Blackboard Learn Ultra Training Guide: Basics

Introduction to Blackboard Learn Ultra

Blackboard Learn Ultra is the latest, upgraded version of Blackboard's Learning Management System (LMS). It offers a more modern, intuitive, and streamlined user experience than its predecessor, Learn Original. Learn Ultra's responsive design is accessible and mobile friendly, making online learning and teaching more efficient and engaging for everyone at Montgomery College. The transition to Blackboard Learn Ultra is structured in three phases (from Spring 2024 to Fall 2025). Starting in Fall 2025, all courses at MC will be in Blackboard Learn Ultra.

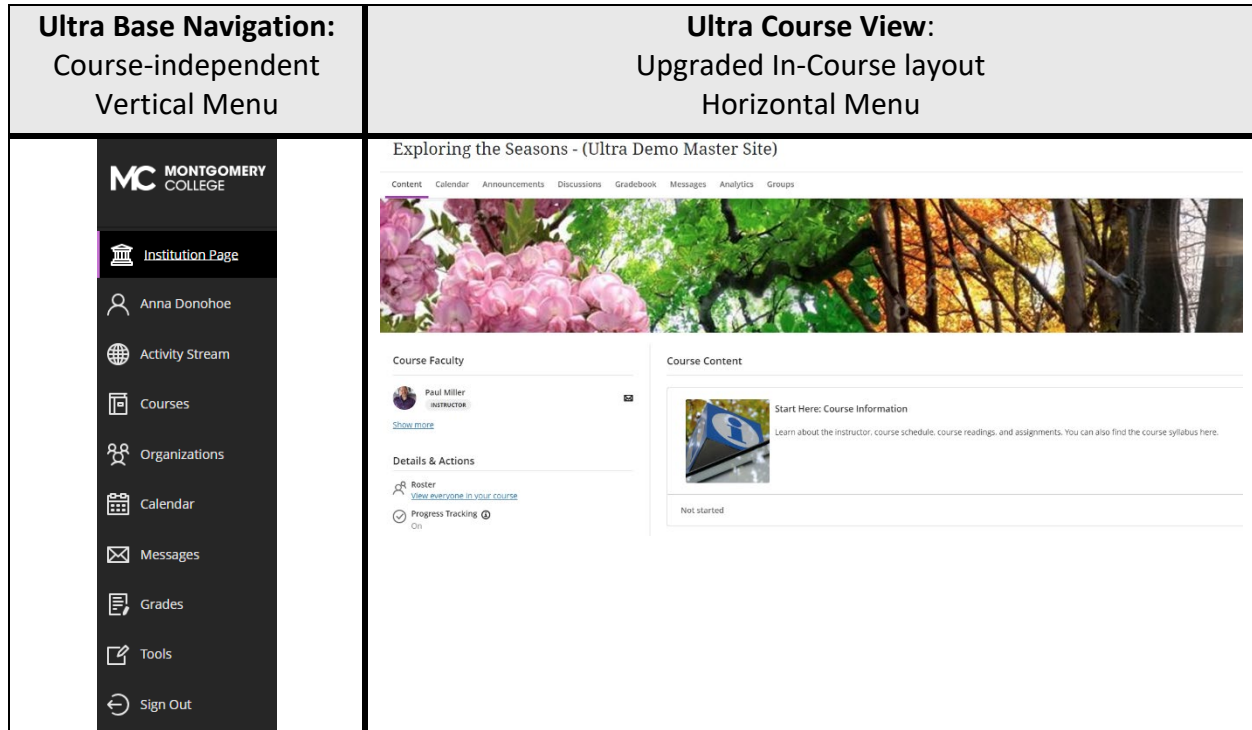### Blackboard Learn Ultra Course Planning Checklist

- ❑ Decide if you will copy content from an existing Learn Original course or build a new course from scratch in Learn Ultra

- ❑ Request a Learn Ultra development course sandbox (optional) and familiarize yourself with the upgraded interface in Learn Ultra

- ❑ For brand new courses, build your course outline, learning sequence, and course content in a platform outside of Blackboard such as Microsoft Word, OneNote etc.

