Quick Start Guide – 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.

Access the Retention Center

The Retention Center is automatically on and immediately visible in your Global Navigation 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 start tracking individual courses from the Global Navigation menu. 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.

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.

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**At-Risk Table**

The main table displays which students are at risk in one or more of four categories:

- Missed Deadlines
- Grades
- Course Activity
- Course Access

You can create as many rules as you need in each category.

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. You can also add the following private notes about an individual student:

- 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 opportunities

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.

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.

If you teach a course with another instructor, this area is directed specifically to the instructor who is logged in and viewing his or her own individualized activity, such as responding to students using the interactive tools. This area is intended to give the individual instructor some insight into how his or her activity in the course may affect student risk factors. Your colleagues cannot view this same information, only their own activity.

You can view the following information:

- 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 or co-instructors.
- 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.

**Create 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 *Retention Center* page, click *Customize* on the action bar. On the *Customize Retention Center* page, point to *Create Rule* on the action bar and select one of the four rule types described in the following table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Activity</strong></td>
<td>Alert is based on students' overall activity within your course. Students who are below a defined level of activity trigger the alert. Blackboard measures the time a student works in a course using the data generated from his &quot;clicks.&quot; A student is assumed to be working with a course from the time he clicks on something in the course until the time he clicks something outside the course or logs out. If a login session is timed out, Blackboard only counts the time until the last click within the course. The time is not counted between the last click within the course and the timeout. No weighting of clicks is assigned to any areas. Adaptive rules are not taken into account.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **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.  
  **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. 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. |

A Video on using the Retention Center can be found on Youtube at the following link:  
http://youtu.be/ECYwy8TSEJA