Using the Retention Center

The Retention Center provides an easy way for you to discover which students in your course are at risk. Based on preconfigured rules and rules you create, students' engagement and participation are visually displayed, quickly alerting you to potential risk. From the Retention Center, you can communicate with struggling students and help them take immediate action for improvement.

You can begin using the Retention Center features immediately—no setup required.

The Retention Center replaces the Early Warning System feature with easy workflows, while retaining all existing Early Warning System data and rules.

The Retention Center in Action

As the new term begins, get early insight into student performance. Check the overall academic health of your class in the main table and see who is struggling. With just a glance, find out who needs your help and drill in to see their specific areas of difficulty. Contact the most at-risk students immediately and flag those you want to monitor closely. As you observe their progress and send emails, you can also keep track of this correspondence and make notes about each student right in the Retention Center.

Tailor the default rules to suit your teaching methodologies. For example, you can:

- Change the threshold for due dates to be more lenient.
- Create two or three new rules to track specific items that are good indicators of risk.
- Create rules to let you know which students are in the top five percent of your class and reward their work. You can use this information to discover student mentors, assign group membership, or find teaching assistants.

Use your course activity information to prioritize which areas of your course to attend to first.

The earlier you can discover and remedy problems, the more successful students become. They are more likely to finish your course and continue the program through to graduation—the ultimate retention goal for a school.
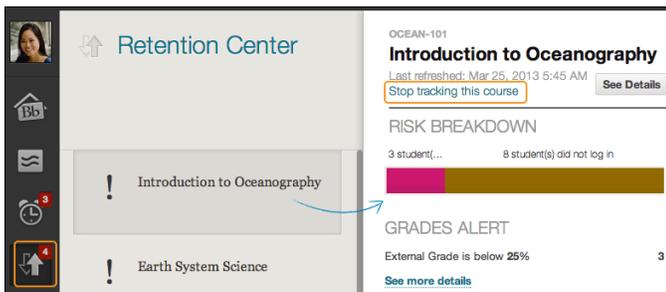
Access the Retention Center

The Retention Center is automatically on and immediately visible in your My Blackboard menu, and also accessible in the **Evaluation** section of a course's **Control Panel**. The information in the Retention Center is for instructors only and is not seen by your students.
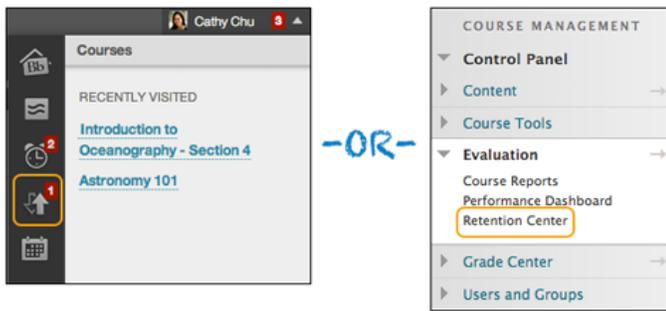
You can turn the Retention Center on or off in an individual course from the **Control Panel** > **Customization** > **Tool Availability**.

-OR-

You can stop or start tracking individual courses from My Blackboard. On the **Retention Center** page, click a course link in the left panel and use the tracking link in the right panel following the course name. Once disabled, warnings will no longer be refreshed, and Retention Center is hidden in the **Evaluation** section of the **Control Panel** in the course.

The Retention Center Page

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

Note that you can access students and their observers from the **Notify** drop-down list from more than one spot in the tool. Observers are typically assigned to follow specific users in Blackboard Learn without interacting with the system, such as parents or counselors. Observers are able to view the course and track student progress. Email notifications you send have a default subject and message that you can edit. If you are sending an email to more than one recipient, the list is not revealed to the group.
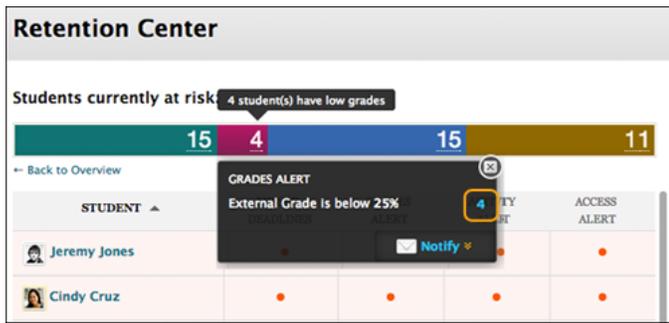
At-Risk Table

