

BLACKBOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STYLE GUIDE

2025

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GETTING STARTED

THE PROCESS

The process for creating offerings for Blackboard Professional Development is laid out in this document as follows:

1. Course Request
2. Course Analysis
3. Course Kickoff
4. Course Design
5. Course Development
6. Course Implementation
8. Course Release
9. Course Maintenance

The entire Educational Consulting and Training team will share in the responsibility of course design, development, and maintenance.

NEW OFFERING REQUEST & EVALUATION PROCESS

STEP ONE: IDEA SUBMISSION

Individuals or teams submit ideas through the [Blackboard PD Idea Submission Form](#), providing relevant information such as:

- Proposed Name of Course or Course Topic
- Target Customer
- Identify Customer or Business justification (i.e., who is asking for this?)
- Proposed SME team
- Resource estimation (time, SME involvement, etc.)
- General information:
 - Does this content exist? Where?
 - Will this offering 'fit' into a learning journey/program area?
 - Will this offering compete with other offerings across Anthology?

STEP TWO: COMMITTEE REVIEW

- The Blackboard Professional Development Course Request Committee meets on a regular schedule (e.g., monthly) to evaluate submitted ideas to determine whether they warrant development based on business value, feasibility, sustainability, and resource availability.
 - Each submission is scored using evaluation criteria.
-

COURSE ANALYSIS AND KICKOFF

The Course Design and Development Team meets with an Instructional Designer to do a needs and assets analysis and set project expectations before getting started.

- If this project is a revision, ID can independently review the previous course, course map, and programs to assess its status and prepare the document below with proposed changes. Then ID and course development team meet to set project expectations together.

During this analysis session and project kickoff, the instructional designer will assist the team with the following items to get started:

1. Determine nature of course, assets, and content.
2. Assign roles and responsibilities.
3. Set the course development schedule.
4. Determine project scope.
5. Indicate what deliverables such as media will need to be resourced or created.

Use the Course Analysis document on the Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint site to record decisions made for the course design and development at this stage.

COURSE DESIGN

1. Instructional Designer provides SME with a content map to add the topics, ideas, and information they want provided in the course. If necessary, an ID can workshop this map with SME(s) or take an active role writing the course content. If SME is comfortable or has the time, they can choose to take on this role. If the ID creates and writes the course content map, then SME should approve content before course build.
2. Instructional Designer and SMEs must plan media in collaboration, including script, storyboards, videos, voice overs, and infographics. If the ID creates the media, then SME(s) must approve script and storyboards prior to media creation and then approve the completed media. If the SME(s) make the media, ID should review for flow, grammar, and viewability/readability.
3. Blackboard Professional Development has specific guidelines for media that need to be followed regardless of who creates the assets.
4. ALL raw materials (images, screenshots, course map, etc.) must be stored in the Bb Professional Development repository to make implementation and revisions easier.
5. Instructional Designer creates/utilizes Blackboard Professional Development design templates and standards to create pages and course content. If a specialized content page has been requested at the start of the course development project, the ID can create a mockup of the page or an example for approval by SME(s) prior to development.

REVISIONS

1. ID will create a new course map using the most recent version of the course map, rename the map with the next course version number, and revise content in the course map.
2. ID, Course Builder, or SME will revise content in the course map and check all links and media.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Write learning objectives using Bloom's taxonomy and active verbs. If you are not sure about how to do this, read this page from the [University of Texas Library](#).

Keep learning objectives concise and specific. Use only one verb in the verbal phrase.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

| | |
|------------|---|
| LO1 | Ex 1: Locate relevant course features such as the assignments, calendar, and course content. |
|------------|---|

| | |
|-----|--|
| LO2 | Ex 2: Design authentic digital assessment strategies that meaningfully evaluate student learning while promoting academic integrity |
| | |

MEDIA

| Course Name | | |
|-------------|----------|---|
| Media Type | Location | Assets Needed (images, screenshots, banners, borders, colors, etc.) |
| | | |
| | | |

COURSE MAP

This is a structured blueprint used to plan and develop Blackboard Professional Development offerings. It outlines the course structure, learning objectives, content, activities, and assessments to ensure alignment and consistency.

Key components include:

- **Course Overview:** Basic details like name, ID, language, and time commitment.
- **Learning Objectives:** Course-level and lesson-level objectives to guide instruction.
- **Module Breakdown:** Organized sections with lessons, resources, activities, discussions, and assessments.
- **Facilitation & Engagement:** Guidance for instructors, including webinars, communication, and success strategies.
- **Assessment & Evaluation:** Knowledge checks, discussions, and final projects to measure learning.

