

Content Creation

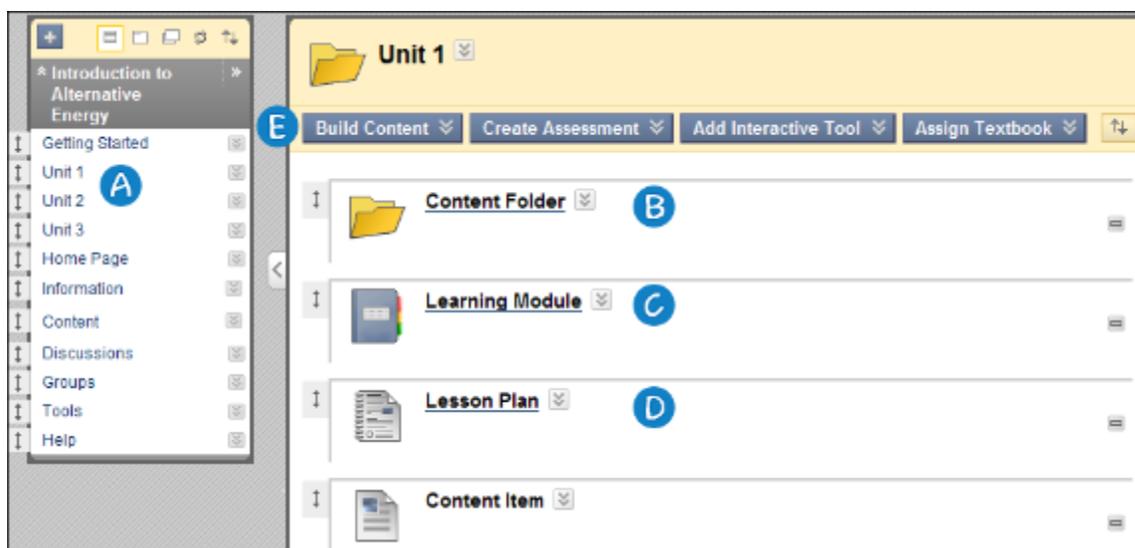
Creating Course Areas for Content

You create course areas to serve as containers for your course material. Course areas enable you to present various types of content in an organized and engaging way.

- The top-level course areas are called Content Areas, which are created, linked, and managed on the Course Menu. Typically, courses contain multiple Content Areas.
- The next level of course areas includes folders, Learning Modules, and Lesson Plans. These course areas must be created within an existing Content Area or other course area.

Once you have created a course area, you create content items within it to present your course material. You can include content such as text, file attachments, links to websites, tests, assignments, and multimedia.

For example, you can create a Content Area called Units that contains Learning Modules for Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, and so on. Each of the Learning Modules contains reading materials, assessments, and links to interactive tools to help student accomplish the learning objectives for the unit.



A **Content Areas** are the top-level course area that provides your course structure. They are linked and created on the Course Menu only. They contain other course areas and content items.

B **Folders** are containers for content.

C **Learning Modules** are containers for content and can include a Table of Contents and can require sequential viewing of its content.

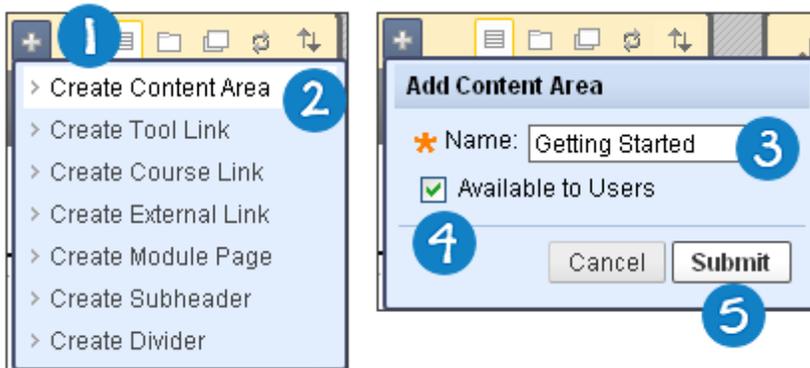
D **Lesson Plans** are containers for content and present objectives and other details directly above its list of content items.

E Content is created within course areas by pointing to **Build Content**, **Create Assessment**, and **Add Interactive Tool** on the Action Bar. To learn more, see [Creating Content in a Course Area on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#), [Creating Assessments in a Course Area on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#), and [Linking to Interactive Tools in a Course Area on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#)

How to Create a Content Area

Content Areas are the top-level course areas. They are created and managed on the Course Menu.

