Contents

BRIGHTSPACE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT 10.6+.................................................................1

DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY ..................................................................................5

COURSE BUILDER......................................................................................................6

Course Builder basics .........................................................................................6

About Course Builder .........................................................................................6

Course Builder terminology .............................................................................7

Understanding nodes and the course tree .....................................................8

Course Builder interface overview .................................................................9

What is the relationship between Course Builder and Content? ..................11

Creating a course structure ............................................................................11

Add a module or placeholder .......................................................................11

Add a new object ..............................................................................................12

Add an existing object ...................................................................................12

Add a new evaluation object .........................................................................12

Add an existing evaluation object ...............................................................13

Repair broken objects .....................................................................................13

HOMEPAGES AND WIDGETS ................................................................................14

Share homepages and widgets ....................................................................14

Make a course homepage the active homepage ........................................14

Create a widget-based homepage ...............................................................14

Add an optional course banner to a widget-based homepage ................15

Adding a course image banner that is not turned on by default ..........15

Create a tool-based homepage ....................................................................15

Create a homepage with an external URL ...............................................16

List of system widgets ..................................................................................17

Create a custom widget ..............................................................................19
Are there restrictions on sharing custom widgets? ................................................................................................................. 20
Change how a widget appears ................................................................................................................................................ 20
Change a homepage layout .................................................................................................................................................. 21
Change personal settings ...................................................................................................................................................... 21

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN WIZARD ..................................................................................................................................... 23
What are the basics of Instructional Design Wizard and Learning Activity Library? ......................................................... 23

NAVIGATION AND THEMES ...................................................................................................................................................... 24
About the navbar .................................................................................................................................................................... 24
Create a navbar ...................................................................................................................................................................... 24
Style navbar links ................................................................................................................................................................. 25
Make your navbar accessible ................................................................................................................................................ 25
Delete a navbar .................................................................................................................................................................... 26
Change a course navbar ...................................................................................................................................................... 26
Create custom link groups ............................................................................................................................................... 26
About themes ......................................................................................................................................................................... 27
Create a theme ...................................................................................................................................................................... 27
Delete a theme .................................................................................................................................................................... 28
Themes layout style panels ................................................................................................................................................ 29

PERSONAL DASHBOARD ....................................................................................................................................................... 30
Understanding the Personal Dashboard homepage and Course Setup Checklist ....................................................... 30
Personal Dashboard homepage overview ......................................................................................................................... 31
Course Setup Checklist overview ...................................................................................................................................... 32
Reset the welcome tour ...................................................................................................................................................... 33
Set course visibility ............................................................................................................................................................. 33
Change your default homepage .......................................................................................................................................... 34
Re-enable the Personal Dashboard homepage .................................................................................................................. 34
Why can't I view a tour of a tool when I click a link in Course Setup Checklist? .............................................................. 34
Why can't I access more tools from the Course Setup Checklist? ....................................................................................... 34
VISUAL COURSE LIST WIDGET ........................................................................................................................................35
About Course List widget ........................................................................................................................................35
Add the Visual Course List widget to your course home page .......................................................................................35
Add a graphic to a course ........................................................................................................................................35
ABOUT D2L ................................................................................................................................................................36
Document Change History

This version of the document replaces all previous versions. The following table describes the most recent changes to this document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision Date</th>
<th>Summary of Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 6, 2017</td>
<td>• Added <em>Add an optional course banner to a widget-based homepage</em> and <em>Adding a course image banner that is not turned on by default.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3, 2016</td>
<td>• Updated formatting for consistency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 6, 2016</td>
<td>• Updated <em>Change how a widget appears</em> with information about how to change an image on a course widget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5, 2016</td>
<td>• Updated <em>List of system widgets</em> topic to add Capture widget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3, 2016</td>
<td>• Added a <em>Change personal settings</em> topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 3, 2015</td>
<td>• Added new pages for creating widget-based, tool-based, and external URL-based homepages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The content in this guide is applicable to the most recent version of Brightspace Learning Environment unless otherwise noted.
Course Builder basics

About Course Builder

Use Course Builder to interact with your course materials, learning experiences, and assessments in one consolidated interface, allowing you to visualize and review your entire course at once. The Course Builder interface is straightforward and efficient, transforming the process of course design and set-up from multiple steps in different tools into simple one-step actions.