- ❑ If you are copying or recreating content from a Learn Original course, review the following structural considerations: 1) Ensure the number of nested folders, if any, is three of fewer; and 2) Identify assignment instructions specific to the Original interface that will need to be updated.

- ❑ Compile content for your Start Here module. Recommended content: Instructor Introduction and Welcome, downloadable Syllabus, overview of Assignments and Course Materials, and overview of Course Structure/Schedule. *For additional information about Start Here module best practices, please reach out to UltraTransition@montgomerycollege.edu*

Key Terms to Know in Learn Ultra

There are a few key terminology differences between Learn Original and Learn Ultra:

- **Course Item**: An umbrella terms that encompasses all the different elements in a course, such as a Learning Module, Folder, etc.

- **Document**: A Document in an Ultra course is what is called an Item in an Original course.

- **Gradebook**: The Gradebook in an Ultra course refers to what is called the Grade Center in an Original course.

Ultra Base Navigation vs **Ultra Course View:**

| Ultra Base Navigation: Course-independent Vertical Menu	Ultra Course View: Upgraded In-Course layout Horizontal Menu

- **Ultra Base Navigation** refers to the left-side menu in Blackboard, which has been the standard navigation at Montgomery College for the past several years, long before the current transition to Ultra Course View.
- **Ultra Course View** is the focus of the ongoing transition at Montgomery College between now and August 2025.

Navigating Within a Learn Ultra Course

Navigation within a course mainly happens via the Horizontal Navigation Menu at the top of the screen. Note that top bar navigation order and section titles is not editable. The horizontal navigation menu contains the following options:

- Content
- Calendar
- Announcements
- Discussions
- Gradebook
- Messages
- Analytics
- Groups
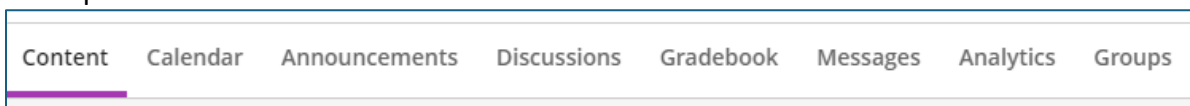
The Course Faculty and Details & Actions sections appear in the **Content** area of the course and provide additional information about the course and actions you can take. The information included here varies if you are accessing a course as an instructor or as a student/in student preview mode.
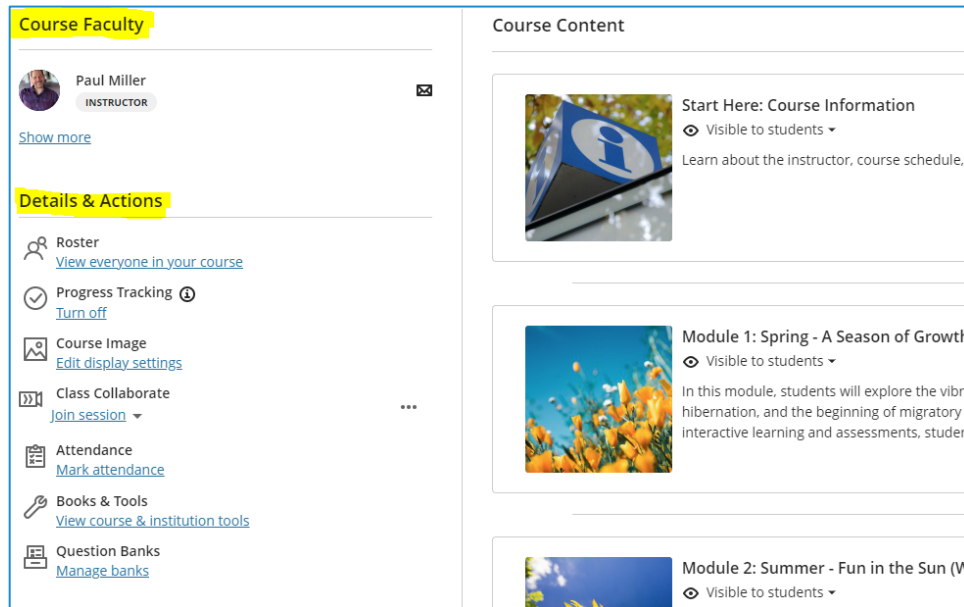