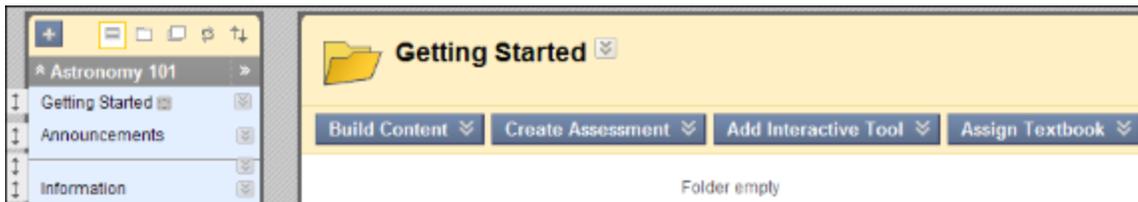
1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**, and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.



2. Select **Create Content Area**.
3. Type a **Name** for the new Content Area.
4. Select the **Available to Users** check box. Content Areas can be created ahead of time, made unavailable, and then made available at the appropriate time.
5. Click **Submit**. A link to the new Content Area appears on the Course Menu.

Result

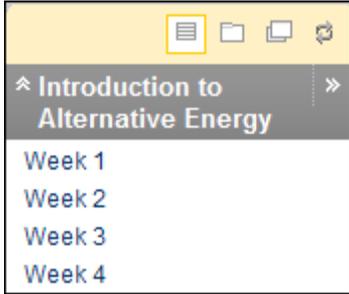
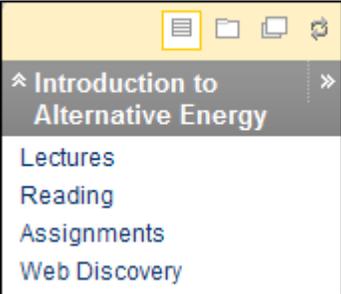
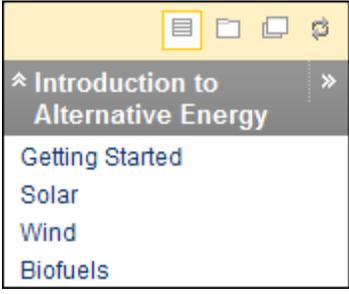
A newly created Content Area is an empty container. Click the link to the Content Area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.



After creating content, you can set the sequence of items with the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. For instructions on reordering and editing content items, see [Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#)

Plan Your Content Areas

Links to the Content Areas you create appear in the Course Menu and provide the overall structure of your course. Plan how you will organize the entire course and envision how your Course Menu will look and function. Three common organizational approaches are:

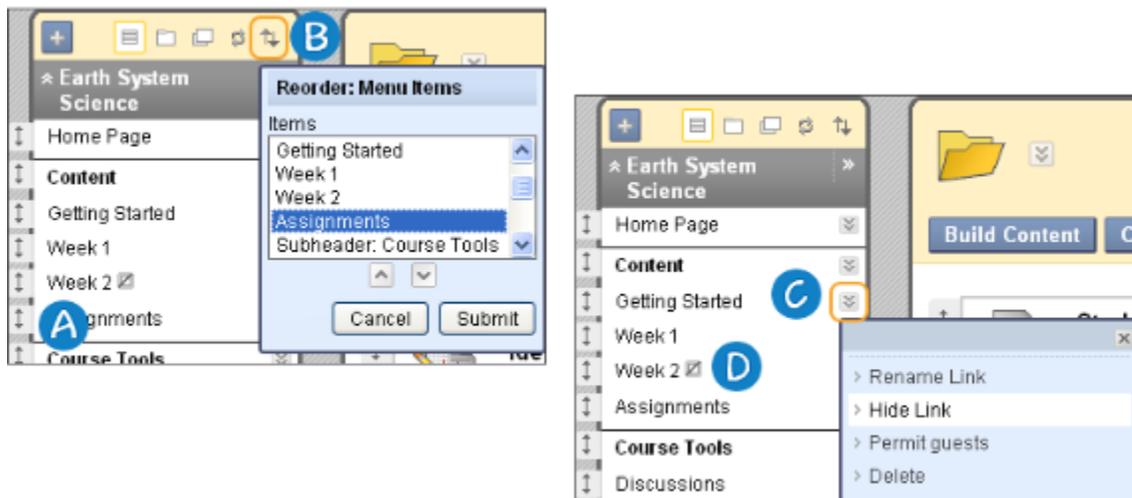
Chronologically	By Content Type	By Subject Area
		
Each Content Area contains a week's worth of readings, assignments, lecture notes, and discussion forums.	Similar content types are grouped together in a Content Area, such as all the lectures for the entire course.	Each Content Area contains lecture material and readings on a specific subject, along with assignments, discussion forums, and assessments.

