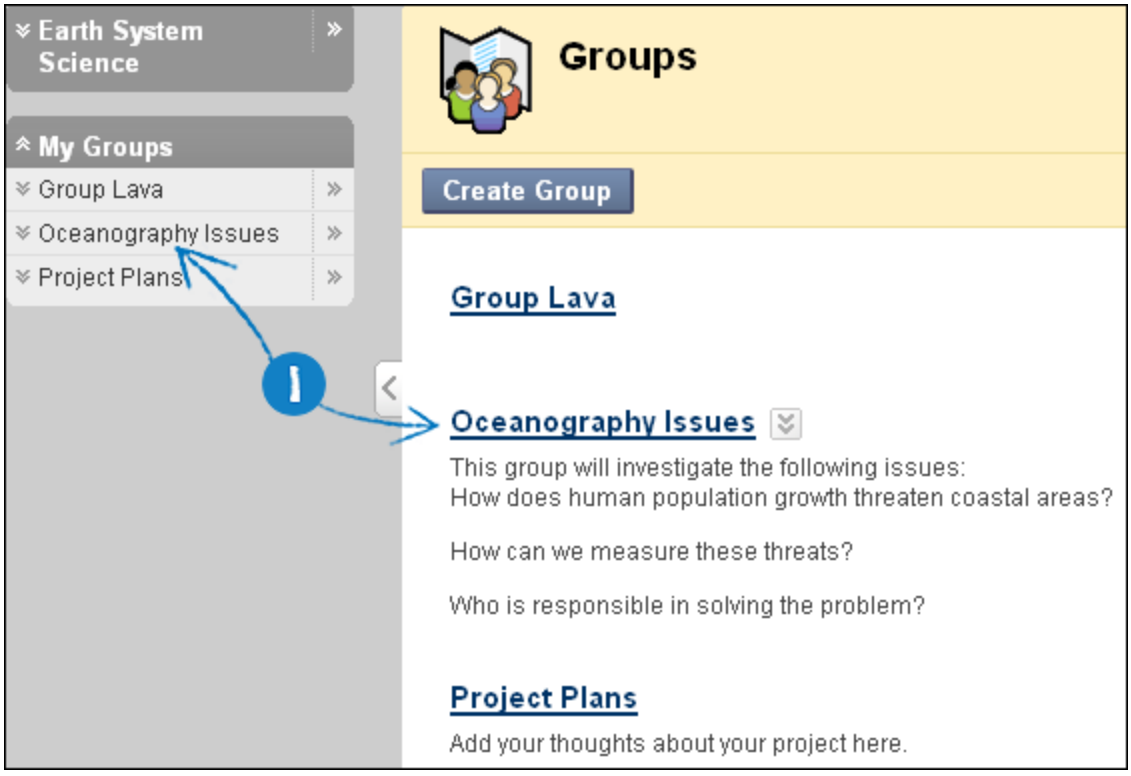
The Group Collaboration Sessions have all of the same features as those in the course. All group members are moderators in Group Collaboration Sessions. Therefore, all group members can manage sessions and access all of the available tools.

Groups can schedule sessions for specific dates and times.

The **Create Collaboration Session** page and **Edit Collaboration Session** page function in a similar manner. The **Create Collaboration Session** page opens with empty fields while the **Edit Collaboration Session** page opens an existing session.

How to Create or Edit Collaboration Sessions

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.



2. On the group Home Page, click **Collaboration** from **Group Tools**.

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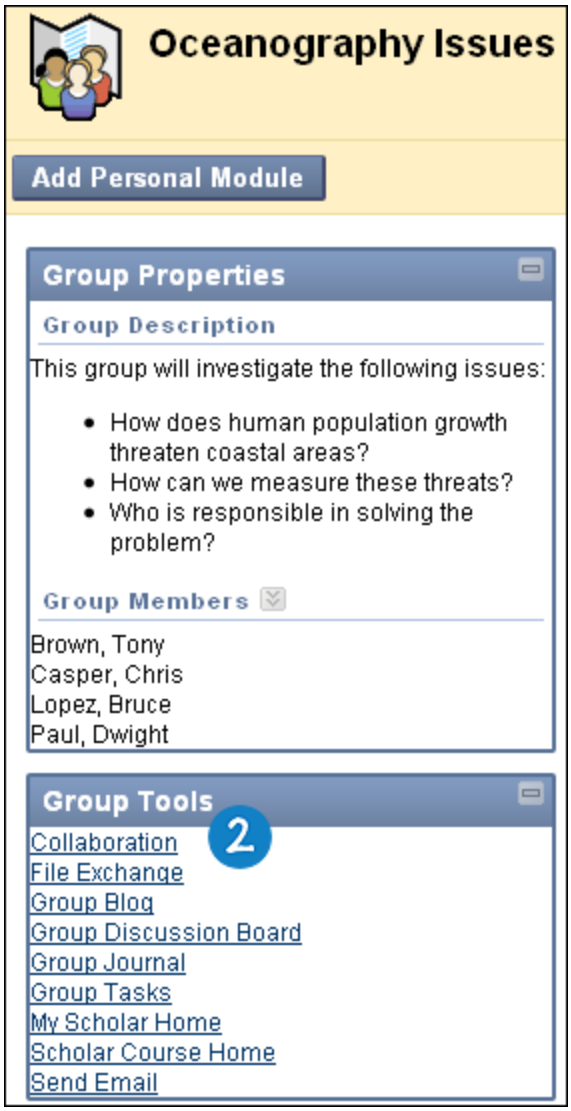

3. To create a new Collaboration session, click **Create Collaboration Session**.

   -OR-
   To edit an existing Collaboration session, in the contextual menu for the session, click **Edit**.

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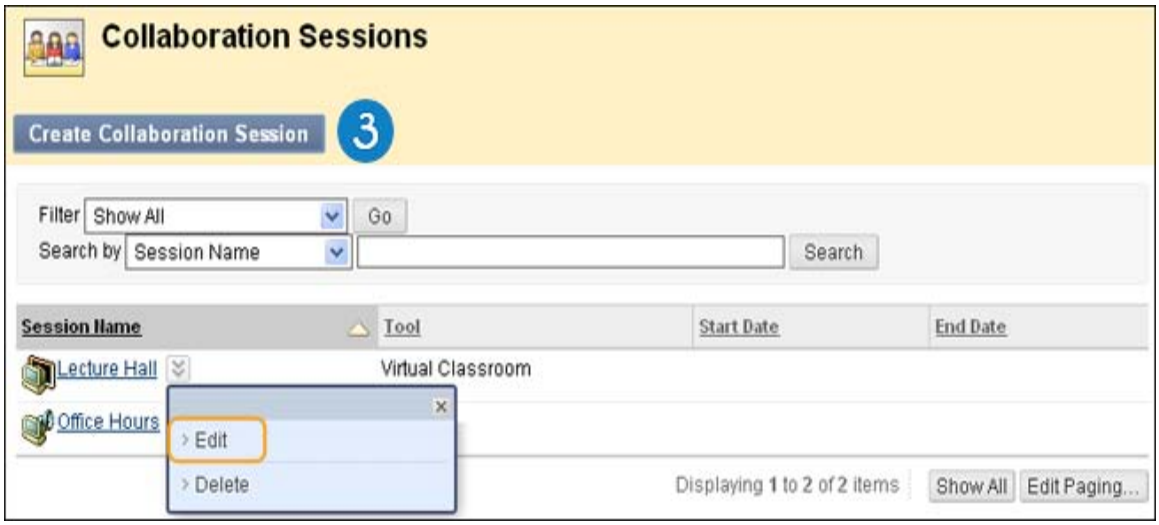

4. On the **Create Collaboration Session** page, type or edit the name of the new session.
5. Select the dates of availability. A start and end date and time for the collaboration session can be set but is not required. If these are not selected then the session is always open and available for users.

   Click the **Start After** check box to choose a date and time to begin the collaboration. Click the **Date Selection Calendar** and select a date. Select the time to begin the session from the **Time Selection Menu**.

   Click the **End After** check box to choose when the session ends. Click the **Date Selection Calendar** and select a date. Select the time to end the session from the **Time Selection Menu**.
6. Select **Yes** to make the session available.
7. Select the Collaboration tool for this session: **Virtual Classroom** or **Chat**.
8. Click **Submit**.

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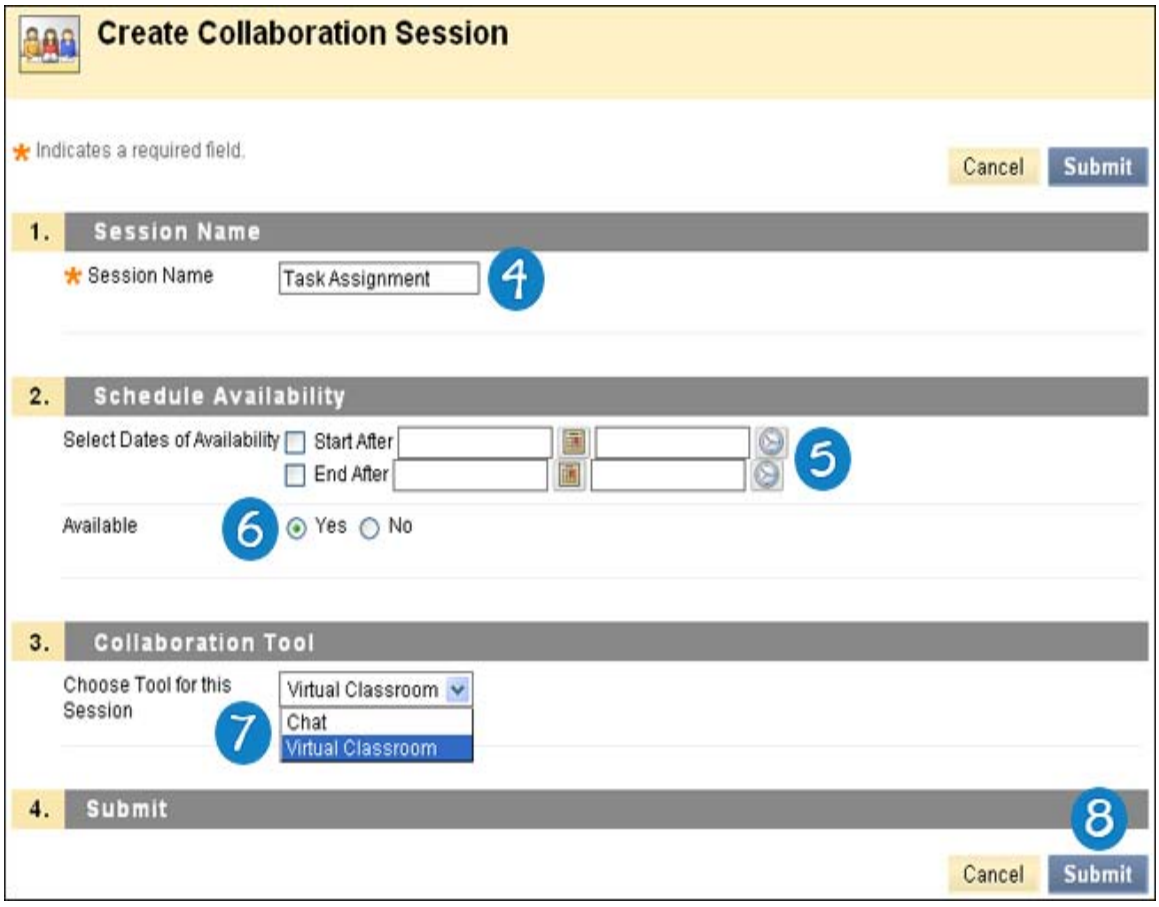

How to Delete a Collaboration Session

1. You can access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** section.

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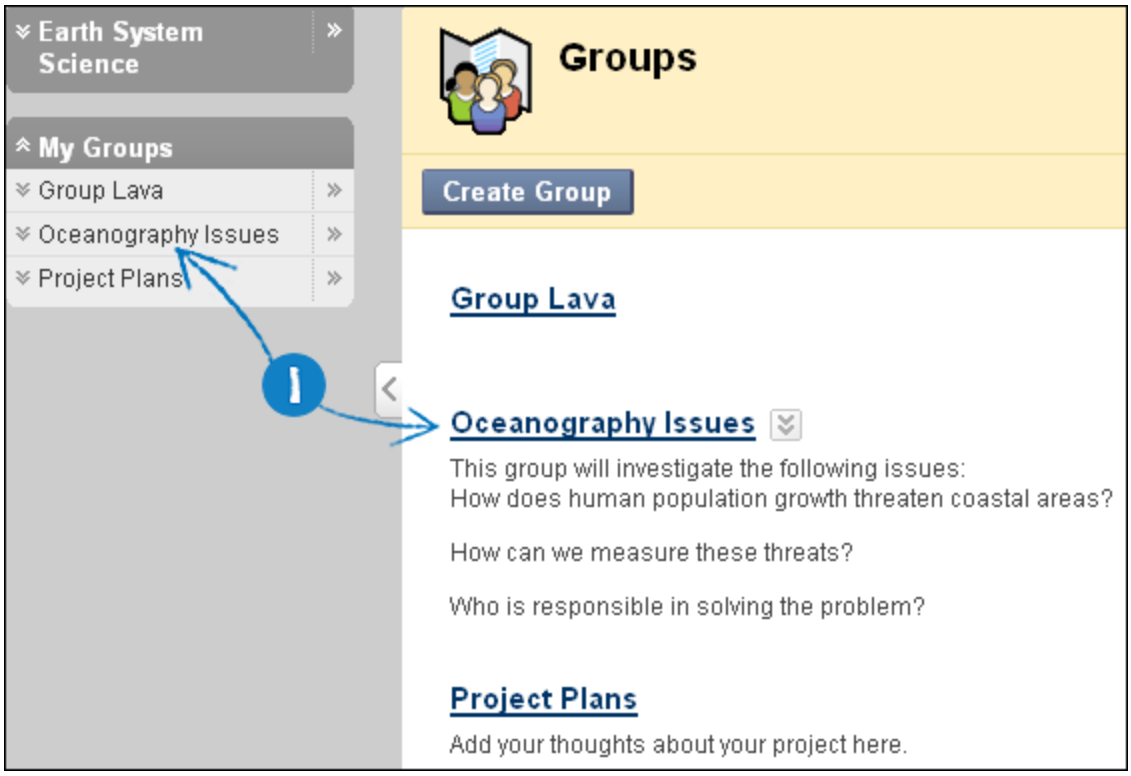

2. On the Group home page, click **Collaboration** from **Group Tools**.

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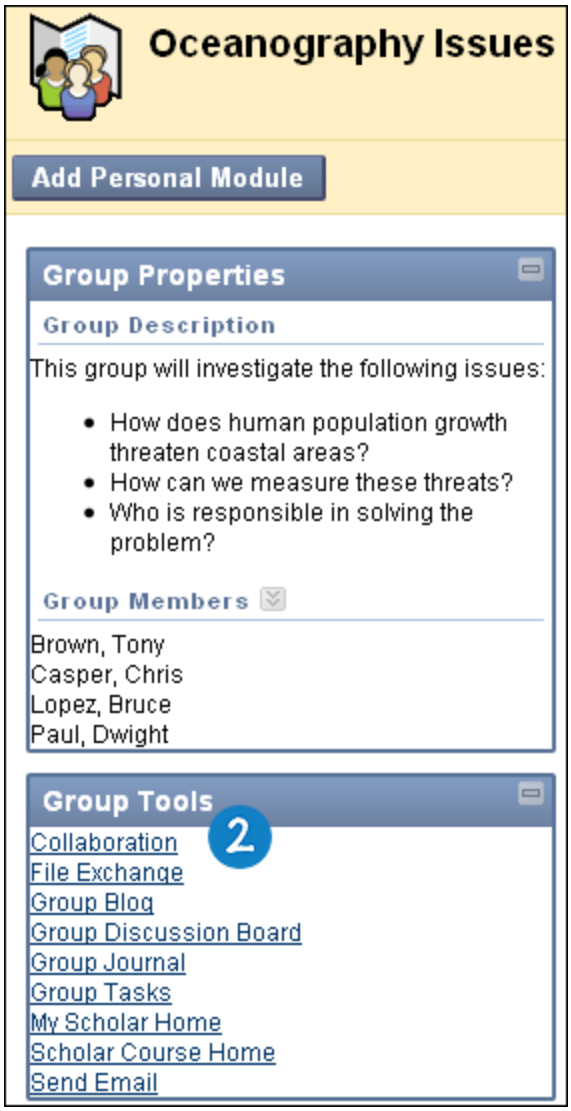

3. To delete a Collaboration session, in the contextual menu for the session, click **Delete**. This action is final and cannot be undone.

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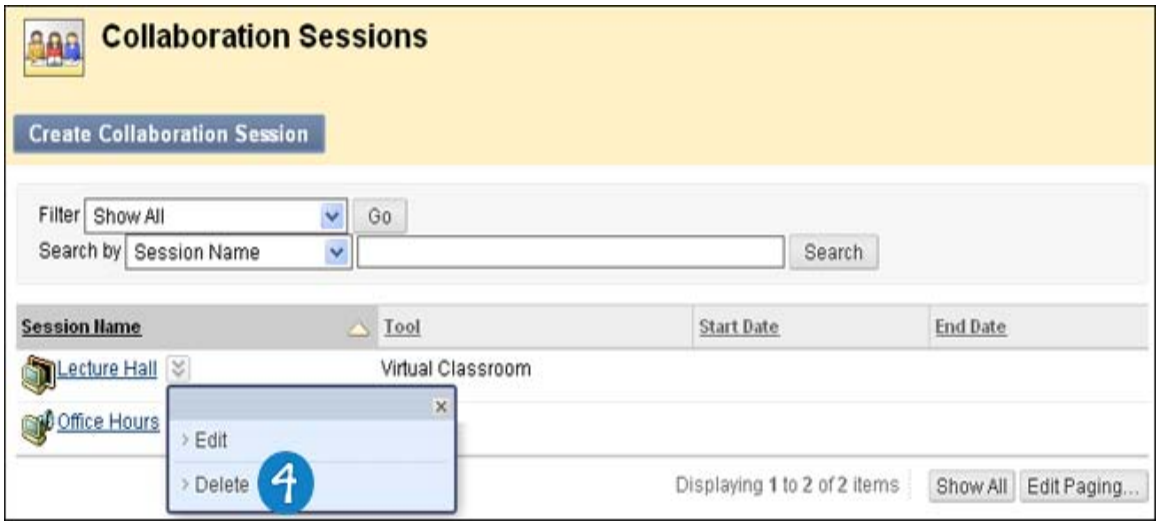


Next Steps

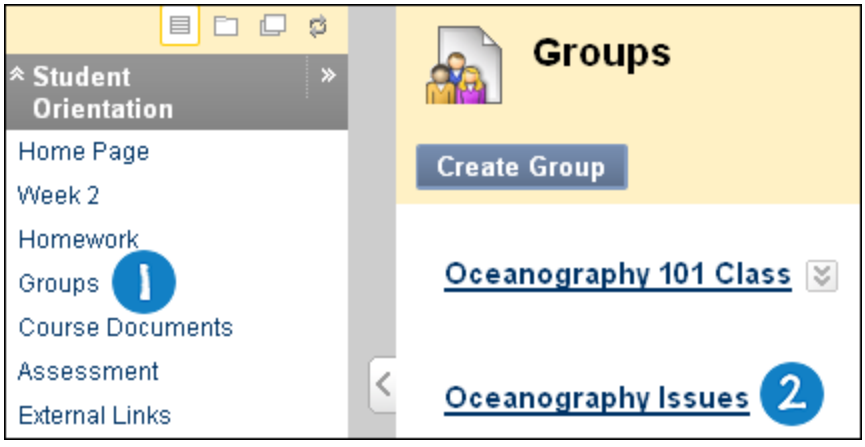
To learn more about Collaboration tool features, see About Collaboration Tools.

Exchanging Files within a Course Group

File Exchange enables you to exchange files with other members of a group, including the instructor.

How to Add a File to the File Exchange

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group, for example, the **Groups** Content Area.
2. On the **Groups** page, click a group name.



3. On the **Group Tools** module, click **File Exchange**.

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4. On the **File Exchange** page, click **Add File**.

5. On the **Add File** page, type the name of the file in the **Name** field.
6. In the **Attach File** field, click **Browse My Computer** and select the file to upload from your computer. If you have the Content Collection, click **Browse Content Collection** and select the file to upload.
7. Click **Submit**.

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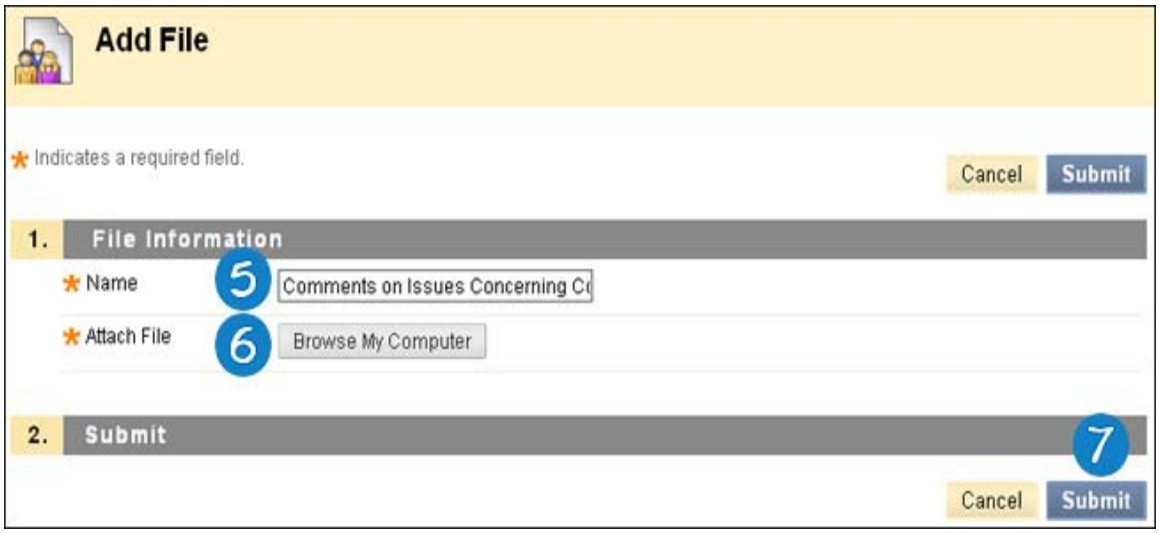
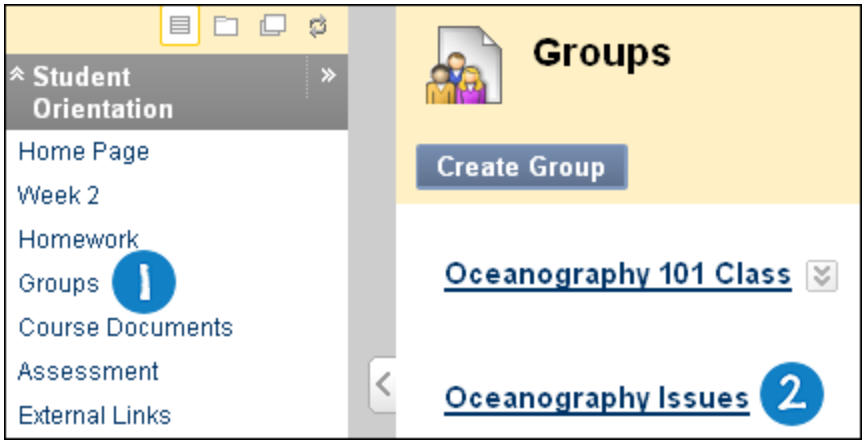


How to Delete a File

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group, for example, the **Groups** Content Area.
2. On the **Groups** page, click a group name.



3. On the **Group Tools** module, click **File Exchange**.

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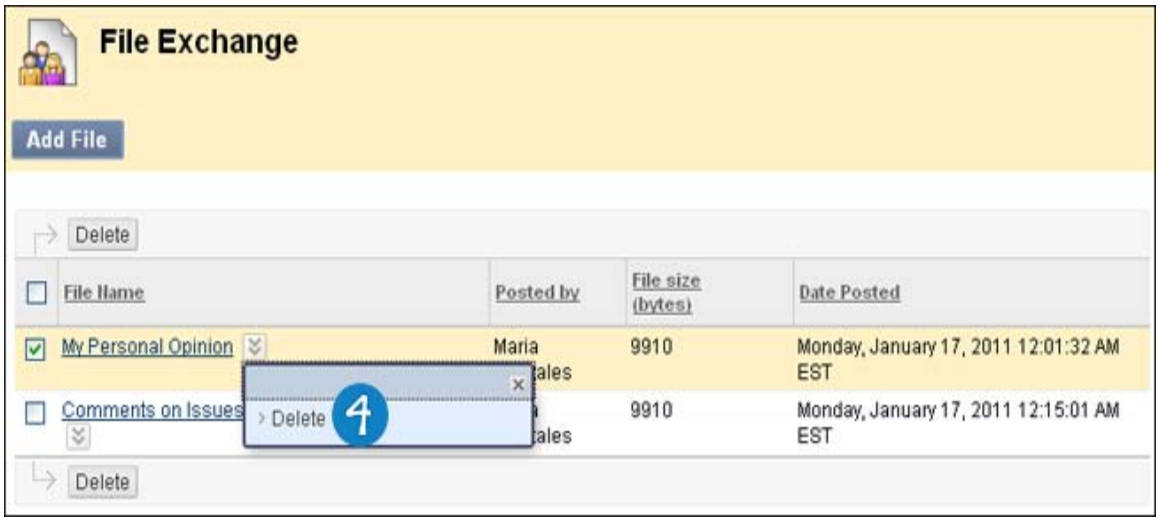
4. On the **File Exchange** page, click **Delete** from a file's contextual menu.



Emailing a Course Group

Instructors and course group members can send email messages to selected group members or the entire group.

