

Instructor Guides

Course Homepage Layouts and Widgets



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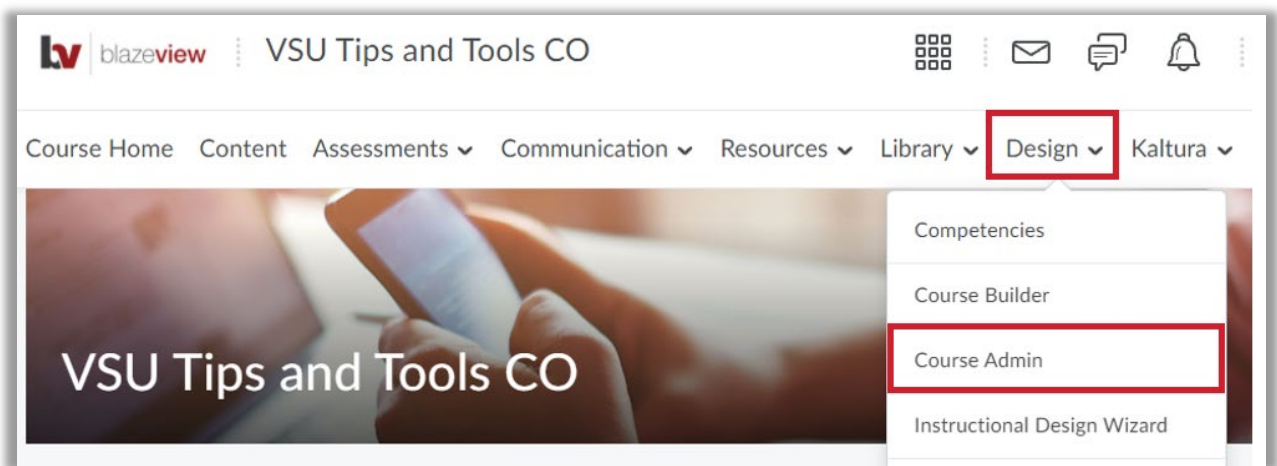
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Course Homepage Customization

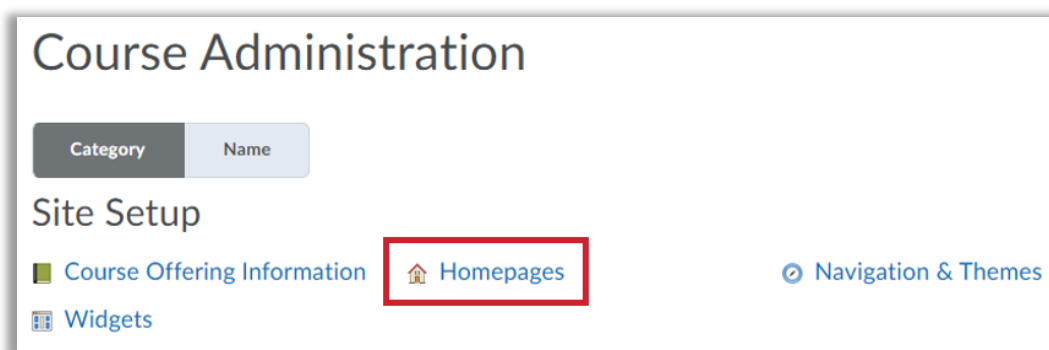
The course homepage is the first thing students see when they enter your course. Selecting a homepage layout that suits your course, your teaching style, and your students' needs ensures success for all.

Accessing the Homepage Selector

1. Enter the course of which you wish to change the homepage.
2. From the NavBar, select **Design > Course Admin**.



3. Under the first area, Site Setup, select **Homepages**.



4. You will see a list of available course homepage options. Previews and descriptions of each follow. Your current active homepage will be indicated with a checkmark and the word "Active" on the right side of the row.

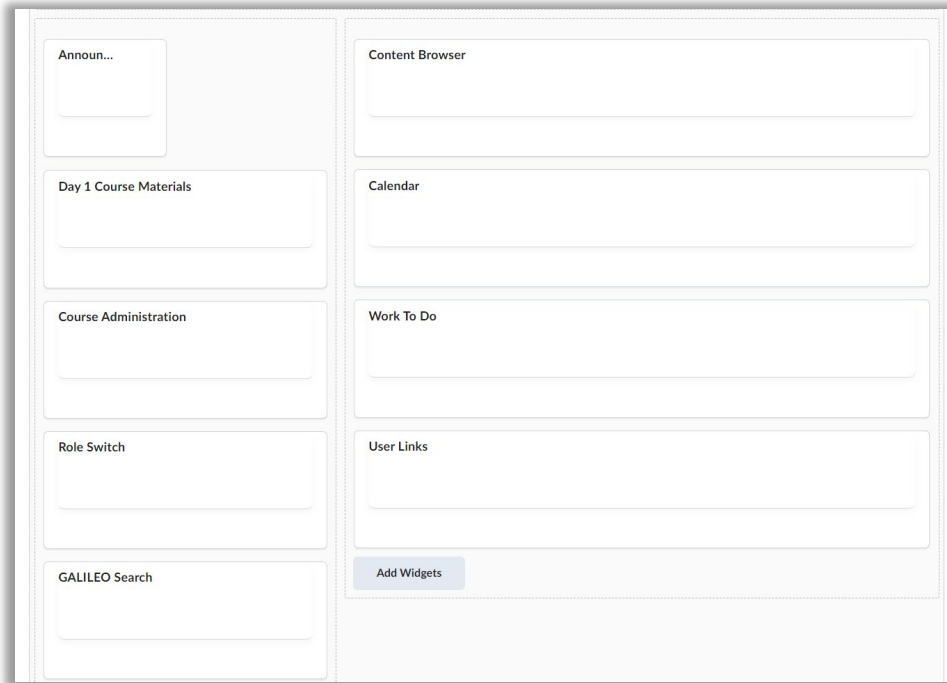
<p>Course Homepage Option 1 ▾</p> <p>Updated default with the Role Switch widget, and the Work To Do widget replaces the Updates widget. Will become the default homepage beginning Spring 2022.</p>	<p>🔒 Default Homepage: Not Enforced</p> <p>Shared</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 2 ▾</p> <p>Two equal columns featuring new Slim Announcements widget, Calendar, Work To Do, Content Browser, Role Switch, and Course Administration widgets.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 12 other org units.</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 3 ▾</p> <p>Two equal columns featuring 2 new widgets (Slim Announcements and Visual Table of Contents) Calendar, Work To Do, Day 1, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 57 other org units.</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 4 ▾</p> <p>Two equal columns featuring 3 new widgets (Welcome Widget, Slim Announcements and Visual Table of Contents) Calendar, Work To Do, Day 1, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 71 other org units.</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 5 ▾</p> <p>One wide and one narrow column featuring 2 new widgets (Slim Announcements and Visual Table of Contents), Calendar, Work To Do, Course Administration, Role Switch, and Galileo widgets.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 213 other org units.</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 6 ▾</p> <p>Two equal columns featuring new Visual Table of Contents widget, Announcements, Calendar, Work To Do, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 17 other org units.</p>
<p>Course Homepage Option 7 ▾</p> <p>Two equal columns featuring 3 new widgets (Slim Announcements, Welcome and Visual Table of Contents) Calendar, Work To Do, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets. No Day 1 Widget.</p>	<p>Shared and used in 10 other org units.</p>

Course Homepage Options

When selecting a course homepage, decide whether or not you wish to set up available widgets. The Welcome Widget and the Visual Table of Contents Widget require some setup to be attractive and effective for your course.

