

Educational Technology Corner | March 2021

Get the latest updates on educational technology, including Brightspace, TopHat and more.

ZOOM

Do you want to “up your game” in Zoom? Zoom communications offers a [full help site](#). Check out the [Top 20 resources](#) to get started. [Learn about new updates](#).

Do remember to open your Zoom client and check for updates. This link is under your initials in the upper right corner of the Zoom interface. Windows should be running version 5.5.4, Macs should be running 5.5.5.

BRIGHTSPACE

Semester Start for Instructors Video Playlist

As we get ready to prepare for a new academic term, there is some prep work to do on your Brightspace course shells. From the D2L company, here is a [playlist of videos](#) to help you organize everything from content to student groups.

MARCH 2021 UPDATES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Starting with the March 2021/20.21.3 release, the Consistent Evaluation experience in Assignments is now referred to as New Assignment Evaluation Experience.

Assignments - Copying an assignment | Updated

Previously, when you copied an assignment, the copied assignment was set to active and you had to open the newly copied assignment to edit it.

Now when you copy an assignment, the copied assignment is set to **inactive** and you are directed to the **Edit Assignment** screen to continue editing it as part of the copy assignments workflow.

Assignments - Learner profile card in New Assignment Evaluation Experience | New

When hovering over a learner’s name or profile picture in the new evaluation experience, the learner’s user profile card appears. The card displays the user’s online/offline status as well as links to:

- Email
- Instant Message
- User progress
- User profile

Brightspace Platform – Support alert banner for legacy Edge | New

In order to be consistent with the [Microsoft End of Support for Legacy Edge in March 2021](#), D2L

is also ending browser support for Legacy Edge. To encourage clients to use Brightspace Learning Environment with a browser that provides robust support for all features, a warning banner appears in Brightspace Learning Environment if the client is using Legacy Edge. The banner can be dismissed; however, it cannot be disabled at the org level.

Brightspace Pulse – Notifications for upcoming quizzes and assignments | New

In Brightspace Pulse, learners now receive push notifications that remind them about upcoming quizzes and assignments. By default, notifications display two days before each activity's due date or end date.

Calendar – Improvements to date and time selection web components | Updated

To improve the ease of use for clients using the date and time picker in Brightspace Learning Environment, there have been updates to the web components related to date and time selection. These changes are intended to provide better usability for keyboard users and better integration with assistive technology. Changes include:

- Ability to use arrow keys rather than the Tab key to improve keyboard navigation and accessibility.
- Aesthetic changes to hide unused elements until they are active.
- New selectable values of 12:01 AM and 11:59PM in the time picker.
- New default values for Start, Due, and End dates.
- The new Set to Today button inside the date picker replaces the Now button outside the date picker.

Note: There may be some instances of the older date picker remaining in Brightspace Learning Environment. These instances will be changed to the new date picker in a future release.

Quizzes - Copy quiz workflow | Updated

The copy functionality is now available on the individual quiz drop-down menu. When you copy a quiz, the copied quiz is set to **inactive** (as per the original copy quiz workflow) and you are directed to the **Edit Quiz** screen to continue editing it. Now, the copy quiz workflow also copies over Special Access settings and aligned Learning Objectives.

Rubrics – Navigation Accessibility Improvements | Updated

This feature was originally released for the Rubrics tool in [June 2020/20.20.6](#) and updated in [July 2020/20.20.7](#). To increase the value of Rubrics in Brightspace Learning Environment, there have been accessibility improvements to the rubric creation workflow:

- In the **Overall Score**, screen reader users are now informed that the overall score levels are selectable items. When the user navigates between levels, the screen reader now reads the level order, level name, point level, level content, and selection status.
- When reading descriptions in rubric table cells, screen readers now read the level name and the point value.
- Radio buttons that are used to grade a criterion are now labelled for screen readers to include the criterion for which this radio button applies, and the corresponding rubric level name and point value for each radio button.

- When an **Add Feedback** button has the focus, screen reader also reads the name of the associated criterion.
- When the screen reader focus is on the outcomes icon in the criterion column, it indicates the standard associated with the criteria name and reads the tooltip content.
- When a **Criterion Score** cell has the focus, screen readers now indicate that it is the score of the criterion name, the score, and that the user can press enter to adjust the score using a spin button.
- Screen readers now have access to controls for adding feedback to criteria when reading the criteria group table. The table summary now includes the following text: This table lists criteria and criteria group name in the first column. The first-row lists level names and includes scores if the rubric uses a numeric scoring method. You can give feedback on each criterion by tabbing to the add feedback buttons in the table.
- When a page is loaded, the keyboard focus is now on the first focusable interface component; extra tab stops have been removed.

(Corporation, 2021)

TOP HAT CURRENT UPDATES

Notifications on the Android mobile app

Students using the latest version of the Top Hat mobile app on an Android device will receive notifications when a question is presented or a test is launched in their course, even if they only have the Top Hat mobile app open in the background. Clicking the notification will bring the student into their Top Hat course on the mobile app. Students must have first enter a course on the mobile app in order to receive notifications for that course. Students will no longer receive notifications for the course if they close the app, exit the course, or more than 2 hours passes from the time of course entry.

Assignment Grading

Instructors now have the ability to grade Tests from the Content section of their course via the Assignment Grading view (prior to this update, it was only possible to grade Pages using the Assignment Grading view). In addition, instructors can now award participation points, edit grades for all question types, and leave feedback for questions worth 0 points in the Assignment Grading view. For more details on how to use the Assignment Grading view, refer to the following support article: [Professor: Assignment Grading](#)

Student Web Accessibility

The most common and essential workflows for students using Top Hat via a web browser have now reached Level AA compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, including logging in, answering questions and reading textbooks. For more details on Top Hat's commitment to accessibility and inclusion, visit our landing page: [Accessibility and Inclusion with Top Hat](#)

Image zoom-in on iOS mobile app

Students using the latest version of the Top Hat mobile app on an iOS device now have the ability to zoom in on uploaded images.