As you build your course, Course Builder interacts with the following Brightspace Learning Environment tools:

- Content
- Manage Files
- Discussions
- Assignments
- Quizzes
- Grades
- Competencies

Course Builder also extends instructional design guidance provided by the Instructional Design Wizard by implementing and displaying the blueprint you create in the wizard. If you decide not to use the Instructional Design Wizard, Course Builder still enables you to incorporate instructional design best practices when planning your course. As you build your course outline with modules and placeholders, you can add notes to each module and placeholder summarizing your course goals and learning objectives. When you are ready, you can populate your outline by creating appropriate lessons and activities within Course Builder.
## Course Builder terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nodes</td>
<td>Each structure element in the course tree is called a node. Node is a general term that can represent a module, placeholder, or object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modules</td>
<td>A module is an organization element that can represent different chapters, units, or sections of your course. You must create a module in Course Builder before you can begin adding objects and placeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placeholders</td>
<td>A placeholder is essentially a container for an object. It is not visible to learners until you add an object to it. There are five placeholder types: link, file, discussion, assignment submission folder, and quiz. Placeholders help you define the structure of your course before you are prepared to compile actual course content. This enables you to plan your lectures, discussion topics, assignment submission folders, tests, and other course activities before you begin creating them. You can populate placeholders when you are ready by creating new content or linking to existing content. For example, if the completion of a particular course unit depends on acquiring files from another resource, drag placeholders into the course tree to represent those files until you receive them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects</td>
<td>Objects are simply learning materials, activities, or assessments in your course. Object types include: links, learning objects, HTML files, discussions, assignment submission folders, quizzes, grade items, and learning objectives. When you create an object in Course Builder, you are in effect creating it within its respective tool and adding it to your course content. For example, when you drag a quiz object into the course tree from Add Content, Course Builder prompts you to enter its basic details and creates the quiz in Manage Quizzes. At a later time, you can go to Manage Quizzes to edit advanced quiz properties and add questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding nodes and the course tree
The course tree represents course content as a hierarchy of nested nodes. The appearance of each node denotes its type, the object type it holds, and the actions you can perform on it.

The first node in the course tree is the course node. When selected, you can change your course offering information in the selected node panel.

**Figure 1: The visual elements on nodes**

- The course node is the first node in the course tree.
- A grey triangle indicates a draggable item.
- When you select a node, its outline appears orange and its background color appears darker.
- Node icons indicate object and placeholder types.
- Context menus provide access to node specific actions.
- Modules have a solid outline and light grey background color.
- Placeholders have a dashed outline and pale blue background color.
- Objects have a solid outline and darker blue background color.
- Status icons indicate when an object is inactive and whether it has assessment object associations.
Course Builder interface overview

The Course Builder user interface consists of three sections.

Figure 2: Course Builder user interface

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
1) Toolbox

You can add modules, placeholders, and objects to the course tree from three areas within the toolbox: Build Outline, Add Content, and Browse Tools.

Build Outline provides you with module and placeholder elements that you can add to your course tree to create your course outline.

Add Content provides you with a selection of objects you can create and add to the course tree or drag onto placeholders in the course tree. Direct access to object types within Course Builder enables you to bypass the complexity of setting up objects in their individual tool areas. You can create and add the following objects to the course tree:

- Links
- HTML files
- Discussion topics
- Assignment submission folders
- Quizzes
- Learning objectives
- Existing learning objects from Brightspace Learning Repository

Browse Tools displays a library of pre-existing objects in your course tools. From Browse Tools, you can locate and add these pre-existing objects to the course tree or drag them onto placeholders in the course tree. This section of the toolbox features a drill-down menu with breadcrumb links that appear at the top of the toolbox as you navigate deeper into the menu. You can click on breadcrumb links to return to a previous section.

2) Course Tree

The course tree is a visual representation of your course structure. It displays the hierarchy of your course content as a series of nested nodes. The course tree simplifies the process of rearranging, copying, and deleting your course structure.

Each structure in the course tree is called a node. Node is a general term that represents a module, placeholder, or object.

Each non-module node in the course tree includes an icon indicating its type. This can help you to see what’s in your course at a glance.
When you select a node in the course tree, the selected node panel displays its details and enables you to perform actions on that node. From the selected node panel you can:

- View general properties for an object
- Edit placeholder properties to change the display name or add planning notes
- Edit object properties
- Launch an object’s associated system tool
- Perform node-related actions

What is the relationship between Course Builder and Content?
As you add modules, placeholders, and objects to the course tree, Course Builder synchronizes with various tools within Brightspace Learning Environment, including the Content tool.

The way Course Builder interacts with the Content tool depends on what you add to the course tree:

- When you add a module to the course tree, the system generates a content module which appears in the Content tool.

- When you add a placeholder to the course tree, the system generates an empty content topic. This content topic is hidden from the Content tool until you attach an object to the placeholder.

- When you add an object to the course tree, the system generates a content topic. This content topic is visible in the Content tool. If you edit an object’s placeholder name or notes within Course Builder, you are editing the name and shared designer comments of the corresponding content topic within the Content tool.

To see how Course Builder content displays for learners, from the tool navigation, access the Content area.

Creating a course structure
Add a module or placeholder

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Course Builder.

3. From the Build Outline section of the toolbox, do one of the following:
   - Drag a module or placeholder into the course tree in the location you want.
   - Click on a module or placeholder element. From the Select a location dialog, click on the location you want to add your module or placeholder.
4. Enter the module or placeholder details.
5. Click **Create**.