Some questions to consider:

- What is the best way to divide the course material into manageable sections?
- Do you want course materials presented in chronological order, by textbook chapter, or by subject area?
- Do you want each unit to follow a predictable pattern? For instance, reading materials followed by a quiz and a Discussion Board wrap-up.
- Do you want students to move through your course material sequentially, non-sequentially, or a mixture of both?

How to Manage Content Area Links

You can organize and rename the Content Area links on the Course Menu to make them easier for students to use.



- A** Use the drag-and-drop function to reorder Content Area links on the Course Menu.
- B** Alternatively, use the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool to reorder the links.

C Click a link's Action Link () and select **Rename** to change its title. Select **Hide Link** to make it unavailable to students. Click **Show Link** to make it available to students. If you **Delete** the Content Area, all content items within it are also permanently deleted. This action is final and cannot be undone.

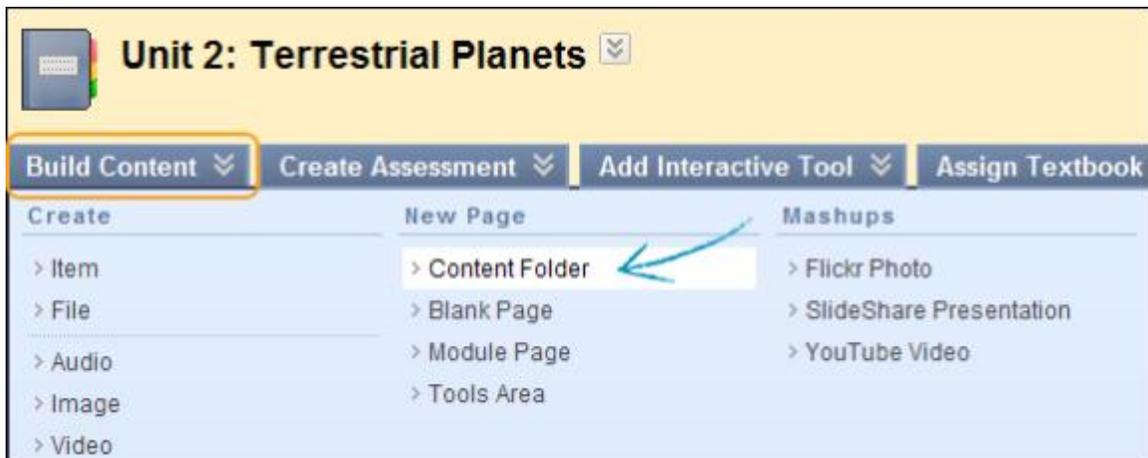
D With Edit Mode set to **ON**, an unavailable link title appears with a square with a diagonal line through it. Students will not see the link on the Course Menu.

How to Create a Content Folder

Folders are a type of course area used to organize content. They are created in existing course areas, such as Content Areas, Learning Modules, Lesson Plans, or in other folders. After you create a folder, content and additional subfolders can be added to it. For example, instructors can create folders for each week of the course in a Content Area.

Use folders to organize content to make materials easier to find and reduce the amount of scrolling in a course area. Organize content so that students can access with as few clicks as possible, so limit the number of nested folders used.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.
2. Access a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Content Folder**.