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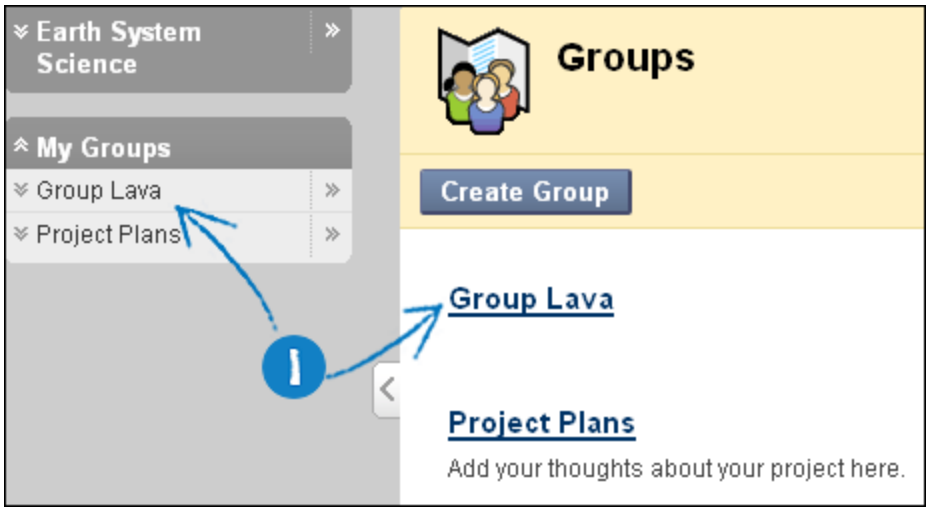
IMPORTANT! Blackboard Learn keeps no record of sent emails. You will receive a copy of your email in the Inbox of your external email account. Keep a copy of important messages in case you need them at a later date.

How to Send an Email Message within a Course Group

1. Access your group in the **Groups** page, or in **My Groups** panel.



2. On the **Group Tools** module, click **Send Email**.

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3. On the **Send Email** page, select the recipients from the **Available to Select** box and click the right-pointing arrow to move them into the **Selected** box.

   Note: To select multiple recipients, hold down Shift and click the name of the recipients. To select recipients out of sequence, hold down the Control Key and select individual names. You can also select all course members with the **Select All** function.

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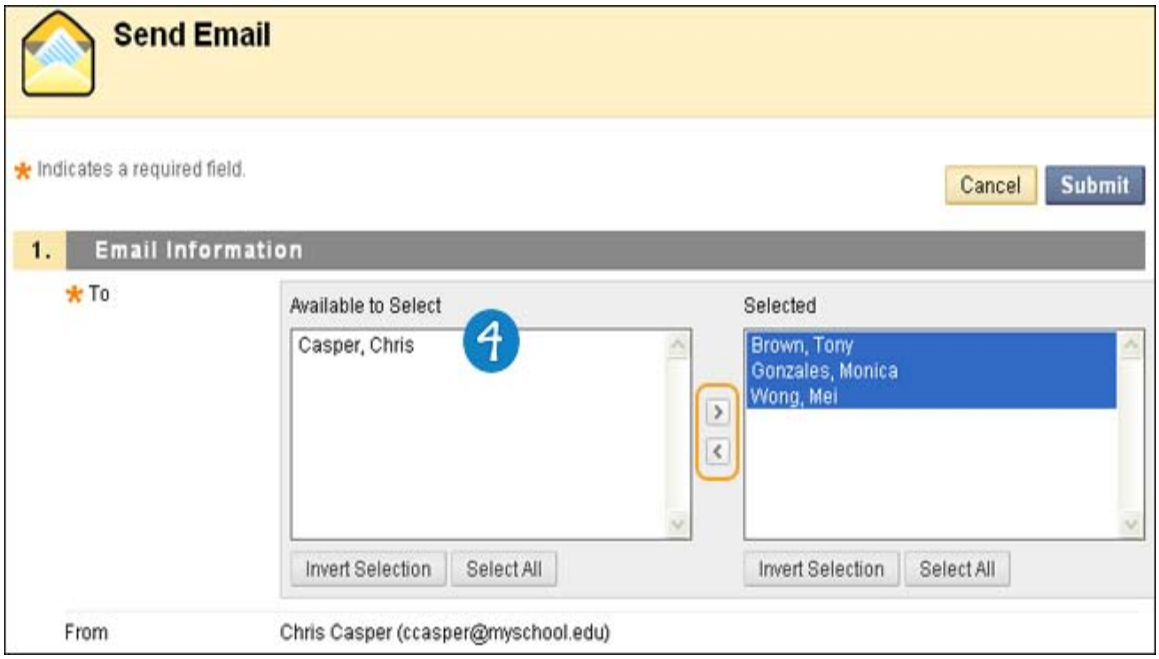

4. Type a **Subject**.
5. Type the **Message**.
6. In the **Attachments** field, click **Attach a file** and select the file to upload from your computer.
7. Click **Submit**.

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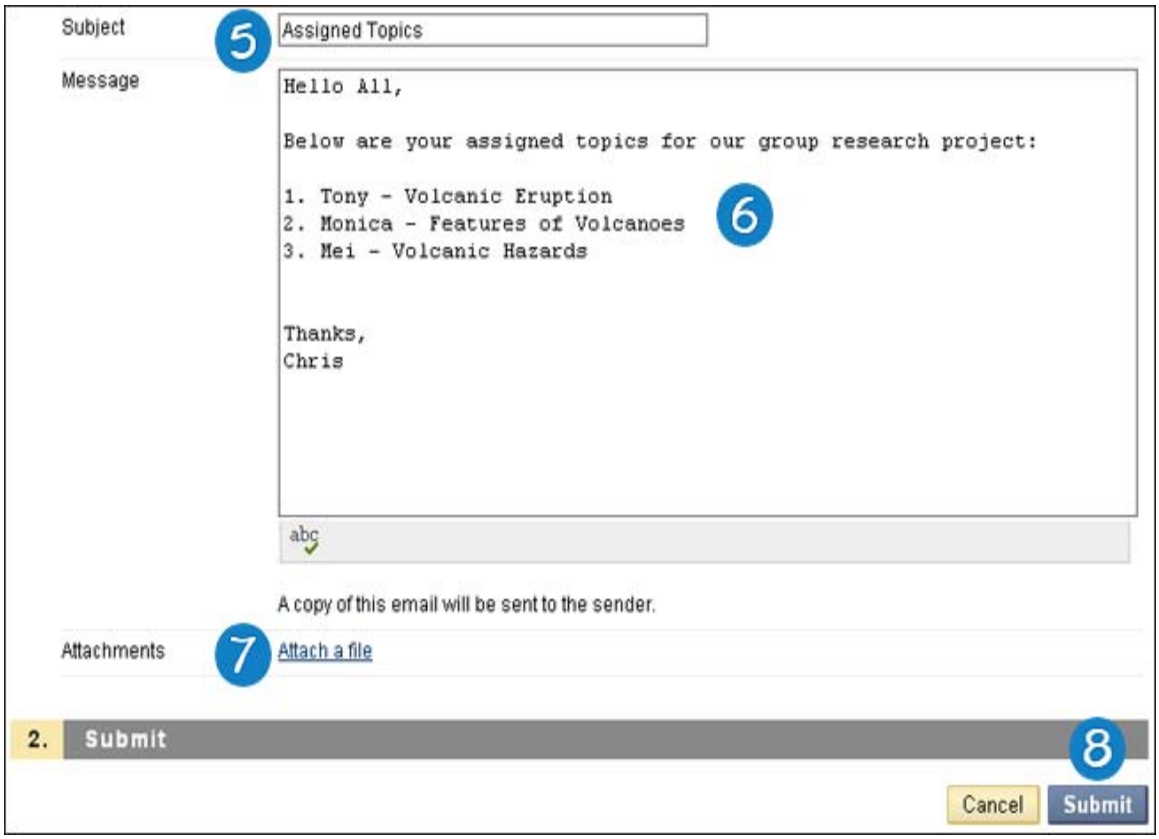

Group Assignments

You can submit your work to satisfy group assignments. You can submit group assignments in the following ways:

- Text typed on the **Upload Assignment** page.
- Files attached from your computer or from the Content Collection.
- A combination of both text and attached files.

Assignments list the name, description, and attachments for class work. You can also choose to include comments for your instructor.

The grade provided by your instructor for the final assignment is given to every member of the group.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I open our group assignment?

Please contact the computing help desk at your school. They can help you troubleshoot and download any application you might need. If you're not sure how to contact them, look for the technology office on your school's website or search the web for *your school's name* + *Blackboard* + *help* or *support*. You may also check to make sure you are using a supported Internet browser and operating system for the version of Blackboard that your school is using.

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Why can't I find our group assignment?

Your instructor might make an assignment unavailable until after a certain date or until other criteria has been met. For example, you might have to mark a lecture as reviewed before you can access the assignment. Please contact your instructor for more information.

My instructor did not receive our group assignment. What do I do?

You must discuss this issue with your instructor. To see the step-by-step instructions for submitting a group assignment, see How to Submit Work for a Group Assignment.

How do I edit or resubmit a group assignment?

Editing a group assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit an assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit an assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the assignment link in your course. To learn more, see How to Edit or Resubmit a Group Assignment.

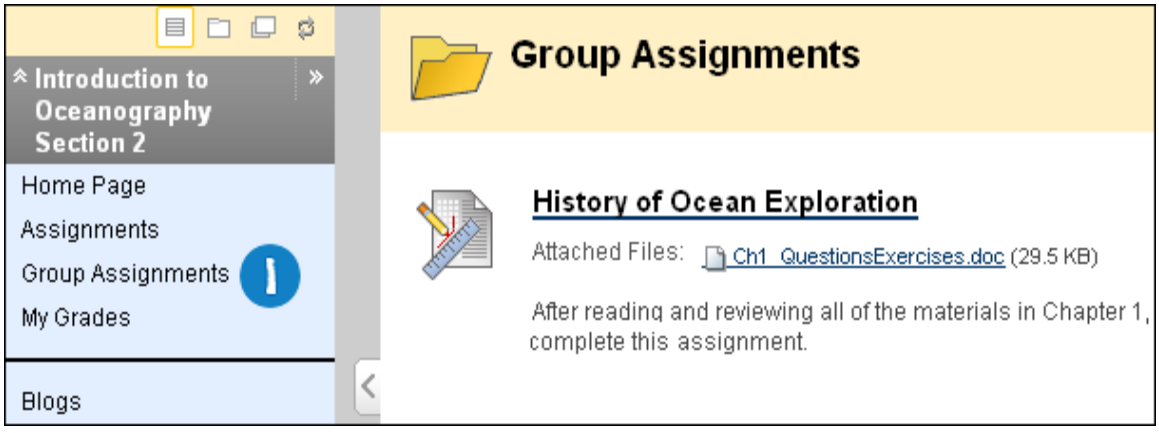
How do I know whether my assignment has been graded?

On the Course Menu, click **Tools**, and then click **My Grades**. If your assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

To learn more, see How to View Group Assignment Grades and Feedback.

How to Submit Work for a Group Assignment

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area. Click the name of the assignment.



-OR-

1. In the **My Groups** panel, select your group name. On the group homepage, click the name of the assignment in the **Group Assignments** section.

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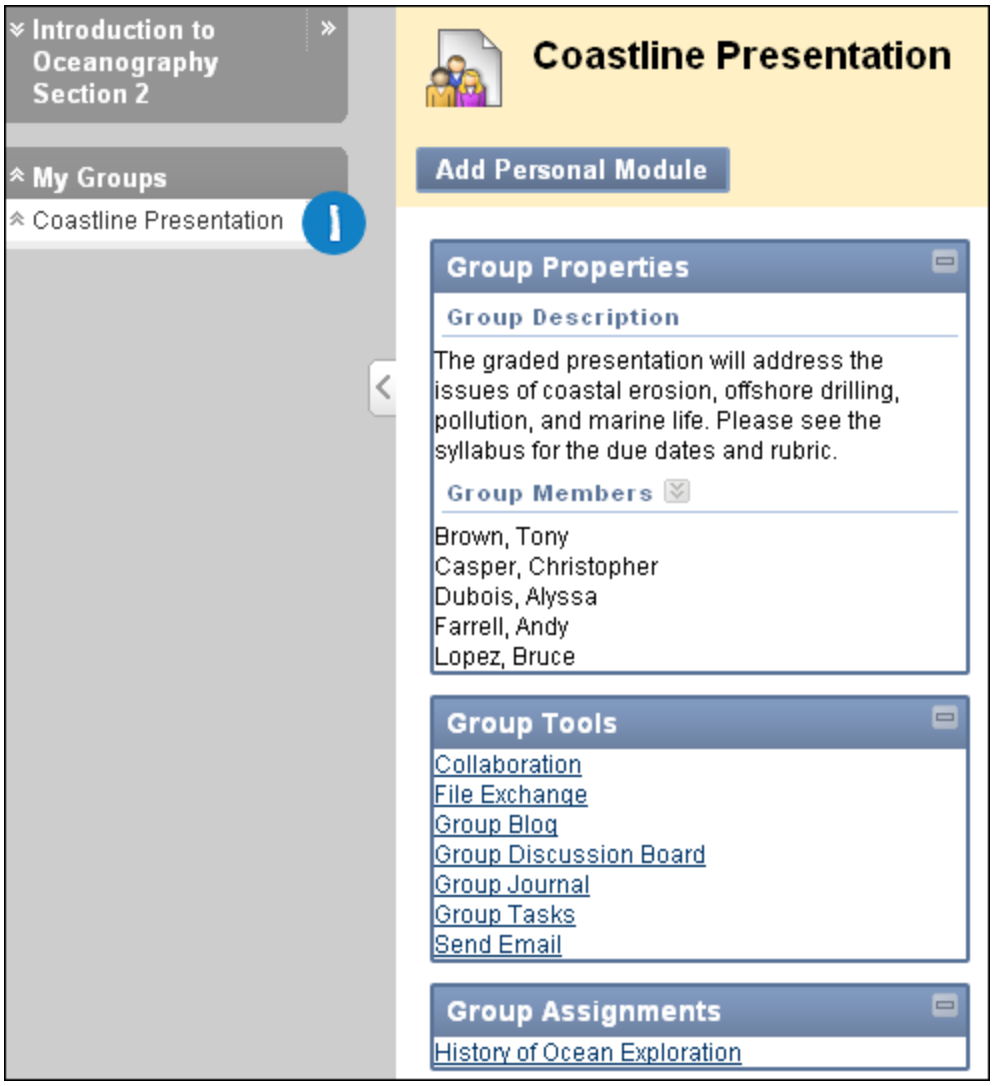

2. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
3. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

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WARNING! If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

4. Click **Submit**.

WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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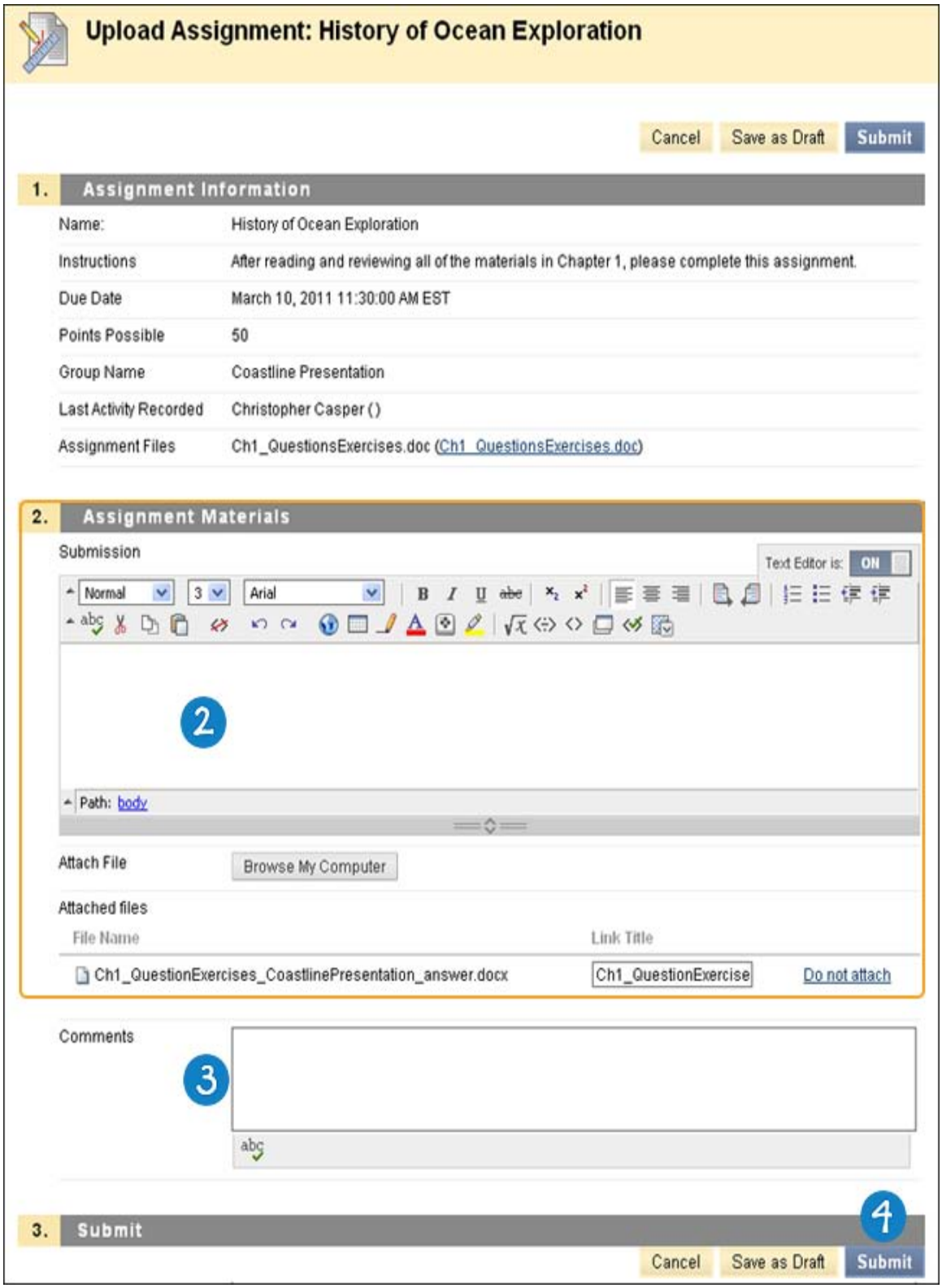

How to Save a Group Assignment as Draft and Submit Later

The **Save as Draft** function is available if you need to return to your group assignment at a later time. This

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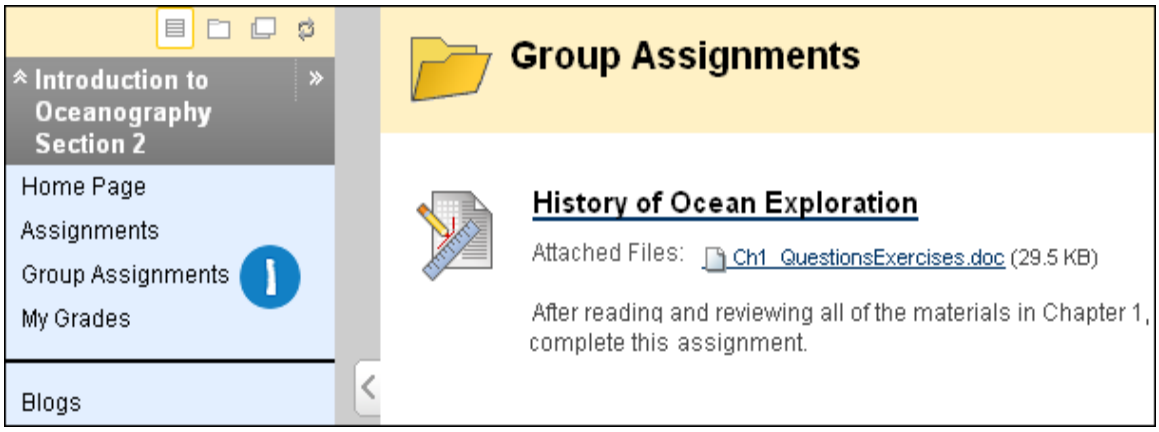
function saves your comments and files on the page.

When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

Saving a Group Assignment as Draft

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area. Click the name of the assignment.



2. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
3. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.
4. Click **Save as Draft** to save your changes and continue working later.

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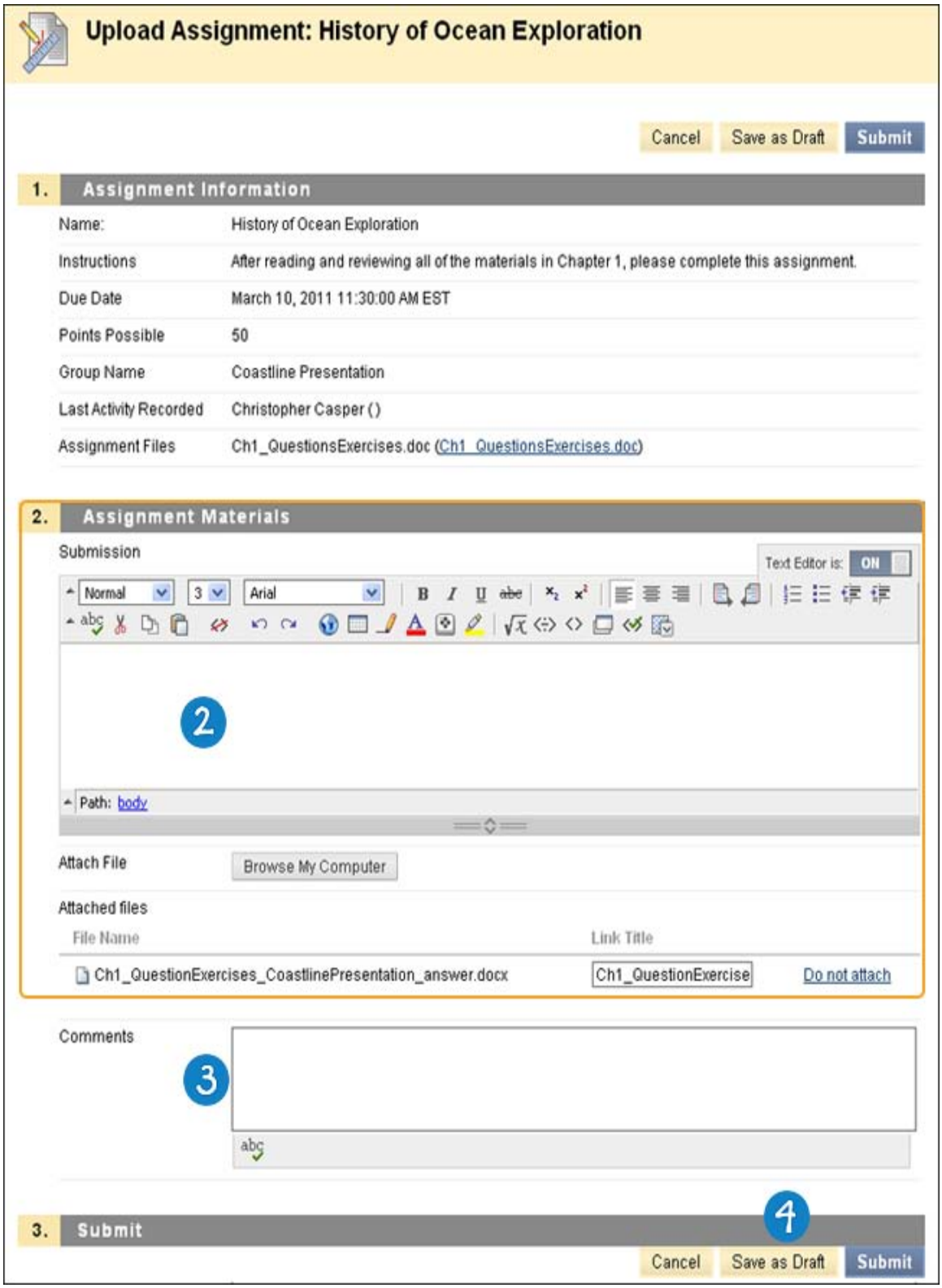

5. When you reach the **Review Submission History** page, click **OK**.

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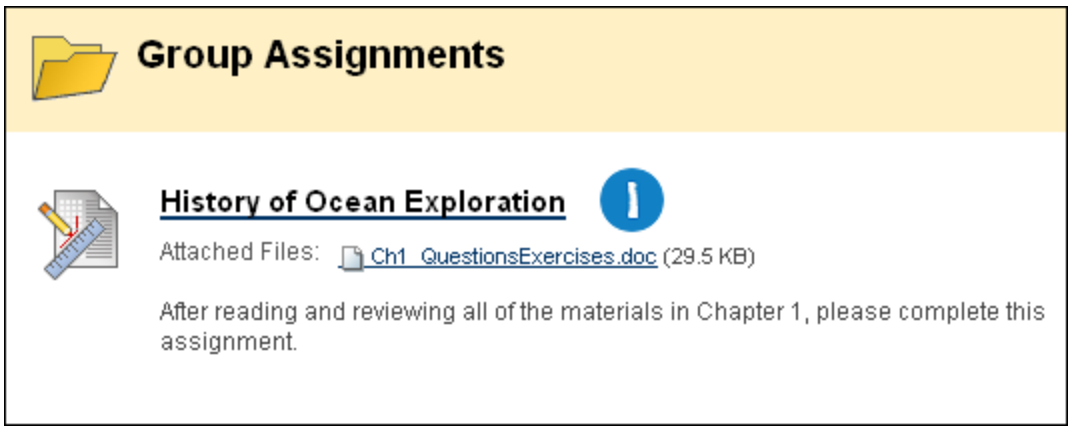
Submitting a Draft Assignment

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.



2. On the **Review Submission History** page, click **Continue Current Submission**.

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3. On the **Upload Assignment** page, make the necessary changes in your assignment.
4. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

5. Click **Submit**. The **Review Submission History** page appears showing the information about your submitted assignment.