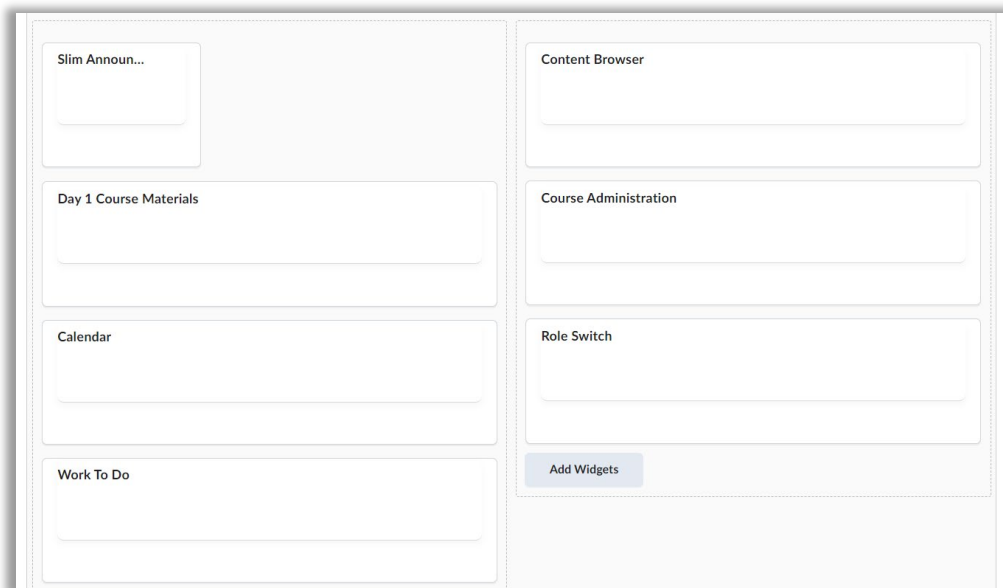
Course Homepage Option 1

Two equal columns featuring Announcements, Day 1, Course Administration, Role Switch, GALILEO Search, Content Browser, Calendar, Work To Do, and User Links.



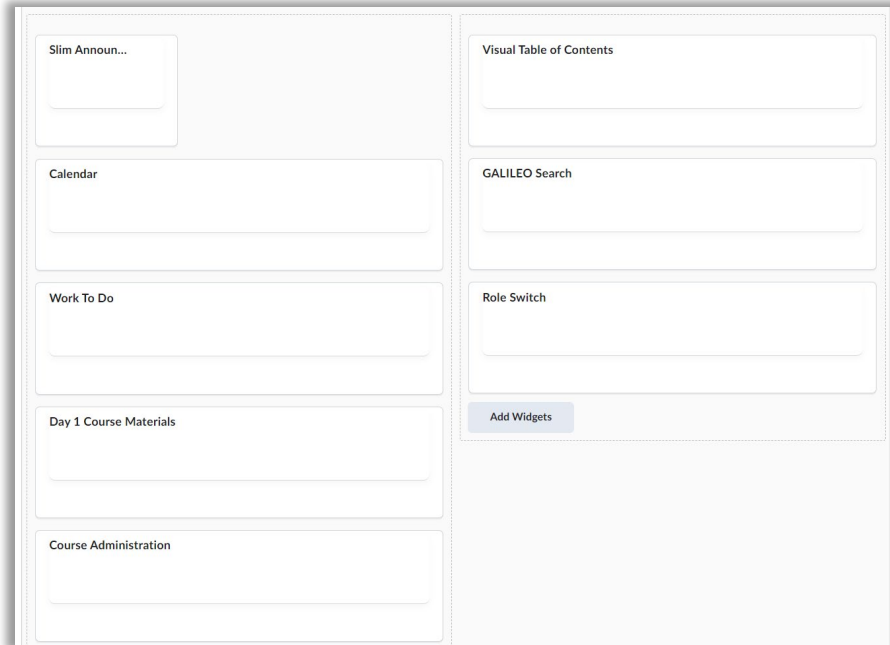
Course Homepage Option 2

Two equal columns featuring Slim Announcements, Day 1, Calendar, Work To Do, Content Browser, Role Switch, and Course Administration widgets.



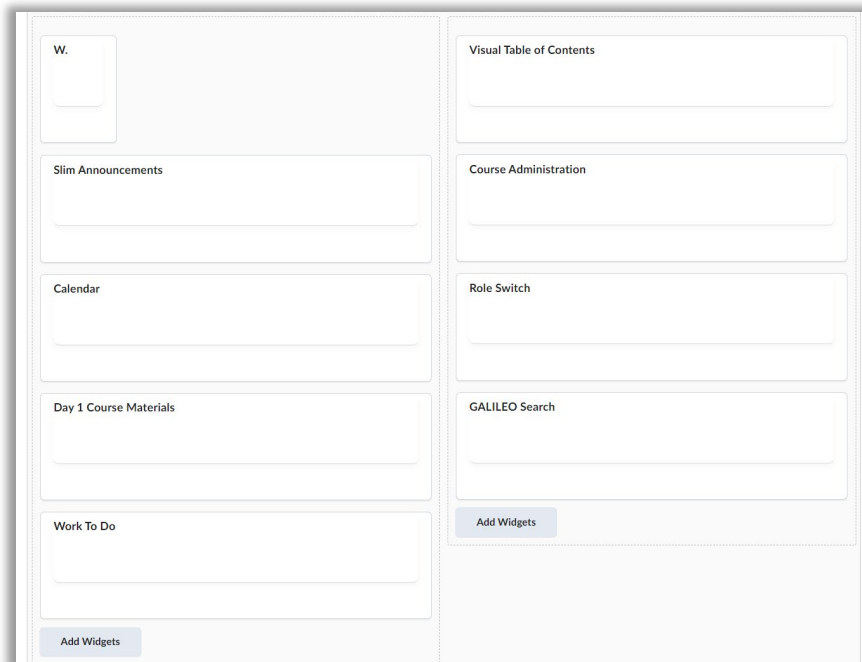
Course Homepage Option 3

Two equal columns featuring Slim Announcements, Visual Table of Contents, Calendar, Work To Do, Day 1, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.



