Adding Course Signals to Your Blackboard Learn Course

The first thing you’ll need to do is associate Course Signals with your course in Blackboard Learn.

- Once you’ve logged in, go to the course for which you’d like Course Signals. Locate the course management menu in the lower left part of your course menus. Click Customization to expand, then Tool Availability.

- Scroll to Ellucian Course Signals and check the box in the first column. Then, click Submit at the bottom of the page.

- Click your course’s entry point in the main menu (this will be Course Content unless you have manually changed it).

- Mouse over Tools then click More Tools. Finally, click Ellucian Course Signals.

- On the Create Link: Course Signals page that opens, click Submit. You have now created a link on your course’s homepage that your students can click to check their Signals color, and Blackboard setup is complete.
Configuring Course Signals

Once you’ve completed the Blackboard setup, you’ll need to set up Course Signals and associate your course with it before you can run an intervention.

If you copied your course from a previous term where you used Course Signals, that association will remain in Blackboard, as will the icon in the Course Content area. At the start of each term, you will need to associate your course on the Course Signals web page before running an intervention.

☐ Go to http://www.purdue.edu/signals, click Course Signals Login, and use your career account to log into Course Signals.

☐ Once logged in, you'll see this:

Click on the Settings tab to affiliate your course with Course Signals.

☐ From here, you will need to choose the current term from the drop down menu under Term(s).

☐ Once you do that, you'll see a listing of courses and sections for which you are listed as an instructor in the Section(s) area. Put a checkmark in the box to the left of the section(s) in which you're using Course Signals.
If you have a course that is merged – that is, where several different sections are listed in Blackboard as one section, as well as their distinct, instructor-specific sections – you will see the parent/child selection (as depicted in the third course in the graphic above).

- Selecting “Parent” for the course will allow you to run interventions on every student across all the selections.
- Selecting “Child” will send to only your section. If you choose one in the initial setup, you can change it by returning to this screen at a later point.

Choose all the courses/sections for which you have Course Signals.

At the bottom of the page, you have the option to have Course Signals remind you to run an intervention. You can choose to have it remind you weekly, biweekly, monthly, or never, as well as the date range for which you wish to receive reminders.

*Note: we suggest that you run interventions at least every other week beginning no later than the second week of the term to achieve the maximum impact for your students; as such, the most effective use of the reminder emails will be if you set them to run weekly or bi-weekly.*

Once you have completed the setup, click save. Then, click on the Course Progress tab – this is where you’ll be able to run an intervention.

Need help with either of these tasks? Request a consultation at [http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/staff/resform.cfm](http://www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/staff/resform.cfm)

Got everything set up?
Go to the next page to learn how to run an intervention.
Running an Intervention in Course Signals

Once you’re in the Course Progress tab, you’ll see the following:

Choose the section for which you intend to run Course Signals from the Section drop down menu. Then, set your ranges for Low, Medium, and High Risk bands. The system will update the numbers for you, given your inputs – so, for example, if you set 85 as the minimum percentage for Low Risk, the Maximum % for Medium risk will automatically be set to 84. You can alter these bands every time you run an intervention; the most recent values you set will load the next time you run Course Signals.

Additionally, choose the date range for which you wish to have effort included. Remember that effort is calculated as the amount of interaction with Blackboard. We suggest that you always use the entire semester to date (so, from day 1 up to the current date) in this category.

Once you’ve set everything to the necessary level, click Next in the lower right-hand side of the screen.
☐ You’ll now be on the Gradebook tab. This is pulling columns directly from your grade book in Blackboard. Select the columns you want Course Signals to include in the calculation. If you have indicated a maximum value for each column within the Blackboard grade book, you will see those values returned in the box to the immediate right of the grade book column name; otherwise, you will see a 0. If you see a zero, you will need to enter a maximum point value into the box.

Note: we recommend that you indicate the maximum point value within Blackboard; otherwise, every time you run an intervention you will have to enter the maximum point values for each column being included in the calculation.

☑ You also have the option of indicating that a Blackboard grade book column is extra credit (and therefore has no maximum value) by clicking the box to the right of the maximum value box. In order for Course Signals to run, you must have at least one grade column with a maximum point value selected for inclusion in the calculation.

☐ Course Signals will then calculate the results given the grade book columns you’ve specified (this will take a few minutes). Once it calculates them, you can review the results on the results tab.

☐ On the results tab, you will have several filters available to you, including (once you have more than one intervention run) the ability to see who has improved, stayed the same, or declined in their performance, as well as those who have received two consecutive yellows or reds. You can also search for a specific student using the search box in the upper right-hand corner.

☑ If you’re satisfied with the results, click next. If something looks awry, start the process over (you can’t go back) and ensure that you’ve used the correct columns from your grade book.

☐ Now you’ll be on the screen called Review Messages. This is where you can write the email messages that will go to the students in your course. For each signal color/risk category, there are two messages – one for high effort and one for low effort.
If your course involves students interacting with Blackboard a great deal (e.g., downloading content, submitting assignments, posting on a discussion board), then be sure to differentiate between high and low effort, as there will be students who fall into both categories.

- If you require minimal interaction with Blackboard, you can have different messages, or you can simply have the same message for both categories of red, yellow, and green, respectively.

- Be sure to update both messages for each risk category so that you do not inadvertently send a student a generic message.

- Be sure to click Save when you’re done, then click Next. The next time you come into Course Signals, the messages you wrote the previous time will be present for you to edit.

Note: We suggest that you write your messages in MS Word, then copy and paste them into Course Signals. That way, if you choose to use Course Signals in the future, you’ll already have previous messages from which you can use to base new messages. PassNote is a site created to help in composing student messages: http://www.purdue.edu/passnote/

When you arrive at the finish tab, you'll have three choices: Send message and post the results in Blackboard, simply send the message, or discard the result altogether.

Other Notes

- We recommend you tell your students you are using Course Signals so they’re aware that you’ll be sending them updates on their progress.
- There is a video available that we suggest you show your students before your run the first intervention. You can find it at www.purdue.edu/signals and under Frequently Asked Questions?
- Read through the Designing Messages for Success and Course Signals Top Ten Tips to understand how to best utilize Course Signals in your course. These PDFs are available in the Course Signals Resources area.