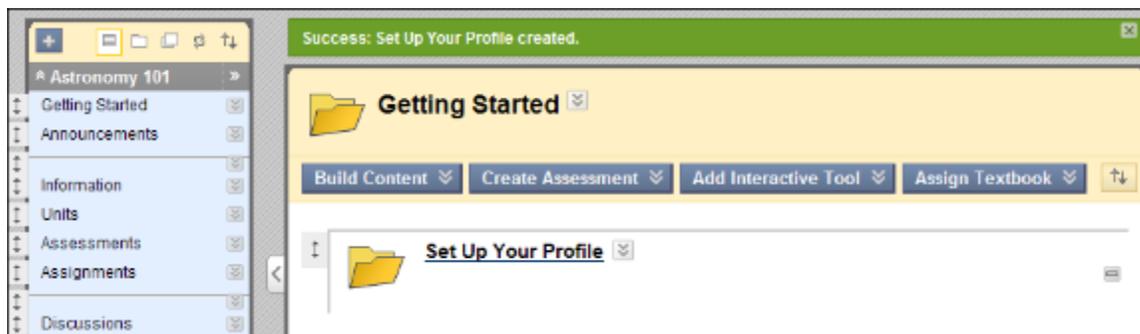


5. On the **Create** page, type a **Name** for the folder.
6. Select options for the folder or item. Options vary based on the type of item.
 - a. Select **Yes** to **Permit Users to View this Content**.
 - b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
 - c. For **Select Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set folders to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect folder availability, only when it appears.
7. Click **Submit**. A link to the new folder appears in the course area.

Tip: To create a subfolder, first create a parent folder. Click the name of the parent folder to open it, then point to **Build Content** on the Action Bar of the parent folder and select **Content Folder**.

Result

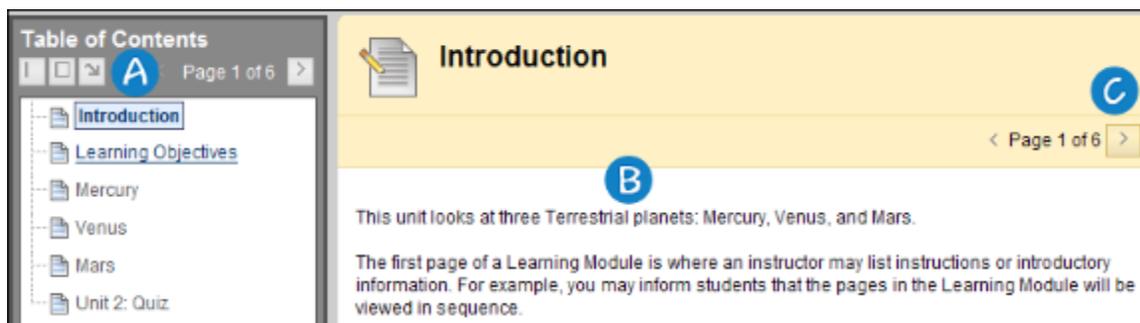
A newly created folder is an empty container. Click the link to the folder in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.



After creating content in the folder, you can set the sequence of items with the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. For instructions on reordering and editing content items see [Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#)

How to Create a Learning Module

Learning Modules are course areas that allow you to organize related course materials in a Table of Contents to provide a rich and interactive learning experience. Students typically access Learning Modules from Content Areas.



Student view of Learning Module

A The Table of Contents displays the items you added to the Learning Module. It can be moved to the bottom, expanded, collapsed, or removed from view using the icons. Instructors may hide the Table of Contents by editing Learning Module settings.

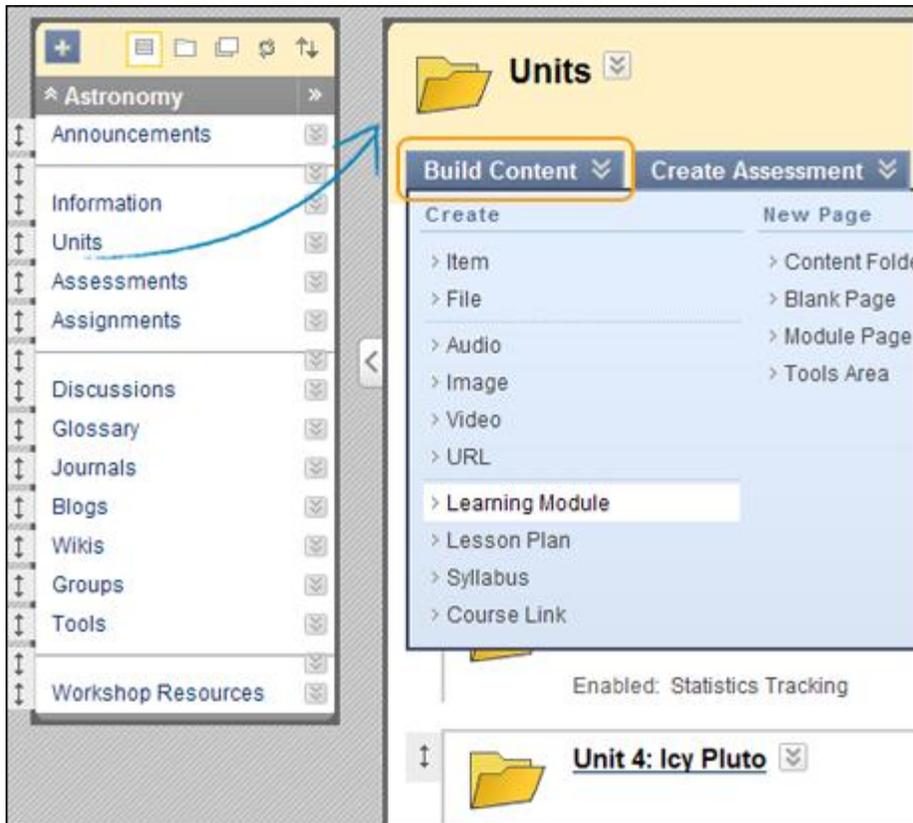
B Content displays in the content frame.