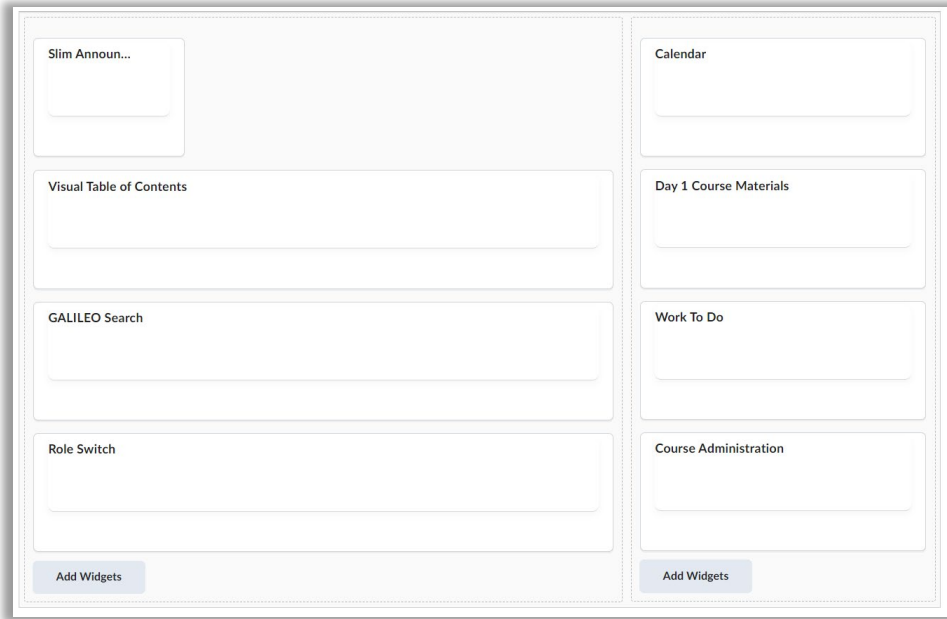
Course Homepage Option 4

Two equal columns featuring the Welcome Widget, Slim Announcements, Visual Table of Contents, Calendar, Work To Do, Day 1, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.



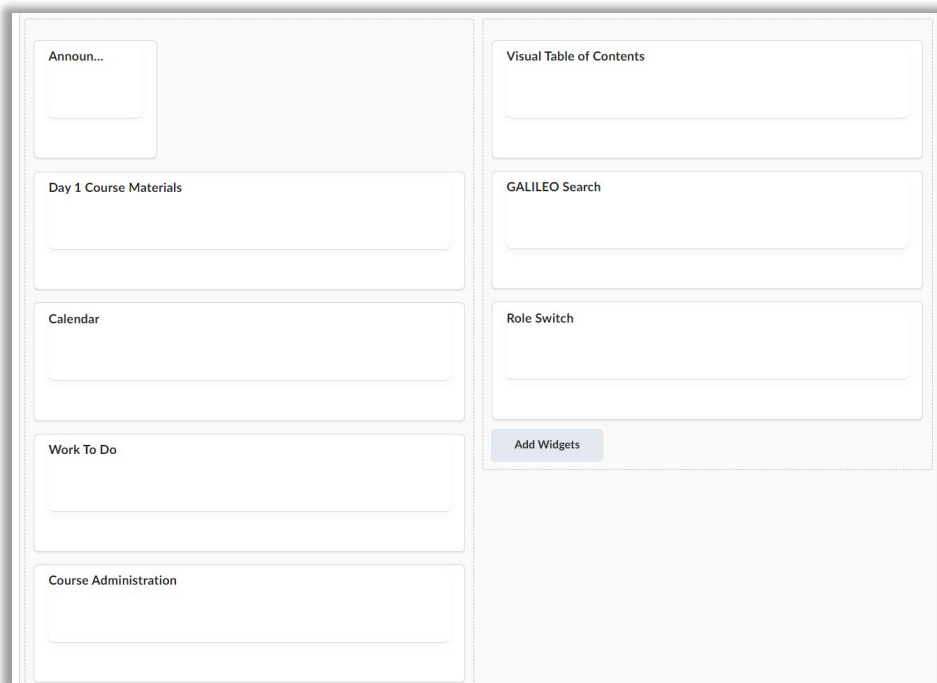
Course Homepage Option 5

One wide and one narrow column featuring Slim Announcements and Visual Table of Contents, Calendar, Work To Do, Course Administration, Role Switch, and Galileo widgets.



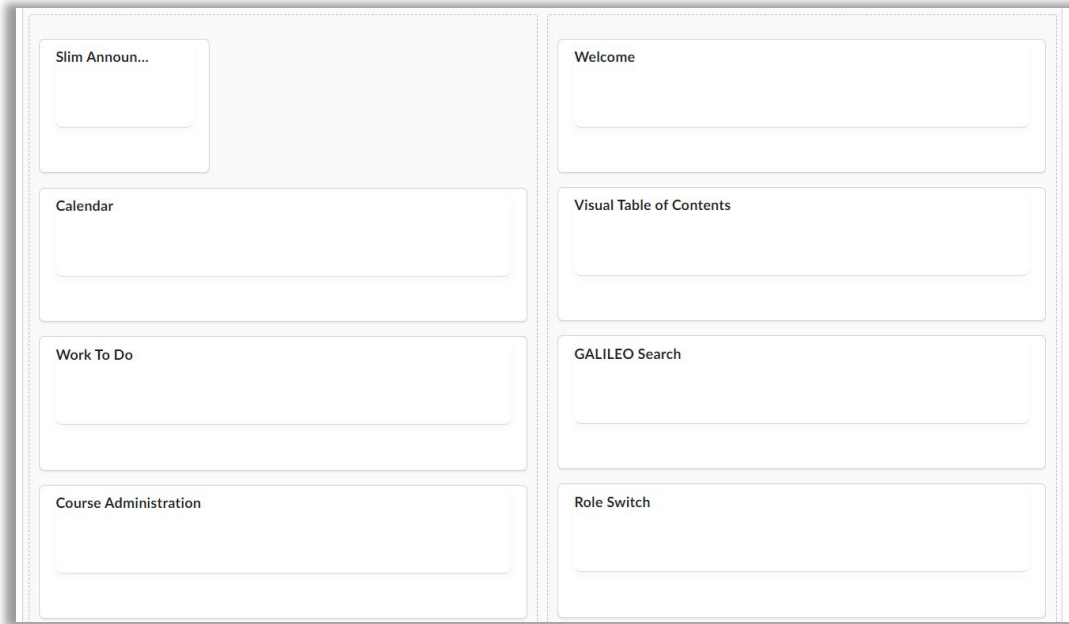
Course Homepage Option 6

Two equal columns featuring the Visual Table of Contents widget, Announcements, Day 1, Calendar, Work To Do, Galileo Search, Role Switch and Course Administration widgets.



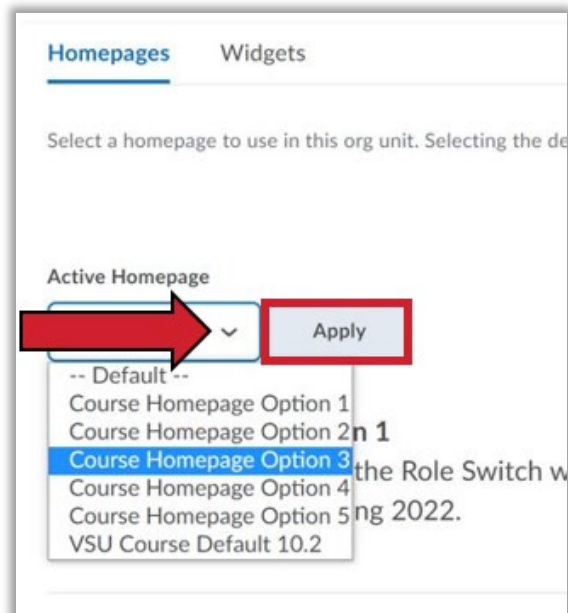
Course Homepage Option 7

One wide and one narrow column featuring Slim Announcements, Welcome, and Visual Table of Contents, Calendar, Work To Do, Course Administration, Role Switch, and Galileo widgets. **There is no Day 1 Widget present in this option.**



Selecting a Course Homepage

To change your course homepage, use the dropdown selector at the top of the page. Select from the available options, then click **Apply**.