This document ensures effective course design, maintains instructional coherence, and supports LMS integration for a seamless learner experience.

MEDIA DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

This document is a planning tool for integrating multimedia elements into a course. It helps instructional designers determine what media is needed, where it should be placed, and how it should look. It includes:

- **Media Planning:** Identifies types of media (images, videos, infographics) and their placement.
- **Infographic Design:** Defines purpose, content, and visual style for course infographics.
- **Storyboard Development:** Outlines content, images, text, voiceovers, and animations for videos and slide decks.

This document ensures media aligns with learning objectives, maintains visual consistency, and provides a clear guide for media creation to enhance engagement and comprehension.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

1. System Admin creates a new course shell in Blackboard Professional Development or copies the most recent version of the course. Sends the course to ID or Course Builder for development.

2. Instructional Designer or Course Builder take the raw course content materials and maps in the Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint Repository and build the course in Blackboard.
3. Instructional Designer or Course Builder creates/utilizes Blackboard Professional Development design templates and standards to create pages and course content.
4. SME or ID creates the course assets (media).

REVISIONS

1. Systems admin will create a new course shell with the new course Id number that corresponds to the updated course map.
2. Course Builder, ID, or SME can use the media assets to revise any media.
3. Course Builder, ID, or SME should check the viability of links, make sure all screenshots are updated, and update any images.
4. Course Builder updates the course with the revisions.

BLACKBOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

This document describes best practices for content writing including tone, voice, language, grammar and punctuation.

BLACKBOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEDIA GUIDELINES

This document provides high-level standards for incorporating multimedia elements into course design while ensuring accessibility, branding consistency, and usability. It outlines best practices for using images, screenshots, infographics, and videos, emphasizing accessibility through alt text, appropriate formatting, and clear visual communication. The document also sets guidelines for media creation, including file formats, labeling conventions, and corporate branding alignment. This resource helps maintain a professional, inclusive, and visually cohesive learning experience while ensuring compliance with accessibility and usability standards.

BLACKBOARD PD TIME ON TASK CALCULATOR

This tool is used to estimate the time learners will need to complete various course activities. It provides guidelines for calculating workload based on reading complexity, activity types, and assessments. By using standardized estimates, instructional designers can ensure courses are appropriately structured to balance engagement and rigor. This tool helps in planning course pacing, setting realistic expectations for learners, and aligning course length with learning objectives while maintaining a manageable workload.

Use Time on Task calculating page on Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint to determine how long it will take a learner to complete your course.

IMPLEMENTATION

At this stage, the offering needs to be prepared and reviewed to be launched on the Blackboard Professional Development course site.

Non-facilitated Course Implementation and Review

1. Non-facilitated courses receive a review of at least one person from outside the offering development team, based on the checklist below.
2. Course build team revises the course and then follows the directions below for course release.

Facilitated Course Implementation

Review

1. Course is reviewed by at least one person from outside the offering development team, based on the checklist below.
2. Course build team revises the course and then follows the directions below for course release.

Facilitator Directions

Use the following as a starting point for creating directions for facilitators. These directions need to take into account not only in-course procedures, but also requirements for course administration on the Blackboard Professional Development site.

1. Facilitators/Instructors create videos introducing themselves to the learners or add course specific content to the course introduction.
2. Create announcements (at least have a welcome, mid-course, and end of course).
3. Add and update the dates.
4. Set up the calendar and webinars.
5. Grades and responses to learners in 2 business days.
6. Email directions on how to download certificates and make sure certificate download directions are on the course and accessible to learners.
7. Fill out the form called End of Course report within one week of ending your course.
8. Close access to your course within one week of ending your course.
9. Once a course goes live, no changes can be made to the gradebook.

REVIEWER CHECKLIST

Refer to this document to have specific individuals read through the course to error check before releasing the course.

COURSE REVISIONS

1. Course revisions occur at scheduled intervals determined at the end of the first implementation phase.
2. ID, SME, or Course Builder is designated as the party responsible for revising courses from review.

COURSE RELEASE

1. ID, SME, or Course Builder is designated as the party responsible for revising courses.
2. Release notes should be created for revisions.
3. Course builder or Offering Dev team fills out the Course Release form and attach release notes and completed course URL.

