Using Blackboard’s Early Warning System

Blackboard’s Early Warning System is a useful tool that coordinates with the Grade Center and Performance Dashboard. Through the Early Warning System, instructors can create rules to detect problem incidents, such as low scores on assignments or tests, submitting an assignment past a due date, or non-attendance. It can also be used to detect positive incidents, such as when a student earns a grade above a certain criterion.

The Early Warning System contains a short log of incidents occurring in the class and keeps track of any notifications the instructor sends a student regarding an incident. The log can be used to verify that a student was alerted to a problem. The Performance Dashboard provides an up-to-date report on the activity of each student, including incidents prompting the Early Warning System.

Because the Early Warning System does not continuously monitor the course, the instructor must periodically check or refresh the Early Warning System to discover incidents of student performance that trigger an alert.

Accessing the Early Warning System

1. **SCROLL DOWN** to your course’s control panel and expand the **EVALUATION** menu. **SELECT EARLY WARNING SYSTEM** from the list of options.

2. The **EARLY WARNING SYSTEM** page will appear. On this page, you can create a new rule, view any existing rules you have made, and modify rules.

   To create a new rule, roll your mouse over **CREATE RULE** and select a type of rule to create from the pop-up menu. Three types of rules are available: Grade Rule, Last Access Rule, and Due Date Rule.
GRADE RULE
A Grade Rule refers to evaluating a student’s grade on a quiz, test, or assignment from the Grade Center according to criteria decided upon by the instructor. If creating a Grade Rule, fill out the following sections...

Section 1 (Rule Information): Give the rule a logical name and be sure that the “YES” option is selected to activate the rule.

Section 2 (Rule Criteria): Choose an item from a list of items retrieved from your course’s Grade Center to which to apply this tool. Select the criteria definition you would like to apply and enter the numeric score you wish to evaluate the grade against.

When done, click SUBMIT
LAST ACCESS RULE

This refers to a rule that evaluates the last date the student has logged into your course against criteria which you specify. If you are creating a Last Access Rule, fill out the following sections...

**Section 1 (Rule Information):** Give the rule a logical name and be sure that the “YES” option is selected to activate the rule.

**Section 2 (Rule Criteria):** Enter the number of days you want to evaluate student attendance against. (Ex: Entering 14 days will check to see which students haven’t logged in within the last 14 days).

Click SUBMIT when done.
DUE DATE RULE

A Due Date Rule refers to evaluating items with assigned due dates against the date the student submits them to the Blackboard course. If creating a Due Date Rule, fill out the following sections...

**Section 1 (Rule Information):** Give the rule a logical name and be sure that the “YES” option is selected to activate the rule.

**Section 2 (Rule Criteria):** Select a Grade Center item with an assigned due date from the drop-down menu. Specify which type of attempt will be evaluated. Define your evaluation criteria. If you would like to allow students a “grace period,” select one of the offset options and enter the number of days before or after the due date that an item will be accepted without penalty. Otherwise, be sure to select “Do not apply offset”.

When done, click **Submit**.

![Add Early Warning System Rule](image-url)
MODIFYING RULES (EDIT, DELETE)

To **EDIT** the criteria of a rule, click on the double-down arrows next to a rule and **SELECT EDIT** from the pop-up menu.

This should take you to an **EDIT EARLY WARNING SYSTEM RULE** page, where you can make changes to the rule information and criteria in a manner similar to how you created the rule. Click **SUBMIT** when done.

To **DELETE** a rule, click on the double-down arrow next to a rule and **SELECT DELETE** from the pop-up menu. A confirmation dialogue box will appear. Click **OK** to permanently delete this rule.
REFRESHING AND APPLYING RULES

You must REFRESH the EARLY WARNING SYSTEM in order to apply the rules and see any alerts resulting from the evaluation. Rules do not continually run in the background, checking for new events, so periodically refreshing the Early Warning System is a good way to check for events that will trigger an alert.

REVIEWING INCIDENTS AND SENDING NOTIFICATION

Notice that in the Early Warning System, there is a column labeled “Number of Warnings”. To review the incidents associated with a rule, click on a set of DOUBLE-DOWN ARROWS next to the name of a rule. From the pop-up menu that appears, select REVIEW RULE STATUS.

The REVIEW RULE STATUS page will appear, list the students enrolled in your course and whether or not they meet the criteria of the rule, as well as display the date the student was last notified. To notify a student when they meet the criteria of a rule, CLICK ON THE DOUBLE-DOWN ARROWS next to the student’s username and select STUDENT ONLY from the pop-up menu.
The **SEND NOTIFICATION** page will appear, where you may enter in a personalized notification message to your student regarding the alert (Ex: low grade, absence, due date).

Click **SUBMIT** to send the notice. A copy of the notice will be sent to the instructor’s Group Wise e-mail account.