**Add a new object**

When you create an object in the toolbox or drag a new object into the course tree, Course Builder interacts with its tool, enabling you to populate basic information and attributes. This streamlines the process of setting up your resources so you can focus on developing your course. From the toolbox or selected node panel, you can launch an object's corresponding tool to complete and finalize its details.

1. On the navbar, click ![Course Admin](image).
2. Click ![Course Builder](image).
3. From the **Add Content** section of the toolbox, do one of the following:
   - Drag an object type into the course tree in the location you want.
   - Click on the object type you want to create. From the **Select a location** dialog, click on the module or placeholder you want to add your object to.

4. Enter the object details.
5. Click **Create**.

**Add an existing object**

1. On the navbar, click ![Course Admin](image).
2. Click ![Course Builder](image).
3. From the **Browse Tools** section of the toolbox, locate the existing object you want to add to your course.
4. Do one of the following:
   - Drag the object you want to add to your course into the course tree in the location you want.
   - Select the check box beside the object you want to add to your course structure and click **Add to Course**.
     From the **Select a location** dialog, click on the module or placeholder you want to add your object to.

**Add a new evaluation object**

After adding activity objects (discussions, Assignment submission folders, and quizzes) to your course structure, you can associate them with evaluation objects (grade items and learning objectives). If an evaluation object is already associated with an activity, that association appears in the evaluation object's details when you browse objects. At the same time, an activity object displays grading details when it is associated with an evaluation object.

1. On the navbar, click ![Course Admin](image).
2. Click ![Course Builder](image).
3. From the **Add Content** section of the toolbox, do one of the following:

- Drag an evaluation object type onto a discussion, Assignment submission folder, or quiz in the course tree.
- Click on the evaluation object you want to create. From the **Select a location** dialog, click on the discussion, Assignment submission folder, or quiz you want to add your evaluation object to.

4. Enter your evaluation object’s details.

5. Click **Create**.

### Add an existing evaluation object

1. On the navbar, click **Course Admin**.

2. Click **Course Builder**.

3. From the **Browse Tools** section of the toolbox, locate the existing grade item or learning objective you want to add to your course.

4. Do one of the following:

   - Drag the evaluation object you want onto a discussion, assignment submissions folder, or quiz object in the course tree.
   - Select the radio button beside the evaluation object you want and click **Add to Course**. From the **Select a location** dialog, click on the discussion, assignment submissions folder, or quiz object you want to add your grade item or learning objective to.

### Repair broken objects

Deleting or moving files, links, discussions, assignment submissions folders, and quizzes within their tools can result in broken objects. If an object breaks, Course Builder displays a broken link status icon within its node. The object becomes a placeholder retaining its name and notes.

To repair a broken object, drag an object from the toolbox onto the placeholder.

![Scientific Method](image-url)

Figure 3: A node with a broken object
Homepages and Widgets

Share homepages and widgets

Homepages and widgets can only be shared downward, to child org units. To ensure that a custom widget or homepage can be shared with child org units, create it at the organization, department, or semester level.

To make a homepage available to child org units, on the **Edit Homepage** page, select the **Share with child org units** check box. When this option is selected, the homepage displays on the Homepages page of a child org unit.

To make a custom widget available to child org units, on the **Edit Widget** page, select the **Add an Org Unit** check box. When this option is selected, the child org unit displays the custom widget in the Add Widgets list.

Make a course homepage the active homepage

All courses are initially set up with a default course homepage by your system administration. You can use the Homepage Management tool to create a new homepage and set it as the active homepage for your course. Course homepages might be enforced by your organization. If so, the homepage listed on Homepages displays an Enforced status, and you cannot change your active homepage.

There are three types of course homepages you can use: Widget-based (Displays a standard homepage with various widgets), Tool (Displays a system tool, such as Content, as your homepage), and External URL (Displays an external web page as your course homepage).

1. To make your newly created homepage the active homepage of an org unit, on the **Homepages** page, from the **Active Homepage** drop-down list, select the homepage
2. Click **Apply**.

Create a widget-based homepage

Widget-based homepages display a standard homepage that contains various widgets. After you create the homepage, you can add or remove widgets, customize their appearance, and create custom widgets to expand the functionality of your course homepage.

1. On the navbar, click **Course Admin > Homepages > Create Homepage**.
2. Enter a name and description for your homepage.
3. In the **Type** drop-down list, select **Widget-based**.
4. To add a header to your homepage below the navbar, select **Include homepage** header.
5. Enter the replace string of the information that you want it to display. Replace strings are placeholders that refer to information in Brightspace Learning Environment; the system replaces these placeholders with the corresponding information when you apply them to a homepage header.

6. To choose a layout for a widget-based homepage, click **Change Layout**.

7. To add widgets to your homepage, click **Add Widgets**.

8. Style your added widgets by adjusting their properties.

9. Click **Save and Close**.

**Add an optional course banner to a widget-based homepage**

It is possible to add a course image banner below the navigation bar on widget-based course homepages. The banner provides a venue to personalize the look and feel of course homepages and provide a connection between the course tile in the My Courses widget and the course homepage.