> ***WARNING!*** When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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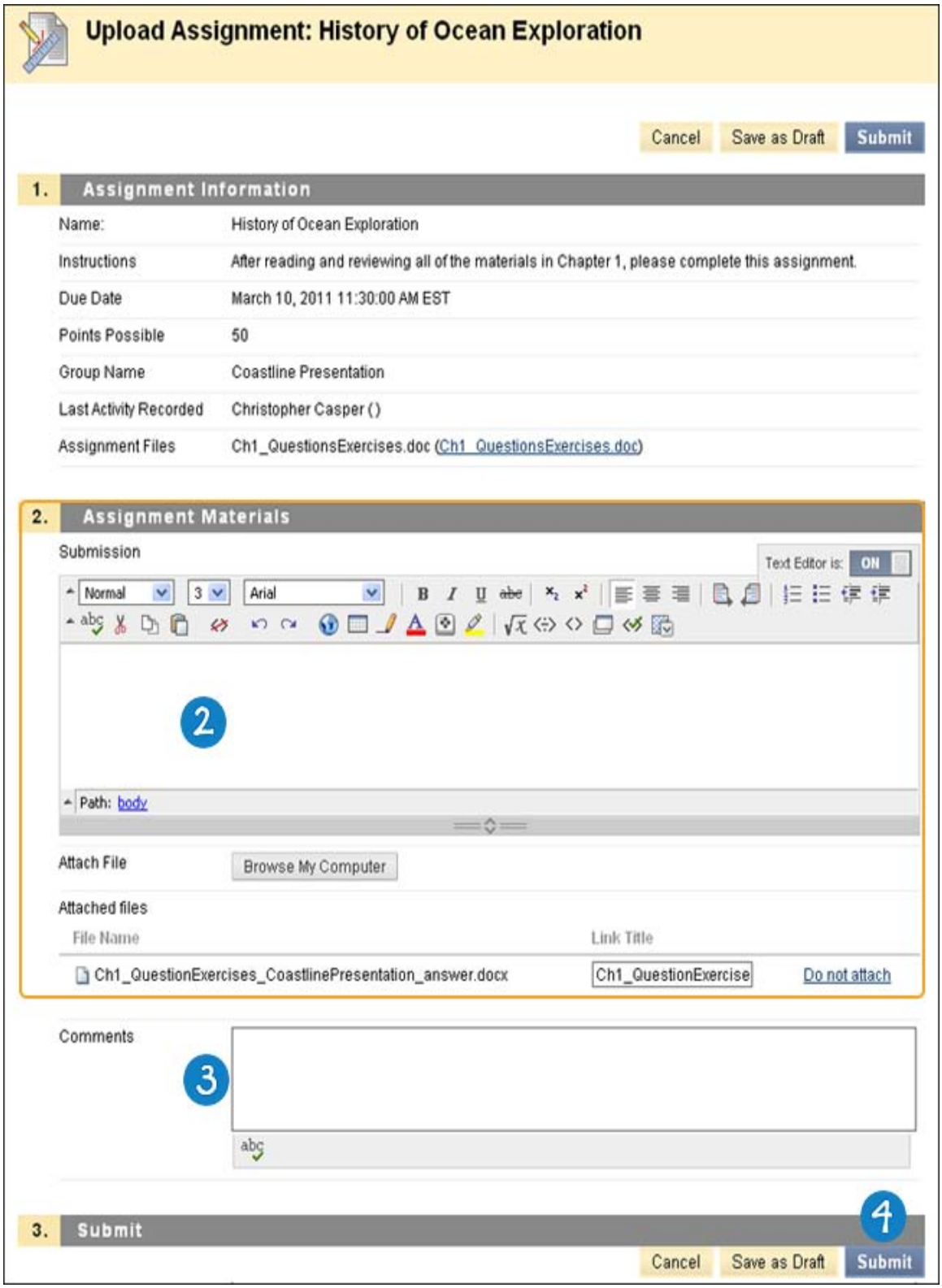

How to Edit or Resubmit a Group Assignment

Editing a group assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be

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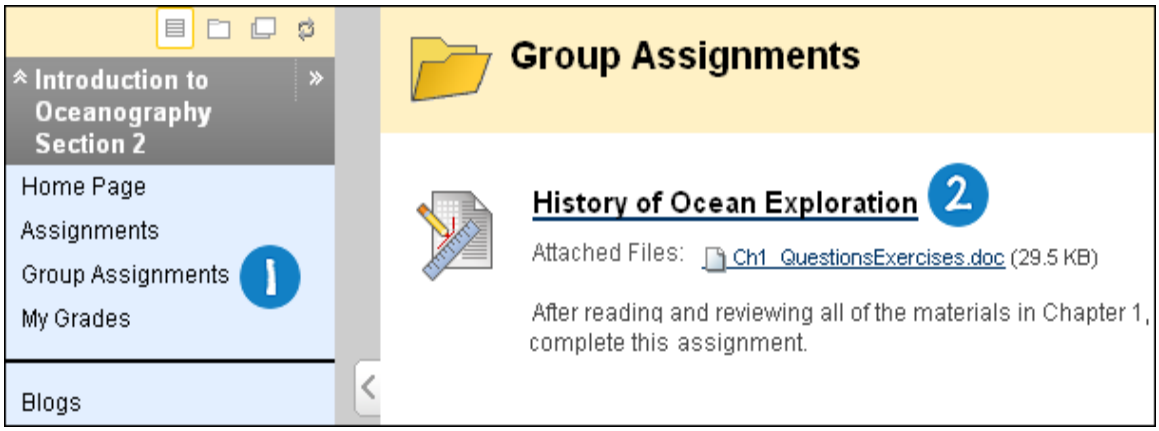
resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit a group assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.

Your instructor may allow you to submit a group assignment more than once for a variety of reasons. For example, your instructor can provide comments on your first draft so that you can try to improve your work. Your instructor can choose to use either the highest graded attempt or the last graded attempt for your grade.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit a group assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the group assignment link in your course.

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.



3. On the **Review Submission History** page, view the details of your first submission. Click **Start New Submission**.

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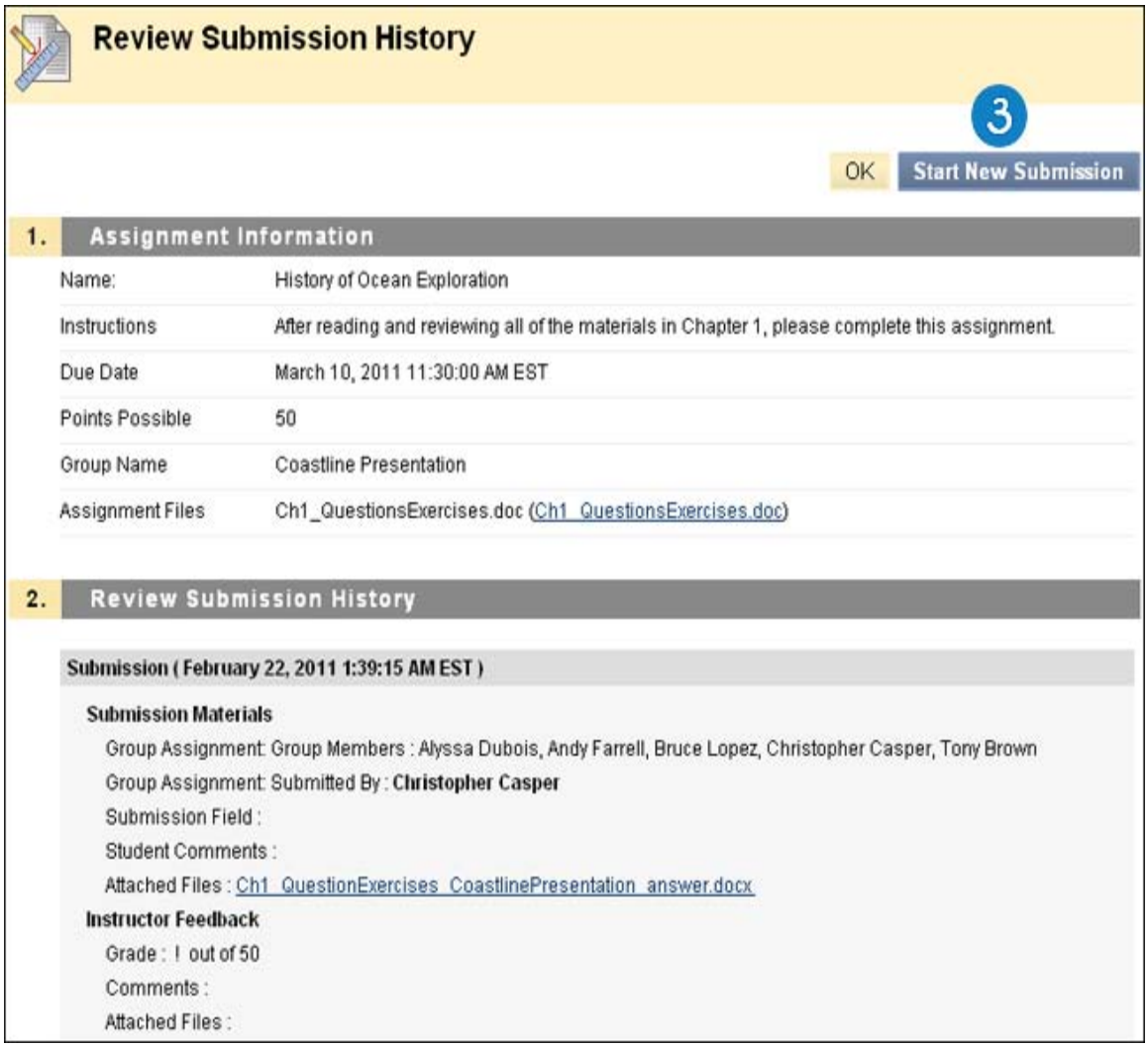

4. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
   - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
   - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

     Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
5. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

6. Click **Submit**.

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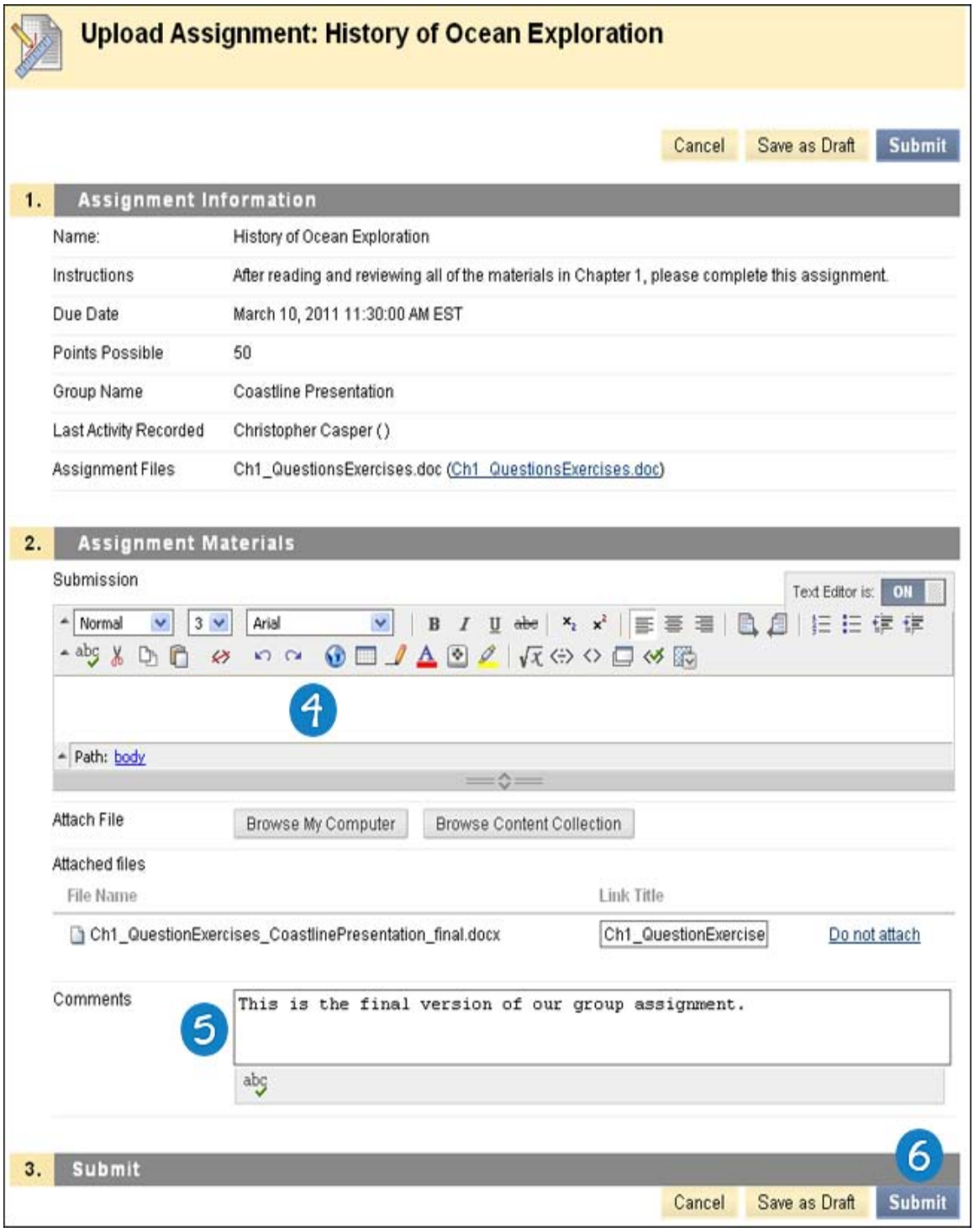
WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.



7. On the **Review Submission History** page, you can see all of your submissions listed by date and time. To view the details of a submission, click the plus sign next to an attempt.

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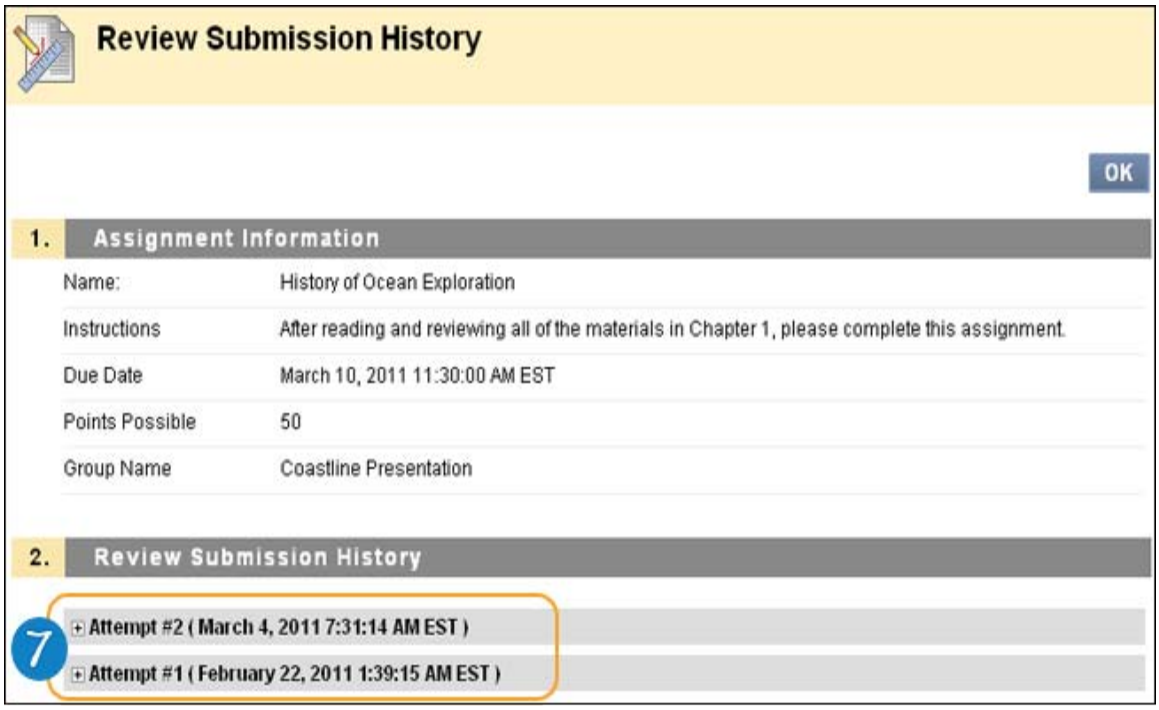

How to View Group Assignment Grades and Feedback

Blackboard does not score assignments automatically. Each assignment needs to be reviewed by your instructor. You can review the information provided by your instructor in **My Grades** or on the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

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Accessing My Grades From Within Your Course

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

Accessing My Grades From Outside Your Course

1. On the **My Institution** tab, click **My Grades** on the **Tools** panel.
2. On the **My Courses/Organizations** page, click the name of your course.

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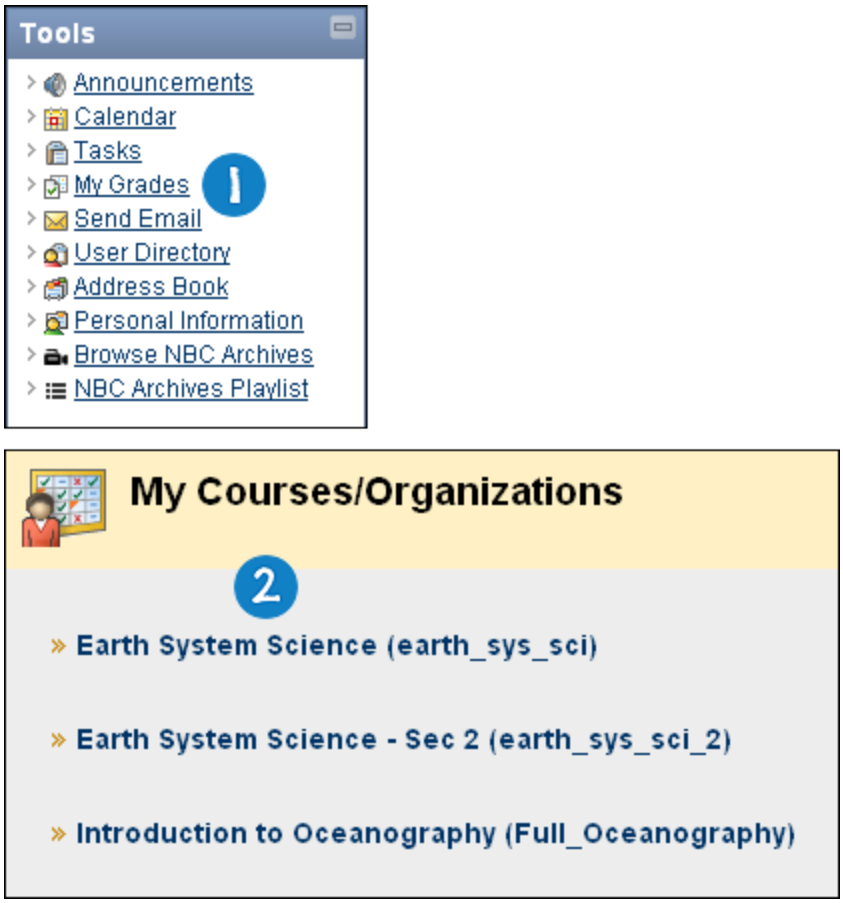

Reviewing Your Grade

- If your group assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status.

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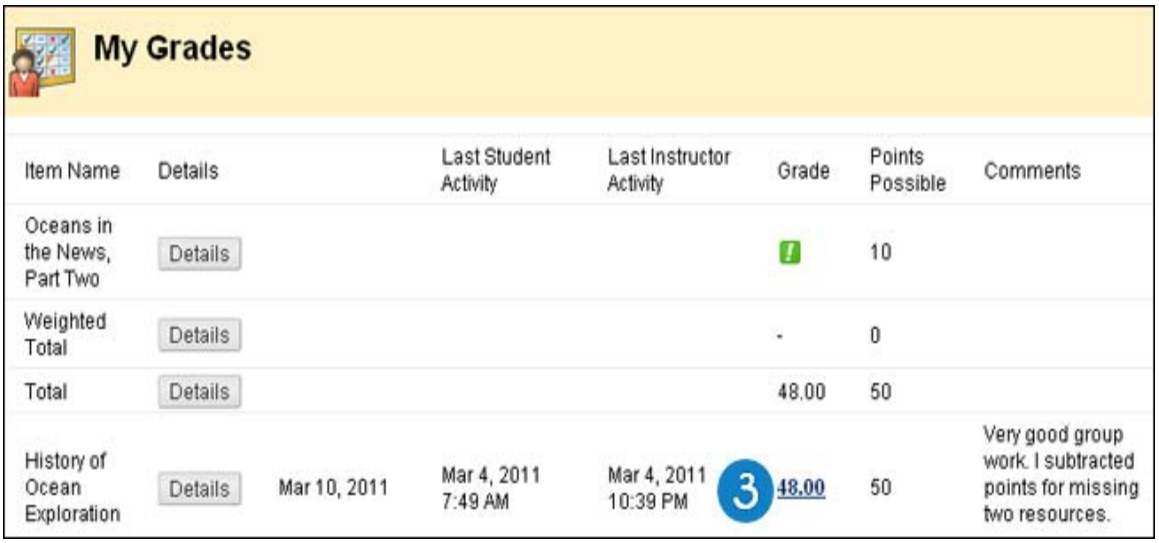
- If your group assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. You can also see your instructor's feedback in the **Comments** column.



My Grades

Item Name	Details		Last Student Activity	Last Instructor Activity	Grade	Points Possible	Comments
Oceans in the News, Part Two	Details					10	
Weighted Total	Details				-	0	
Total	Details				48.00	50	
History of Ocean Exploration	Details	Mar 10, 2011	Mar 4, 2011 7:49 AM	Mar 4, 2011 10:39 PM	3 48.00	50	Very good group work. I subtracted points for missing two resources.

Reviewing Your Grade from the Group Homepage

You can also view your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor in the assignment's **Review Submission History** page. If your instructor attached a file, you must access it from the group homepage's group assignment link.

1. On the **My Groups** panel, click the name of your group.
2. On the group homepage, click the name of your group assignment. The **Review Submission History** page includes:
    - **Instructor Feedback**: This section lists your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor.
    - **Attached Files**: This section provides links to open or download any files attached by you or your instructor. For example, your instructor might provide comments in a file that you

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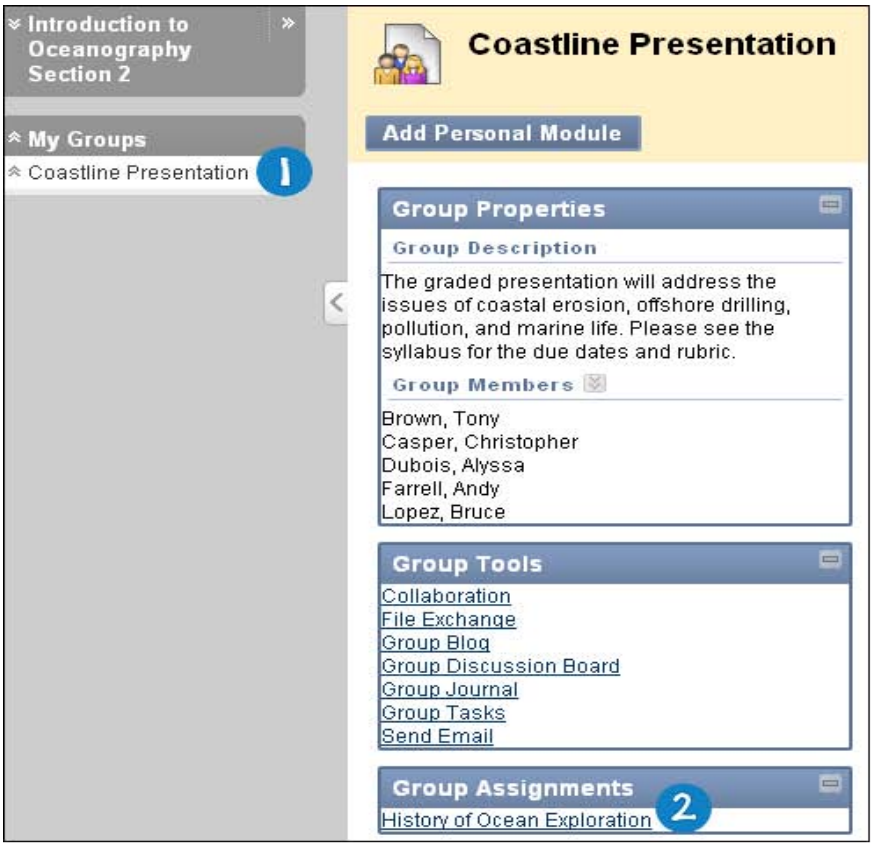

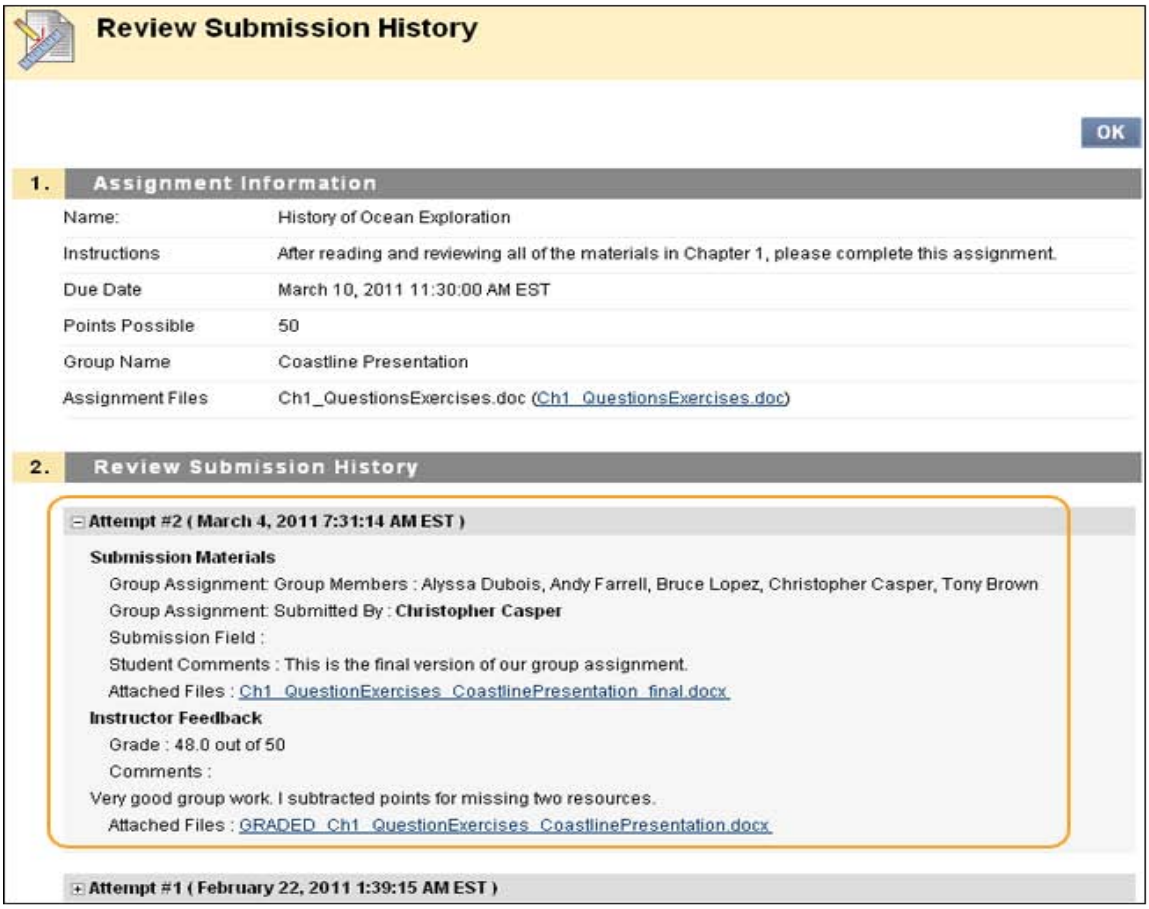

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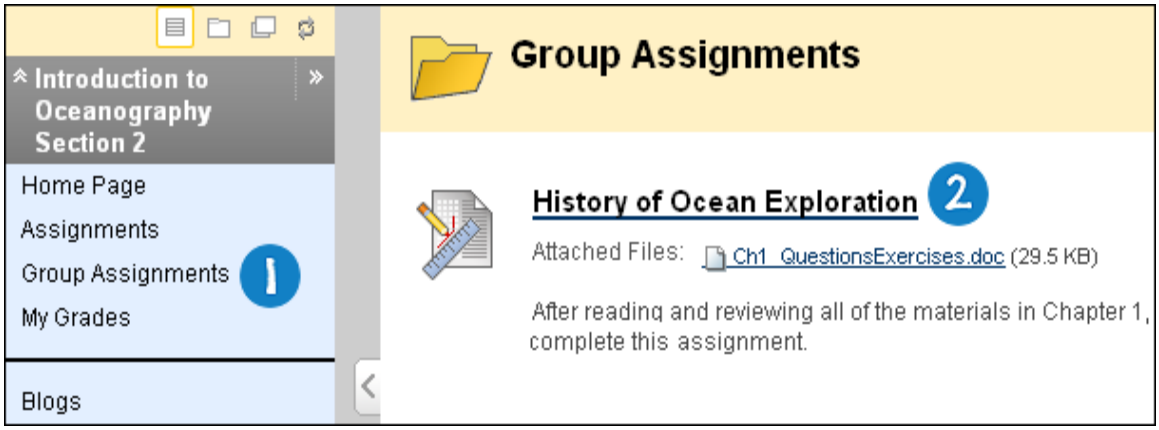
Accessing the Review Submission History Page from Group Assignments

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.