C Click the arrows to scroll through the items in the Learning Module sequentially.

You can set a structured path through the Table of Contents by enforcing sequential viewing or allow users to explore the content in any order. For instance, a Learning Module presents the concept of magnetic fields before describing how speakers and microphones work. Understanding the first concept is required for understanding the second concept. Alternatively, you can allow students to explore a Learning Module in any order for subjects where no particular arrangement is required for understanding the larger concept

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON**.

2. Access a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Learning Module**.



5. On the **Create Learning Module** page, type a **Name**. Students access the Learning Module by clicking the name.
6. Optionally, type a description in the **Text** box. You can use the Text Editor functions to format the text. The description appears below the Learning Module Name.
7. Select the options for **Availability**, **View**, and **Table of Contents**.

2. Availability

Permit Users to View this Content Yes No

Select Date and Time Restrictions Display After 01/20/2011

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

3. View

Select Yes to force users to progress through the content in the order that is set by the number next to each Content Item. Users are unable to advance to a page within the Learning Unit without viewing the previous page.

Enforce Sequential Viewing of the Learning Module? Yes No

Open in New Window Yes No

Track Number of Views Yes No

4. Table of Contents

Select Yes to show a structured view of the Learning Module. Users can choose to display the Table of Contents on the bottom or on the side of the Learning Module.

Show Table of Contents to Users Yes No

Hierarchy Display

8. Click **Submit**. A link to the new Learning Module appears in the course area.

Learning Module Options

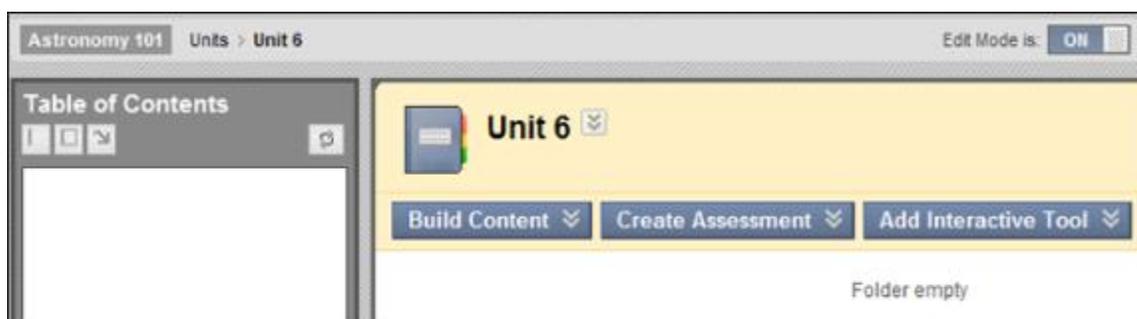
The Learning Module options you select determine how users view the Learning Module as well as its availability.

