## WHAT IS CONTENT?

"Content" is the term that we are going to use to refer to any type of item you present to students in your course to assist them in learning course material. Much of the content you will be adding to your course will be on the Content page. This is where students will be participating the majority of the time. To see all available content items in Blackboard:

Navigate to the area in which you'd like to add the content **(1)** (for example, the content area of the course or a module folder), and click the "***Build Content***" button on the Action Bar **(2)**.

To the right is a screenshot that displays the different types of content you can add to your course.

Before adding content, it is wise to consider your course outcomes and objectives. Be sure to meet with an Instructional Designer in the Teaching Resource Center. They have expertise in content presentation and course development and can work with you to determine which technological tools are appropriate to assist you in meeting your pedagogical goals.
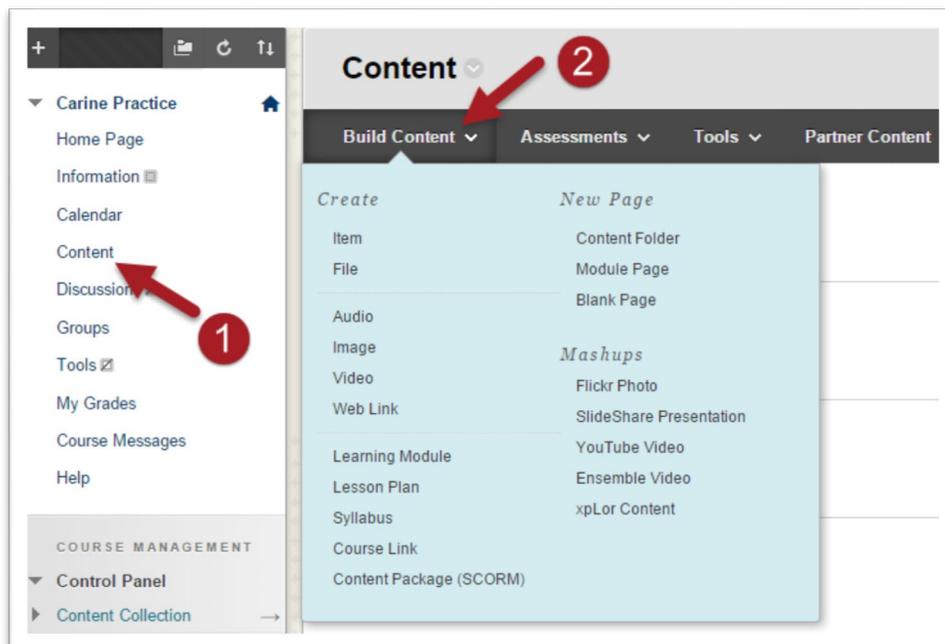
COMMON CONTENT TYPES AND USE AT SUNY BROOME

The following table lists each type of content you can add to your course from the "Build Content" area. A description and example use of each content type is also provided. Please note: The examples provided represent only a fraction of the uses of content in a Blackboard course. They are meant as a starting point for an instructor to think about course design and best practices for presenting content and engaging students. A smiley face ☺ indicates that the content type is one frequently used by faculty at SUNY Broome. Caution should be used when attempting to incorporate any of the content types indicated with a ⚠. Be sure to fully understand the content type's intended purpose prior to adding it to your course.

Content Type	Description	Example
Item	An item can contain text, audio, video, files or images. Anything added to an item *is displayed directly on the content* area where it was added. In other words, students will not have to click on an icon to view the item.	Since an item is displayed in its entirety on the content area, it is meant for shorter pieces of content. Examples include: • Welcomes and Introductions • Module headings or section dividers. • Brief listings of module expectations or outcomes.
File	This option allows you to link to a piece of content (file) that has been created outside of Blackboard. Students will need to click on an icon to download and view the file. Faculty at SUNY Broome use the "File" content type to post any document that they would like the student to be able to print.	Examples of files include: • Word Documents • Excel Spreadsheets • PowerPoint Presentations • PDFs
Audio, Image, & Video	These three options for content allow you to include multimedia directly in a content area (rather than being embedded within a page). Each of the content types has its own setting choices including, auto-play, auto-loop and transcript options. Note: audio, images, and video can be included elsewhere in the course. The difference with adding them through the "Build Content" area is that doing so will place them prominently in the content area.	Audio, Images, and Video can be added to: • Include a welcome message from the instructor in the course information area. • Providing an introductory video at the beginning of each module.