BLACKBOARD PD RELEASE NOTES

This document is used to track and communicate updates to training materials following a system, feature or cadence update. The document organizes updates by offering, module, and folder, detailing specific modifications to documents, sections, and subsections. This helps ensure that licensing institution's course content remains current and aligned with the latest Blackboard Professional Development release.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Quarterly Content Reviews and Updates - check for links, images, smaller content changes, screenshots.

- Fill out the Revision Review SMARTform and attach your checklist, release notes, and any additional materials you want added to the course.

BUILDING IN BLACKBOARD

NAMING CONVENTIONS AND COURSE HIERARCHY

Module Names: Use clear, descriptive titles (e.g., "Module 1: Introduction to Accessibility").

Lesson Names: Use consistent, specific titles reflecting the content (e.g., "Lesson 1: Understanding UDL Principles").

Knowledge Checks: Label assessments with "Knowledge Check" preceded by the module number (e.g., "Module 1 Knowledge Check").

Resources: Use labels such as "Reading," "Video," or "Activity" with specific names (e.g., "Reading: Accessibility Laws Overview").

Discussion/Activities: Name them based on the task (e.g., "Activity: Accessibility Scenarios").

Final Exam/Project: Clearly indicate its purpose (e.g., "Final Project: Design an Accessible Course").

COURSE OUTLINE

Use the outlines below as guidelines for course content development. Blackboard Professional Development recommend using this hierarchy structure to present information to learners in a pedagogically sound manner. **The items under About this Course are required.**

| Non-Facilitated Courses | Facilitated Courses |
|--|---|
| <p>About This Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Overviewo Learning Objectiveso Course Structure & Formato Course Requirements & Materialso How to Succeed in This Course <p>Module 1: Name of Module</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module Introduction | <p>About This Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Course Overviewo Learning Objectiveso Meet Your Instructoro Webinars and Accesso Course Structure & Formato Course Requirements & Materialso How to Succeed in This Course |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesson 1.1: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ [Resource Name]▪ [Activity Name]• Lesson 1.2: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ [Resource Name]▪ [Activity Name]• Module Knowledge Check• Module Wrap Up <p>Module 2: [Module Title]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module Introduction• Lesson 1: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">• [Resource Name]• [Activity Name]• Lesson 2: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">• [Resource Name]• [Activity Name]• Module Knowledge Check• Module Wrap Up | <p>Module 1: Name of Module</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Module Introductiono Lesson 1.1: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ [Resource Name]▪ [Activity Name]o Lesson 1.2: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ [Resource Name]▪ [Activity Name]o Module Knowledge Checko Module Wrap Up <p>Module 2: [Module Title]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module Introduction• Lesson 2.1: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">• [Resource Name]• [Activity Name]• Lesson 2.1: [Lesson Title]<ul style="list-style-type: none">• [Resource Name]• [Activity Name]o Module Knowledge Checko Module Wrap Up |
|---|---|

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Refer to this section as you write the course content. This section provides style guidance to create consistent tone and language across Blackboard Professional Development.

NARRATIVE MODE (VOICE)

Write **to** your audience. Speak to them as you would as if you were their course instructor. Each course has a specific primary audience, such as instructors (Higher Ed), instructors (workplace training), adult learners, workplace learners. Speak to that specific audience but be mindful that others may take the course.

AUDIENCE PERSONA

Blackboard Professional Development provides training and resources for multiple audience groups across higher education and business and government. Despite the differences in their roles, we should write to our audience with certain assumptions in mind:

Educated. Our audiences are educated, highly trained, and experienced (mostly). We should assume they know at least something about the topics we are providing to them. In fact, in some cases, they may very well know more than us.

Adults. Write to inform and explain concepts but always remember our audience consists of adults. They need to know **WHY** they are learning something. Provide our audience with the value proposition for **WHY**

they are learning. Use real scenarios and examples they can relate to and provide multiple examples when necessary.

Working. They are also very busy people who wear multiple hats in their jobs. They do not have time to decipher what we are offering them. Be sure to provide directions and instructions and be consistent throughout a course, so the audience does not have to work too hard to learn how to learn.

Prone to Overload. Busy adults are the type of people who have multiple tabs open and multiple to-do lists. Keep lessons chunked into relevant areas, so that your audience is not overwhelmed with what they are learning. Clear organization and multimedia approaches in courses will help relieve cognitive overload. An audience can get information through a few different short and coherent materials: video, text, and image.

Technically Proficient. Our audience owns smart phones, laptops, and pads/tablets. They are technically proficient. They may or may not be tech savvy and they may or may not feel confident about their abilities with technology.