Option	Settings
Availability	<p>Permit Users to View this Content: Select No to make the Learning Module unavailable to users.</p> <p>Select Date and Time Restrictions: You can set Learning Modules to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and times in the boxes or use the pop-up Date Selection Calendar and Time Selection Menu to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect the Learning Module's availability, only when it appears.</p>
View	<p>Enforce Sequential Viewing of the Learning Module: Select Yes to force students to view the pages in order you have determined. Students cannot advance to the next link in the Table of Contents without viewing the previous link. Although the Table of Contents displays a list of all the Content Items and folders in the Learning Module, links only appear for the Content Items that the user can access. After the links are viewed sequentially, users can review it in any order. If users navigate away from the Learning Module and return to it, they will be required to view it sequentially again.</p> <p>If sequential viewing is not enforced, items in the Learning Module can be viewed in any order by clicking the links in the Table of Contents.</p> <p>Open in New Window: Select Yes if you want the Learning Module to be viewed in a separate window instead of in the content frame. This enables students to keep the Learning Module open in the separate window while navigating to other areas.</p> <p>Track Number of Views: Select Yes to turn on Statistics Tracking and record the number of times the</p>

Option	Settings
	Learning Module is viewed, when it is viewed, and by whom.
Table of Contents	<p>Show Table of Contents to Users: Select Yes to display a Table of Contents to students when they access the Learning Module. Even when sequential viewing is enforced, it is still beneficial for students to see the Table of Contents to gain perspective on the overall concepts being taught. If the Table of Contents is hidden, students use the navigation arrows to move between pages, but cannot see the list of items in the Learning Module.</p> <p>Hierarchy Display: Select the way items in the Learning Module are labeled to denote their relative position in the Table of Contents. Numbers, letters, Roman Numerals, or mixed can be selected. If None is selected, the items will not be labeled.</p>

Result

A newly created Learning Module is an empty container. Click the link to the Learning Module in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.



After creating content in your Learning Module, you can organize the content in folders to provide a hierarchical structure in the Table of Contents. You can set the sequence of Learning Module items by using the drag-and-drop function or the Keyboard Accessible Reordering tool on the Action Bar. After reordering, click the Refresh button in the Table of Contents. For instructions on reordering and editing content items see [Editing and Managing Course Areas and Content on page Error! Bookmark not defined.](#)

Change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to view the Learning Module as students see it.

How to Create a Lesson Plan

A Lesson Plan is a container for content items, similar to a Learning Module, Content Area, or folder. You can use Lesson Plans to help students understand the intended result of their learning and prepare them for the content ahead.

The screenshot shows a student view of a Lesson Plan. At the top, there is a yellow header with a document icon and the title "Unit 1: Astronomy Overview". Below this is a gray box containing the following information:

Instructional Level	Introductory
Instructor	Cathy Chu
Objectives	After completing this unit, you will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the planets in our solar system sequentially Identify Jovian and Terrestrial planets Describe the history of discovery

Below the gray box, there are two content items:

- Solar System Tour**: Take an interactive virtual tour of the solar system provided by Space.com. When the tour has loaded, click the *Virtual Space Tour* link and follow the instructions or...
- Powers of Ten**: View this short film as an introduction to our B I G universe.

Two blue circular callouts, labeled 'A' and 'B', are present. Callout 'A' is positioned to the right of the Objectives section. Callout 'B' is positioned to the right of the Powers of Ten section.

Student view of Lesson Plan

A The lesson profile and instructional objectives appear in the top portion of the page.

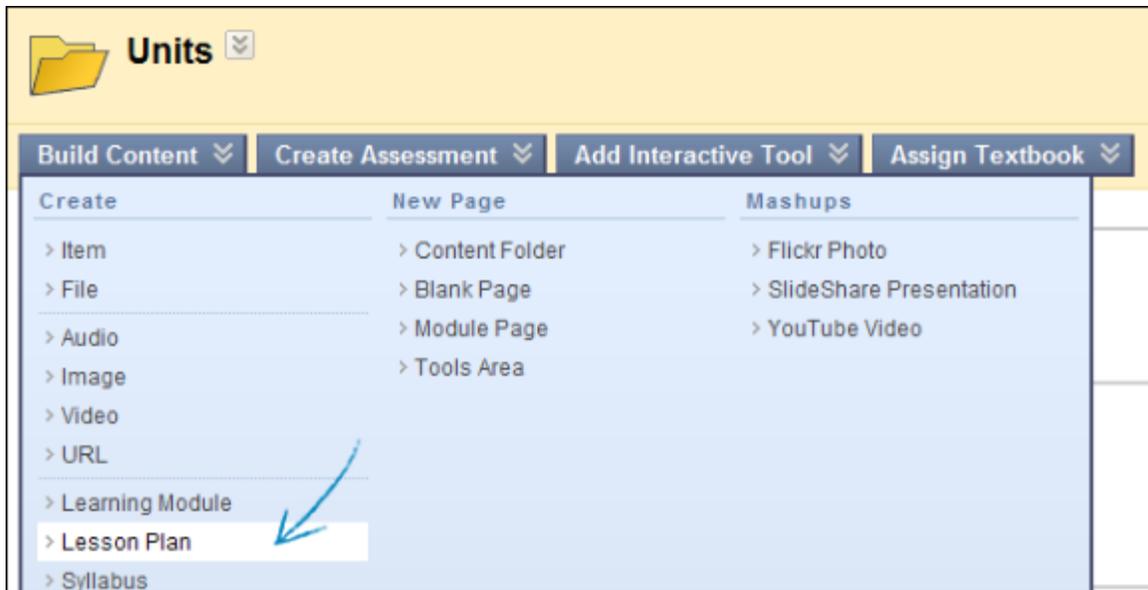
B Content appears in the lower portion of the page.