Administrators control the prominence of this feature in the Brightspace Daylight Experience. If the feature is turned on, the banner appears at the top of the course homepage by default. If you have the appropriate permissions can turn of the course banner using the options menu on the banner or using the banner setting on the Course Offering Information page.

**Adding a course image banner that is not turned on by default**

If your administrators do not configure the course image banner to be turned on by default, you can turn it on using the Course Offering Information page. Note that the maximum display size for the course image banner is 1230 by 200 pixels. Larger images and images with different aspect ratios are automatically resized appropriately.

1. From the navbar, click **Course Administration** and select **Course Offering Information**.
2. Click **Browse** and search for the image you want to use as the course banner.
3. Select **Display the image in a banner on the course homepage**.
4. Click **Save**.

**Create a tool-based homepage**

A tool-based homepage displays a system tool, such as Content as your homepage.

1. On the navbar, click **Course Admin > Homepages > Create Homepage**.
2. Enter a name and description for your homepage.
3. In the **Type** drop-down list, select **Tool**.
4. Select the tool you want to use as the homepage.
5. Click **Save and Close**.

### Create a homepage with an external URL

An external URL homepage displays a web page external to your organization as the course homepage.

1. On the navbar, click **Course Admin > Homepages > Create Homepage**.
2. Enter a name and description for your homepage.
3. In the **Type** drop-down list, select **External URL**.
4. Enter the URL location you want to use as your course homepage.
5. Click **Save and Close**.

You can use a replace string to populate an external URL for an org unit. If you configure a homepage URL as follows: https://www.bing.com/search?q={OrgUnitId}, the replace string is populated with the users current OrgUnitId when the homepage is accessed.
List of system widgets

System widgets are defined by the Brightspace Learning Environment platform. You cannot modify the contents of system widgets or delete them, but you can change where the widgets are located on your course homepage and customize their display options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widget</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin Tools</td>
<td>The Admin Tools widget displays all of your available administrative links and provides easy access to the tools that you need to manage. The number of administrative links you are able to see in the Admin Tools widget is determined by your role’s permission settings in the Roles and Permissions tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookmarks</td>
<td>This widget is used to bookmark pages in course content. The bookmark widget is typically located on course offering homepages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>The Calendar widget consists of a mini-calendar and a list of upcoming events. It displays all events created by instructors and administrators for the applicable month. Clicking on a day in the widget’s mini-Calendar filters the event list to only display events for that day. Clicking on an event in the widget takes you to the event in the Calendar tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture</td>
<td>The Capture widget enables you to access the recording and presentation functions of Brightspace Capture Encoder, and provides direct links to all Capture presentations in a course to learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Browser</td>
<td>The Content Browser widget enables you to browse course content, view recently visited topics, and view bookmarked topics from your course homepage. You can access your recently viewed and bookmarked topics from the content browser home and use the drill-down menu to navigate course content topics and modules. As you navigate deeper into content modules, the navigation at the top enables you to move up one module level or jump backwards to the Content Browser home. To view a topic, click on its name to launch it in View Content. The Content Browser widget retains the place you left off when you return to your course homepage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Administration</td>
<td>The Course Administration widget displays links to your course administration tools. The number of links you are able to see in the Course Administration widget is determined by your role’s permissions in the Roles and Permissions tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Search</td>
<td>The Google Search widget enables you to search the web from your homepage. Your search results open in a new window using your default internet browser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Courses</td>
<td>The My Courses widget shows course offerings users are enrolled in and have access to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widget</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Users can navigate to course homepages by clicking the names of course offerings in this widget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widget</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Settings</td>
<td>The My Settings widget only displays links the user has permission to view. These permissions are located under Account Settings in the Roles and Permissions tool. Users with permission to edit specific course offerings can access the Course Management tool from the widget menu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcements</td>
<td>The Announcements widget communicates important updates and information to users. You can create Announcements items with formatted text, graphics, audio, and quicklinks. You can also choose the date range and conditions for a Announcements item’s availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office 365</td>
<td>The Office 365 widget allows you to log in to your Office 365 account by entering your credentials. When you log in, the widget displays a list of your emails, calendar events, and OneDrive documents. Clicking anywhere in the widget takes you directly to your email, calendar, or OneDrive, depending on which tab you’re on. Navigating to an individual email, calendar event, or OneDrive document within the widget is currently not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Library</td>
<td>The Picture Library widget displays images from the Picture Library tool and provides links to create and edit picture albums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Switch</td>
<td>The Role Switch widget enables you to temporarily switch your active role to another role in your organization by selecting it from a drop-down list. You can then navigate the org unit based on the permissions of another role without having to log out and log in as another user. For example, you can select another role to see how Course Home or a quiz appears to users in that role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>The Tasks widget enables you to view and manage tasks from the Calendar tool. You can add a due date and additional notes to each task, and the system sorts them into the categories of Today, Upcoming, or Someday (no due date). If you mark a task complete, it disappears from the list. However, you can click the View Completed Tasks link to review the tasks you’ve finished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updates</td>
<td>The Updates widget can be configured to display any of the following links:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New Assignment submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unread Assignment submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unread discussions posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widget</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ungraded quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quizzes that have not been attempted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-registration updates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Updates widget can only be configured by a D2L Implementation Services Specialist. Please contact your Account Manager if you want to customize the links displayed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widget</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User Links</td>
<td>The User Links widget allows users to create a personal list of links to external websites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Create a custom widget