My Grades Item Status

The following table describes the symbols appearing on the **My Grades** page.

Symbol	Description
-	Item has not yet been completed. No information is available.
✓	Item has been completed, but will not have a grade (for items such as surveys).
!	Item has been submitted. This item is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor. -OR- Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review this item but may not be provided a grade (for items such as surveys).
Grade	Item has been graded. Click the grade to view detailed feedback.
	Attempt is in progress. This item has not been submitted. To submit the item, see Submitting a Draft Assignment.
	Grade is exempted for this user. If you do not complete this assignment, it will not affect your grade.
!	Error has occurred. Contact your instructor.

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Tests and Assignments

Tests and Surveys

You can find tests and surveys (referred to collectively as assessments) in any Content Area, Content Area folder, or Learning Module.

Tests can be used to assess your knowledge. Your instructor assigns point values to questions. Your answers are submitted for grading, and the results are recorded in the Grade Center.

Surveys can be used for polling purposes and evaluations. These assessments are not graded.

Question Types

There are many types of questions that can be included in an assessment.

- **Calculated Formula**: Contains a formula with a number of variables. The correct answer can be a specific value or a range of values.
- **Calculated Numeric Response**: Resembles a fill-in-the-blank question except a number is entered to complete the statement. The correct answer can be a specific number or within a range of numbers.
- **Either / Or**: A statement with a pre-defined choice of two answers (Yes/No, On/Off).
- **Essay**: A question where the answer must be typed in a text box.
- **File Response**: Uploaded files are used to respond to the question.
- **Fill in Multiple Blanks**: Multiple responses are inserted into a sentence or paragraph.
- **Fill in the Blank**: A statement that requires an answer to complete it. Answers are evaluated based on an exact text match.
- **Hot Spot**: A specific point on an image is used to indicate the answer.
- **Jumbled Sentence**: A sentence with a number of variables within it.
- **Matching**: Two columns of items where each item in the first column must be matched to an item in the second column.
- **Multiple Answer**: A number of choices with one or more correct answers.
- **Multiple Choice**: Allows a number of choices with one correct answer. Indicate the correct answer by selecting a radio button.
- **Opinion Scale / Likert**: A rating scale used to measure attitudes or reactions.
- **Ordering**: A question that requires users to provide an answer by selecting the correct order of a series of items.
- **Quiz Bowl**: An answer appears; the users respond with a who, what, or where question to respond.
- **Short Answer**: Similar to Essay questions; answer length is limited.
- **True / False**: A statement with the option to choose either true or false. True/False answer options are limited to the words True and False.

Grading Questions

The majority of questions in assessments are auto-graded. Your instructor defines the correct answers and assigns a certain number of points to each question when the assessment is created. The system validates your answers against the key and assigns the score. You may find out your score on an assessment

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immediately after completing it if all questions are auto-graded and your instructor releases this information.

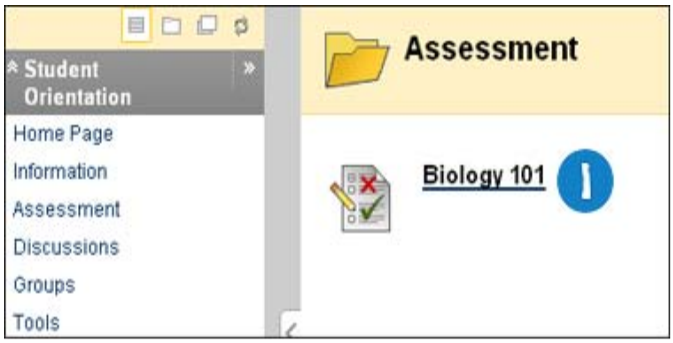
Essay questions, file response, and short answer questions are not auto-graded, meaning that your instructor must grade these questions manually. After you submit an assessment, your instructor reviews these questions and manually provides a score. If an assessment contains these question types, the grade for the assessment is not immediately available after the assessment is submitted.

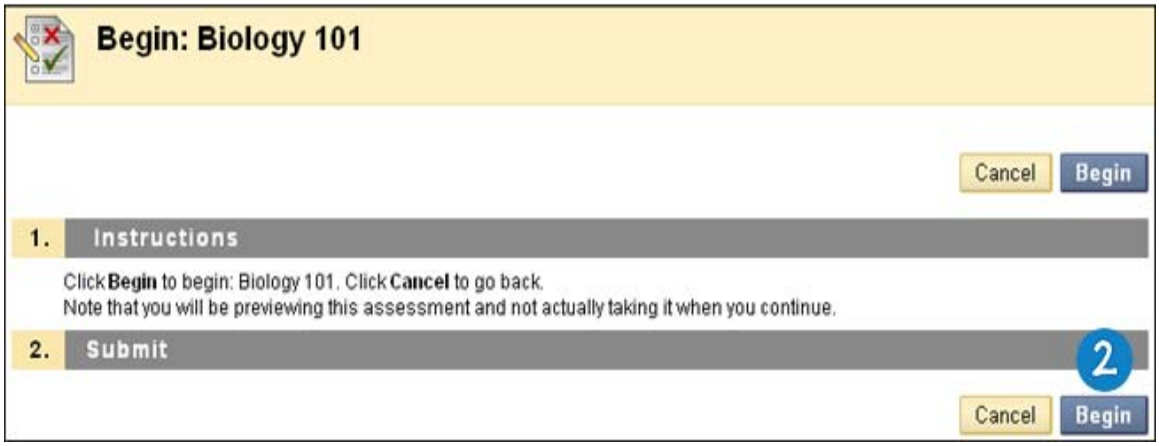
How to Take an Assessment

Assessments are located within Content Areas in a course.

Note: Contact you instructor if you encounter issues or problems while taking your assessment.

1. Navigate to an assessment and click the link associated with it.
2. Click **Begin** to take the assessment.





3. Your instructor may choose to have you type a password to begin taking an assessment. If necessary, type the valid password and click **Submit** to begin the assessment. The assessment continues to prompt for a valid password until the correct one is provided.

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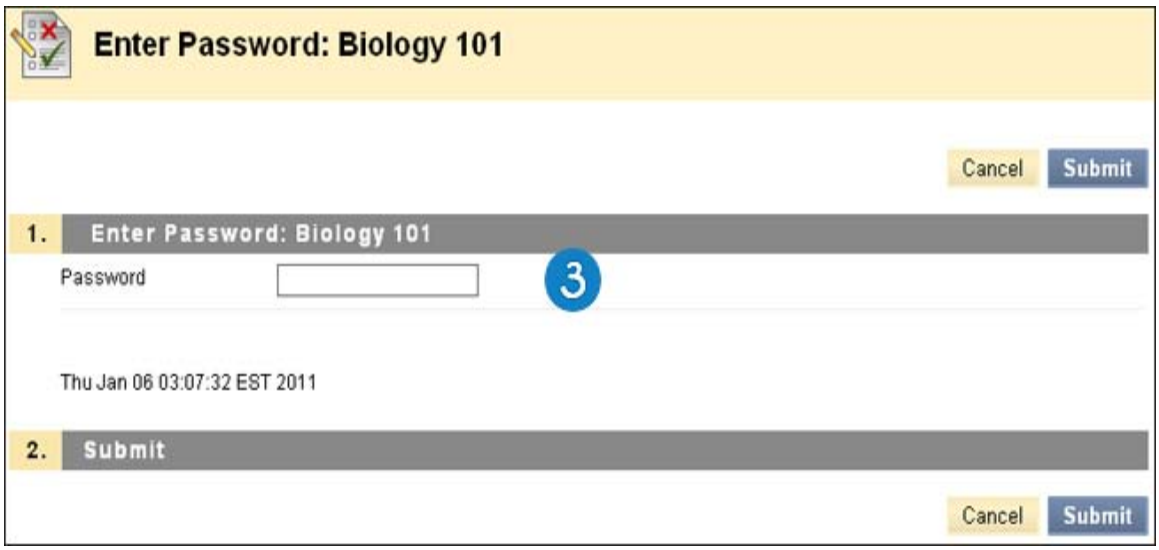
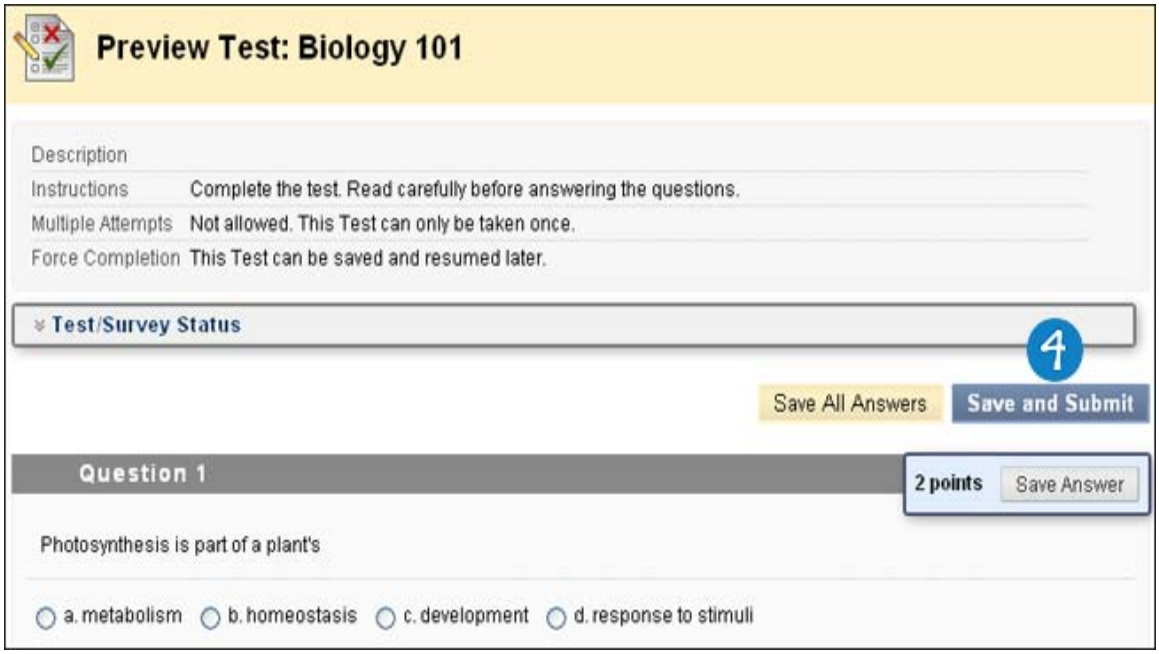


4. Click **Save and Submit** when you complete the assessment.



Note: If the Assessment is timed, the remaining time appears in the bottom of the browser.

WARNING! Do not use the browser's **Back** button during an assessment. This may cause loss of data.

Feedback and Grades

The performance results you receive after completing a test depends on the options selected by your instructor. For example, your instructor may only show the final score for one test, while for another test the final score and correct answers are displayed. Feedback includes one or more of the following:

- Final score for the test
- Answers users submitted

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- Correct answers
- Feedback for the questions

To access Feedback and Grade information, select the test in the Content Area or use the **My Grades** tool.

Multiple Assessment Attempts

You may be allowed to take an assessment multiple times. If multiple attempts is allowed, this is noted at the top of the assessment. Your instructor may also set a limit on the number of attempts, which will also be noted at the top. A link to take the test again appears if the test is re-opened. Your instructor determines if one or more of the test attempt scores are recorded in the Grade Center.

Presentation Option

Force Assessment Completion

You must complete the assessment the first time it is launched if Force Completion is enabled. If Force Completion is enabled, this is noted at the top of the assessment. You may not exit the assessment and continue working on it at a later date. The **Save** function is available for you to save the assessment as you work through it, but you may not exit and re-enter the assessment.

Backtrack Prohibited

You may not go back to questions you have already answered if backtracking is prohibited. If backtracking is prohibited, this is noted at the top of the assessment. When you take an assessment that does not allow backtracking, an error appears if you attempt to use the **Back** function within the assessment.

Assessment Presentation

Your instructor has two different options for presenting Assessments: all-at-once and one-at-a-time.

All-at-once assessments present all of the questions at the same time. The following options are available while taking this type of assessment:

Function	Action
Store answers	Select **Save All Answers**. A Saved icon appears in the Question Status Indicator. Answers may be changed after they are saved.
Finish the assessment	Select **Save and Submit**. A confirmation, then receipt page appears that states the assessment has been completed.

One-at-a-time assessments present questions separately, only one question appears on the screen. You decide when you are ready to move onto the next question. The following options are available while taking this type of assessment:

Function	Action
Navigate through questions	Use the navigation arrows (<<, <, >, or >>). The Question/Section Indicator describes the current location in the assessment and the overall number of questions. If backtracking is prohibited, these arrows do not appear.
Save answers	Select **Save All Answers**. Questions answered up to this point are saved.
Finish the	Select **Save and Submit**. A confirmation, then receipt page appears that states the assessment has been completed.

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Function	Action
assessment	

Question Completion Status

The Questions Status Indicator provides you with a quick up-to-date look at complete or incomplete questions in an assessment at all times. The **Save** function next to each question provides a visual reminder to save your progress periodically.

Completion status of assessment questions is displayed at the top of the page.

The status of which questions have been answered is displayed at the top of the page, just below the instructions.

When you answer a question and move to the next question in a question-by-question assessment, the status box is edited on the next page to show that the previous question was answered. If you do not answer a question and move on to the next page in a question-by-question assessment, the status box will show on the next page that the previous question was not answered. Navigate between questions by clicking on the question number in the status indicator.

When you take an all-at-once assessment (an assessment where the questions all appear on the same page), click **Save Answer** to save a specific question without scrolling to the bottom of the page to save. Saving either a single question or all of the questions that have been answered (with the **Save All Answers** at the top or bottom of the page) changes the status indicator to show which questions have been completed.

Submitting Assignments

The Assignments tool is used to present a variety of learning activities to students, allowing them to view and submit assignments from one location. You can submit assignments in the following ways:

- Text typed on the **Upload Assignment** page.
- Files attached from your computer or from the Content Collection.
- A combination of both text and attached files.

Assignments list the name, description, and attachments for class work. You can also choose to include comments for your instructor.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I open my assignment?

Please contact the computing help desk at your school. They can help you troubleshoot and download any application you might need. If you're not sure how to contact them, look for the technology office on your school's website or search the web for *your school's name* + *Blackboard* + *help* or *support*. You may also check to make sure you are using a supported Internet browser and operating system for the version of Blackboard that your school is using.

Why can't I find my assignment?

Your instructor might make an assignment unavailable until after a certain date or until other criteria has been met. For example, you might have to mark a lecture as reviewed before you can access the assignment.

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Please contact your instructor for more information.

My instructor did not receive my assignment. What do I do?

You must discuss this issue with your instructor. To see the step-by-step instructions for submitting an assignment, see How to Submit an Assignment.

How do I edit or resubmit an assignment?

Editing an assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit an assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit an assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the assignment link in your course. To learn more, see How to Edit or Resubmit an Assignment.

How do I know whether my assignment has been graded?

On the Course Menu, click **Tools**, and then click **My Grades**. If your assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

To learn more, see How to View Assignment Grades and Feedback.

How to Submit an Assignment

When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.

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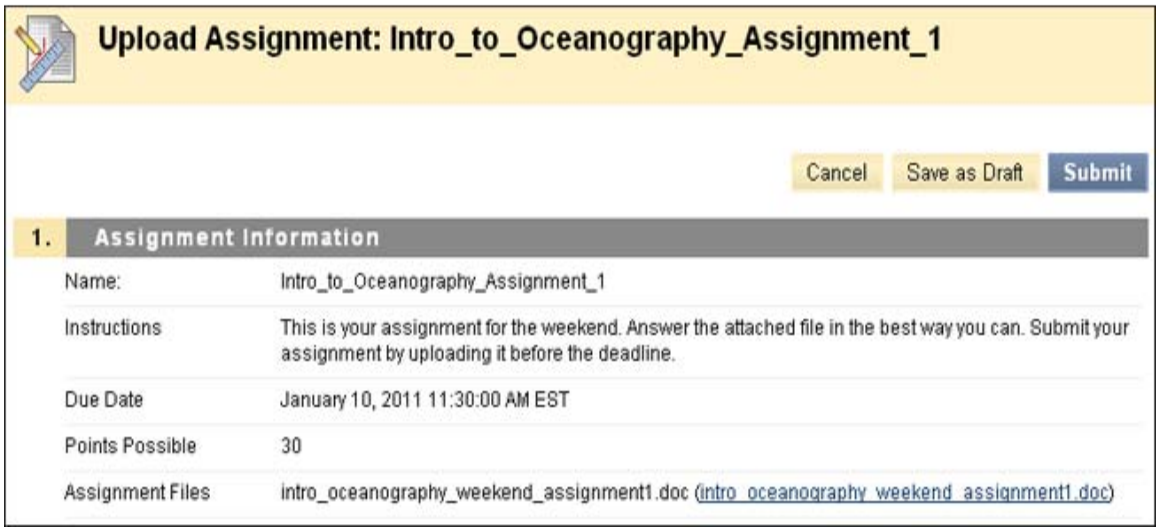

3. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
4. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

5. Click **Submit**.

> ***WARNING!*** When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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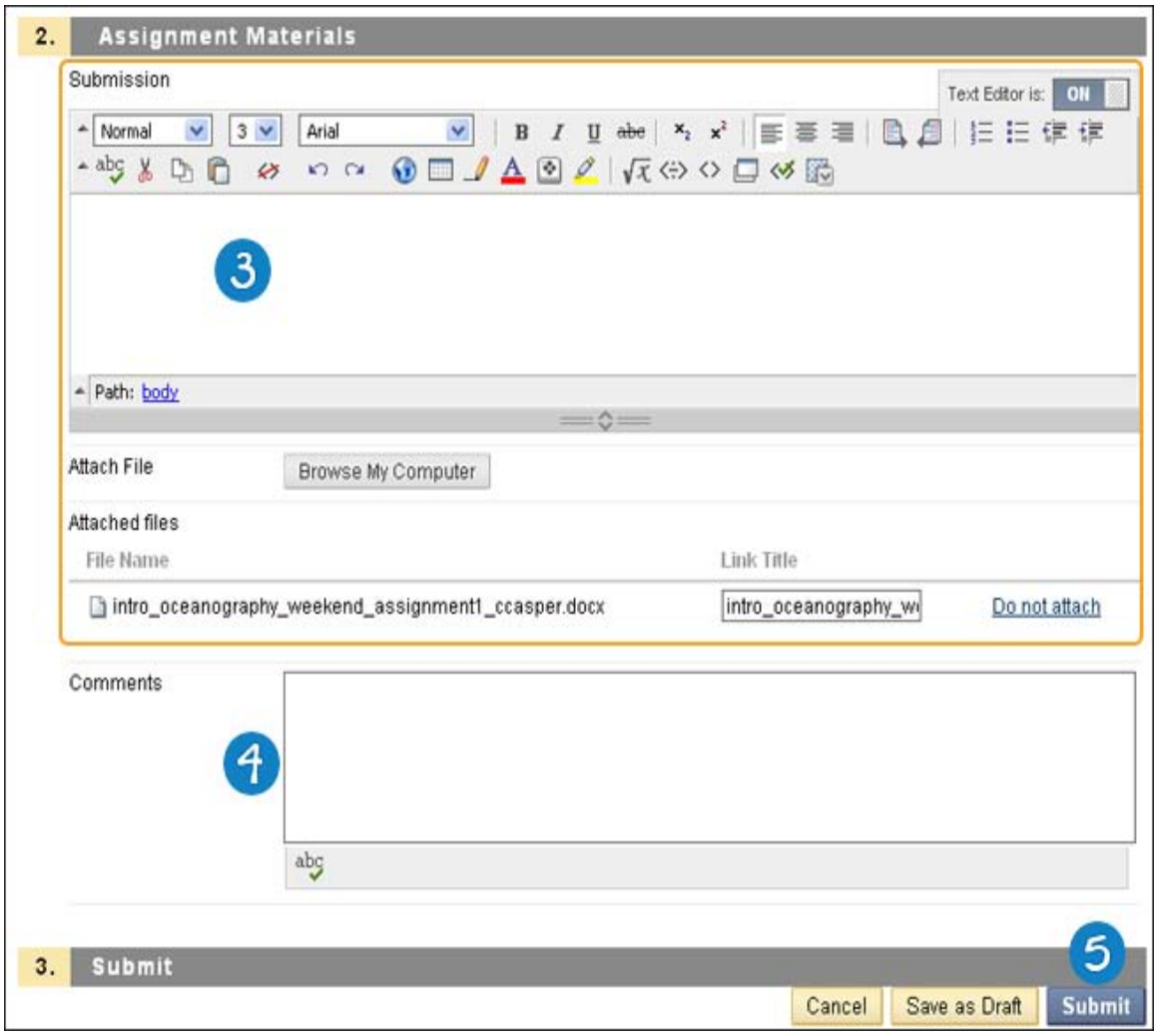

How to Save an Assignment as Draft and Submit Later

The **Save as Draft** function is available if you need to return to your assignment at a later time. This function saves your comments and files on the page.

When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

Saving an Assignment as Draft

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.

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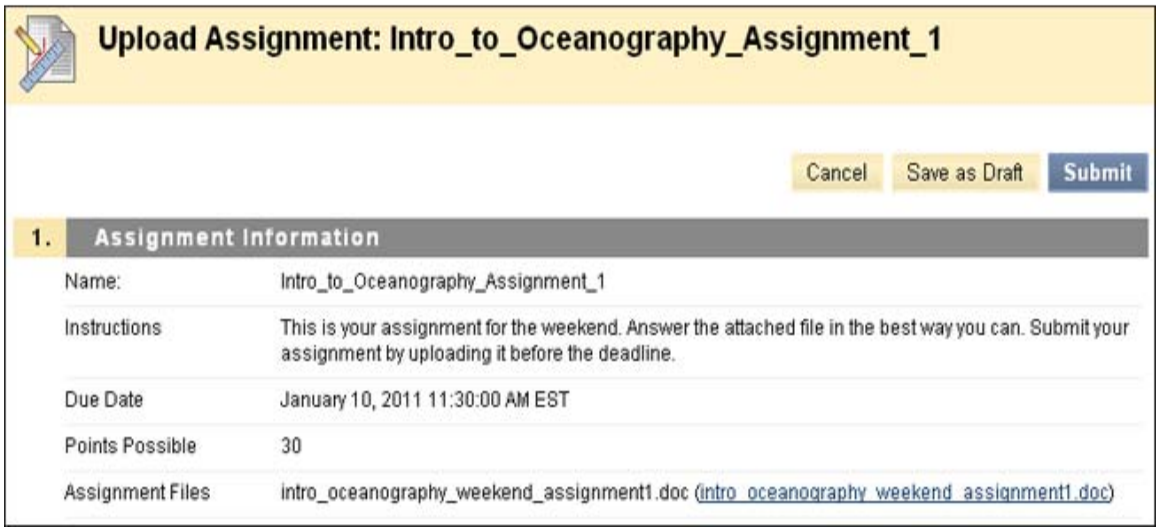

3. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
4. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.
5. Click **Save as Draft** to save your changes and continue working later.