You create Lesson Plans in two steps based on the two tabs appearing on the Create Lesson Plan page:

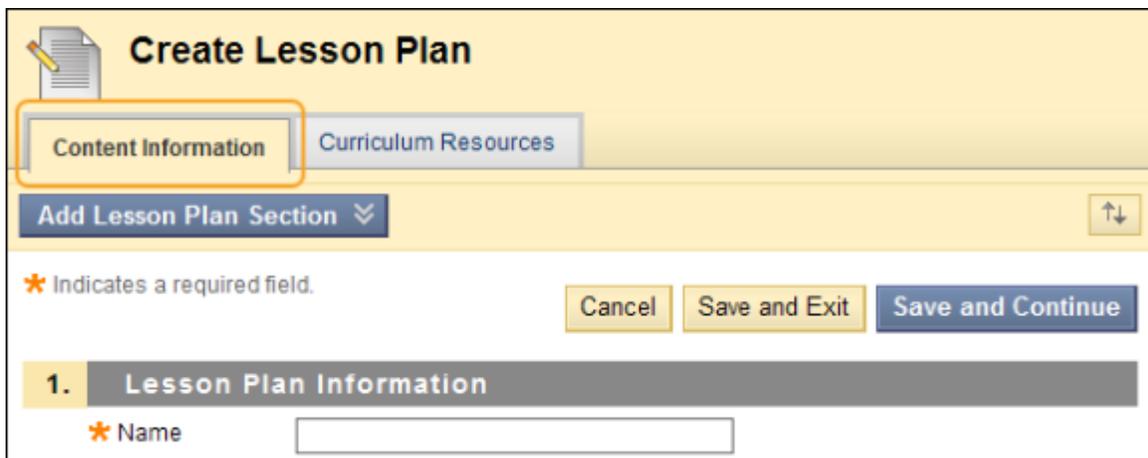
- **Content Information:** This tab contains general information, such as Instructor, Objectives, and Subject Area. This information appears at the top of the Lesson Plan in a gray box when students access the Lesson Plan or when you view it with Edit Mode turned **OFF**.
- **Curriculum Resources:** This tab contains the Lesson Plan's content items. You can create all content types in a Lesson Plan just as you can in a Content Area, Learning Module, or folder.

You can make Lessons Plans available to students or use them solely as a planning tool. The Lesson Plan tool is turned on by default, but your Blackboard Administrator can disable the tool.

1. Change **Edit Mode** to **ON**.
2. Access a course area, such as a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or folder.
3. On the Action Bar, point to **Build Content** to access the drop-down list.
4. Select **Lesson Plan**.



5. On the **Create Lesson Plan** page, the **Content Information** tab appears first by default. This tab enables you to display general information for users at the top of the Lesson Plan in a gray box.



6. Type a **Name** for the Lesson Plan. This is a required field and appears as the link to the Lesson Plan in the course area.
7. Type an optional **Description**. Use the Text Editor functions to format the text and include files, images, links, multimedia, and Mashups. The **Description** follows the **Name** in the course area.
8. Type information for the default elements: **Instructional Level**, **Instructor**, **Objectives**, and **Subject Area**. A default element's title can be edited by clicking the existing title to access the **Edit Element Name** text box. Delete an element by clicking the **X**.

9. Select the check box next to **Share with students** for each element that you want to appear in the Lesson Plan when students view it. If information is not added to a default element, it will not appear in the Lesson Plan and does not require deletion. Clear the check box next to **Share with students** for any information that is for instructors only.