Custom widgets allow you to expand the functionality of available content in your homepages to suit your specific organizational and/or course needs. You can add custom HTML code to create a wide range of widgets. As an Instructor, you can create custom widgets for your courses, or use custom widgets shared to your course offerings from the organization, department, or semester level.

1. On the My Home or Course Home page, click Course Admin > Widgets > Create Widget.
2. Enter a name and description for the widget.
3. If you want to share your custom widget with other org units, click Add an Org Unit.
4. To add your own HTML content to the widget using the HTML Source Editor, click the Content tab > Edit HTML Source icon. Add your HTML custom code.
5. To apply different styling options to the widget, click Customize Widget Style.
   To help you meet visual accessibility standards, there is a built-in WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guideline) checker on the Widget Settings page. If you choose a shade that does not meet these guidelines (for example, the contrast between the text color and the background color is too low), the check mark by WCAG AA is replaced by a warning or error icon to alert you to possible accessibility issues.
6. Click Save and Close.
Are there restrictions on sharing custom widgets?

You can only share a custom widget with child org units if the widget is created at the organization, department, or semester level.

The following are the cascading effects if you share a custom widget from different levels:

- **The organization level** - The widget is shared to all departments, semesters, course templates, and course offerings in the organization.
- **The department level** - The widget is shared to all semesters, course templates, and course offerings in the department.
- **The semester level** - The widget is shared to all course templates and course offerings in the semester.

Change how a widget appears

1. On the My Home or Course Home page, click Course Admin > Widgets > Edit.
2. Click the Content tab.
3. Do any of the following to customize your widget appearance:
   - To change the image on a course widget tile, click the widget and select Change Image.
   - To hide the titlebar, clear the Display Titlebar check box.
   - To prevent users from closing the widget on the homepage, select the Prohibit minimizing widget check box.
   - To set a custom title, in the Name section, select the Custom radio button. Enter your text in the field.
   - To change the font color of the title, in the Titlebar area, select a font color from the Color selector.
   - To change the background of the titlebar, from the Fill Type drop-down list, select Gradient or Solid. Select a color style: soft, light, or dark. These colors are set by your administrator.
   - To create a shadow effect on the titlebar, in the Titlebar Shadow area, select a font color from the Color selector. Set a vertical amount and a blur level in the fields provided.
   - To change the border on the titlebar, from the Border Style drop-down list, select a line type. From the Color selector, select a border color. From the Width drop-down list, select a border width.
   - To remove the border on the titlebar, clear the Display Border check box.
   - To show the page background in a custom widget, in the Widget Background area, select the Transparent check box.
To create a shadow effect on the widget, from the Color selector, select a shadow color. Set the vertical and horizontal pixels, the spread of the shadow, and the blur level in the fields provided.

To change the border of the widget, from the Border Style drop-down list, select a line type. From the Color selector, select a border color. From the Width drop-down list, select a border width.

To remove the border of the widget, clear the Display Border check box.

To change the shape of the corners on the widget, set a pixel value for each corner of the widget in the fields provided. The higher the value, the more rounded the corners appear. The lower the value, the sharper the corners appear. The lowest value you can enter is 0.

To change the padding on custom widgets, set a pixel value for each side of the widget in the fields provided.

4. Click Save.

Note: To help you meet visual accessibility standards, there is a built-in WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guideline) checker on the Widget Settings page. If you choose a shade that does not meet these guidelines (for example, the contrast between the text color and the background color is too low), the check mark by WCAG AA is replaced by a warning or error icon to alert you to possible accessibility issues.

Change a homepage layout

1. In the bottom right corner of the homepage, click Edit this homepage.

2. To view all widgets available for use in the homepage you are editing, in the Widgets section, click Add Widgets.

3. Select the check boxes beside the widgets that you want to add to the homepage panel, and click Add.

   Note: The widgets listed in the Add Widgets dialog are dependent on the tools available for use within your organization and added to the current org unit.

4. To change a widget's vertical placement on a panel or move it to another panel, click and drag the widget.

5. Click Save and Close.

Change personal settings

You can change your user profile, account settings, notifications, and more using the My Settings widget found on the My Home page.