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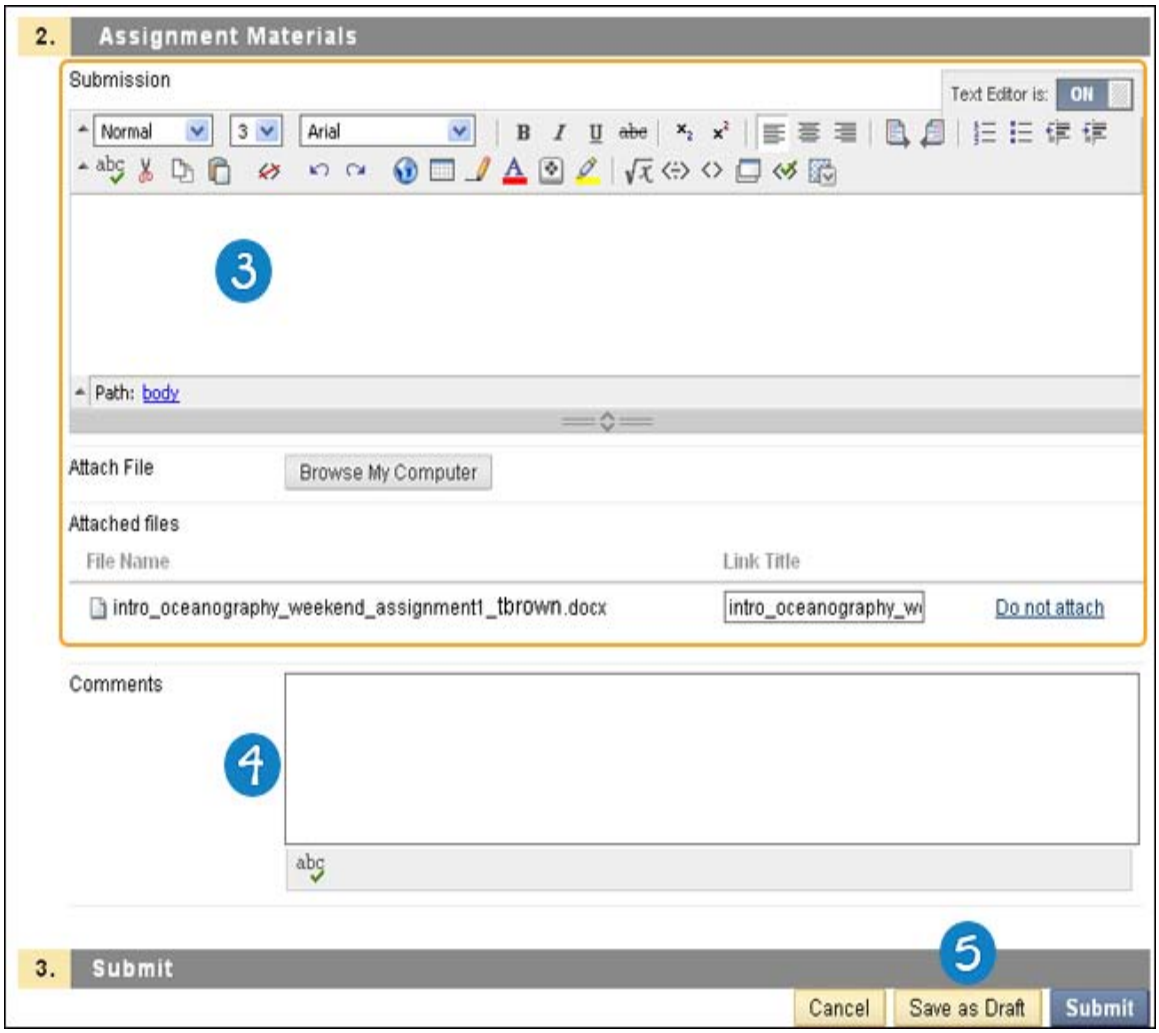
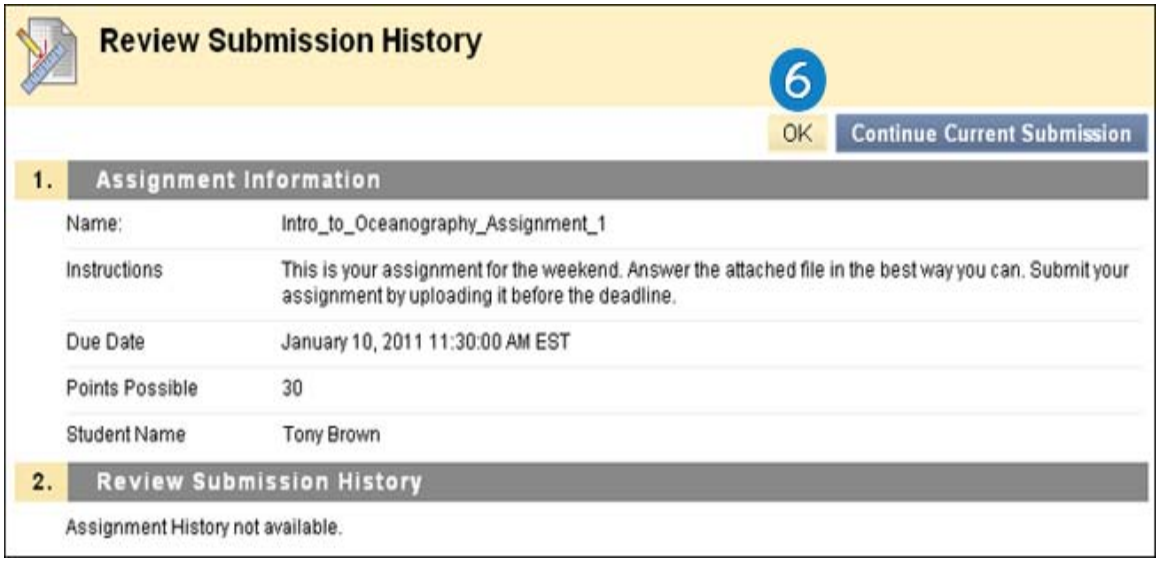


6. When you reach the **Review Submission History** page, click **OK**.



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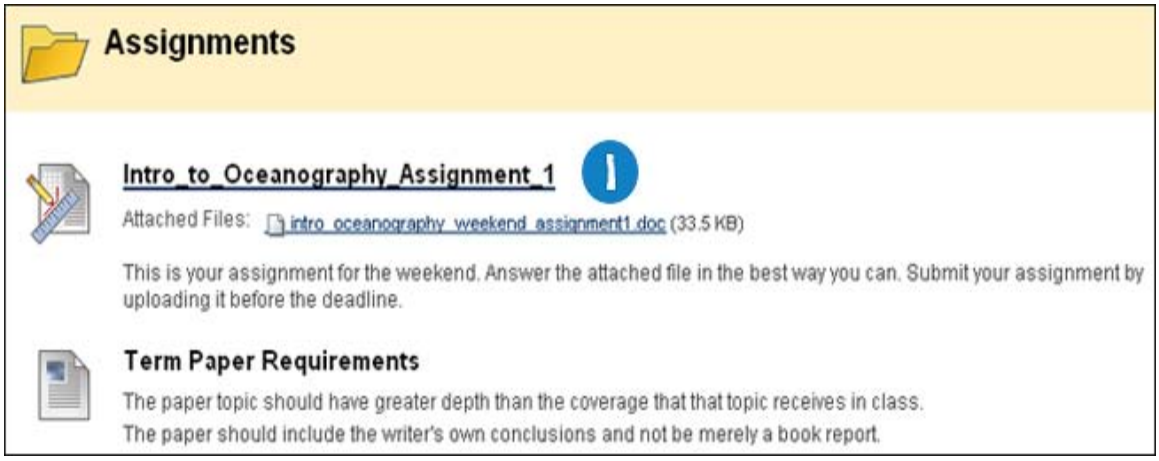
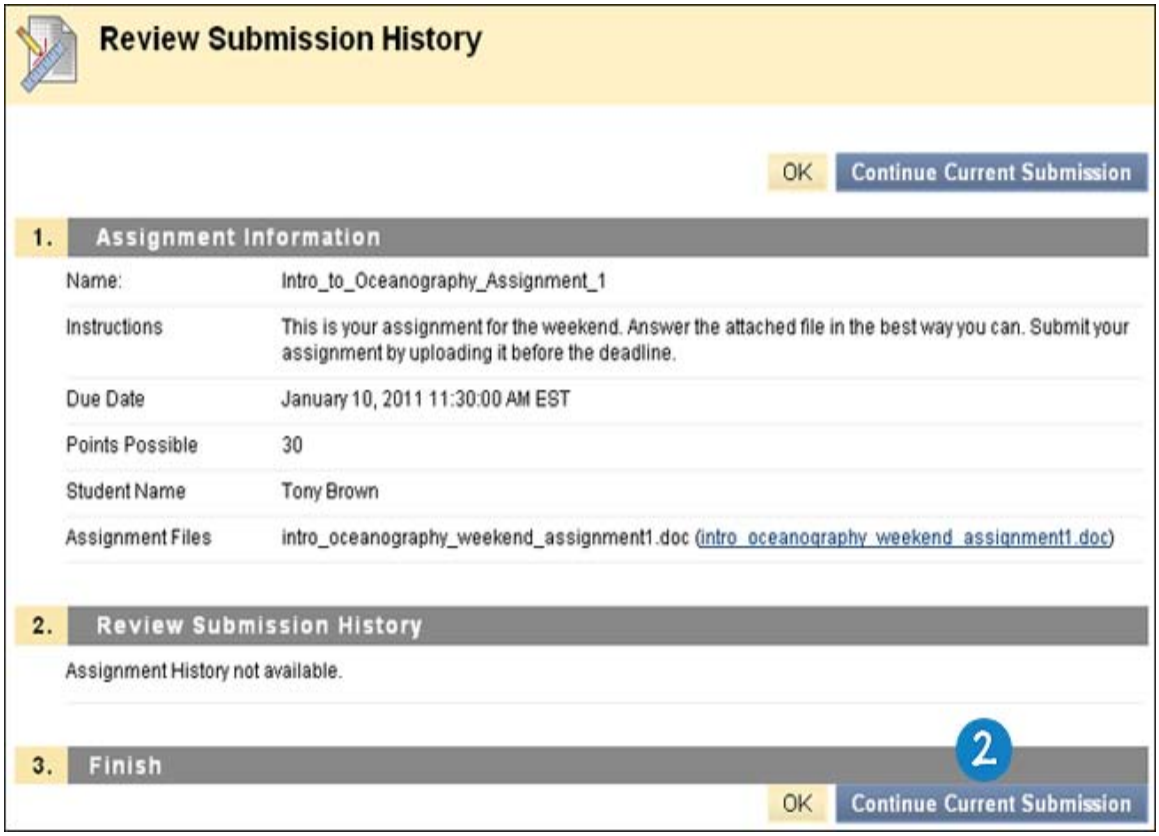
Submitting a Draft Assignment

1. Return to the assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.



2. On the **Review Submission History** page, click **Continue Current Submission**.



3. On the **Upload Assignment** page, make the necessary changes in your assignment.
4. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

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WARNING! If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

5. Click **Submit**. The **Review Submission History** page appears showing the information about your submitted assignment.

WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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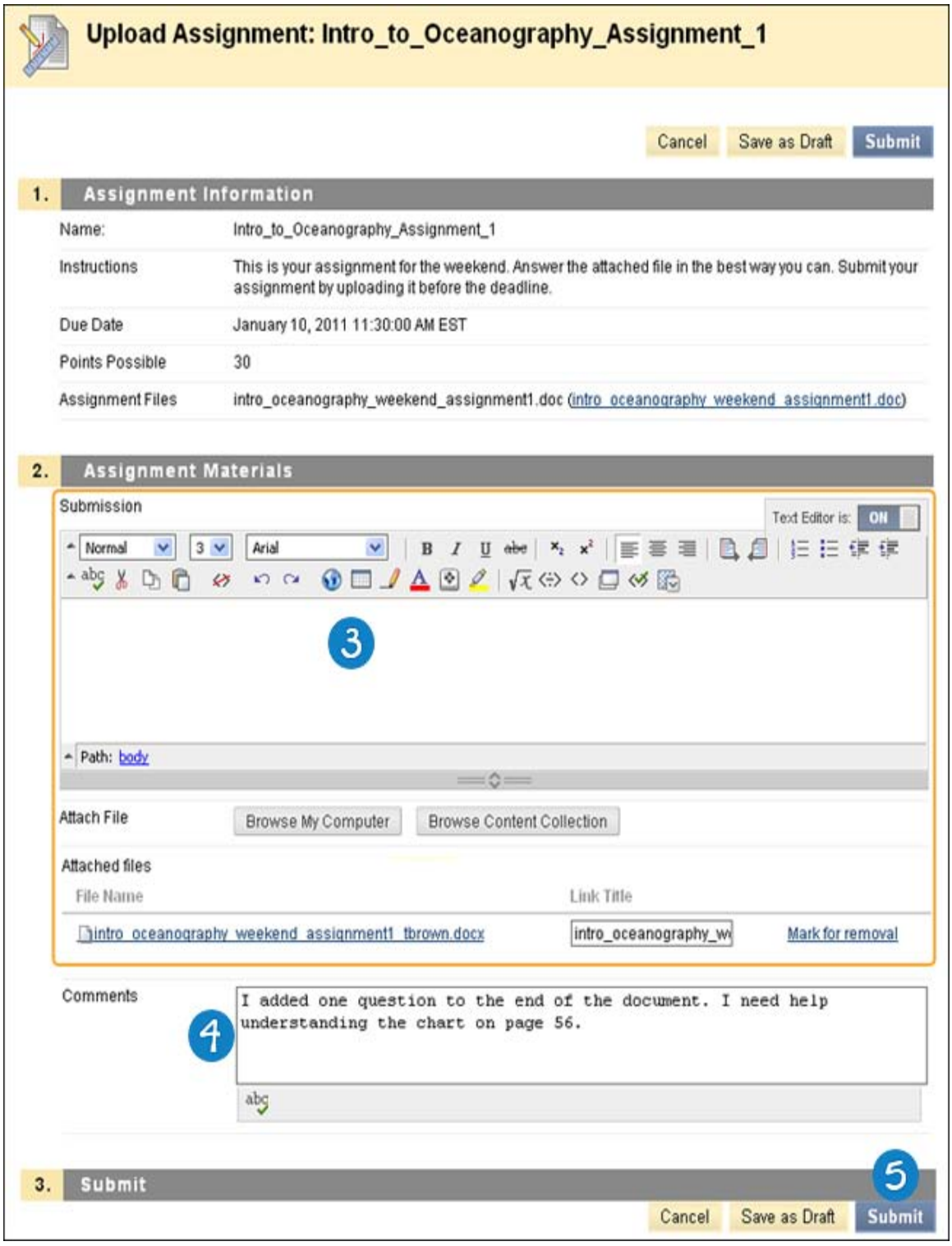

How to Edit or Resubmit an Assignment

Editing an assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit an assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the

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assignment.

Your instructor may allow you to submit an assignment more than once for a variety of reasons. For example, your instructor can provide comments on your first draft so that you can try to improve your work. Your instructor can choose to use either the highest graded attempt or the last graded attempt for your grade.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit an assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the assignment link in your course.

1. Return to the assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.

3. On the **Review Submission History** page, view the details of your first submission. Click **Start New Submission**.

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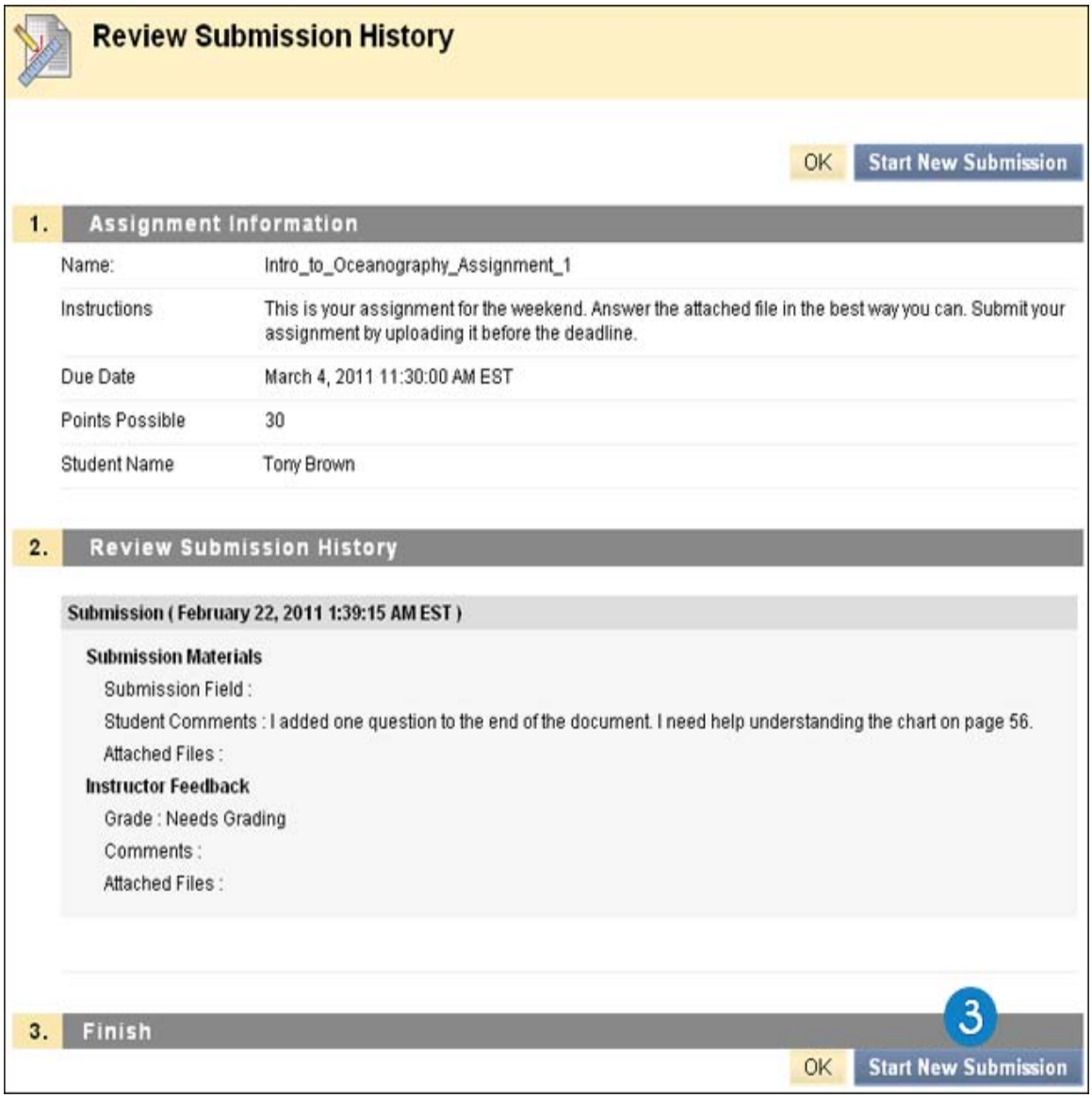

4. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and add files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
5. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

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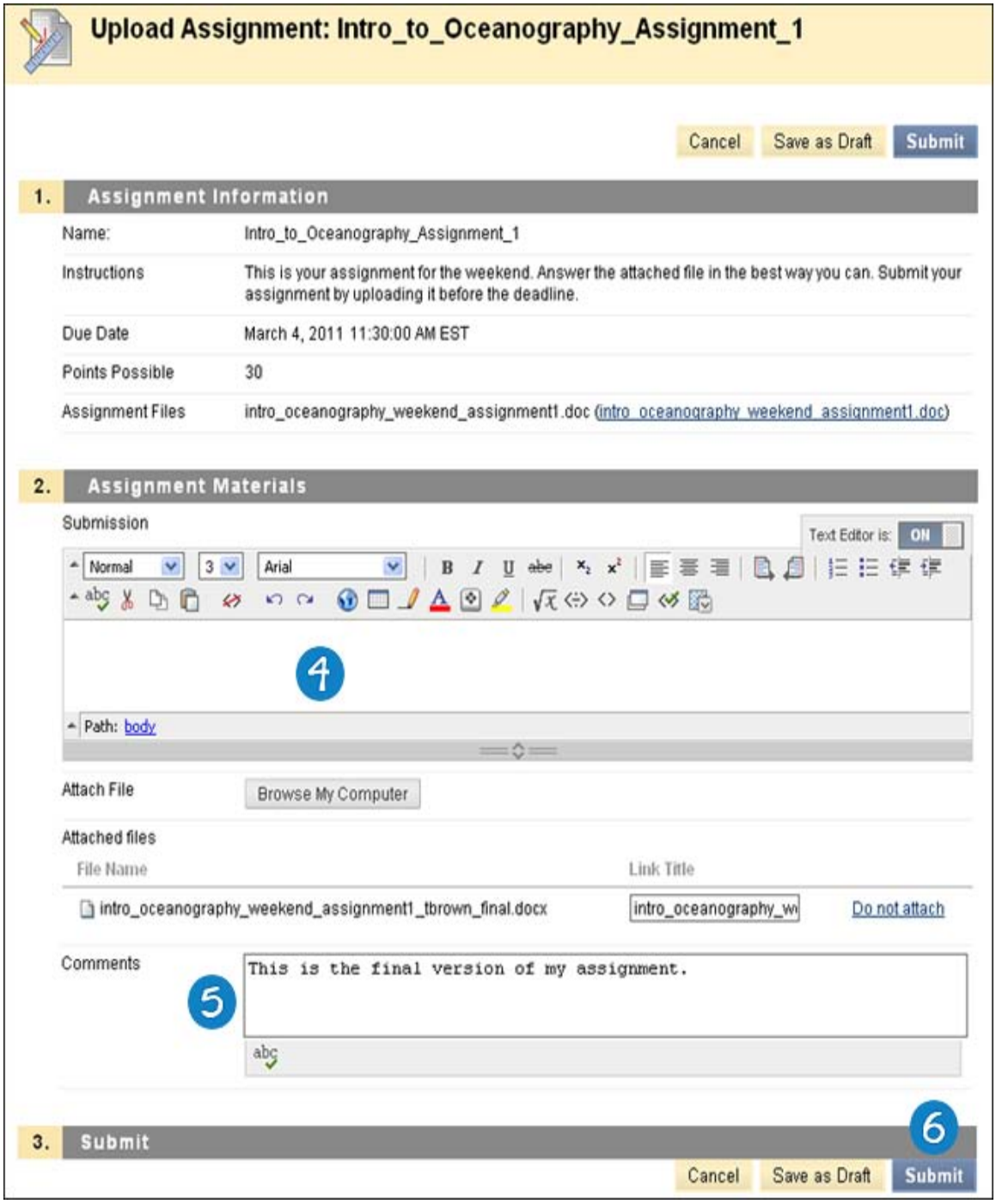
WARNING! Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

6. Click **Submit**.

WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.



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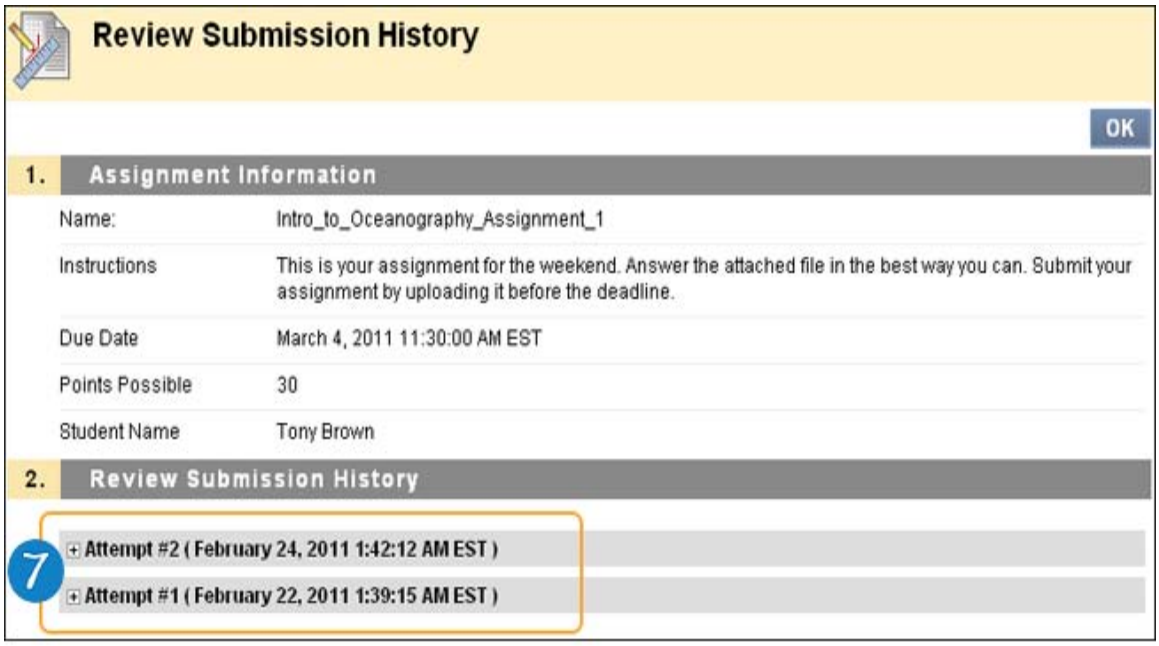
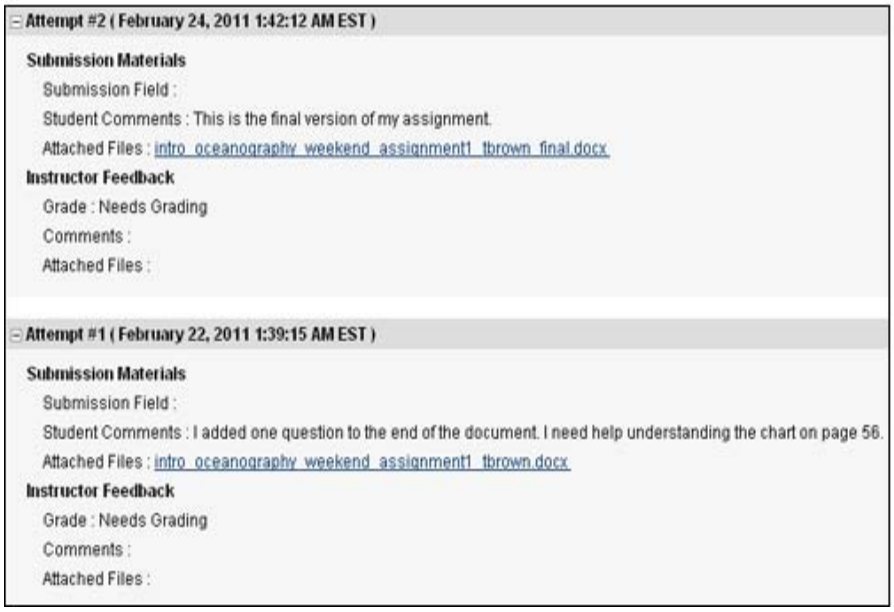
7. On the **Review Submission History** page, you can see all of your submissions listed by date and time. To view the details of a submission, click the plus sign next to an attempt.





How to View Assignment Grades and Feedback

Blackboard does not score assignments automatically. Each assignment needs to be graded by your instructor. You can review the information provided by your instructor in **My Grades** or on the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

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Accessing My Grades From Within Your Course

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**.
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

Accessing My Grades From Outside Your Course

1. On the **My Institution** tab, click **My Grades** on the **Tools** panel.
2. On the **My Courses/Organizations** page, click the name of your course.