Things to Note

Best Practice: If you choose to change your course homepage layout after a course has started, post an announcement notifying students of the change.

Reminder: When selecting a course homepage, decide whether or not you wish to set up available widgets. The Welcome Widget and the Visual Table of Contents Widget require some setup to be attractive and effective for your course. See these other sections for instructions:

- How to Import and Set Up the Welcome Widget
- How to Style the Visual Table of Contents Widget

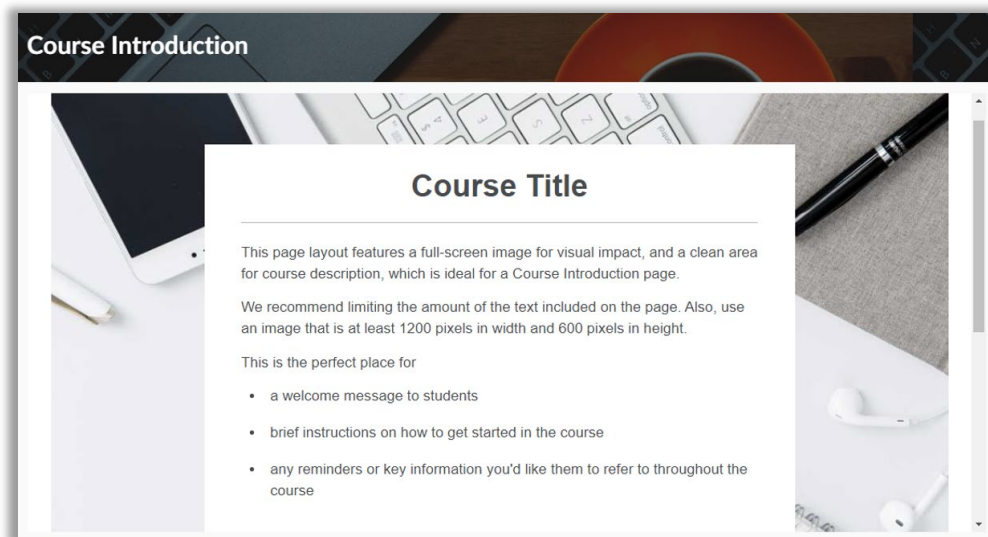
If you do not intend on setting up these widgets, select a course homepage option that does not include them.

Note: The Slim Announcements Widget will **not** display a video. You may still place a video within an announcement, but please use text within the announcement to indicate to students that they should click the announcement title to view the full contents.

BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget

The Welcome Widget adds a window overlaid on your course homepage intended to welcome students to the course each time they log in and access the homepage, until they dismiss it. The Welcome Widget contains four pages, referred to as “steps,” of information to promote student success in BlazeVIEW.

1. **Step 1: Course Introduction** – This page is intended for you to personalize with your course title, a welcome message, and any key reminders or information you would like students to refer to. See Setting Up the Welcome Widget on Page 15 for further instructions.



2. **Step 2: Navigating BlazeVIEW and this Widget** – This page contains an instructional video on navigating the Brightspace D2L Learning Environment (BlazeVIEW). Students will also learn how to dismiss and reopen the Welcome Widget, also referred to as the Quick Guide.

Navigating BlazeVIEW and this Widget

Navigate Brightspace Learning Environment

LEARNER

Watch on YouTube

Direct Link: <https://youtu.be/ysM2cc2ziPM>

When Does This Window Appear?

- Anytime new content is added to or rearranged within the welcome module, this window will appear for you the next time you arrive at this course's homepage.
- The window will reappear even if previously dismissed when new content is added or rearranged within the welcome module. The window will then need to be dismissed again.

How Do I Dismiss this Window?

3. **Troubleshooting Common Issues** – This page contains a 5-part interactive accordion. When students click and expand the rows, they will find the solutions to common BlazeVIEW problems.

Troubleshooting Common Issues

Running into an issue with BlazeVIEW? Use the accordions below to troubleshoot some of the common problems and solutions. Once you've explored these fix-it-yourself options, see the following page for who to contact next.

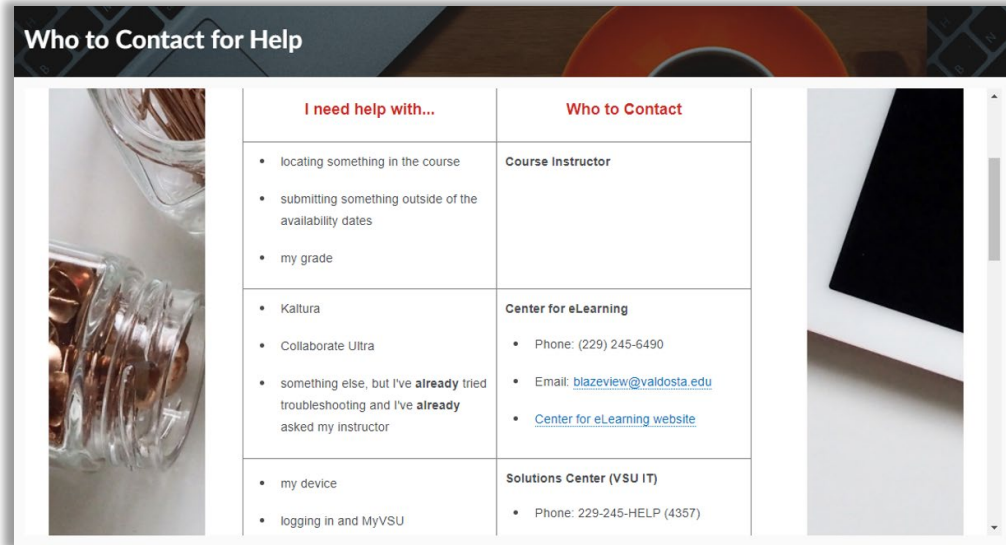
Problems & Solutions

- > **BlazeVIEW Technology Requirements**
- ▼ **Basic Troubleshooting**

Many of the problems people report are related to Internet browsers, not BlazeVIEW. If you are experiencing technical problems, consider your browser first.