1. On the navbar, click My Home.
2. On the **My Home** page, navigate to the **My Settings** widget.

![My Settings widget](image)

Figure 4: The My Settings widget in D2L Learning Environment

3. From the **My Settings** widget, click a setting:
   
   **Note:** Depending on your permissions, not all of the following settings may appear.
   
   - **Profile** - change settings for your profile picture, contact information, social networks, and personal information.
   - **Account Settings** - change settings for fonts, dialogs, HTML Editor, reading, video, locale and languages, pseudo-localization, signing in, application, Brightspace Binder, Discussions, Email, and metadata.
   - **Notifications** - change settings for email and mobile contact information, summary of course activity, specific tool notifications such as Grades and Quizzes, custom notifications, and course exclusions.
   - **Email Address**.
   - **Change Password**.
   - **View my Progress** - change settings for the Class Progress dashboard.
   - **Locker** - manage your locker and group lockers.
   - **Brightspace ePortfolio** - manage Brightspace ePortfolio.
Instructional Design Wizard

What are the basics of Instructional Design Wizard and Learning Activity Library?

The Instructional Design Wizard provides you with a step-by-step process for:

- Defining course learning objectives
- Incorporating assessment activities
- Identifying appropriate instructional methods and activities
- Recommending tools that support the learning experiences you want to provide in your course
- Promoting alignment between learning experiences and Bloom’s Taxonomy

As you progress through the wizard, it creates a course structure using placeholders in the Course Builder and reviews instructional design strategies.

The Instructional Design Wizard promotes the following instructional design best practices and concepts for course design:

- Understanding learner personas
- Spending time early in the process to document your desired outcomes and learning goals for your course, including a mix of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation objectives
- Determining an appropriate mix of instructional strategies for the course and its lessons, including direct instruction, collaborative learning, independent learning, and experiential learning
- Creating a variety of content-focused and application-focused learning experiences using Brightspace Learning Environment tools and technology in different ways
- Determining appropriate measurement and assessment strategies, including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to understand, customize, and accurately measure learning outcomes
- Reviewing your course for appropriate length, distribution of experiences, etc.
Use the Learning Activity Library to view, activate or deactivate, and add to the activity descriptions in the Instructional Design Wizard by creating custom activity descriptions.

The Owner column indicates which org unit an activity description exists within. Activities listed as owned by System are org-level activity descriptions.

Icons in the Cognitive Skills column show the cognitive domain from Bloom’s Taxonomy that different activity descriptions develop.

Navigation and Themes

About the navbar

The navbar contains links to course-specific and organization-wide tools and resources. Each course (or org unit) has its own navbar that links to relevant tools for that course. You can create custom links and link groups if you want to include URL links to third-party tools and other areas of Brightspace Learning Environment.

Your organization or specific department can share navbars with courses and other org units to ensure consistent branding and navigation. If you have permission to manage navbars, you can use a shared navbar or create a navbar specifically for your course. New course offerings (or org units) use the default navbar set by the organization (or parent org unit).

Navbars created at the course level cannot be shared with other courses, but you can create and store them inside a course template to make them available in course offerings that use the course template.

Navbars consist of two components: a theme that controls the look of the navbar and the navbar itself (which controls the links available on the navbar).

At the organization level, navbars listed on the Navbars page display information about whether a navbar is shared to other org units. At the course offering level, all navbars listed on the Navbars page display information about whether they are shared from another org unit (such as a department, course template, or the organization), and the name of the org unit sharing the navbar. If you have permission to manage shared navbars, the name of the org unit sharing its navbar becomes a link to the Navbars page where the navbar was created.

You can only share navbars with child org units below the org unit in which they were created. For example, if you create a navbar in a department you can only share it with all courses in that department.

You cannot add all tools and functionality to a navbar. Some tools are only available in widgets and on the minibar.

Create a navbar

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.
2. Click Navigation & Themes > Create Navbar.
3. Enter your navbar details.

4. If you want to change the theme of your navbar, click Change Theme. Select a new theme and click Update.

5. In the Links area, do any of the following:
   - To add a custom link to any area of the navbar, click Create Custom Link. Enter your custom link details, and click Create.
   - To add existing system links to any area of the navbar, click Add Links. Select your links, and click Add. The list of links available depends on the tools your organization uses, the custom links and link groups available, and the tools enabled for your course.

6. Click Save and Close.

Style navbar links
1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. Click on the navbar containing the links you want to style.

4. Click on the link you want to style.

5. In the Properties for [link] area, do one of the following:
   - To display the icon and text for the link, select Use default theme style.
   - To customize how your link displays, from the Custom Style drop-down list, select your display option.

6. Click Hide Properties.

7. Click Save and Close.

Make your navbar accessible
By default, the link areas in a navbar are called the Top Left Link Area, Top Right Link Area, Bottom Left Link Area, and Bottom Right Link Area. You can rename these link areas with your own headings to provide users with a better sense of navigation. For example, screen reader users can orient themselves to a navbar more quickly if headings effectively communicate the type of tools found in each link area.

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. Click on the navbar containing the link areas you want to edit.

4. Click on the link area you want to edit.
5. In the Properties for [link area] area, select the Rename Link Area check box. In the field provided, enter a new name for the area.