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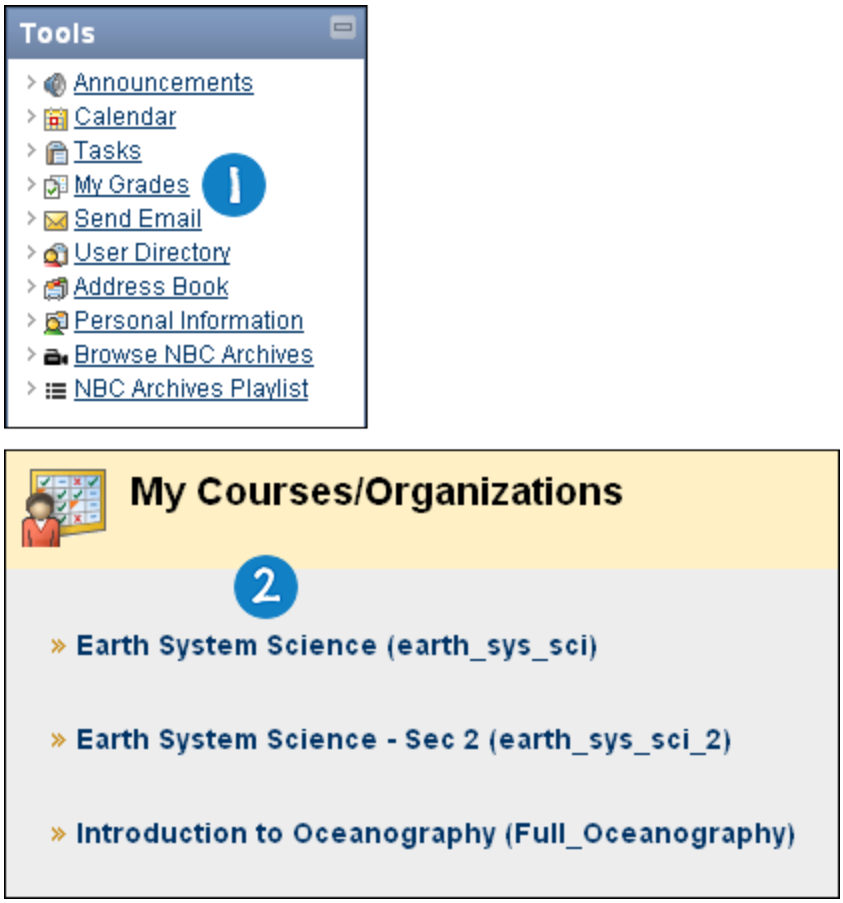

Reviewing Your Grade

- If your assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status.
- If your assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's **Review Submission History** page. This page includes:
    - **Instructor Feedback**: This section lists your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor.
    - **Attached Files**: This section provides links to open or download any files attached by you or your instructor. For example, your instructor might provide comments in a file that you submitted with your assignment. In the following image, notice that the student included his

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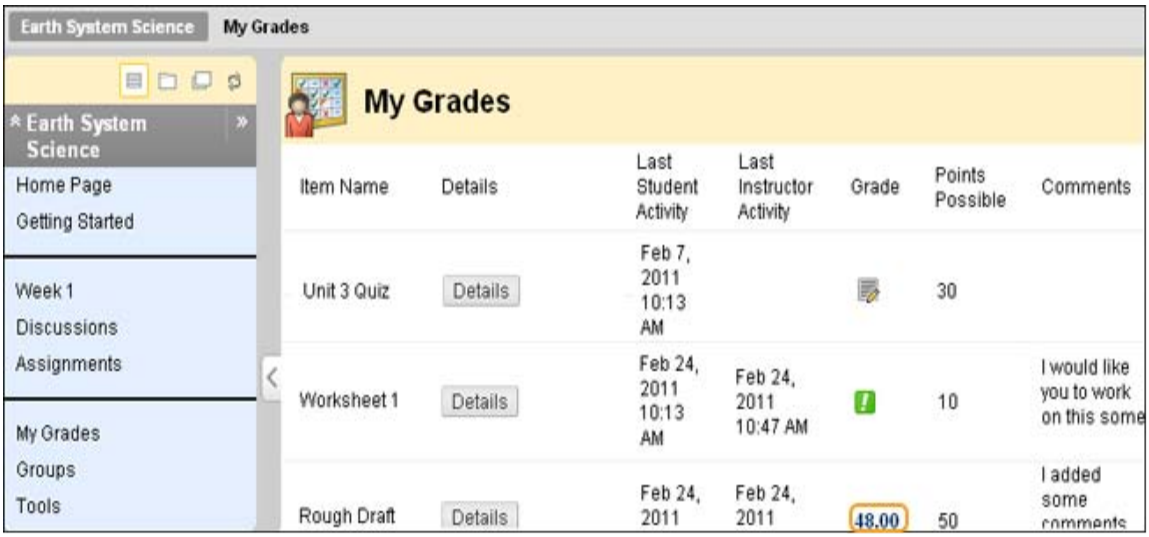

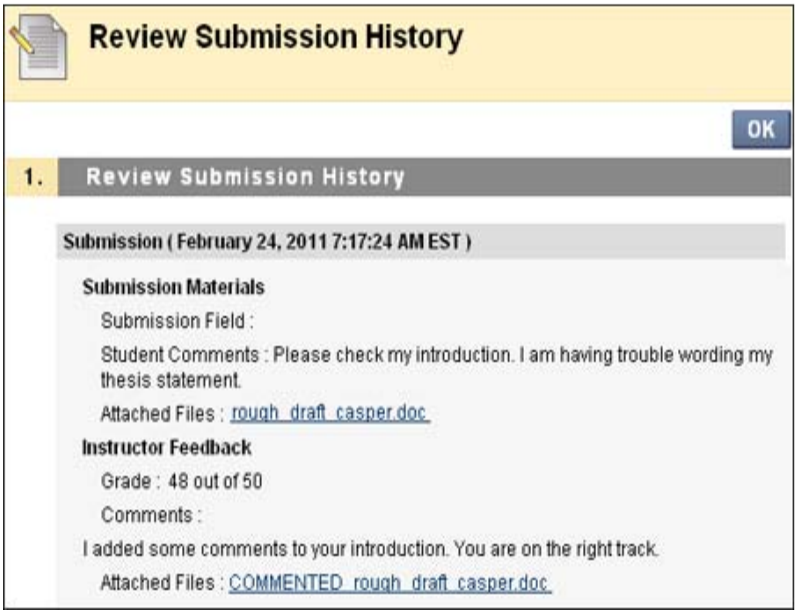

Accessing the Review Submission History Page from the Assignment

1. Return to the assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.

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2. Click the name of the assignment.

My Grades Item Status

The following table describes the symbols appearing on the **My Grades** page.

Symbol	Description
-	Item has not yet been completed. No information is available.
✓	Item has been completed, but will not have a grade (for items such as surveys).
!	Item has been submitted. This item is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor -OR- Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review this item but may not be provided a grade (for items such as surveys).
Grade	Item has been graded. Click the grade to view detailed feedback.
	Attempt is in progress. This item has not been submitted. To submit the item, see Submitting a Draft Assignment.
	Grade is exempted for this user. If you do not complete this assignment, it will not affect your grade.
!	Error has occurred. Contact your instructor.

Related Tutorials Submitting Assignments (Flash movie | 2m 43s | 5,775 KB)

Next Steps

To learn how to submit a group assignment, see Group Assignments.

Group Assignments

You can submit your work to satisfy group assignments. You can submit group assignments in the following ways:

- Text typed on the **Upload Assignment** page.
- Files attached from your computer or from the Content Collection.
- A combination of both text and attached files.

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Assignments list the name, description, and attachments for class work. You can also choose to include comments for your instructor.

The grade provided by your instructor for the final assignment is given to every member of the group.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why can't I open our group assignment?

Please contact the computing help desk at your school. They can help you troubleshoot and download any application you might need. If you're not sure how to contact them, look for the technology office on your school's website or search the web for *your school's name* + *Blackboard* + *help* or *support*. You may also check to make sure you are using a supported Internet browser and operating system for the version of Blackboard that your school is using.

Why can't I find our group assignment?

Your instructor might make an assignment unavailable until after a certain date or until other criteria has been met. For example, you might have to mark a lecture as reviewed before you can access the assignment. Please contact your instructor for more information.

My instructor did not receive our group assignment. What do I do?

You must discuss this issue with your instructor. To see the step-by-step instructions for submitting a group assignment, see How to Submit Work for a Group Assignment.

How do I edit or resubmit a group assignment?

Editing a group assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit an assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit an assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the assignment link in your course. To learn more, see How to Edit or Resubmit a Group Assignment.

How do I know whether my assignment has been graded?

On the Course Menu, click **Tools**, and then click **My Grades**. If your assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status. If your assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. To view more detail, click the link to see the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

To learn more, see How to View Group Assignment Grades and Feedback.

How to Submit Work for a Group Assignment

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area. Click the name of the assignment.

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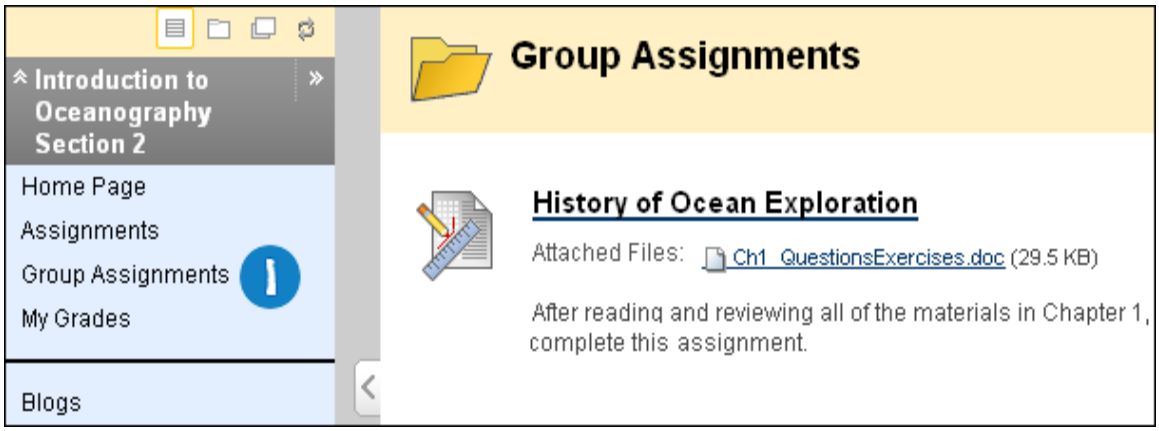
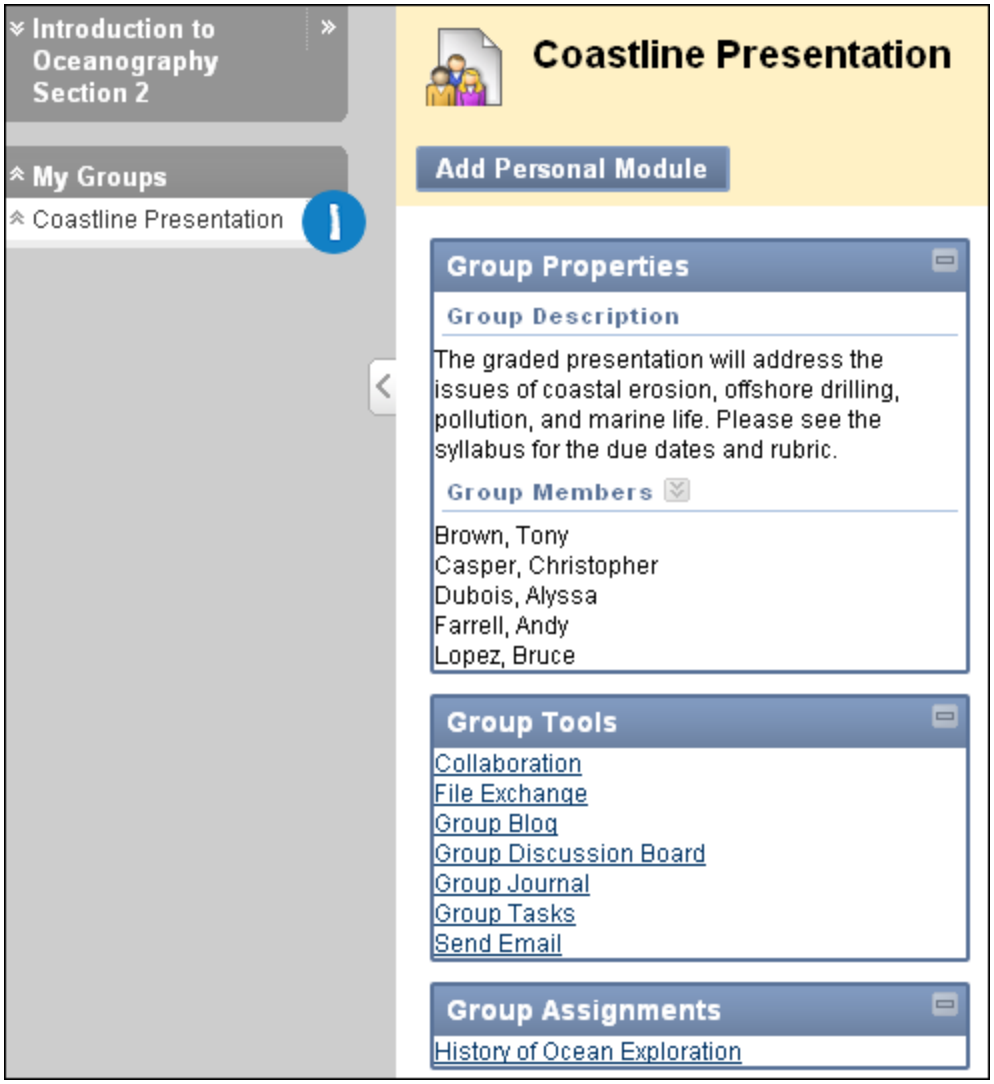


-OR-

1. In the **My Groups** panel, select your group name. On the group homepage, click the name of the assignment in the **Group Assignments** section.



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2. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
    - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
    - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

      Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
3. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

4. Click **Submit**.

> ***WARNING!*** When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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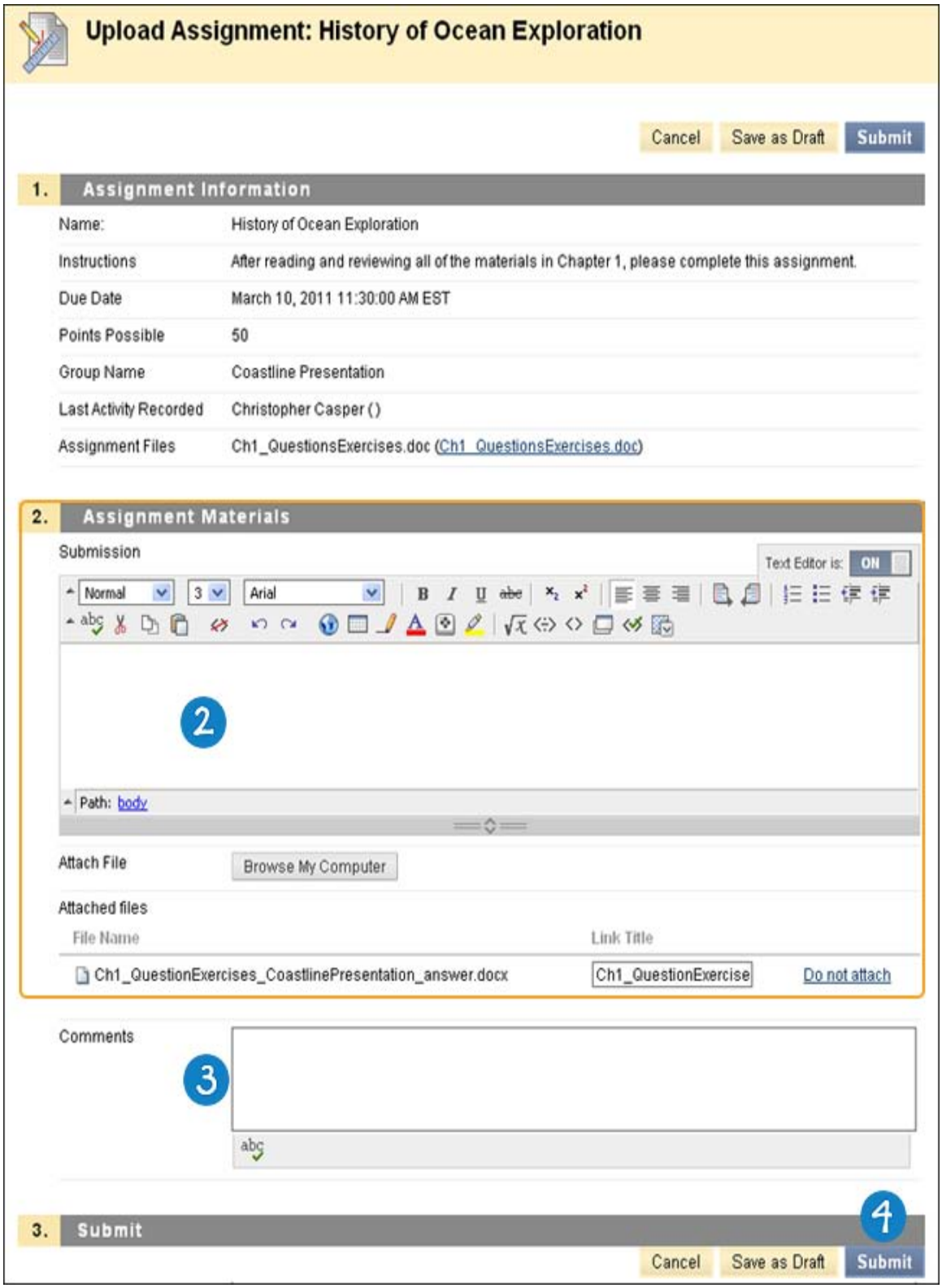

How to Save a Group Assignment as Draft and Submit Later

The **Save as Draft** function is available if you need to return to your group assignment at a later time. This

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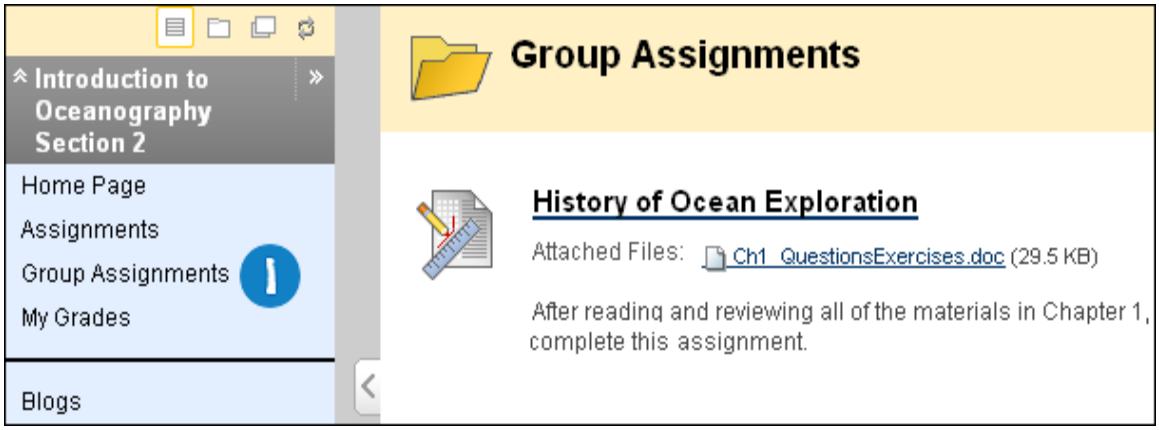
function saves your comments and files on the page.

When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

Saving a Group Assignment as Draft

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the group assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area. Click the name of the assignment.



2. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
   - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
   - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

     Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
3. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.
4. Click **Save as Draft** to save your changes and continue working later.

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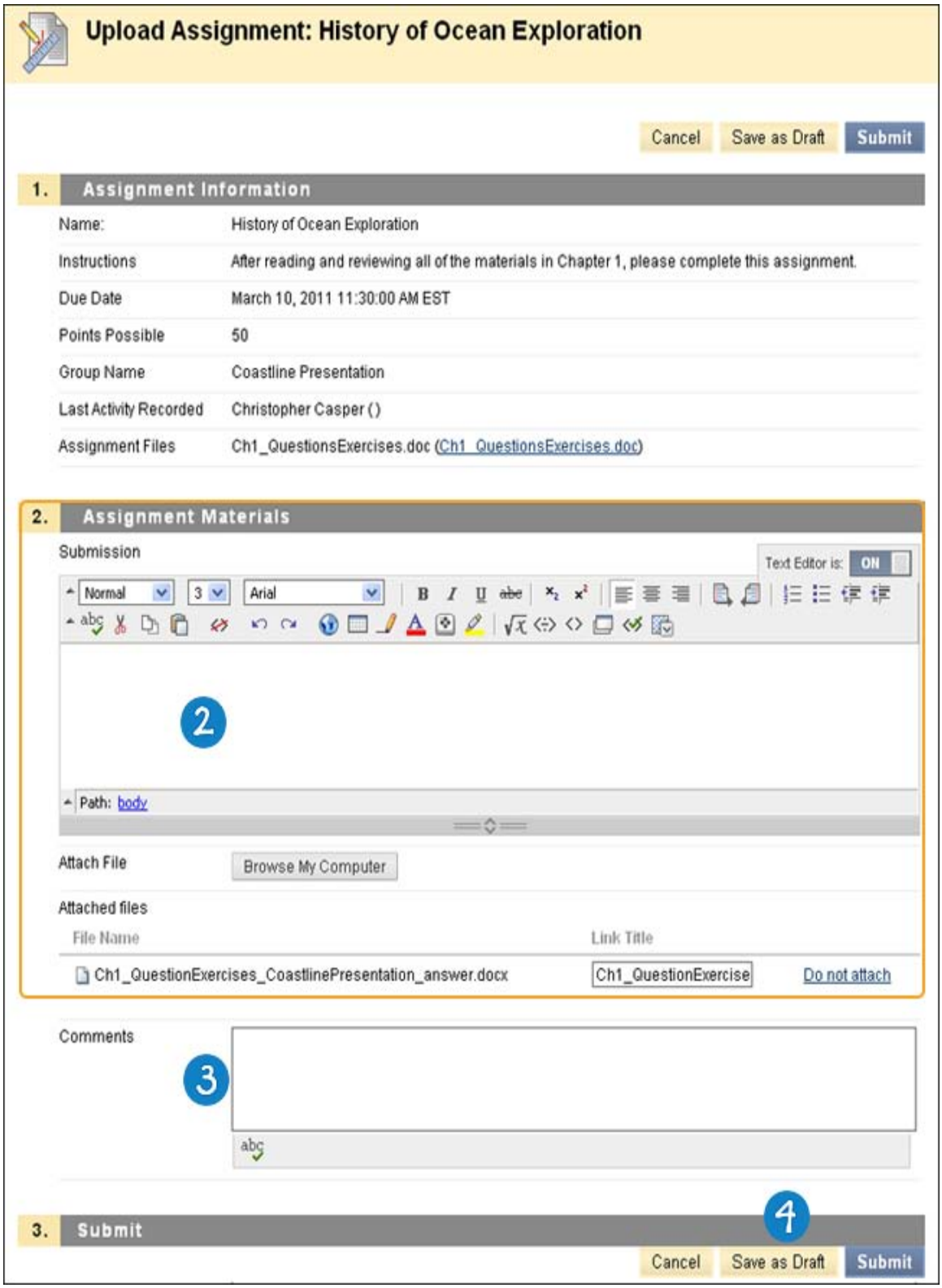

5. When you reach the **Review Submission History** page, click **OK**.

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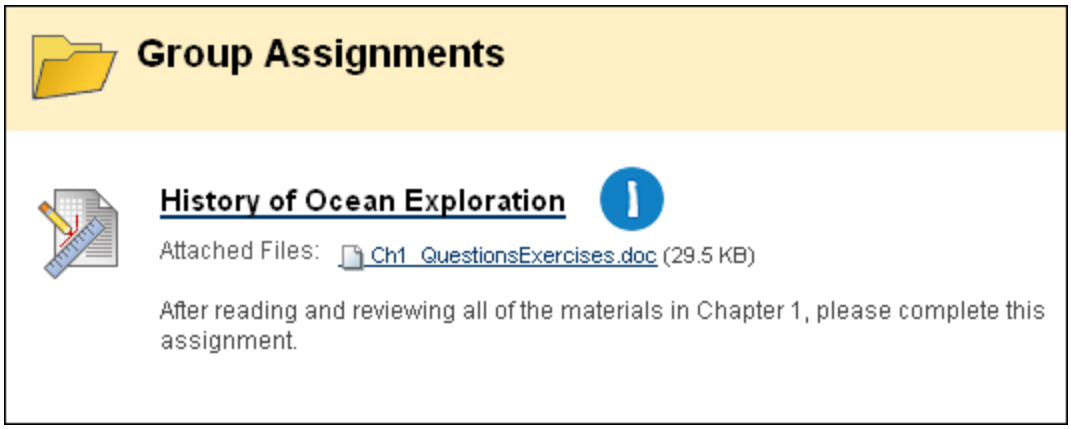
Submitting a Draft Assignment

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.



2. On the **Review Submission History** page, click **Continue Current Submission**.

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3. On the **Upload Assignment** page, make the necessary changes in your assignment.
4. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

> ***WARNING!*** If your instructor has ***not*** allowed multiple attempts, assignments can be submitted only once. Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.

5. Click **Submit**. The **Review Submission History** page appears showing the information about your submitted assignment.

> ***WARNING!*** When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.