THIRD PERSON VS. 2ND PERSON

Avoid making unwarranted assumptions and commanding the reader. E.g Avoid using the first person when writing in a course, unless you are writing a course announcement. Within courses, write in the third-person for the most part, but second person might be appropriate.

Do:

When you first taught a course, you may have felt trepidation entering the room or you were excited and felt ready to go. Reflect on your experience. How did you feel? What did you do to prepare?

Don't:

You go to the classroom and enter the noisy room. You do not know how to control the group, but you have to figure out how.

THIRD PERSON

Avoid using the royal "We" to refer to Blackboard. You can use we if you are creating inclusive language or speaking generally of the world around us.

Do: Learn best practices on using Blackboard in your blended classroom.

Or

"We live in a world of technology and education."

Don't: We have the best practices for holding discussions.

FIRST PERSON

Use first person if you are the facilitator of the course or offering. The facilitator script for example can be in first person. In other cases, avoid using first person.

PLAIN LANGUAGE

While we use a lot of technical terms in education such as pedagogy and learning objectives, we want to explain less commonly known key terms.

Do: Adult learners prefer to know the learning objectives, so they can understand why they are learning about a topic.

Don't: In BLACKBOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT we like to A.I.M high and be didactic.

YOU – ATTITUDE

In business, you-attitude refers to remembering that your audience is a human being. And speak to your audience just as you would if the person was sitting in front of you.

Do: Use positive language when you write.

Don't: You want to avoid being overly negative in your phrasing.

Do: Best practices for designing your course include lesson objectives, curriculum planning, and assessment.

Don't: We would like to show you the best practices for organizing your course.

PRESENT TENSE

Use the tense that makes the most sense for the content or scenario you are writing, but when writing instructions for a course or descriptions, write in the present tense rather than the conditional or future tense. The learner is reading in the present, so it feels less confident to them if we use conditional.

Do: This course **provides** you with the tools to keep track of your students' learning, manage communications and announcements to support them and encourage community building and active learning using discussions.

Don't: This course **will provide** you with the tools to keep track of your students' learning, manage communications and announcements to support them and encourage community building and active learning using discussions.

Don't: This course **ought to provide** you with the tools to keep track of your students' learning.

SPELLING

Write in American English.

CONCISION

Wordiness can interfere with learning. It is important to write concisely and clearly.

Do: Learning theories mediate the way we teach, and our learners respond.

Don't: These often-implicit belief systems, or personal theories, mediate the way we conduct our teaching and interact with and respond to our learners.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

The following are common terms in our courses. When written follow the format below:

- Instructor instead of teacher
- Learning objectives instead of Learning outcomes
- Learner instead of student
- drop-down menu (not dropdown or drop down)
- Select and not click
- set up vs. setup: set up is a verb and setup is a noun
- log in vs. login: log in is a verb and login is a noun
- which vs. that: A phrase containing “which” (a nonrestrictive and unnecessary clause) could be removed from a sentence without changing the meaning. If the meaning would be changed, then you should use “that” because it is a restrictive (necessary) clause.
- e-mail
- Web
- vs (not v.)

CITE SOURCES

Use APA 7 to cite your sources. Cite any sources that did not provide you with commonly known information, especially if you paraphrased what was said. If you use media, also cite your source and provide a link to the original source if online.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

QUESTION WRITING

- Don't be afraid to add images into an assessment question. For example, you can use them in Multiple Choice questions (e.g., a chart).
- Avoid trick questions. You don't want to confuse your students. If students are consistently missing a question, then evaluate it and find out why.
- Write meaningful feedback. If using question feedback, provide specific reasons for why an answer is incorrect and relate back to the course content. Customers like to receive feedback.

QUESTION STEMS

- Beware of the use of the word “which.” Oftentimes, designers will use it incorrectly within the question. For example, it is incorrect to say, “Which is the best...” as it should be written “Which method is the best...”
- Avoid the use of the word “not” in questions. For example, “Which of the following items is NOT...”
- If you continue to use the same phrasing in the correct answer and the distracters, then pull that text into the question stem to avoid redundancy.
- Instead of using colons after the question stem, write a meaningful question or create a fill-in-the-blank question.