Note: Change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to ensure that you reveal only the information you intend to show to users.

10. To add new elements, point to **Add Lesson Plan Section** on the Action Bar to access the drop-down list.

Lesson Profile	Lesson Preparation	Lesson Walk-through	Lesson Assessment	Set Up
> Author	> Assess	> Guided Student Activities	> Assessment Plan	> Custom Field
> Duration	> Instructional Levels	> Independent Student Activities	> Closure	> Section Heading
> Instructional Level	> Location		> Enhancement Suggestions	
> Instructor	> Materials			
> Objectives	> Resource			

11. Select an element. The new element is added to the bottom of the list on the **Create Lesson Plan** page, where you can edit its title and use its Text Editor, if available.

Note: Select **Section Headings** to organize the elements. After adding a Section Heading, click the title to edit the name.

12. Select options for the Lesson Plan.
 - a. Select **Yes** for **Permit Users to View this Content** to make it available to students.
 - b. Select **Yes** to **Track Number of Views**.
 - c. For **Select Date and Time Restrictions**, you can set Lesson Plans to display on a specific date and time and to stop displaying on a specific date and time. Select the **Display After** and **Display Until** check boxes to enable the date and time selections. Type dates and

times in the boxes or use the pop-up **Date Selection Calendar** and **Time Selection Menu** to select dates and times. Display restrictions do not affect Lesson Plan availability, only when it appears.

3. Options

Permit Users to View this Content Yes No

Track Number of Views Yes No

Select Date and Time Restrictions

Display After

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

Display Until

Enter dates as mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any increment.

4. Save and Continue

13. Click **Save and Exit** to save the Lesson Plan shell and return to the course area. You can edit the Lesson Plan later to create content items.

-OR-

Click **Save and Continue** to display the **Curriculum Resources** tab and create content now.

Result

A newly created Lesson Plan is an empty container. Click the link to the Lesson Plan in the course area to access it. Next, point to any of the functions in the Action Bar to create content.

Lesson Plan

Content Information **Curriculum Resources**

Build Content Create Assessment Add Interactive Tool Assign Textbook

Folder empty

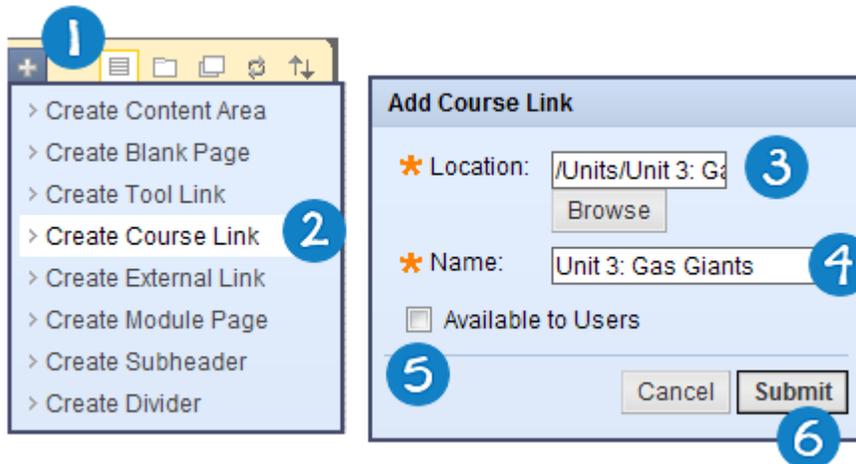
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Change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to view the Lesson Plan as students see it. It is substantially different than the view with **Edit Mode** set to **ON**.

How to Link a Folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module on the Course Menu

You cannot create a folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module directly on the Course Menu. However, you can create a Course Link on the Course Menu for an existing folder, Lesson Plan, or Learning Module.

1. Change Edit Mode to **ON** and point to the plus sign above the Course Menu. The **Add Menu Item** drop-down list appears.



2. Select **Create Course Link**.
3. **Browse** for the location of the course area you want to link.
4. Type a **Name** for the Course Link.
5. Select the **Available to Users** check box to allow students to access it.
6. Click **Submit**. A link to the course area appears on the Course Menu.

How to See the Student View of a Course Area

You must change **Edit Mode** to **OFF** to see course content as students see it. This is especially important for Lesson Plans and Learning Modules as they look quite different when **Edit Mode** is **ON**.

Viewing from the student perspective ensures you reveal only the information you intend to show to users.