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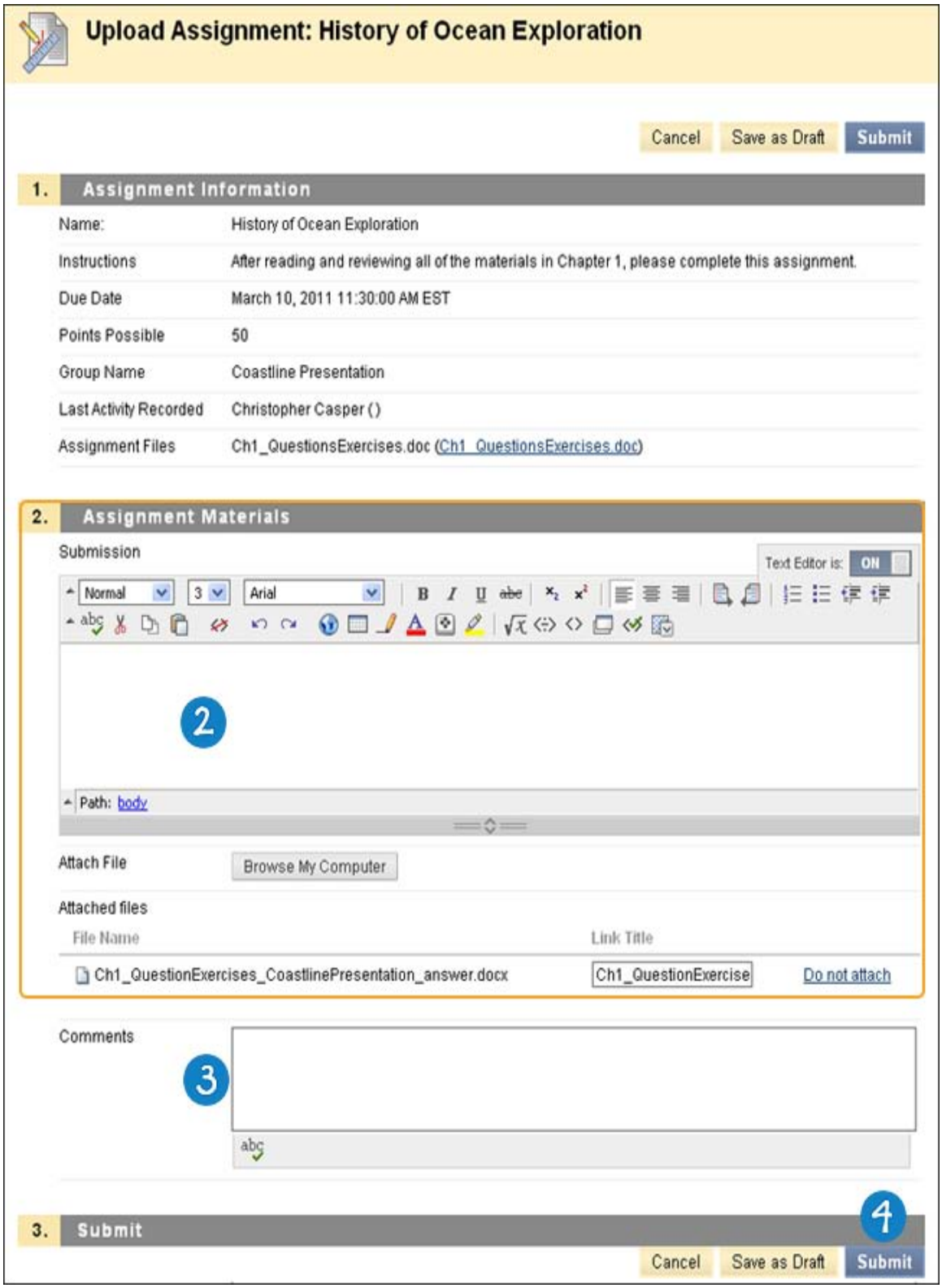

How to Edit or Resubmit a Group Assignment

Editing a group assignment requires you to resubmit the assignment, and not all assignments can be

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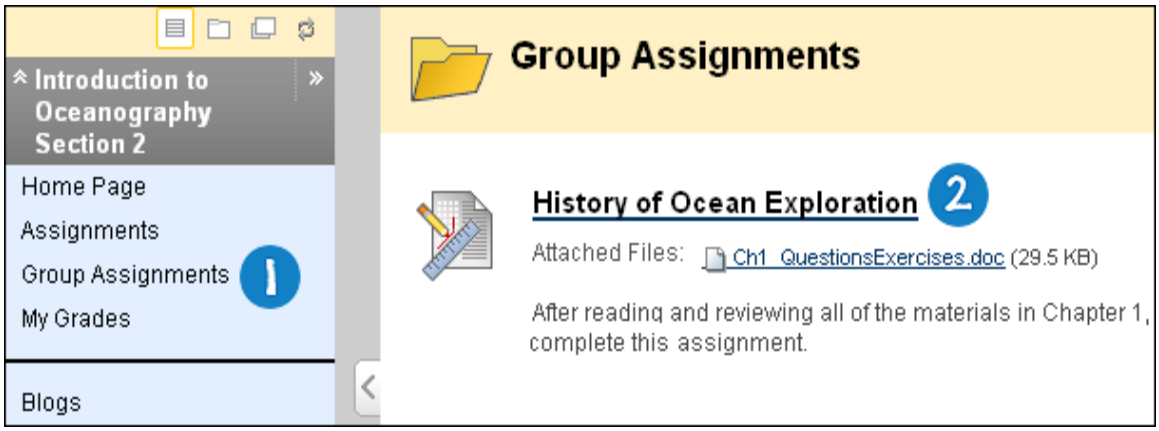
resubmitted. If your instructor has not allowed you to submit a group assignment more than once and you made a mistake when submitting the assignment, you must contact your instructor to ask for the opportunity to resubmit the assignment.

Your instructor may allow you to submit a group assignment more than once for a variety of reasons. For example, your instructor can provide comments on your first draft so that you can try to improve your work. Your instructor can choose to use either the highest graded attempt or the last graded attempt for your grade.

If your instructor has allowed you to submit a group assignment more than once, you will see a **Start New Submission** function on the **Review Submission History** page. You access this page by clicking the group assignment link in your course.

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.



3. On the **Review Submission History** page, view the details of your first submission. Click **Start New Submission**.

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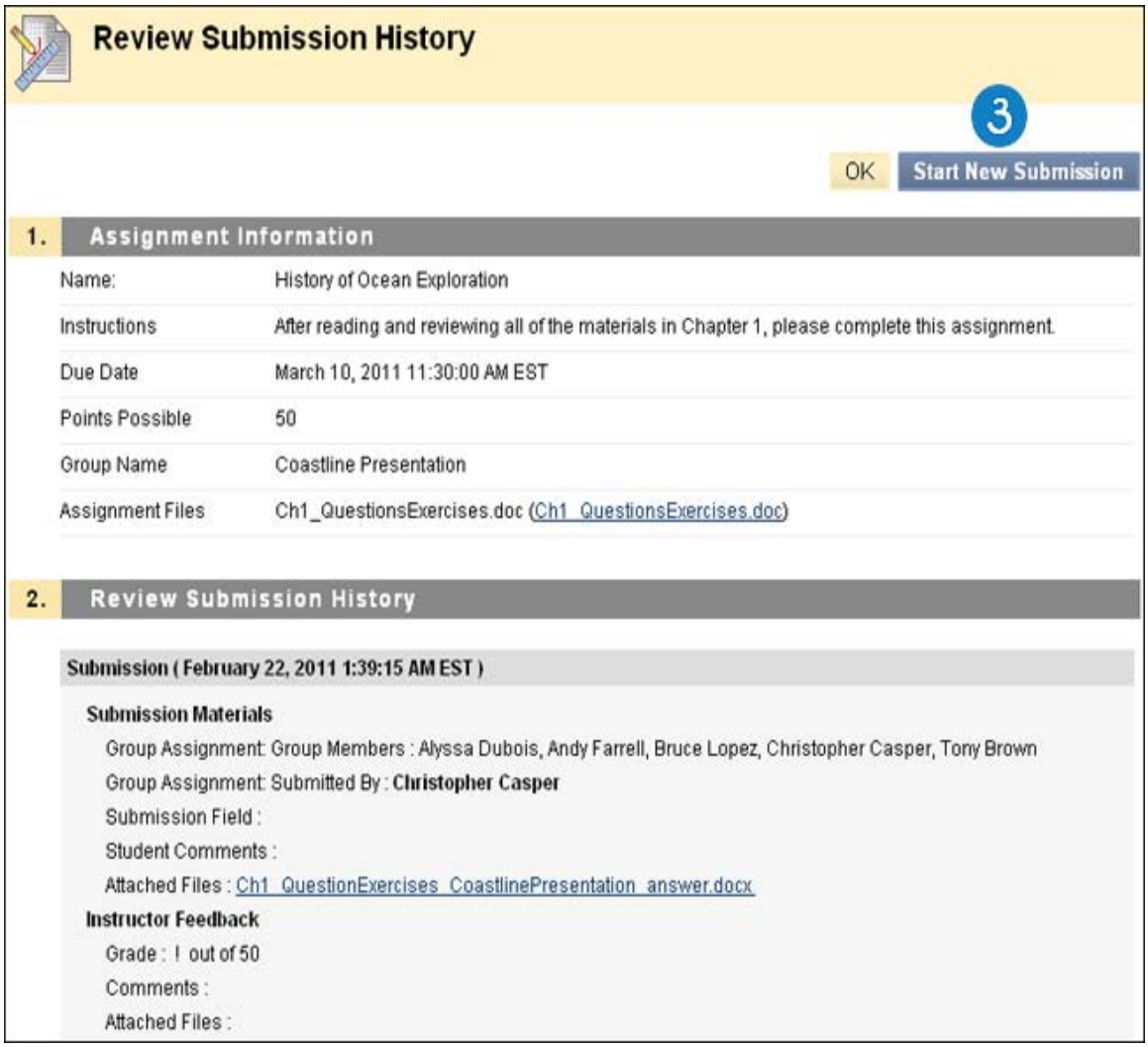

4. On the **Upload Assignment** page, download any files provided by your instructor and complete the assignment using one or both of the following:
   - In the **Submission** box, type your response. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, external links, multimedia, and Mashups.
   - If your response to the assignment is in a separate file, click **Browse My Computer** and select a file to attach. If you attach a file, type a **Link Title**. If the box is left blank, the file name becomes the link. Follow any instructions that your instructor provided for naming your file.

     Note: The **Do not attach** option appears next to an uploaded file. If you have selected an incorrect file, you can remove it with this option. If the same file is attached to your assignment more than once, the new file is saved with a number appended to the name. For example, `history_assignment(1).doc`.
5. Optionally, in the **Comments** box, type your comments.

   WARNING! Ensure that you have attached any required files to your assignment before you click **Submit**.
6. Click **Submit**.

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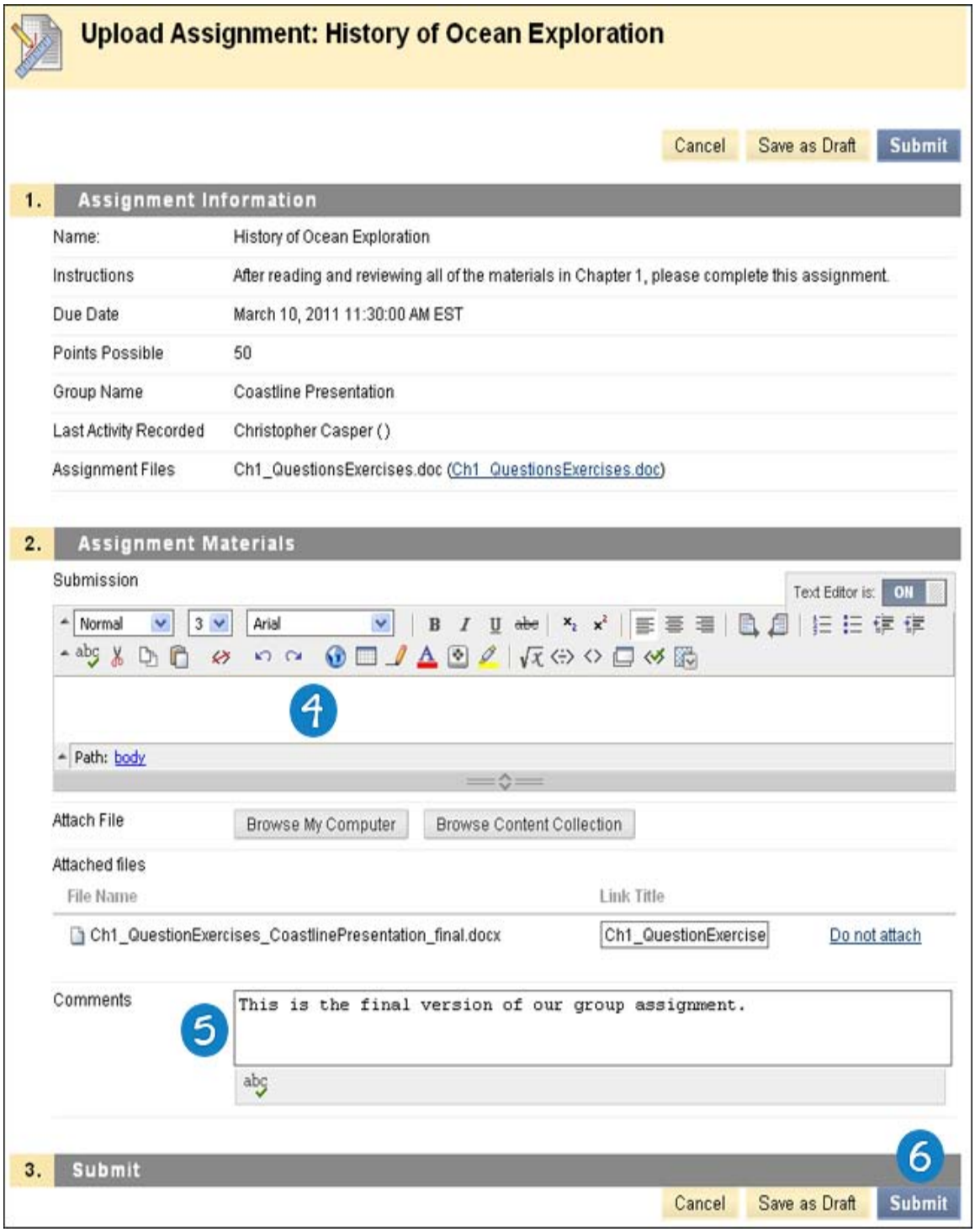
WARNING! When you finish your assignment, you must click **Submit**. If you do not, your instructor will not receive your completed assignment.



7. On the **Review Submission History** page, you can see all of your submissions listed by date and time. To view the details of a submission, click the plus sign next to an attempt.

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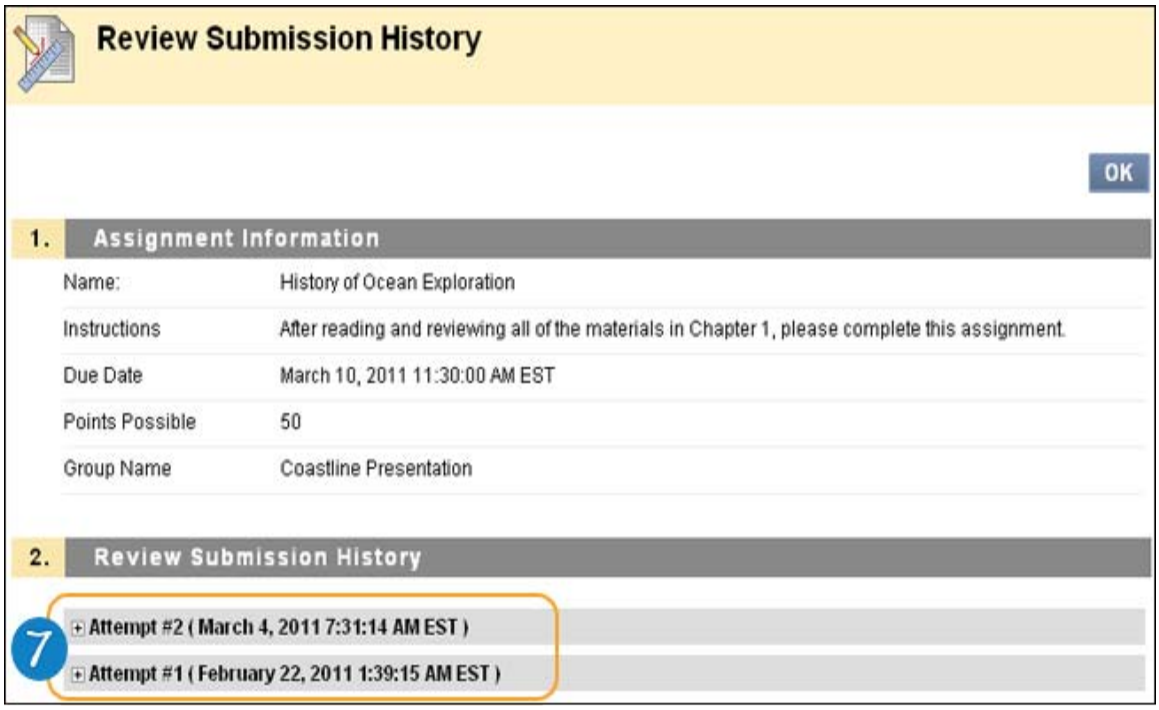

How to View Group Assignment Grades and Feedback

Blackboard does not score assignments automatically. Each assignment needs to be reviewed by your instructor. You can review the information provided by your instructor in **My Grades** or on the assignment's **Review Submission History** page.

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Accessing My Grades From Within Your Course

1. On the Course Menu, click **Tools**
2. On the **Tools** page, click **My Grades**.

Accessing My Grades From Outside Your Course

1. On the **My Institution** tab, click **My Grades** on the **Tools** panel.
2. On the **My Courses/Organizations** page, click the name of your course.

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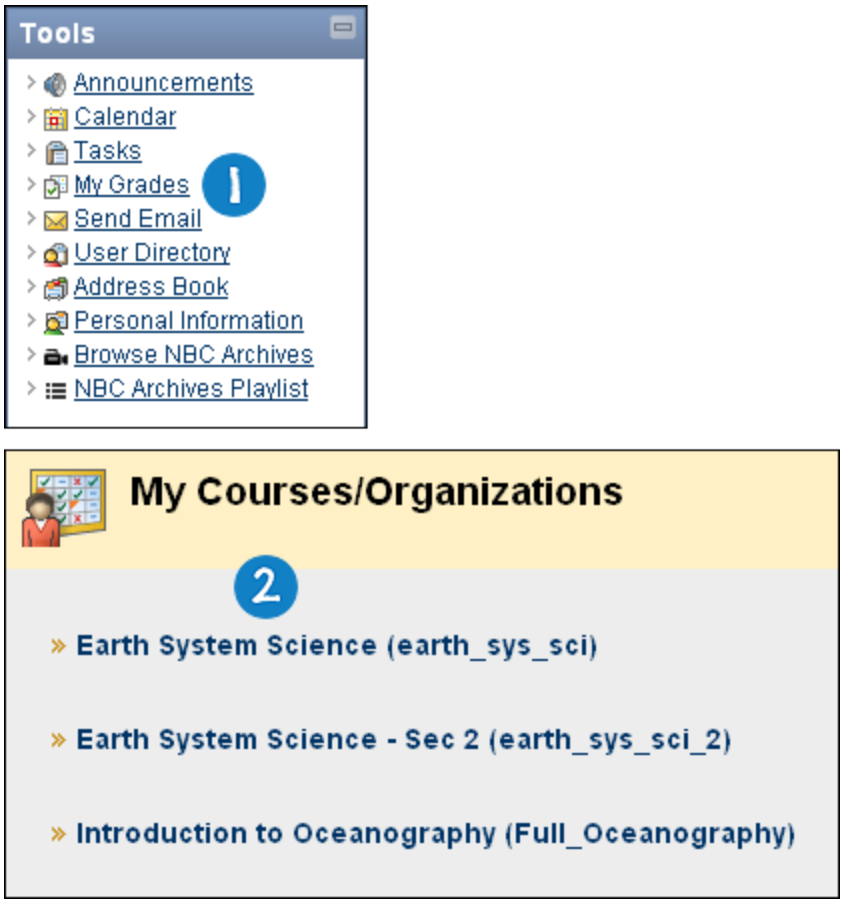

Reviewing Your Grade

- If your group assignment has not been graded, the **Grade** column contains a symbol indicating its status.

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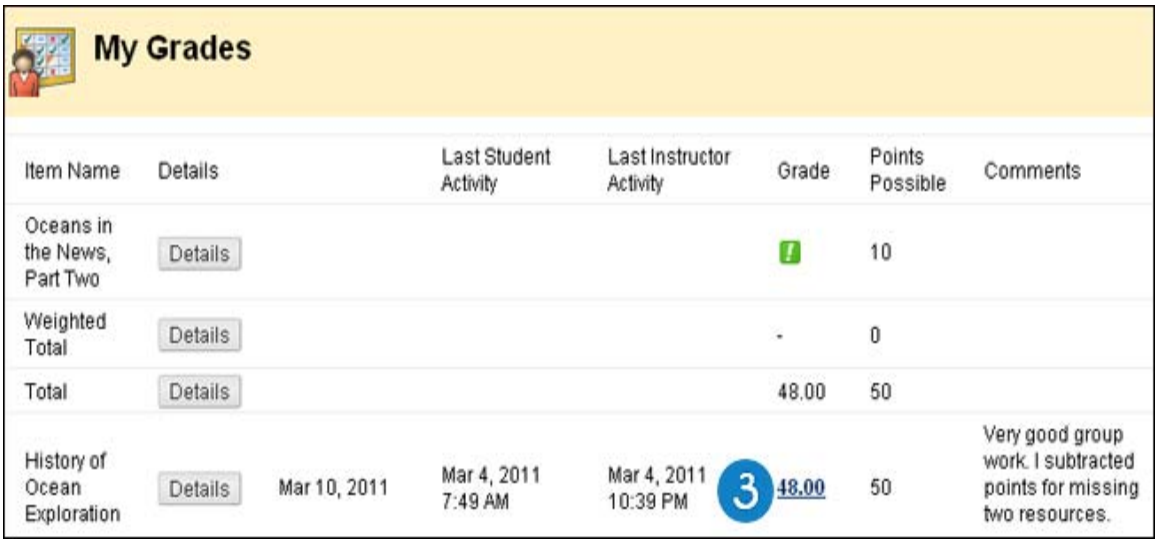
- If your group assignment has been submitted and graded, the grade appears in the **Grade** column. You can also see your instructor's feedback in the **Comments** column.



My Grades

Item Name	Details		Last Student Activity	Last Instructor Activity	Grade	Points Possible	Comments
Oceans in the News, Part Two	Details					10	
Weighted Total	Details				-	0	
Total	Details				48.00	50	
History of Ocean Exploration	Details	Mar 10, 2011	Mar 4, 2011 7:49 AM	Mar 4, 2011 10:39 PM	3 48.00	50	Very good group work. I subtracted points for missing two resources.

Reviewing Your Grade from the Group Homepage

You can also view your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor in the assignment's **Review Submission History** page. If your instructor attached a file, you must access it from the group homepage's group assignment link.

1. On the **My Groups** panel, click the name of your group.
2. On the group homepage, click the name of your group assignment. The **Review Submission History** page includes:
    - **Instructor Feedback**: This section lists your grade and any feedback provided by your instructor.
    - **Attached Files**: This section provides links to open or download any files attached by you or your instructor. For example, your instructor might provide comments in a file that you

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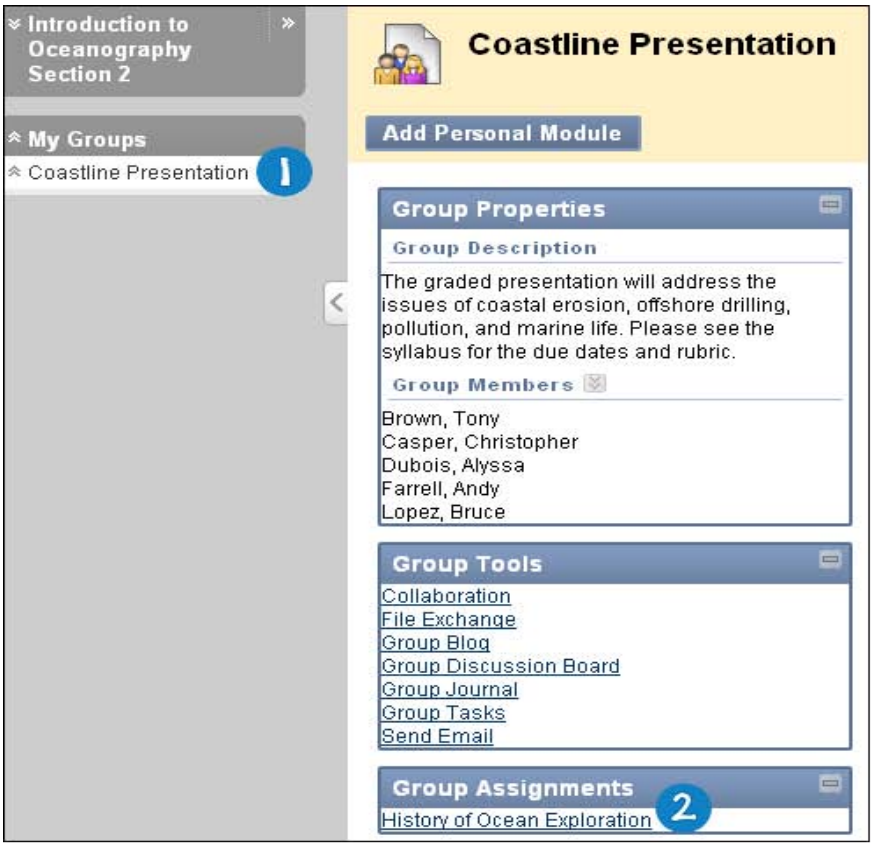

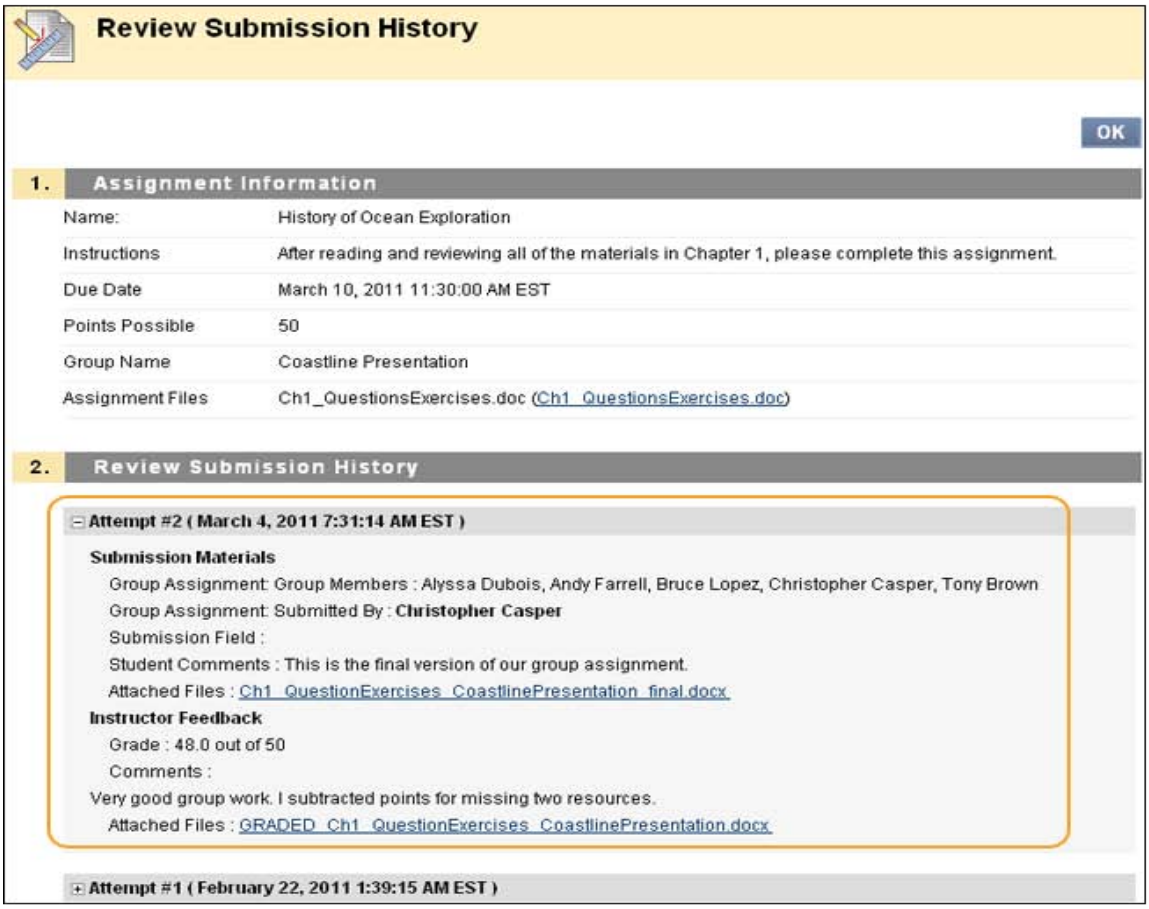

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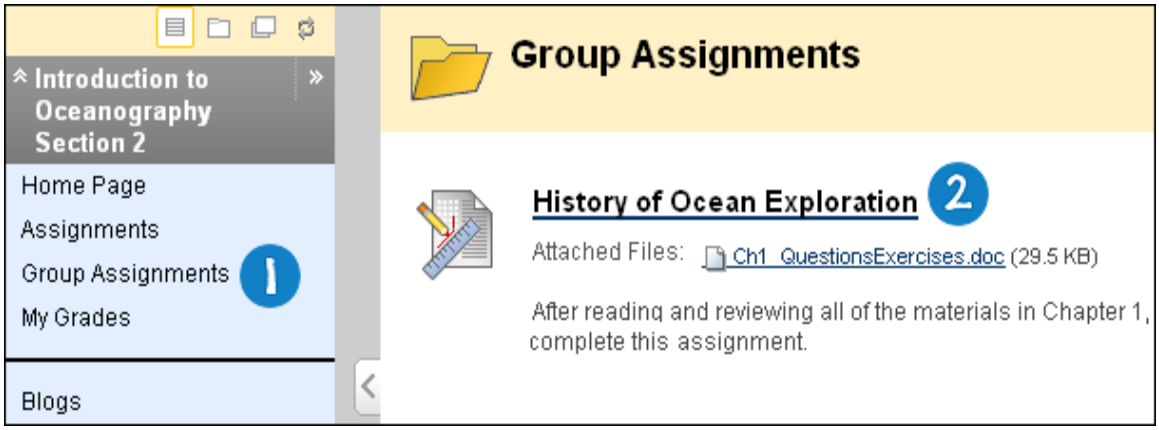
Accessing the Review Submission History Page from Group Assignments

1. Return to the group assignment link in the Content Area that holds the assignment, for example, the **Group Assignments** Content Area.
2. Click the name of the assignment.