- We recommend using Chrome or Firefox. We hear the most complaints from students using Safari (Mac) or Edge (PC).
- Switch to a different browser. Regardless of the browser you use, one

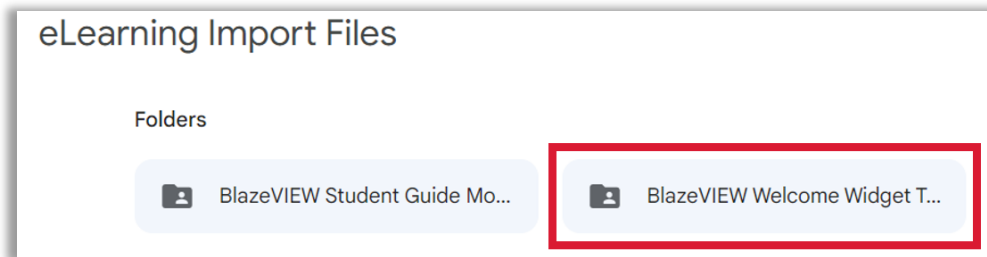
4. **Who to Contact for Help** – On this final page, students will find a table of contact information, categorized by help topic. This page is intended to provide students with next steps if troubleshooting does not work.



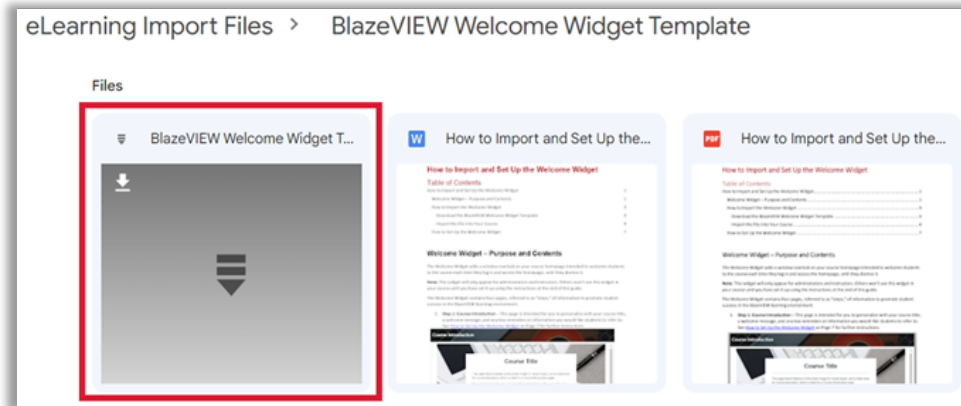
I need help with...	Who to Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• locating something in the course• submitting something outside of the availability dates• my grade	Course Instructor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kaltura• Collaborate Ultra• something else, but I've already tried troubleshooting and I've already asked my instructor	Center for eLearning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone: (229) 245-6490• Email: blazeview@valdosta.edu• Center for eLearning website
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• my device• logging in and MyVSU	Solutions Center (VSU IT) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone: 229-245-HELP (4357)

Downloading the BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget Template

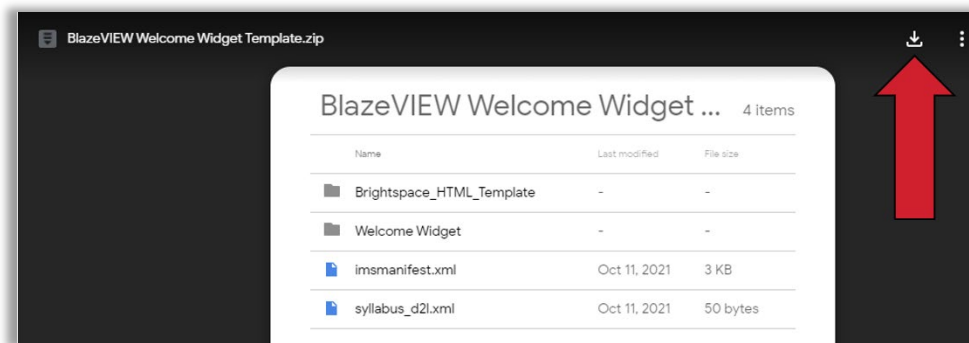
1. Open the [eLearning Import Files Google Drive folder](#).
2. Click the **BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget** folder to open it.



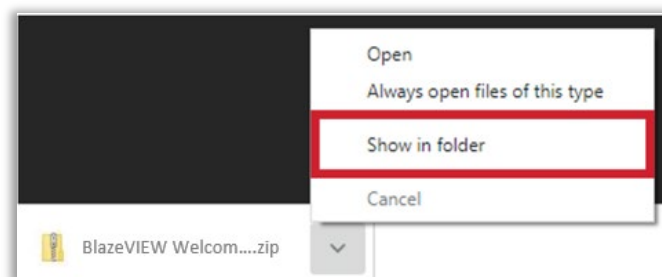
3. Select the BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget Template.zip file.



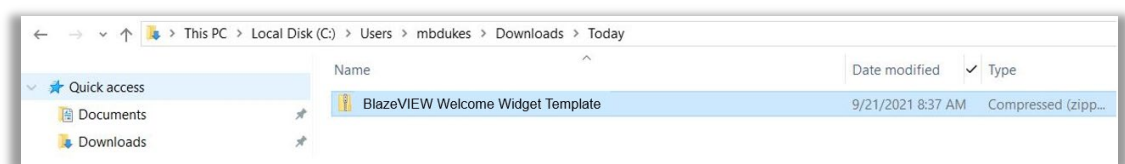
4. When the link opens, select the **Download** icon to download the file to your computer.



5. After the file downloads, click on the selector arrow at the right of the file name and select **Show in Folder**.

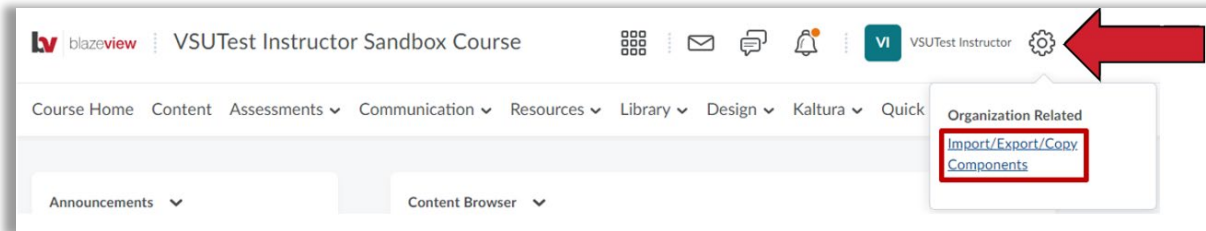


6. The **BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget Template** compressed (zipped) file should download into your Downloads folder so that you can import it into your course(s).

