

Blackboard Early Warning System

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the Early Warning System?

The Early Warning System is a tool used to communicate warnings to Students or Observers that a performance problem is beginning to appear or has become more serious. Warnings can be generated based on graded performance, late or missing course work, or attendance within the online course. The Instructor can choose to communicate a particular warning to just the Student, the Student and a parent or advisor that is assigned as an Observer, or just the Student's Observer. In addition, the Instructor has control over the message each time a warning is communicated. The Instructor can use the default message or modify it to more accurately communicate the seriousness of the situation.

1.2 Key Points

When using the Early Warning System, please keep the following key points in mind:

- The Early Warning System does not continuously monitor the course. The Instructor must check the Early Warning System periodically and click Refresh to discover incidents of Student performance that trigger an alert. The Early Warning System consolidates these incidents and allows the

Instructor to easily report problems, the Early Warning System does not automatically detect problems and notify Students and Observers. Remember to refresh rules manually on a regular basis.

- The System Administrator may turn off access to the Early Warning System based on policies at the institution. If the Early Warning System is on at the system-level, the Instructor may still turn it off within the course.
- The Early Warning System keeps a log of alerts sent to users. The log is searchable and can be used to verify that a Student was alerted to a problem.

2. Early Warning System and the Gradebook

The Early Warning System is designed to work closely with the Gradebook. Early Warning System rules use Gradebook results to create rules and create alerts to student performance based on those rules. In particular, the Early Warning System can trigger an alert based on grades recorded in the Gradebook. As well, Assignments or Assessments that are not completed by the deadline may also be used to trigger an alert.

3. Early Warning System and the Performance Dashboard

The Performance Dashboard includes information about Early Warning System alerts. The Early Warning Column shows the number of warnings and the number of total rules that may trigger a warning. Clicking on the data in this column will open the Early Warning System. The Early Warning System column will only display if the tool is turned on in the course.

4. Managing Early Warning System Rules

4.1 Overview

Rules determine when the Early Warning System flags student performance. It is up to the Instructor to communicate the warning to the user through the Notification Log. There are three options for rules:

- **Grade Rule:** Identifies when student performance on an Assignment, Assessment, or manually graded item is equal to or below a certain level. It is also possible to set a Grade Rule that identifies when a user exceeds a performance level. This can be a useful tool for positive feedback.
- **Due Date Rule:** Identifies when a Student does not complete course work when it is due. A Due Date Rule can only be used to track an Assignment or Assessment created through the Blackboard Learning System. Due Date Rules cannot be created for manually graded items.

- **Last Access Rule:** Identifies the last time a Student accessed the course online.

Please keep in mind that rules are not constantly running in the background checking for events. Regularly refresh the Early Warning System to run the rules and check for events that will trigger a warning.

4.2 Add rule

Follow these steps to add a rule.

1. Open the **Control Panel**.
2. Select **Early Warning System**.
3. Click **Add Grade Rule**, **Add Due Date Rule**, or **Add Last Access Rule**.
4. Enter a name and availability for the rule and then set the rule criteria.

4.3 Modify rule

Follow these steps to modify a rule.

1. Open the **Control Panel**.
2. Select **Early Warning System**.
3. Click **Modify** for a rule from the list.
4. Change the rule information and criteria.

It is also possible to change the availability of a rule by selecting it, along with several other rules if desired, from the list on the Early Warning System page and then clicking **Available** or **Unavailable** from the action bar.

4.4 Remove Rule

Follow these steps to remove a rule.

1. Open the **Control Panel**.
2. Select **Early Warning System**.
3. Select one or many rules from the list.

4. Click **Remove**. Confirm that the selected rules should be deleted.

4.5 Refresh Rules

Follow these steps to refresh rules.

1. Open the **Control Panel**.
2. Select **Early Warning System**.
3. Select one or more rules from the list.
4. Click **Refresh** from the action bar. The selected rules will be run and any events that trigger the rule will create a warning.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The Early Warning System does not continuously monitor the course.

- The Instructor must check the Early Warning System periodically and click Refresh to discover incidents of Student performance that trigger an alert.
- EWS consolidates these incidents and allows the Instructor to easily report problems.
- EWS does not automatically detect problems and notify Students and Observers.
- Remember to refresh rules manually on a regular basis.

4.6 Video demonstration – This video shows how to add a rule and then see it's results in the performance dashboard.

<http://www.viewletcentral.com/vc/viewlet.html?id=17089404>