My Grades Item Status

The following table describes the symbols appearing on the **My Grades** page.

Symbol	Description
-	Item has not yet been completed. No information is available.
✓	Item has been completed, but will not have a grade (for items such as surveys).
!	Item has been submitted. This item is waiting to be reviewed by your instructor. -OR- Item has been submitted. Your instructor may review this item but may not be provided a grade (for items such as surveys).
Grade	Item has been graded. Click the grade to view detailed feedback.
	Attempt is in progress. This item has not been submitted. To submit the item, see Submitting a Draft Assignment.
	Grade is exempted for this user. If you do not complete this assignment, it will not affect your grade.
!	Error has occurred. Contact your instructor.

About SafeAssign

SafeAssign compares submitted assignments against a set of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. Safe Assign is used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. SafeAssign is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool.

How SafeAssignments Work

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SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm capable of detecting exact and inexact matching between a paper and source material. SafeAssignments are compared against several different databases, including:

- **Internet**: Comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform database**: More than 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access)
- **Institutional document archives**: Contains all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions
- **Global Reference Database**: Contains papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism

Global Reference Database

Blackboard's Global Reference Database is a separate database where students voluntarily donate copies of their papers to help prevent plagiarism. It is separated from each institution's internal database, where all papers are stored by each corresponding institution, and students are free to select the option to check their papers without submitting them to the Global Reference Database. Students submit their papers to the database voluntarily and agree not to delete papers in the future. Submissions to the Global Reference Database are extra copies that are given voluntarily for the purpose of helping with plagiarism prevention. Blackboard does not claim ownership of submitted papers.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

After a paper has been processed, a report will be available detailing the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources. It also shows the suspected sources of each section of the submitted paper that returns a match. Instructors can delete matching sources from the report and process it again. This may be useful if the paper is a continuation of a previously submitted work by the same student.

Because SafeAssign identifies all matching blocks of text, it is important to read the report carefully and investigate whether or not the block of text is properly attributed.

Interpreting SafeAssign Scores

Sentence matching scores represent the percentage probability that two phrases have the same meaning. This number can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90 percent means that there is a 90 percent probability that these two phrases are the same and a 10 percent probability that they are similar by chance and not because the submitted paper includes content from the existing source (whether or not it is appropriately attributed).

Overall score is an indicator of what percentage of the submitted paper matches existing sources. This score is a warning indicator only and papers should be reviewed to see if the matches are properly attributed.

- **Scores below 15 percent**: These papers typical include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other documents. These papers typically do not require further analysis, as there is no evidence of the possibility of plagiarism in these papers.
- **Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent**: These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism. These papers should be reviewed to determine if the matching content is properly attributed.
- **Scores over 40 percent**: There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and should be reviewed for plagiarism.

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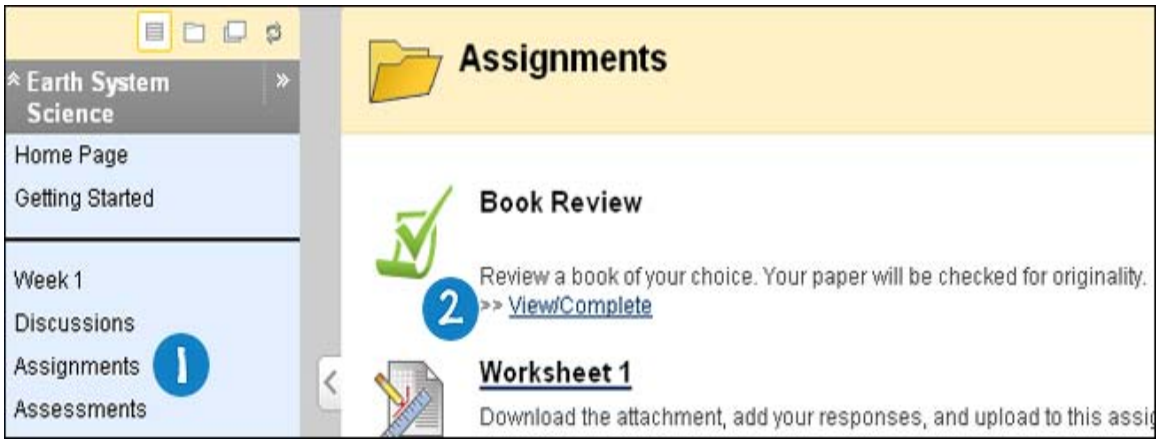
Grade Center Integration

SafeAssignments are created with associated Grade Center items. The score is then recorded in the Grade Center.

How to Submit a SafeAssignment

1. On the Course Menu, select the Content Area that holds the SafeAssignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. On the **Assignments** page, look for the SafeAssignment and click **View/Complete**.



3. On the **Upload SafeAssignment** page, optionally, type your comment in the **Comment** box.
4. Click **Browse** to select a file to attach as your submission.
5. Optionally, select the **Global Reference Database** check box to upload your paper to the Global Reference Database.

   Note: Submitting to the SafeAssign Global Reference Database allows papers from other institutions to be checked against your paper to protect the originality of your work across institutions.
6. Click **Submit**.

   Note: After you submit SafeAssignments, there is a slight delay between the upload and the availability of the SafeAssign report. Results are normally available within 10-15 minutes.

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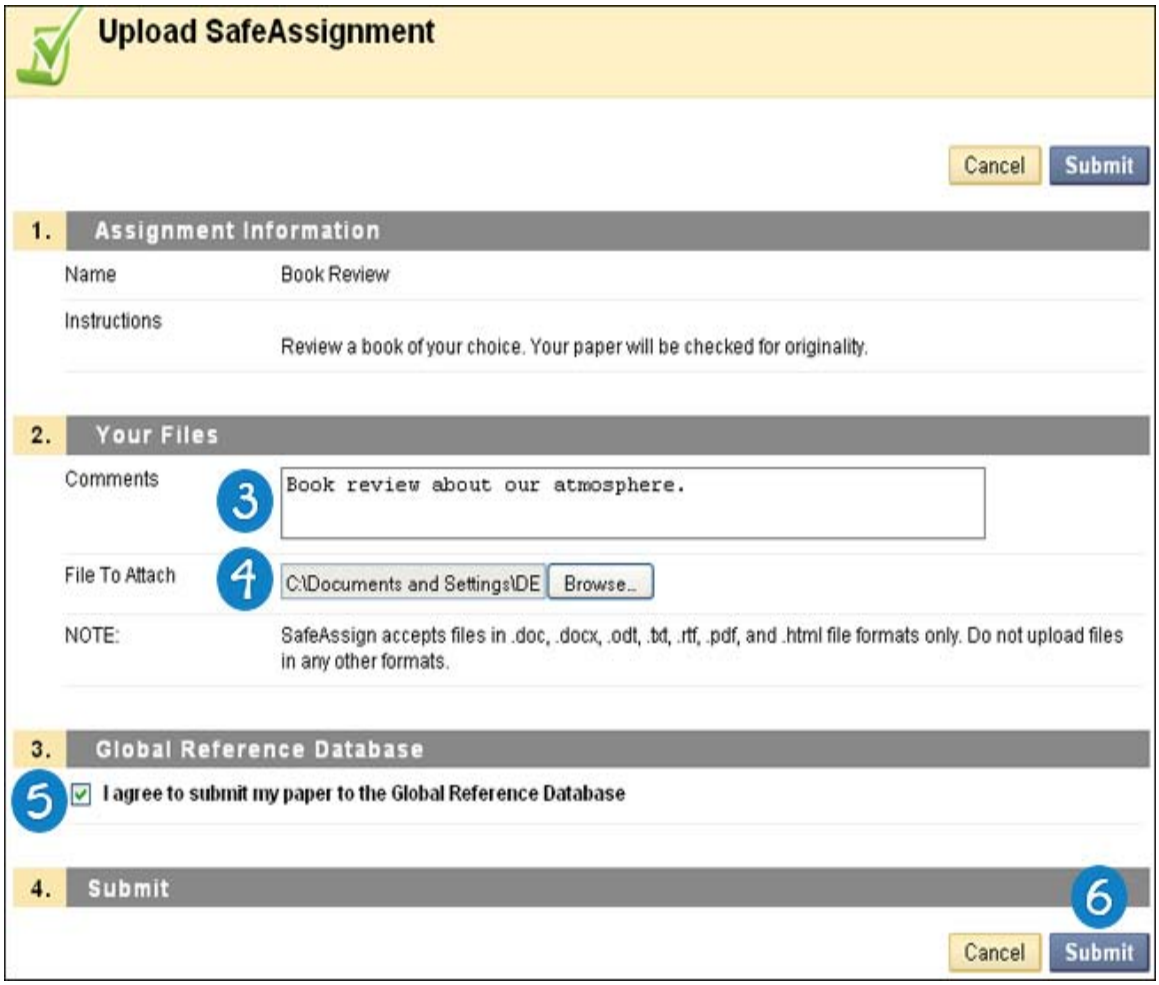

How to View SafeAssignment Submissions

Your submissions and the SafeAssign reports associated with submissions are viewable by accessing the SafeAssignment after submitting your paper.

Note: This option is only available if allowed by your instructor.

Viewing a SafeAssign Submission

1. Return to the assignment link in the Content Area that holds the SafeAssignment, for example, the **Assignments** Content Area.
2. On the **Assignments** page, look for the SafeAssignment and click **View/Complete**. The **View SafeAssignment** page appears. This page includes:
    - **Assignment Information**: This section displays the name of the SafeAssignment and its description.
    - **Submitted Work**: This section provides link to the following :
        - **Text**: Select this option to view your paper and comments.
        - **File**: Select this option to download the submission.

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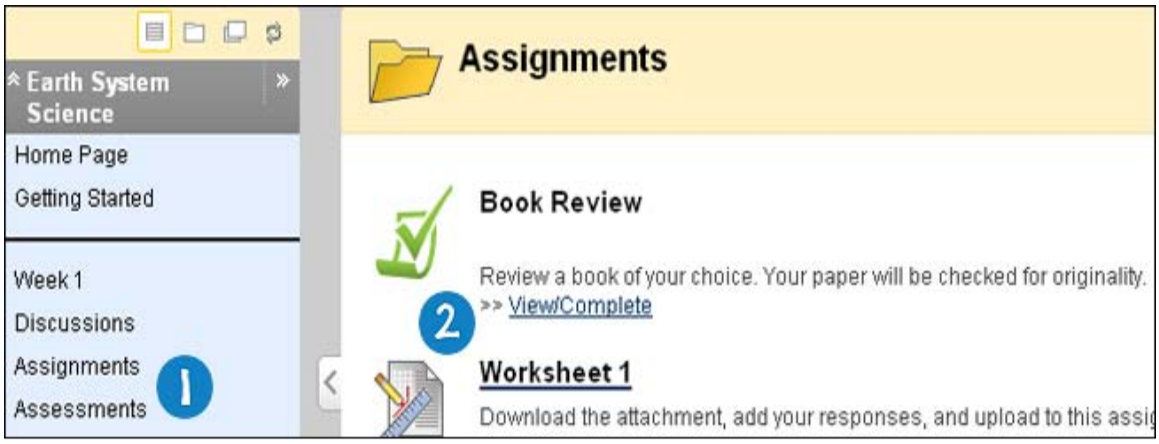
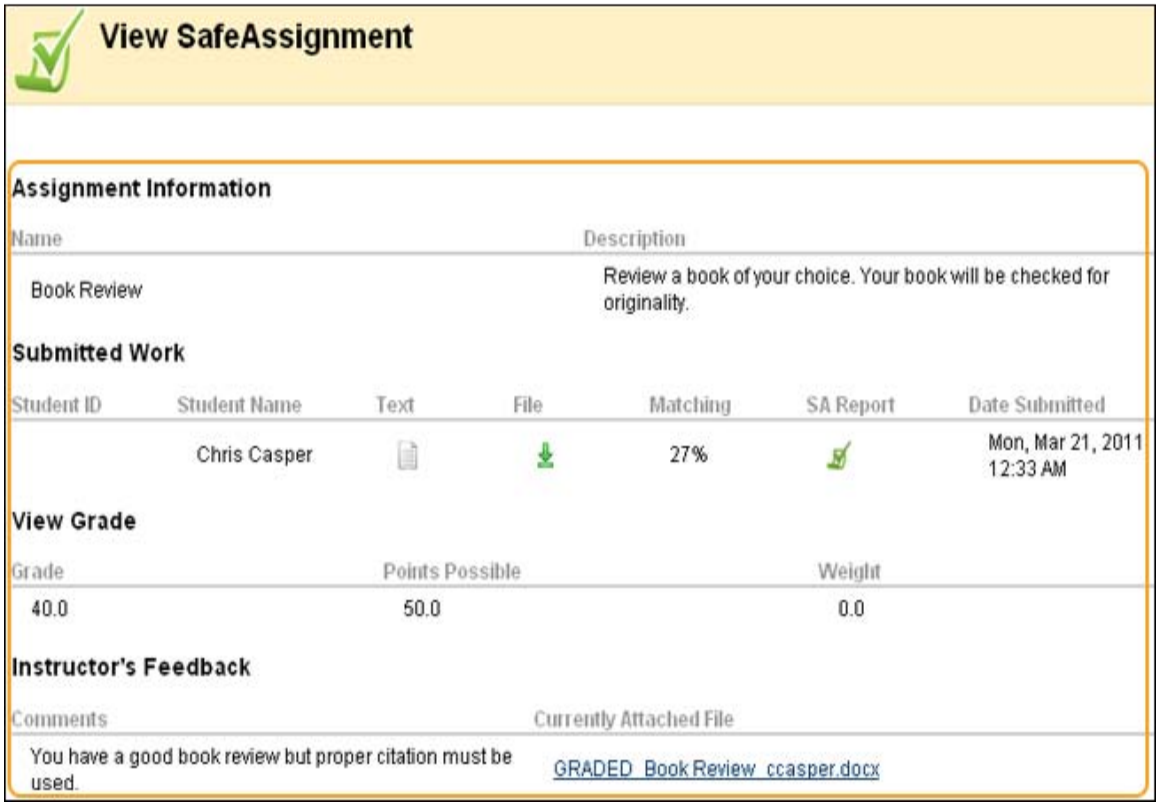
- **Matching**: The percentage listed is the percentage of your paper that matches other sources. Read the full report to determine if the matching is properly attributed.
- **SA Report**: Select this option to view the full SafeAssign report.

- **View Grade**: This section lists the grade given by your instructor.
- **Instructor's Feedback**: This section lists any feedback, and provides links to open or download any files attached by your instructor..





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Viewing a SafeAssign Report

SafeAssign Report provides detailed information about the matches found between your submitted paper and existing sources. The SafeAssign Report identifies all matching blocks of text. It is your and your instructor's responsibility to investigate whether the matching text is properly referenced or not. Detailing every match prevents detection errors due to differences in citing standards.

1. Return to the **View SafeAssignment** page.
2. On the **View SafeAssignment** page, click the green check mark link under **SA Report**. The **SA Report** provides extensive information to help you determine whether you are appropriately citing your works. This page includes:
    - **Paper Information**: This section lists data about the paper, such as the author, percent matching, and when it was submitted. This section also includes options for downloading the report, emailing the report, or viewing a printable version. Note that the printable version may be the most effective view of the report for those users that rely on assistive technologies to access Blackboard Learn.
    - **Suspected Sources**: This section lists the original sources that match sections of the submitted paper.
        - To display the original work, click on the source title.
        - To display the related phrase within your paper, click the magnifying glass.
    - **Paper Text**: This section shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified and numbered. Click a phrase to display the Source Comparison Window which provides a direct comparison between your paper's phrase and the source document it

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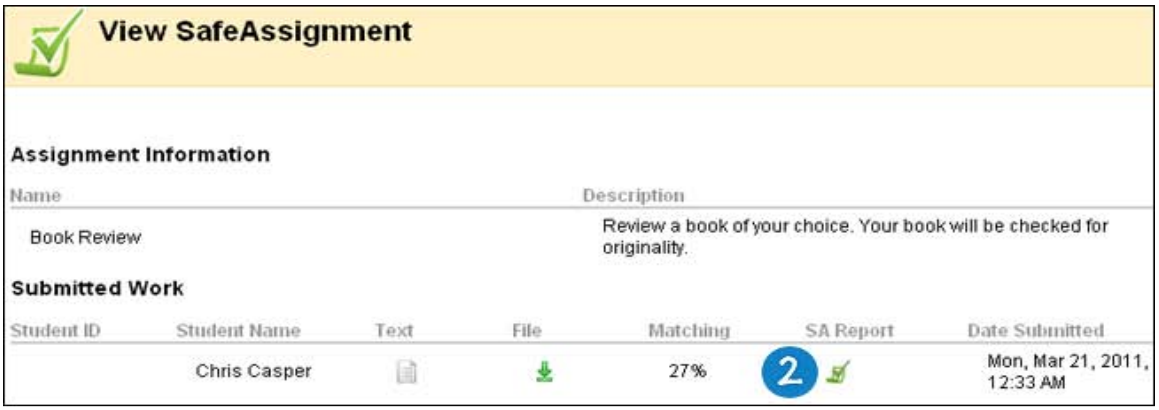

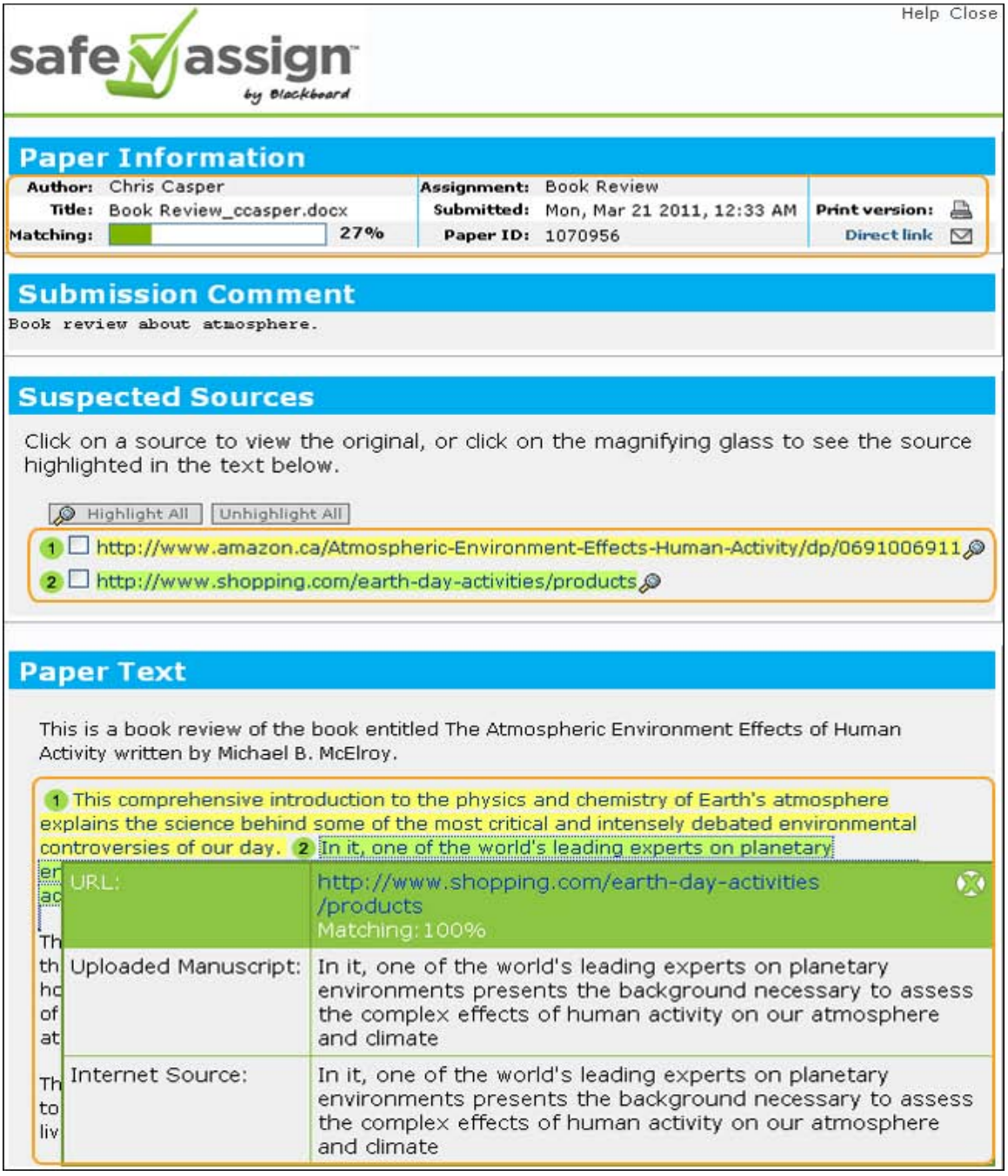

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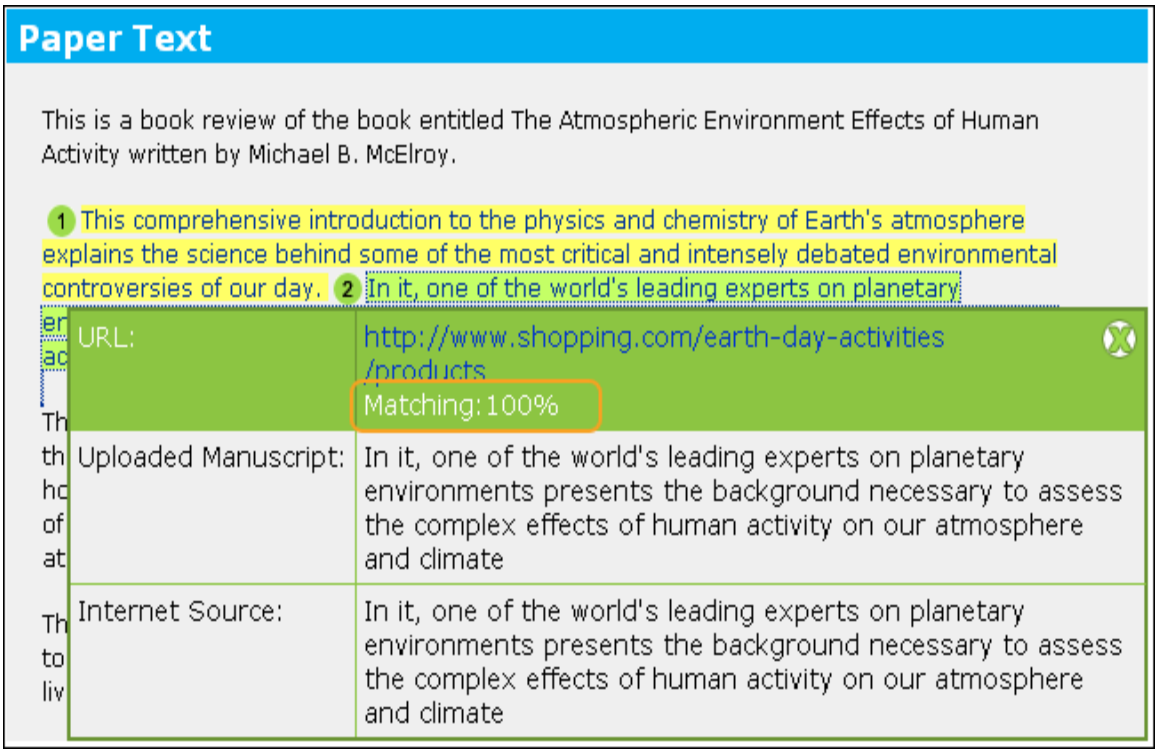
Interpreting the Overall SafeAssign Score

The overall SafeAssign score indicates the percentage of the submitted paper that matches existing sources.



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