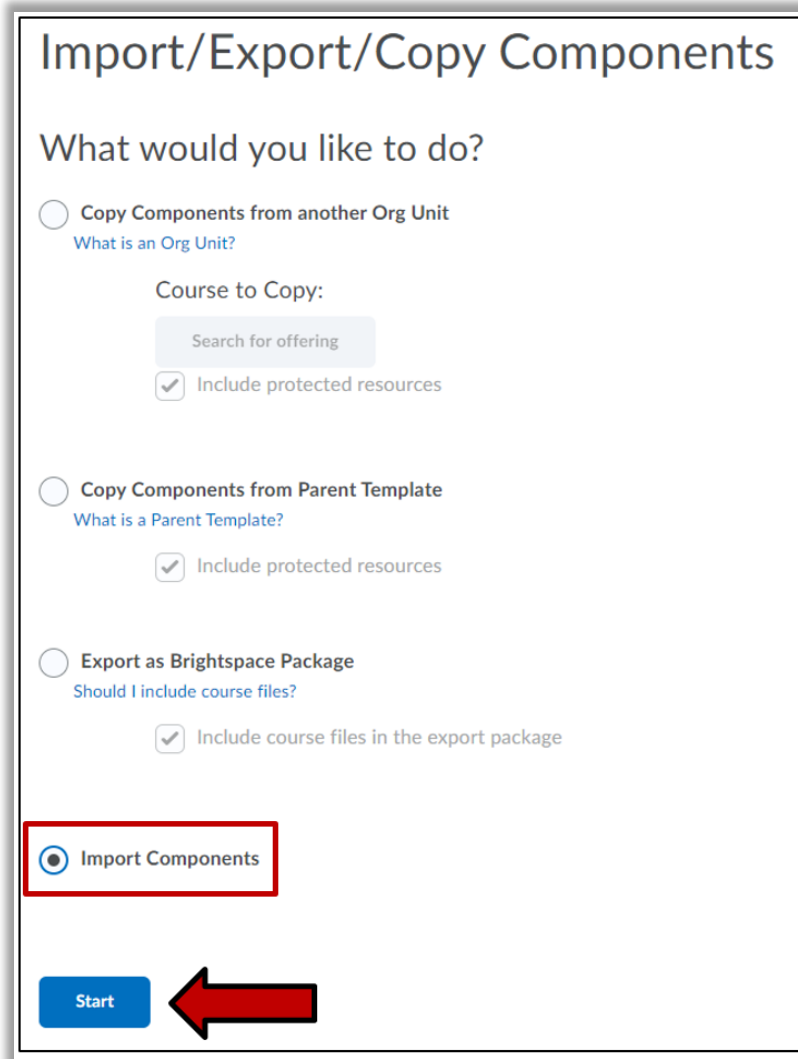


Importing the File into Your Course

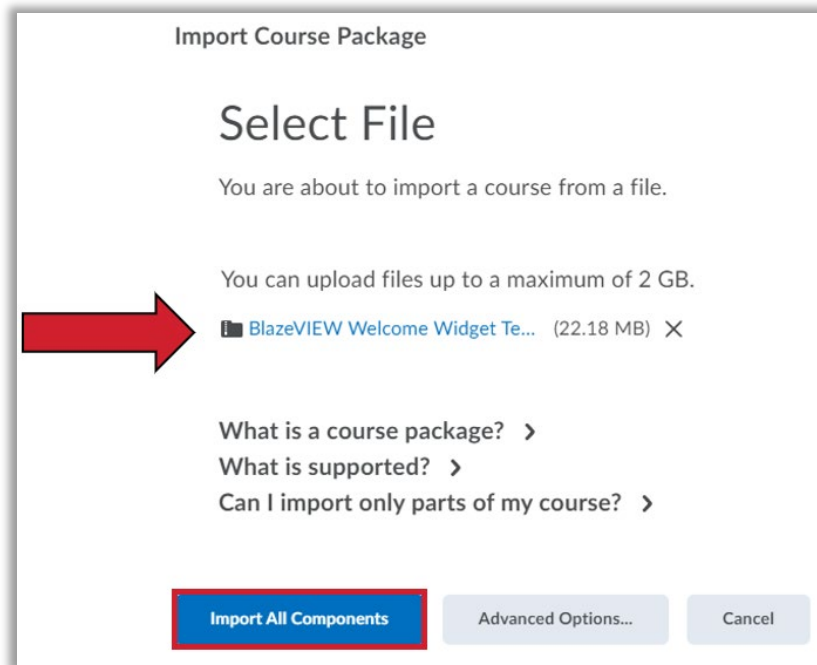
1. Navigate to the course you plan to import the BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget Template.
2. Click the Admin Tools icon on the Minibar and select **Import/Export/Copy Components**.



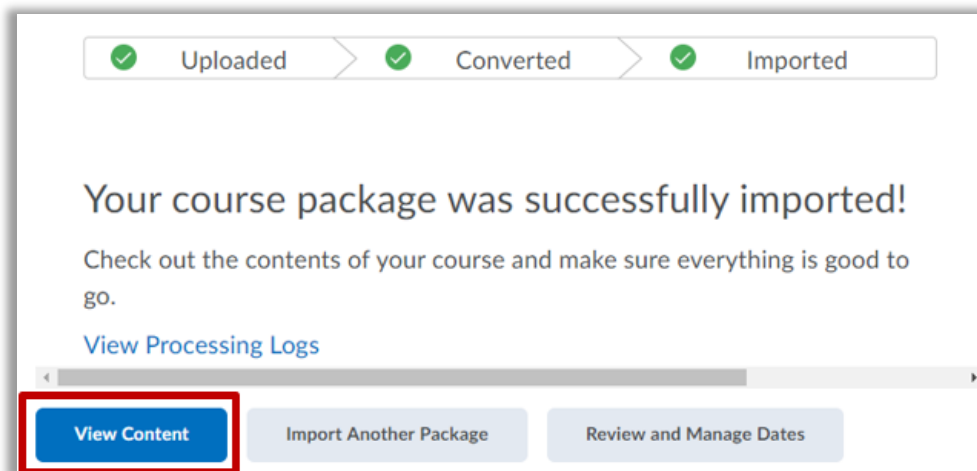
3. Select **Import Components**, then click **Start**.



4. Click the **Upload** button and browse to upload the **BlazeVIEW Welcome Widget Template** file you downloaded earlier, then click the **Import All Components** button.