Content Type	Description	Example
Web Link	The Web Link will take the student to an outside website or resource. When directing the student outside of the course in this manner, it is best practice to indicate that the website should open in a new window or tab. That way, if the student closes the window when done reviewing the content, they don't close out of your course as well.	Faculty often use the Web Link for: • External publisher • Articles, websites, and material pertaining to the lecture topic. • Study guides and online activities.
Learning Module	A Learning Module is a set of content that includes a structured path for progressing through pages. This should not be confused with the term "Module" as it is used at SUNY Broome. At SUNY Broome most faculty use the Content Folder to chunk their courses into distinct modules rather than using the Learning Module content type.	The Learning Module is useful for: • The presentation of content that must be viewed in a particular sequence.
Lesson Plan	The Lesson Plan is similar to a Content folder. It is an option that faculty can use to group together related information for a particular topic, chapter, unit, etc. It differs from a content folder in that the lesson plan includes areas where instructors can provide students with a description and list of objectives. A lesson plan can contain any of the other content items available in Blackboard. At SUNY Broome, faculty typically use content folders to organize information as it is more easily shared and migrated across learning management systems.	A Lesson Plan is useful for: • Organizing information into related topics.
Syllabus	The Syllabus content type enables faculty to either attach an existing syllabus file or build one directly in Blackboard through a series of steps. At SUNY Broome, faculty are encouraged to upload a syllabus file (such as a Word Document or pdf) to their Course Information area rather than use the Syllabus creation tool. Also, a syllabus created with the syllabus tool may not print properly for the student.	The Syllabus content type is useful: • If an instructor does not have a syllabus for the course and needs to create one quickly.

Content Type	Description	Example
Course Link	A course link is a shortcut to another content area that exists within the same course.	Common uses for course links: • Provide students with a quick way to access the Course Information area from within a module. (ex: to access the course schedule). • Link to an "Ask a Question" discussion forum from within each module.
Content Package (SCORM)	We do not use this content type at SUNY Broome.	We do not use this content type at SUNY Broome.
Content Folder	The content folder is a container for other content items. It is the content type used by the majority of faculty at SUNY Broome to create a modular structure for their course. Content folders can contain any other type of content, including folders (sub-folders) giving instructors the ability to further organize their course.	Examples of the uses of Content Folders: • To group all course information together in one area (typically appears as the first folder on the content area page). • To create a modular structure. • To further organize content within a module (ex: lecture documents folder).
Module Page	A page containing dynamic personalized content modules that help users keep track of tasks, tests, assignments and new content created in the course. The Module Page can be set to allow students to customize what it displays. It is similar to the Home Page function of Blackboard. This is NOT the same as a Blank Page used to add lectures or a Content folder used to chunk content into modules. It is rarely used at SUNY Broome.	Module Pages area used for providing students with a quick way to access tools within the course. • For example, an instructor may create a module page that contains access to an online calculator or a link to publisher resources.

Content Type	Description	Example
Blank Page	The blank page content type is used to present text, images, links, etc. in your content area. The Blank Page is used to create lecture documents. Unlike the "Item" content type which displays directly on the area it was added to, a student must click on the icon for the blank page in order to open it and access its information. The Blank page, therefore, can be much more detailed than the item and be much more lengthy. Note: While blank pages display nicely on the screen in the Blackboard window, they do not print well. Faculty who expect their students to print content should also post the information as a file.	Example of Blank Pages include: • Lecture Documents • Course Information such as the course schedule. • Any type of information needed to be displayed to the student that is not meant to be interactive.
Mashups	Mashups allow instructors to include content in a course that is from an external website or resource. SUNY Broome currently has several options for mashups available and offers specialized workshops for many of them.	Mashups are used when an instructor would like to: • Locate and link to multi-media content on an external website or server. • Access SUNY Broome created content that another instructor has shared with them.

Online@SUNYBroome

Please visit the Online@SUNYBroome website (www.sunybroome.edu/online) for additional information pertaining to distance education. The site contains information for Students, Faculty and Chairs. A repository of informational/instructional documentation is included on the site as well as a listing of training opportunities and frequently asked questions.