CREATING QUESTION DISTRACTERS

- Question distractors refers to the incorrect answers in a question designed to make the learner think about the answer rather than guessing based on context clues.
- Write distracters to match the same length, style, and arrangement of the correct answer.
- Avoid writing question distracters that are obviously incorrect. Well-written distracters should be plausible. This can be one of the most challenging parts of question writing.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- For Multiple Choice questions with multiple correct answers, indicate all the correct answers and adjust the point values whenever necessary.
- You can use Multiple Choice questions as a fill-in-the-blank question type, but with choices. If you decide to do this, use five underscores (e.g., _____) for the blank.
- Your distracters should be in lower case (unless they are proper nouns) since you are completing a sentence. Do not include the period in the distracters; it should be in the stem.
- Avoid the use of the option “All of the above” when using randomization. Instead, opt for using “All of these.” As a best practice, avoid using an either/ or statement.
- If the multiple-choice question has multiple answers possible, use the directions: “Choose all that apply.”

MATCHING

- Avoid having too many items to match.
- Avoid having long answers within Matching questions. For example, if you want students to match terms to their definitions then it would be best to write the definitions in the Question area and the terms in the Answer area.
- If a matching question, the total number of points equals the number of items that must be matched.

TRUE/FALSE

- Avoid using too many T/F questions. Make sure that you are assessing the intended level of learning.
- Avoid using the words *only*, *never*, and *always* within questions. It is a give-away for the answer most of the time.

MEDIA GUIDELINES

Refer to this section for guidelines for the use of media in Blackboard Professional Development offerings to create consistency across the platform.

Best Practices to Consider:

1. **Relevance:** Ensure images and videos directly relate to the course content to avoid distractions.
2. **Quality:** Use high-quality visuals to maintain professionalism and engagement.
3. **Accessibility:** Include alt text for images and video captions to make content accessible to all learners.
4. **Consistency:** Maintain the Blackboard Professional Development consistent style and format across all media to create a cohesive learning experience.


RESOURCES


We should use the same or similar software to create and save files which can be accessed across multiple platforms whenever possible.

- Use the free version of Canva or Adobe Express for image and graphic creation.
- Snagit is available through Anthology. Reach out to IT to request access. If you have trouble getting the application, then reach out to the Blackboard Professional Development team for assistance.
- Use Blackboard applications and features whenever possible including Video Studio to make videos.

ICONS

Icons create branding and organizational consistency across pages. Use the icons below to accent your pages and add interest or direction for the reader. Use in locations that make sense for your content. If you need an additional icon, email Blackboard Professional Development.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Alt Text: Explore (or mark as decorative)</p> <p>Possible Header next to the icon: Explore or Learn More</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Alt Text: Best Practices (or mark as decorative)</p> <p>Possible Header next to the icon: Best Practices or Tips and Tricks</p> |
| | <p>Alt Text: Try It (or mark as decorative)</p> <p>Possible Header next to the icon: Practice or Try It</p> |
| | |

BANNERS

COURSE BANNER EXAMPLE

In the Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint you will find a collection of course banners for all courses. If you are not sure which one to use or need to have one created, email the Blackboard Professional Development team.



IN-CLASS BANNER EXAMPLE

In the Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint you will find a collection of banners to use on specific pages of an offering. You do not need to have a banner on every page. Use for important pages to call the reader's attention. Choose the alignment that fits your page design best. If you are not sure which one to use or need to have one created, email the Blackboard Professional Development team.

MIDDLE OF DOCUMENT ALIGN

Module Introduction



Module Introduction

Use simple Alt Text “Module Introduction banner” or mark as decorative.

DOCUMENT DESIGN

Use images and other media to add interest and use design and usability guidelines. On the Blackboard Professional Development SharePoint, locate the page design examples to be inspired. These images are examples of ways to align your page and place images. You are welcome to arrange the page based on your audience and content.

IMAGES

Guidelines for using images, videos, and audio, including file formats and quality standards.

- Use stock and copyright free images.
- Images should relate to the topic of the page and course. If people are present in the image, look for images with diversity and inclusion. Vary representations. Look for candid images of people doing related activities and not posed.
- Add alt text.
- Use document design drag and drop to keep images no more than two columns in size for readability.
- Consider creating charts and infographics to add information, interactivity, and variety to the page. Follow infographic guidelines for these images below.
- Do not use flashing GIFs.
- **Best Formats:** **JPEG** for photographs and **PNG** for graphics with transparent backgrounds.
- **Resolution:** Use images with a resolution of at least **72 DPI** for web use. For high-quality visuals, **300 DPI** is ideal.
- **Dimensions:** Aim for images that are at least **800x600 pixels**. This ensures clarity without excessively large file sizes.
- **File Size:** Keep images under **1MB** to ensure quick loading times and optimal performance.