5. When the import is complete, click on the **View Content** button to navigate your course's Content section.

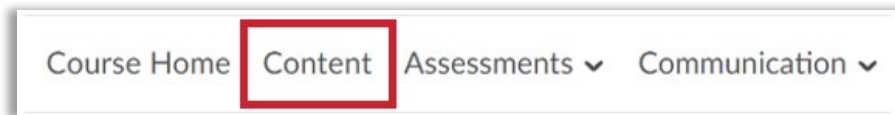


Setting Up the Welcome Widget

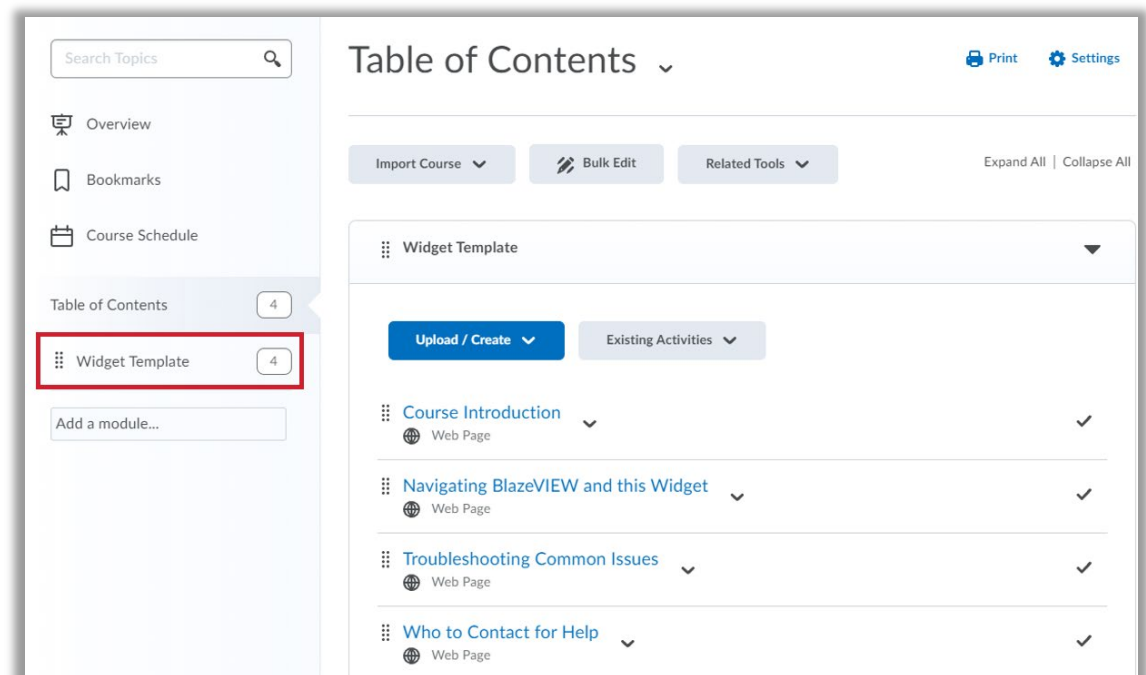
To enable the Welcome Widget in a course, you must select a course homepage that includes the Welcome Widget. Select **Course Homepage Option 4** or **Course Homepage Option 7**. For instructions on changing your course homepage, review the steps on Page 3 for Course Homepage Customization.

Note: The Welcome Widget pulls content from a module using the name “Welcome.” If any other module in your course contains the keyword “welcome” in the title, you must change it.

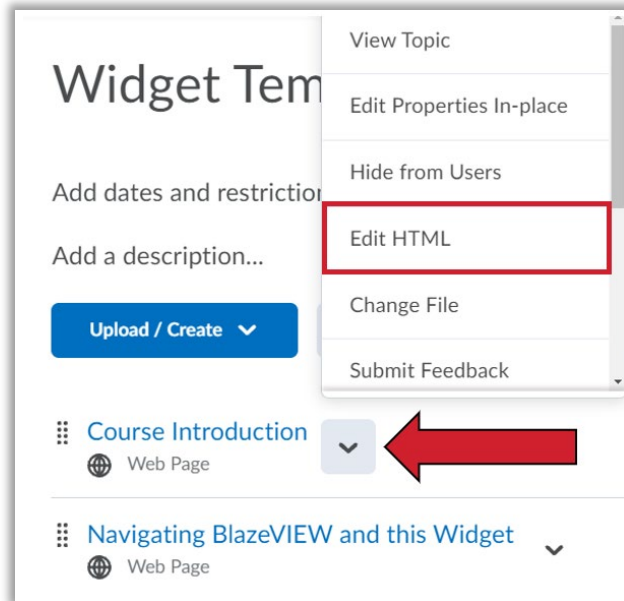
1. From the NavBar, select **Content**.



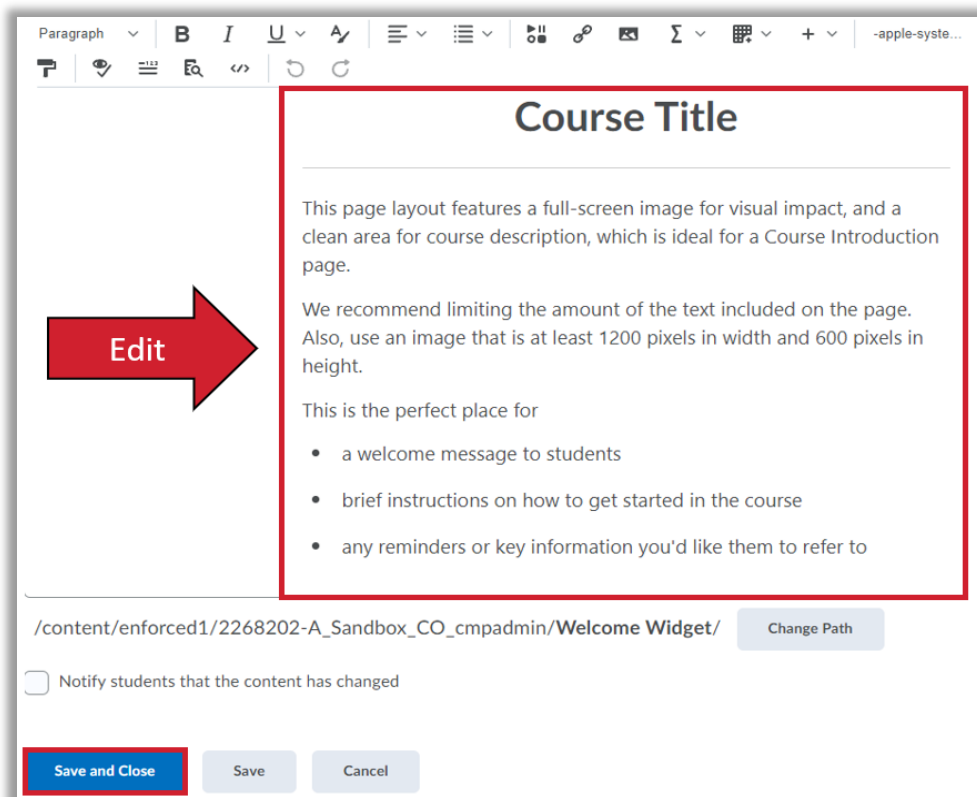
2. You will see the Widget Template module under the Table of Contents.



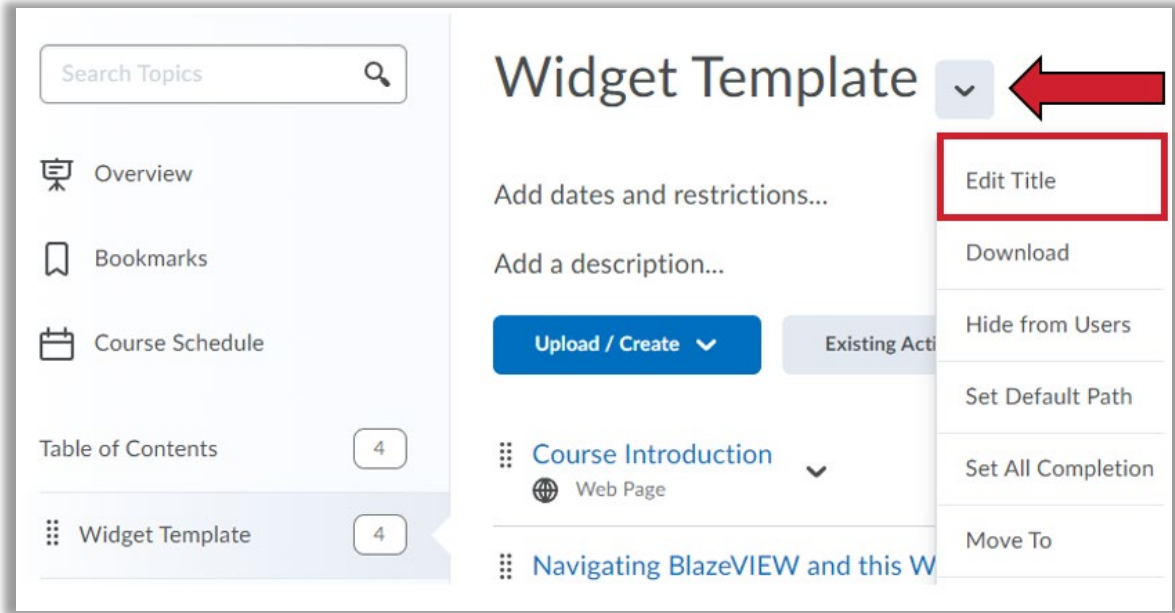
3. Personalize the Course Introduction page by selecting **Edit HTML** from the indicated dropdown arrow.



