Faculty Tutorial: Availability Dates and Adaptive Release

Purpose: To show instructors how to manage when content is available to students.

This tutorial includes these topics, listed in order of easiest to most complex:

- **Available vs. Unavailable**
  - This is an easy way to hide content (i.e., a folder or item) from students by making it unavailable.

- **Availability Dates**
  - You can limit when and for how long an item is available to students.

- **Adaptive Release**
  - Determine when to show the appropriate content, to select individuals, at the appropriate time.
  - Because more criteria makes it more difficult for students to gain access, we recommend using adaptive release to open content based on performance (e.g., student must score at least 80% to unlock next item).
  - If using the Blackboard template for Drake Online and Continuing Education, work with your instructional designer or instructional technologist if you want to use the student’s Checklist for adaptive release (e.g., prior items must be completed and checked off on checklist to unlock the next item).

**Important:** The more restrictions you add—for example, availability dates and adaptive release—the greater the likelihood of a conflicting setting that will need troubleshooting in the future.

Additionally, this tutorial shows how to use the **Date Management course tool** to review the dates in your course.
Available vs. Unavailable

For each item in Blackboard, you can change it from the default “Available” to “Unavailable.”

1. Hover over the header to display the chevron in the gray circle.

2. Click the chevron and select Make Unavailable.

3. The item is still visible to you, the instructor. The “Item is hidden from students.”
   a. As shown here, you can use this option on the Home Page to hide an entire module. When you’re ready to open the module, repeat the process but select Make Available instead.
   b. You may find it helpful to hide answer keys or teaching notes, as well.
Availability Dates

You can use “Limit Availability” to display an item after a certain date. Additionally, you can display it until a certain date, as well. The two (i.e., after and until) do not have to be used together as a pair.

Using Availability Dates is recommended if you don’t need students to meet certain criteria to ‘unlock’ the item.

Examples of Using Availability Dates

The following screenshots show where to manage the Availability Dates for various types of items in Blackboard. For most items, these settings display when you edit the item.

Availability Dates for Content Folders (e.g., Module):

![Standard Options](image)

Availability Dates for Assignments:

![Availability](image)
Availability Dates for Discussion Forums:

*FORUM AVAILABILITY*

If links to this forum exist and are hidden, the forum itself may be hidden, even if this setting is set to ‘Yes’.

Available:  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

Enter 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.

Availability Dates for Tests:

- 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.
Adaptive Release

Adaptive Release lets instructors create rules to control how content is released to students.

Refer to the following tutorials from Blackboard:

- Release Criteria
- Rules for Releasing Content
- Criteria for Releasing Content
Date Management

Use the Date Management Course Tool to see a summary of dates.

Date types include, but are not limited to: availability, due dates, and adaptive release. Only the date types used appear in the list. Refer to the Date Management tutorial by Blackboard for more information, including how to adjust dates (individually or in batches).

Date Management Tool

From within your Blackboard course, click “Course Tools,” which is located in the “Course Management” portion of the course menu.

Select “Date Management.”
On the Date Management Review page, check the settings for Item Types and Date Types.

For Item Types, “Check All.”

For Date Types, select All.
Click the “Run Date Management” or “Run Date Management Again” button.

Select the radio button to “List All Dates for Review” and then click the Start button.

The Date Management Progress bar shows the status.
When the process is 100% complete, click **Next**.

The Date Management Review page displays. This course uses Availability Dates.

The Date Management Review for this other course shows Availability Dates and Adaptive Release Dates.
**Important reminder:** The more restrictions you add—for example, availability dates and adaptive release—the greater the likelihood of a conflicting setting that will need troubleshooting in the future. In this example, the Final Paper was made visible to students on 2/25/2020—not on 2/22/2020.

Congratulations! You now know how to use Date Availability, Adaptive Release, and the Date Management course tool.

**Drake Online and Continuing Education**

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*For further help with Blackboard and other technical assistance, visit the Knowledge Base.*

*For general technical issues, contact Information Technology Services.*