6. Click Hide Properties.

7. Repeat steps 4-6 until you are done editing the navbar’s link areas.

8. Click Save and Close.

Delete a navbar

You cannot delete an active or default navbar, and you can only delete a navbar from the org unit (or organization) in which it was created.

If you delete a navbar that is shared to child org units, all child org units using the navbar will automatically revert to the default navbar.

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. On the Navbars page, from the context menu of the navbar you want to delete, click Delete.

Change a course navbar

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. From the Active Navbar drop-down list, select a navbar for your course.

4. Click Apply.

Create custom link groups

Custom link groups are individual links grouped together into sets of links. You can create custom link groups and use effective link group names to suggest relationships or common features each group shares. For example, you could create an Assessments link group that contains links to the Quizzes, Assignments, Surveys, and Self Assessments tools.

When you create a custom link group and add it to a navbar link area, the link group appears as a drop-down menu labeled with the custom link group name.

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. From the tool navigation, click Custom Links > Create Link Group.
4. Enter a name for your custom link group.

5. In the Links area, do any of the following:
   - To add existing links to the group, click Add Existing Link. Select the links you want to add and click Add.
   - To add a new link to the group, click Create Link. Enter your custom link details and click Create.

6. Click Save.

About themes
Themes enable you to customize and brand the look and feel of navbars and page backgrounds. Themes do not control the type of links navbars can contain. When you create a theme, there are two areas you can customize styles for: the navbar layout and the page background.

At the course offering level, all themes listed on the Themes page contain information about whether a theme is shared from another org unit and the name of the org unit sharing the theme.

If your permissions do not allow you to create themes, you must select from existing themes or use the default theme.

Themes created in an org unit are automatically shared with child org units.

Themes created at the course level cannot be shared with other courses, but you can create and store them inside a course template to make them available in course offerings that use the course template.

Create a theme
The Theme Preview area displays changes you make to the theme as you make them.

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.

2. Click Navigation & Themes.

3. From the tool navigation, click Themes > Create Theme.

4. Enter a name for your theme.

5. If you want to change the layout of your theme, click Change Layout.

6. To customize any of the following areas, click on the relevant style panel:
   - Navbar Background
   - Inner Navbar Background
   - Left Logo
   - Middle Background
   - Main Link Area
7. Once you've modified a panel, click Hide Properties.
8. Click Save and Close.

Delete a theme

You cannot delete a default theme or a theme shared to you from the organization, a parent course, or department.

You are prompted to choose a replacement theme for the navbars using the theme you want to delete. If a theme with an identical layout does not exist, you are not allowed to delete the theme until you have created an acceptable replacement.

1. On the navbar, click Course Admin.
2. Click Navigation & Themes.
3. On the Themes page, from the context menu of the theme you want to delete, click Delete.
4. In the Choose a Replacement dialog, from the drop-down list, select a new theme.
5. Click Delete.
### Themes layout style panels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style Panel</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navbar Layout</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navbar Background</td>
<td>Apply an image, color, or border to the navbar background. You can only see the left and right areas of the navbar background if you apply an inner navbar background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner Navbar Background</td>
<td>Apply an image, color, or border to the inner navbar background. You can only see the left and right areas of the navbar background if you apply a top, middle, or bottom background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top, Middle, and Bottom Backgrounds</td>
<td>Apply an image, color, or border to the top, middle, or bottom background areas of the navbar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Link Areas</strong></td>
<td>Apply a font and hover effects to links. Specify if you want to show links as text only, icons only, or text and icon together. You can also customize the link area's size and margins, links alignment, and spacing between links.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Apply a font and set the alignment of the organization or course title that appears on the navbar. You can also specify margin sizes around the title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Logo and Right Logo</td>
<td>Apply an image to represent your course or organization. You can add a link destination that brings users to My Home, Course Home, a specific org unit, your organization's main website, or a custom URL when they click on the logo image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Page Layout</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Background</td>
<td>Apply an image or color to the entire page background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Page Background</td>
<td>Apply an image or color to the left page background area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right Page Background</td>
<td>Apply an image or color to the right page background area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Dashboard

Understanding the Personal Dashboard homepage and Course Setup Checklist

The Personal Dashboard homepage is a personalized homepage for instructors and a checklist to help set up courses easily in Brightspace Learning Environment.

The Personal Dashboard homepage displays your full course list, with the ability to set current courses as favorites for easy access. You can also see if courses are not yet visible to students, and access your profile.

The Course Setup Checklist contains a list of suggested course setup tasks with shortcuts to the tools. Tours appear on those pages to demonstrate how to get started on the task. The checklist lets you keep track of completed items. The Course Setup Checklist can also be accessed from the top of course-level pages when there are still items to complete.
Personal Dashboard homepage overview

Figure 5: The Personal Dashboard homepage for instructors

1) The Favorite Course tiles provide easy access to your current courses. You can edit the course image, access the Course Setup Checklist, and view alerts if the course is not visible to learners.