4. Edit the page content to include your course information and anything else you would like to incorporate. When you are finished, click **Save and Close**.



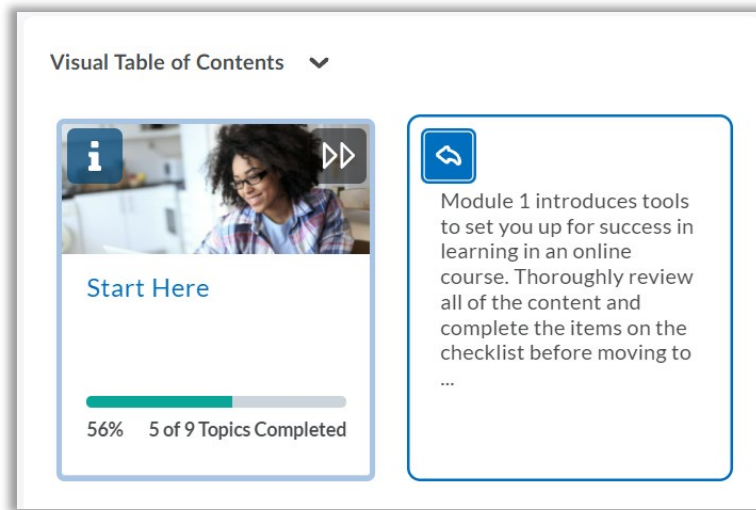
The Welcome Widget will not deploy until the module is renamed to include the keyword “welcome.” Once you have finished personalizing the Course Introduction page, you are ready to deploy the Welcome Widget. Change the Widget Template module name to **Welcome** by selecting **Edit Title** from the indicated dropdown arrow.



Note: If any other module in your course contains the keyword “welcome” in the title, you must change it. Alternatives include **Getting Started** and **Start Here**.

Visual Table of Contents

The custom Visual Table of Contents widget creates a tile for every module created in the course. A tile is automatically created for each Module in the course. The information in the tile is pulled from the Module description in the Content area, and can contain a unique image for each module. Any text added to the module description can be pulled in as information about the module. The widget is also smart enough to know where a learner left off, so they can select the module title to get to the top level of the module or select the 'Next Topic' button to go to the next unread topic in that module.



When to Use the Visual Table of Contents Widget

...you have a content-driven course

When sharing content and activities is the primary goal of your course, the Visual Table of Contents adds a highly visual, simplified organization system right to your homepage.

...you have a traditional linear course structure

The layout of the Visual Table of Contents encourages continuous progression through a course, module by module, and topic by topic.

...you want to promote learner progress

The widget visualizes progress and launches learners into the first unvisited topic reinforcing the importance of completion.

Visual Table of Contents Best Practices

- Keep your module description short and to the point. Your module's description is automatically displayed on the "back" of each module flip card. Keep the description to less than 50 words so it fits on the card.
- Picture size matters. The image used in the module description should be 754 pixels wide by 400 pixels high (or larger) so it will properly display in the widget. We recommend using a .jpg file type, but the widget supports .png, and .svg.

Adding a Module Description and Image for the Visual Table of Contents

1. From your BlazeVIEW course homepage, click **Content** in the course Navbar.
2. Under Table of Contents in the left sidebar, click on the module you want to edit.
3. Under the module title, click **Add a description...** or click on the existing module description.
4. Use the HTML editor to add an image. Click the **Insert Image** button in the Editor toolbar and choose the image location.
 - If the image is on your computer, select **My Computer**. Choose the file from your computer and drag and drop it on the designated area, or click **Upload** to select the image from your computer. Then, click **Add**.
 - If the image is located on the web, select **URL**. Enter or paste the web address for the image, then click **Add**.
 - If the image is located within the course, select **Course Offering Files**. Choose the file from your course files, then click **Add**.
5. Once you click **Add**, the system will prompt you to add an alternative text for the image selected. To ensure that the image is accessible to all users, enter a short description of it in the Alternative Text field or check the 'This image is decorative' box if it is a decorative image.

TIP: The alternative text should convey the message you want students to get when they look at the image. If the image refers to an intricate infographic that needs further explanation, enter a short description in the provided Alternative text field and add a more detailed description under or next to the image in the HTML textbox so all learners benefit from the explanation.

WARNING: Only select '*This image is decorative*' if the image contains no information valuable to the student. You can always edit the image later and edit the alternative text.

The screenshot shows a course editor interface. On the left is a sidebar with a search bar and a table of contents. The main area is titled 'Start Here' and contains a rich text editor. The editor's toolbar includes options for Paragraph, Bold (B), Italic (I), Underline (U), Text Color (A), List, Bulleted List, Link, Image (highlighted with a red box), Sum (Σ), and other icons. Below the toolbar, an image of a young woman with glasses working on a laptop is displayed. Below the image, there is a paragraph of text: 'Welcome to the Intro to VSU course. The Start Here module provides an overview of the course and describes how to access learning content. First, read the Syllabus to understand goals, course expectations, assignments and more. Then complete the checklist items in the Start Here module, before moving to Module 1.' At the bottom of the editor, there are 'Update' and 'Cancel' buttons, with the 'Update' button highlighted by a red box.

6. Click **Update**. The image is now saved in your module description and will be displayed in the Visual Table of Contents.

Finding Images for the Visual Table of Contents Tiles

There are a number of royalty-free and/or creative commons licensed images you can use for your BlazeVIEW course. Images will need light editing to change their dimensions to match the 754 pixels wide by 400 pixels high (or larger) size recommended.

Check out some of the websites below:

- [Creative Commons \(CC\) Search](#)
- [Google Image Search](#) (images, tools, and usage rights)
- [Carleton Library Site](#)

Public Domain and CC0 License Photo Sites

A number of free, stock images are available for use in your teaching and learning. Use a search engine to find royalty-free images, or visit the links below and search for images to use in your content. Be sure to follow the relevant use guidelines and specifications. If you have any questions about image copyright, please email blazeview@valdosta.edu.

- pixabay.com

- pexels.com
- unsplash.com
- burst.shopify.com
- gratisography.com
- stocksnap.io
- publicdomainpictures.net
- metmuseum.org/art/collection

For more information or assistance, call 229-245-6490 or email blazeview@valdosta.edu.
For 24/7 BlazeVIEW or GoVIEW assistance, call 855-772-0423 or visit GeorgiaVIEW Help Center.



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