Course Items: Three Categories

Course Items refer to the different elements in a course. They fall into three categories:

1. Course Content
2. Assessments
3. Participation and Engagement
4. **Course Content** (Learning Modules, Folders, Documents, and more)
5. **Assessment**: (Tests, Assignments, Surveys)
6. **Participation and Engagement**: (Discussions, Journals, Cloud Collaboration)

Creating Course Content Items

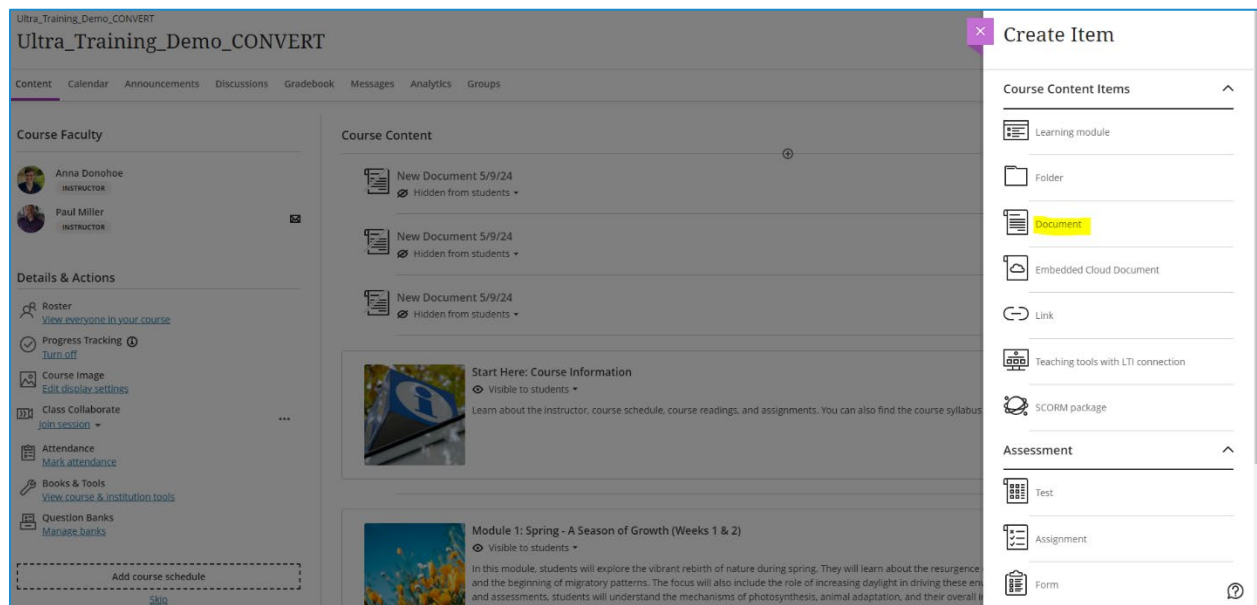**Step 1:** Click **Plus** > **Create**
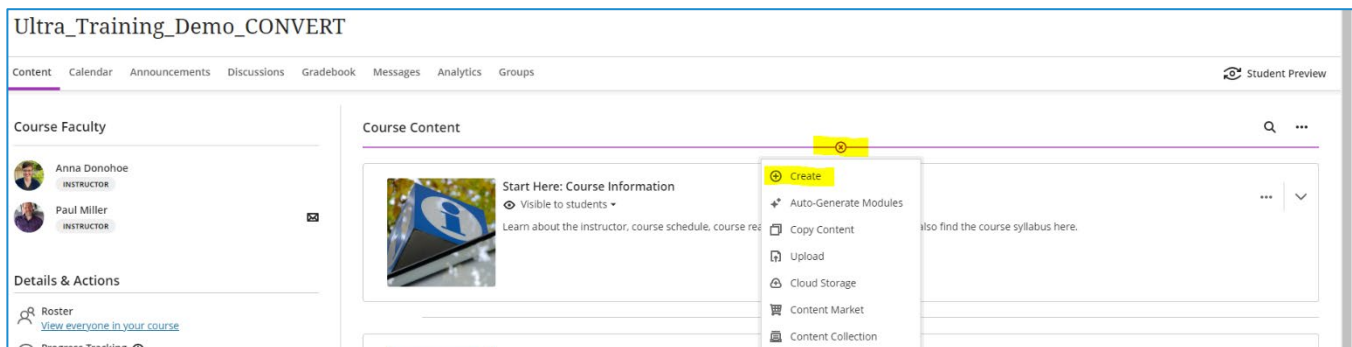
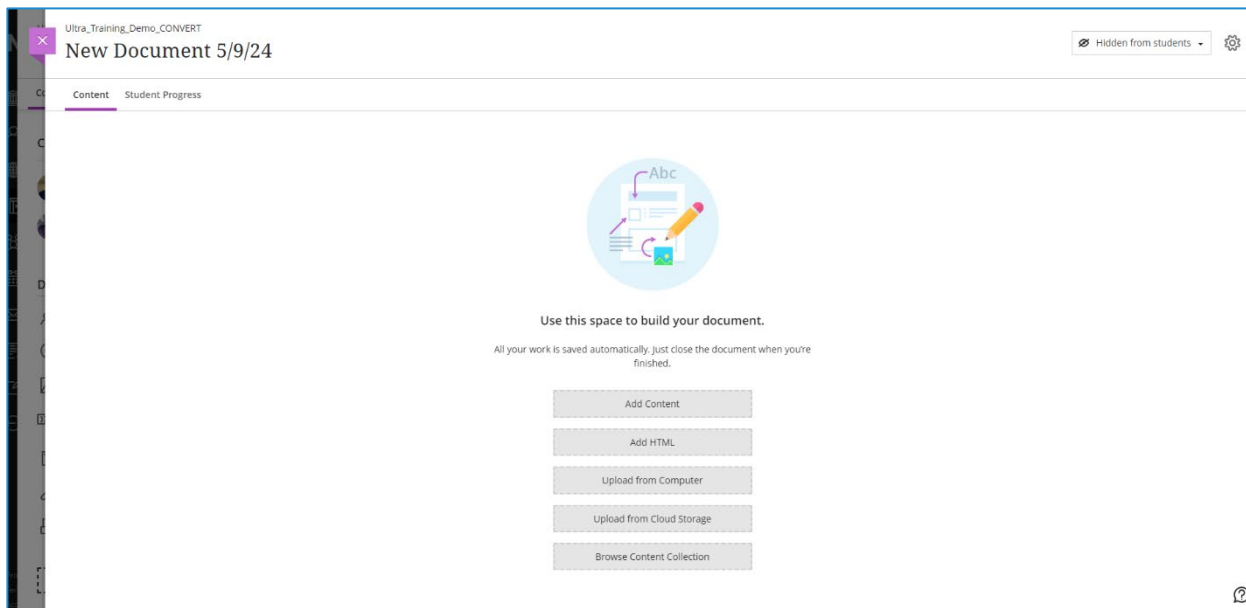**Step 2:** Scroll to choose **Item Category**
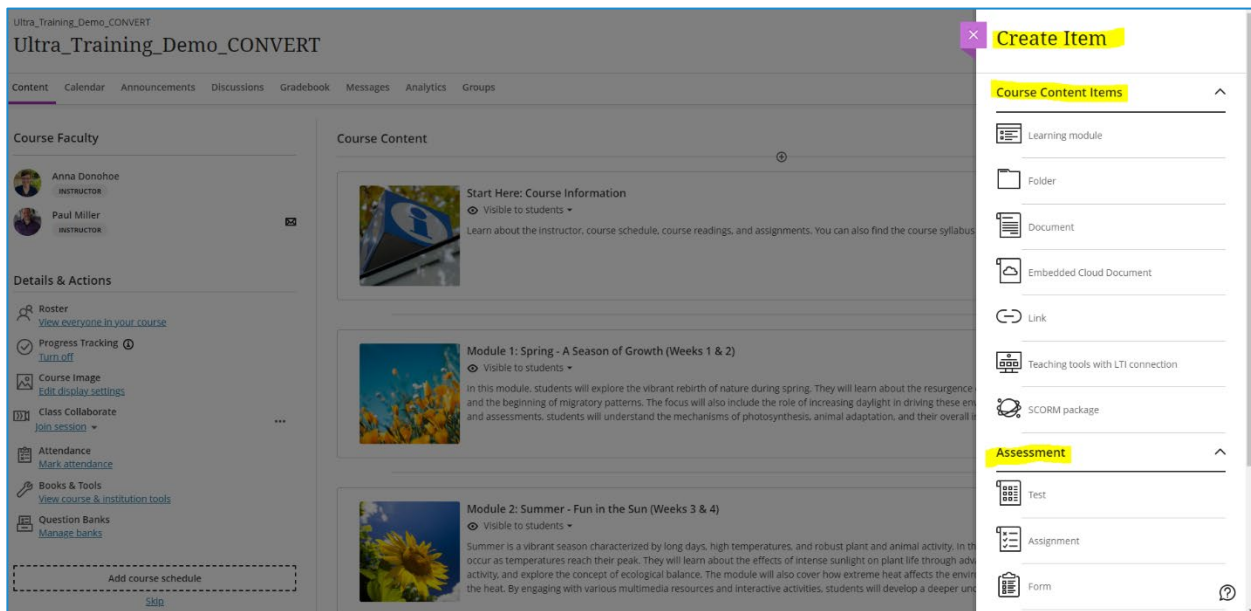
Tip:

