Retention Center Release Notes: Mar 2013

Release Information

Original Launch: March 13, 2013

Requirements: Service Pack (SP) 11 and later

Supported Platforms

The Retention Center Building Block is supported on the following platform:

- Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP 11 (Build: 9.1.110082.0)

About the Retention Center

The new Retention Center Building Block provides an easy way for instructors to discover which students in their courses are at risk. Instructors can communicate with struggling students and help them take immediate action for improvement. Based on pre-configured rules and rules instructors can create easily, students' engagement and participation are visually displayed, quickly alerting instructors to potential risk. Instructors can begin using the Retention Center features immediately—no set up required.

(!) *The Retention Center Building Block replaces the Early Warning System feature with easy workflows, while retaining all existing Early Warning System data and rules. Once installed, this building block cannot be uninstalled to roll back to the Early Warning System.*

Accessing the Retention Center

The Retention Center is automatically on and immediately visible in an instructor's My Blackboard menu, and also accessible in the **Evaluation** section of a course's **Control Panel**. Instructors can choose not to track student risk factors for any of their courses. The information is available to instructors only, and not seen by students.
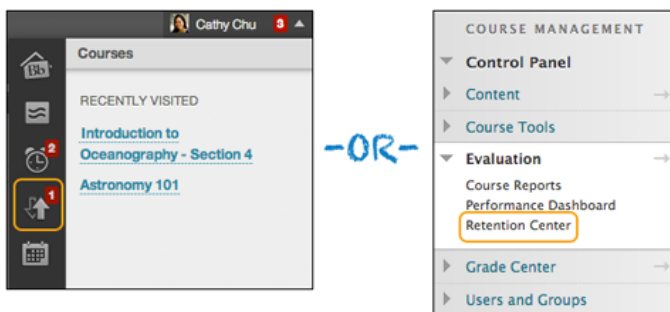
Release Highlights

Because it requires no set up on the part of the instructor or administrators, it automatically calls out students who may need an instructor's attention. Instructors can respond to risk factors quickly to help at-risk students succeed in their courses. The preconfigured rules are easy to change so that each instructor can tailor them to suit their teaching methodologies. The four categories of risk include:

- Missed Deadlines

- Grades

- Course Activity

- Course Access

At Risk Table

Click the colored bar preceding the table to display a summary of the at-risk students in a course. Click a colored section to access more information. Instructors can drill in further by clicking links in the pop-up boxes. For example, in a grade alert box, instructors can click the displayed number to access a list of students triggering the alert.

The main table displays which students are at risk in one or more of the four categories. Instructors can create as many rules as needed in each category.

When instructors access the Retention Center, the data is refreshed. However, the data for the course activity rule is recorded once a day. Your school can change when and how often the data is collected for this rule.

Sort columns by clicking the heading title. The table is sorted by most at-risk students and then alphabetically.

Click the red dot indicator in a student's cell for more information, to include the student in the monitoring section in the right panel, or to send an email.

Click students' names to access their **Retention Status** pages. View their risk factors and the notification emails sent, along with any private notes.

Right Side Panel

As shown in the preceding image, instructors can view two types of information in the right panel:

- **Students you are monitoring**: Click a red dot indicator in the risk table to view information about a student. Then, click the star icon to place the student's information in this panel.

- **Other information you are monitoring**: All rules instructors exclude from the risk table appear here. For example, instructors can create a rule to display those users doing well in their courses, for activity that does not relate to risk, or for participation that they only need to monitor occasionally.

Your Course Activity

The section following the risk table provides a one-stop collection of an instructor's activity, engagement, and participation in a course. This data helps instructors become more aware of how their own behaviors are (or are not) contributing to student success. The information provided includes:

- Instructor's last login

- Time lag for grading student submissions

- Instructor's participation in interactive components of the course

- Recent announcements

- Fresh course content

Each time instructors enter their courses, they can use this information to determine which course areas require their attention.

The links in this section allow instructors to quickly take appropriate action to further engage their students. For example, they can click an assignment link to begin grading and provide feedback. They can easily access communication tools to interact with students, or post an announcement.

How to Install and Activate the Retention Center

1. Download the Retention Center Building Block from Behind the Blackboard Downloads on the **Feature Building Blocks for Learn** page. Save the file on a local drive. Unzip the package to access the .war file.

2. On the **Administrator Panel**, in the **Building Blocks** section, click **Building Blocks**.

3. On the **Building Blocks** page, click **Installed Tools**.

4. On the **Installed Tools** page, click **Upload Building Blocks** on the action bar.

5. On the **Install Building Block** page, browse for the Retention Center building block .war file.

6. Click **Submit**.

7. In the list of building blocks, navigate to the **Retention Center** and access its contextual menu.

8. Select **Available**.

9. Click **Approve**.

How to Make the Retention Center Available to Users

After installation, you must make the Retention Center available in existing courses.

1. On the **Administrator Panel**, in the **Tools and Utilities** section, click **Tools**.

2. Locate the **Retention Center** in the list of tools and select **Always On** for **Course Tool** to turn the tool on for all courses. Select **Default On** to allow instructors to turn the Retention Center on or off in their courses from the **Control Panel** > **Customization** > **Tool Availability**.

Important Notes About the Transition From the Early Warning System

All existing Early Warning System rules are retained when your system is updated to include the Retention Center. These rules appear in the **Other information you are monitoring** section. Instructors can edit these rules and determine whether or not to include them in their risk tables.

The transition from the Early Warning System to the Retention Center includes the prior notifications history that might need to be retained as part of course records. Note that the Early Warning System included less information

in the notification history than what is included in the Retention Center, but records that are transitioned include notification date, sender, and student recipient.

The Early Warning System provided flexible privileges that administrators could change for system roles and course roles. The Retention Center has its own new flexible privileges that are similar and replace the prior Early Warning System privileges. However, privileges changes made for the Early Warning System do ***not*** transition to Retention Center privileges. Therefore, administrators should review Early Warning System Privileges prior to installing the Retention Center building block and note which privileges will need to be changed for Retention Center privileges.

Because the Retention Center is a new course tool, any tool availability settings for the Early Warning System will not be applied to the new tool. The Retention Center will be on by default in all courses and organizations.