2) The All Your Courses area lists all the courses you are enrolled in. Courses are sorted by semester, which are grouped alphabetically, and then by course name in alphabetical order. Use the Load More feature to view more. You can also search the list by semester, course code or course name.

3) Select the Favorite check box from the All Your Courses area to enable the course tiles.

4) Classic Homepage lets you view your organization’s homepage.

5) Use Settings to set your Default Homepage. You can keep the Personal Dashboard homepage as your landing page, or you can select your organization’s homepage. You can also reset the Welcome Message tour of the Personal Dashboard homepage in Settings.

6) View and edit your User Profile from the Personal Dashboard homepage.
Course Setup Checklist overview

1) The Course Setup Checklist is a list of suggested tasks to help you set up your course in Brightspace Learning Environment:

- Copy or import a course package
- Create or review your syllabus
- Add or tweak course content and activities
- Manage your grade book
- Post a welcome message
- Review learner enrollments
You can access the Course Setup Checklist from your Personal Dashboard homepage, or from or from any page in your course while you have incomplete tasks remaining.

2) Each task provides links to the tools you use to complete the task. If you access the tool to complete a task in the Course Setup Checklist, a call out tour appears to show you where to start.

3) Links to Additional Resources that may be useful for the task or for organizing your course are also included in the checklist.

4) After completing a task, select the associated check marks or the Mark Complete button. You can also use this function to dismiss tasks you don’t want to complete.

Note: The Course Setup Checklist only provides access to tools and functions that you have permissions to use. You may not see all of the tasks listed, or have access to the tools in the checklist if you do not have the required permissions.

Reset the welcome tour

The Welcome tour appears when you first login to Brightspace Learning Environment to call out the functional areas of the Personal Dashboard homepage. You can reset the Welcome tour anytime.

1. On the Personal Dashboard homepage, click Settings.
2. Select the Reset Welcome Message check box.
3. Click Save.
4. On the minibar, click My Home.
Set course visibility

The Course Visibility call out appears on the Favorite Course tile on the Personal Dashboard homepage if your course is
not yet visible to learners. You may not be able to edit either the active status or the course availability dates if you do
not have the required permissions to do so. If you do not see any notification, then your course is already visible to
students.

If you have permission, you can modify the start and end dates for your courses and make them Active directly from
your Personal Dashboard homepage.

1. From your **Personal Dashboard** homepage, on a **Favorite Course** tile, click the course visibility call out.

2. Do any of the following:
   - To make your course Active, select the **Course Status** check box.
   - Select the **Start Date** and **End Date** check boxes and select dates.

3. Click **Save**.

Change your default homepage

If your organization has enabled the Personal Dashboard homepage, you can switch back to the default organization
homepage.

On your **Personal Dashboard** homepage, click **Classic Homepage**.

Re-enable the Personal Dashboard homepage

You can switch from your organization’s classic homepage back to the Personal Dashboard homepage any time.

1. On the minibar, click **My Home**.

2. Click **Personal Dashboard**.

Why can't I view a tour of a tool when I click a link in Course Setup Checklist?

The Course Setup Checklist works with your existing permissions and access to tools in Brightspace Learning
Environment. If you do not have one of the permissions for a tool that is part of the Course Setup Checklist, the tour of
the tool will not appear when you access the tool, although you can still view the tool in the Course Setup Checklist.
Why can't I access more tools from the Course Setup Checklist?

The Course Setup Checklist organizes course tasks by available tools for the organization or course. If a tool is disabled for your course or your organization, then the tool and the related tasks will not appear in the Course Setup Checklist.

Visual Course List Widget

About Course List widget

The Visual Course List widget is designed to aid users who are not yet literate navigate to their courses. Instructors have the ability to associate a title, color, and specific graphic to a course, giving a visual indicator to users and enhancing their ability to navigate the system.

Add the Visual Course List widget to your course home page

1. On the course home page that you want to add the Visual Course List widget to, click Course Admin.
2. Click Homepages.
3. Click on the active homepage to edit it.
4. In the panel you want to add the widget to, click Add Widgets.
5. Select Visual Course List Widget.
6. Click Add > Save and Close.

Add a graphic to a course

Adding a graphic to a course gives users a visual indicator that they can use to locate and identify the course. For example, you can upload a picture of a calculator to give a visual indicator of a math course.

1. On the course home page that you want to add a graphic to, click Course Admin.
2. Click Course Offering Information.
3. In the Welcome Widget Picture area, click Browse.
4. Select your graphic.
5. Click Add > Save.
About D2L

A global leader in EdTech, D2L is the creator of Brightspace, the world’s first integrated learning platform.

The company partners with thought-leading organizations to improve learning through data-driven technology that helps deliver a personalized experience to every learner, regardless of geography or ability. D2L’s open and extensible platform is used by more than 1,100 clients and almost 15 million individual learners in higher education, K–12, healthcare, government, and the enterprise sector—including Fortune 1000 companies.

The company has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore.

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