# Upgrading to the Q4 2017 release from the Q4 2015 release?

# Share the good news with your instructors.

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**Email subject line suggestions:**

* Check out what’s new with Blackboard Learn
* Updates for Blackboard Learn: what it means for you
* New Blackboard Learn features for your courses
* Save time with new updates to Blackboard
* Enhancements to Blackboard that will save you time

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Dear [insert name],

We’re excited to announce we’re updating Blackboard Learn on [insert date]. The updated version will provide new features and enhancements that simplify many of your everyday tasks, offer a better mobile experience, and improve accessibility, assessment and grading.

Here are some of the top highlights of this new version: (Note: We suggest highlighting 3-5 things that you feel your educators will be most excited about, see below for a sample list.)

1. **New look & feel.** You’ll love the new, modern look and feel that enhances the overall experience. Note: Delete this bullet if your institution is not activating the Learn 2016 Theme during this upgrade.
2. **Improved mobile experience.** When accessing Learn on your mobile device, look for the new hamburger icon that makes navigating Learn even easier; plus, many tools are now mobile-friendly including blogs, journals and discussion boards.
3. **More efficient Grade Center cleanup.** You can now delete multiple gradebook columns at once making managing the gradebook even easier.
4. **Discussion board “Replies to me.”** Keeping up with discussion posts is simpler with unread replies to your own posts called out.
5. **Course availability status.** An open or closed padlock icon on the main course page makes it easy to see the availability of the course to students, and with one click you can quickly change the status.
6. **Drag and drop content.** Getting your content into your Blackboard courses is now just a matter of dragging and dropping. This functionality works in the content editor, blogs, journals, and portfolios.
7. **Dropbox integration.** Now you can upload files directly from Dropbox into your course.
8. **MOSAIC and O\*NET Standards.** Aligning your curriculum against these competencies is now simplified in Learn. Note: These downloadable standards are available from Behind the Blackboard.
9. **Submission receipts.** There’s no debate as to when and what assignments were submitted as Learn now keeps a record of all student assignment submissions.
10. **VALUE rubrics.** You can now easily use these rubrics developed as part of the American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U’s) Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative. Note: These rubrics are available for download on Behind the Blackboard.
11. **Accessibility simplified with Blackboard Ally****.** Improve the accessibility of your content for students with disabilities. Using Ally, you can view an accessibility score for your content and learn ways to improve the accessibility of materials. Your students can also download automatically-generated alternative versions of your files, such as accessible HTML, digital braille, and audio format files. Note: Delete if your institution does not license Blackboard Ally.
12. **Web conferencing tools for groups.** Increase student group engagement by offering web conferencing tools. Synchronous collaboration, content sharing and whiteboarding are sure to get your students involved. Note: Delete if your institution does not license Collaborate.

**More information.**

Attached, please find two helpful resources. The first is a flyer that provides an overview of what’s new in the latest version of Blackboard Learn. The second is a feature guide that provides detailed information on all the updates. (Note: You will find these 2 resources in the Communication & Adoption toolkit on help.blackboard.com – you can customize them for your institution.) Additionally, here are a few additional resources we think you may find useful:

* [Blackboard Innovative Teaching Series (BITS):](https://community.blackboard.com/groups/higheredbits) Blackboard hosts BITS webinars to share strategies and best practices for increasing educator efficiency and improving learning outcomes. You can register for live webinars or watch recordings of past events.
* [Blackboard Community Educator Group](http://community.blackboard.com/community/questions/educator): Connect with other educators across the world that are using Blackboard through Blackboard’s Community Site.
* [Blackboard Help Site](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn): Find detailed documentation on all the features and functionality in Learn on Blackboard’s Help Site.

If you have any questions about the latest updates, please feel free to reach out to me.

Regards,

[Signature]