Expand or collapse an Item Category by clicking on the small arrow on the right side of the category name.

Step 3: Click on **Item type** to create (example image = Document)

Step 4: Specify an **Item Name** and **Customize**

Other Considerations for Fall 2024 and Beyond

- If you are working with a live course linked to a CRN from Banner in Fall 2024, the course will show up in Original by default.
  - If you wish to enable Ultra in this course BEFORE you have added content, refer to the guide here: Enable Ultra Course View
  - If you have already added content to the Original Course, it is no longer possible to manually enable Ultra in that course.
- In a live course linked to a CRN in Original, you may see the option to "Experience the new Learn" or "Try the Ultra Course View". This functions like a preview mode for you to see how your course would appear in Ultra.
  - Once this preview is initiated, if you click the option to "Use the Ultra Course", it is not possible to revert to Original. It is an automatic process that makes structural changes that cannot be reversed even by administrators.
  - **Using this automatic conversion method is NOT RECOMMENDED. Please refer to our guide and trainings on how to convert courses via copying content for an easier approach that gives you more control and flexibility.**

Additional Resources

Thank you for your interest in Blackboard Learn Ultra! This training guide was compiled by Montgomery College's Learn Ultra Transition team.

- Visit our website for additional resources and answers to FAQs: **mcblogs.montgomerycollege.edu/thehub/stay-connected/blackboard-learn-ultra/**

- Request a development course "sandbox": **Development Course Request information**

- Contact the Transition Team by email at **UltraTransition@montgomerycollege.edu**