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

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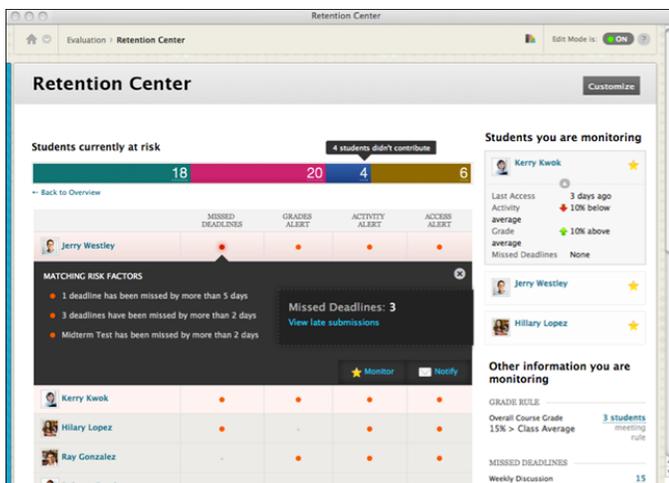
Click the red dot indicator in a student's cell for more information, to include the student in the monitoring section in the right panel, or to send an email.

Click students' names to access their **Retention Status** pages. View their risk factors and the notification emails you have sent, along with your private notes about an individual student, such as:

- Remedial activities or accelerated materials offered.
- Special accommodations for disabilities or language barriers.
- One-on-one meetings.
- Extra attempts allowed on assignments or tests.
- Who you assigned to help the student.
- Possible teaching assistant or student mentor opportunites.

You can create new rules, edit existing rules, and delete rules by clicking **Customize** on the action bar. You can create as many rules as you need.

Right Side Panel

In the right side panel, you can view two types of information:

- **Students you are monitoring**: Click a red dot indicator in the risk table to view a student's specific alert information. Then, click the star icon to place the student's information in this panel. This list allows you to easily check on the students who are most at risk in your course.
- **Other information you are monitoring**: All rules you exclude from the risk table appear here. For example, you can create a rule to display those users doing well in your course, for activity that does not relate to risk, or for participation that you only need to monitor occasionally.

IMPORTANT! When your system is updated to include the Retention Center, all existing Early Warning System rules are retained. These rules appear in the **Other information you are monitoring** section. You can edit these rules and determine whether or not to include them in your risk table.

Your Course Activity

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

- Your last login
- Time lag for grading student submissions
- Your participation in the interactive components of your course. For example, the numbers appearing for blogs shows how many times *you* have posted, not your students.
- Recent announcements
- Fresh course content

This information is only for you, and other users cannot access it. Each time you enter your course, you can use it to determine which course areas require your attention.

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

Customize the Retention Center

You can use the four default rules to begin receiving alerts about how your students are doing in your course. Edit the rules as necessary to customize them for your content and expectations. When you create or edit rules, you determine which appear in the risk table on the Retention Center page.

- **Include in Risk Table**: The rule appears in the risk table which displays an alert for each student meeting the rule's criteria.
- **Exclude From Risk Table**: The rule appears in the right panel in the **Other information you are monitoring** section. Return to the **Customize** page if you want to include the rule in the risk table.

Creating Rules

You can create as many rules as you want. For example, you can create individual grade rules that alert you when students score below a certain point value on each test. Next, you can create a grade rule that alerts you if a student's total grade for your course falls to a certain percentage.

On the action bar, point to **Create Rule** and select one of the four rule types described in the following table.

Rule Type	Despcription
Course Activity	Alert is based on students' overall activity within your course. Students who are below a defined level of activity trigger the alert.
Grade	Alert is based on a defined score for any grade or calculated column in the Grade Center. Students who score above or below the defined threshold for a specific grade item trigger an alert. Determine when a grade triggers an alert: • **Set Grade Value**: Use the drop-down lists to select above or below - AND- points or percentage. Type a value in the field. • **Use Average Grades**: Type the percentage in the field and select above or below the average grade from the drop-down list.
Course Access	Alert is based on the date users last accessed your course. Students who have not logged in for a defined number of days trigger an alert
Missed Deadline	Alert is based on a defined due date for an assignment, test, or survey. Students who do not complete an assignment, test, or survey by the due date trigger an alert based on the option you choose: • **Monitor all course deadlines**: Determine how many deadlines must be missed and by how many days before an alert is triggered. From the drop-down list, select **More Than** or **Less Than** the number of days you chose.

Rule Type	Despcription
	• **Monitor Specific Deadline**: Make a selection in the **Select Course Item** drop-down list. The due date for each item appears in parentheses. Then, select **More Than** or **Less Than** from the drop-down list and type the number of days to trigger an alert. *Note:* If you enter zero (0) for how many days, you are asking to be alerted if an item was not submitted before or on the deadline. No lateness is acceptable.

IMPORTANT! You can create missed deadline rules for Grade Center columns you create manually, but if you do not grade properly submitted items by the due date, a "false" alert is triggered. For manually created columns, students can submit items by the due date, but you must also grade them by the due date.

Deleting Rules and Restoring Default Rules

When you delete a rule, all your course content and data remains intact. If no rules exist in a category, return to the main Retention Center page and click **Use Defaults?** in the appropriate column heading. The default rule and criteria are added. You can use the rule as is or edit it.

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.

Retention Center (Flash movie | 4m 30s)