Blackboard AI Design Assistant: The AI Design Assistant simplifies the process of adding images to the courses. It eliminates the need to worry about pixels and file sizes, as it can automatically resize images to fit perfectly within Ultra documents as well as generate images directly in the platform for learning modules and in documents. This feature is a significant advantage, making it easier to create visually appealing content without technical hassles

SCREENSHOTS

Take a screenshot of Blackboard or other Anthology product in use. Name this screenshot with name of screen and date. Store screenshots in shared image folders.

Labeling a Screenshot:

- Highlight a section of the screenshot using a rectangle: 4pt and color # D100D1
- Call out multiple items on the page using Steps (numbered bubbles in SnagIt Editor): circle and color # D100D1
- Point to specific actions using an arrow: 10pt and color # D100D1
- Write alt text for image on course map.
- Do not clutter screenshot with multiple boxes, steps, and arrows. Create multiple versions of the screenshot if more than one or two concepts need to be pointed out. If multiple items need to be noted, then use Gifs or videos instead.
- Add alt text and set screenshots to view only.

INFOGRAPHICS

When creating infographics or graphics, be sure to add alt text and alternative formats in the course for accessibility and usability. Follow corporate design principles to match Anthology branding in terms of color, font, icons, and design. Save as a .pdf or .png and create a text only version if necessary. If an infographic is designed to be downloaded and printed, then post it as a .pdf and set it to view and download.

VIDEOS

Do not use YouTube videos from the Anthology help site. Use YouTube videos infrequently due to copyright and the fact that we do not have control over the upkeep of the videos.

You are welcome to create simple and short videos (5mins or less).

Create videos using slide decks on Canva or PPT. Slide decks should be the Ed Services template. You can also create a short screenshot demo of an action.

Save video and slides in the Course Development folder on SharePoint.

If you use voice over, then you have to have closed captioning and a transcript. You can create and edit closed captioning and transcripts in Blackboard Video Studio.

Keep text limited to make the slide easier to read.

Videos are best used to show or demonstrate actions rather than lectures. Additionally, you can use a video to define a specific concept or act as an important aside to your other content.

If you create a slide for a video, make use of accessibility and design principles such as alignment and contrast.

Best Format: MP4 is recommended due to its compatibility and efficient compression. It uses the H.264 codec, which balances quality and file size.



Resolution: Aim for 720p (1280x720) or 1080p (1920x1080). These resolutions provide a good balance between quality and accessibility.

File Size: Keep videos under 500MB if possible, to ensure smooth playback and quicker loading times.

VOICEOVERS

Voiceovers are not required for videos.

Use a natural voice rather than AI voice overs. As a group we do not have access to good AI voice software, nor is it likely that we will. Use the free recording software: Audacity (Windows) or Garageband (Mac).

There are thousands of videos on how to use these two programs easily and efficiently on YouTube.

Use a good microphone and not the microphone on your laptop or phone. Headphone microphones may be sufficient. Record in a space with limited background sound. Record the room you are recording in first to see what background noise is present. You might find voice recording in your closet to work best.

The sound software will also allow you to limit or correct for some background information.

Speak into the microphone clearly and speak just slightly slower than your natural speaking voice (if you are a fast speaker); otherwise speak at your normal pace. Vary your intonations and tone and try to speak to someone rather than read a script.

Save the voice file as a .mp3

Overlay the voice over onto your slides and make sure the voice over aligns to the correct part of your video.

WEBINARS/FACILITATED SLIDE DECKS

For webinars and facilitated slide decks, use the Ed Services template as your starting point. Use corporate colors. Images and icons should be used for interest and use graphics or SmartArt to help make the slides more readable and interesting.

Images should relate to the topic of the page and course. If people are present in the image, look for images with diversity and inclusion. Vary representations. Look for candid images of people doing related activities and not posed.

One slide equals about 1 minute of time during your facilitated session. Limit the number of slides to no more than 25, especially if you are including interactions, discussions, and other activities into the webinar or facilitated lesson.

Videos do not always play well on Teams, so offer the link to the video in chat as an alternative. Choose videos that are on YouTube and have closed captioning and transcripts or videos that were created using Video Studio. If you make a video, follow the directions for videos above.

Limit the amount of text on the slide. Text should add to what the facilitator is saying in their presentation and not have so much text that customers are reading the slides instead of listening and participating with the conversation.



If you are offering slide decks to customers for their use, be sure to run accessibility checks to make sure the decks can be used.

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