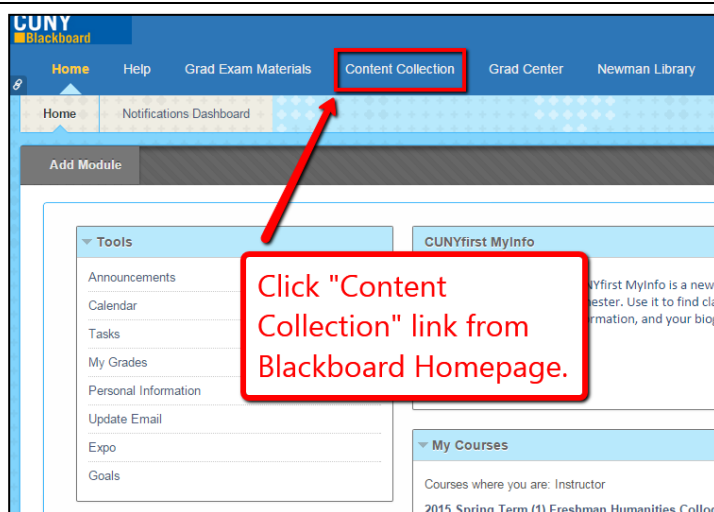# Working within Course Size Limits in Blackboard

Beginning with the Summer semester 2015, all new live course sites will have a **750 megabyte course content limit**, as will any new DEV course sites created after April 8, 2015. While this won't be a problem for many courses, it could be an issue for some. This quick guide will introduce faculty to the new 750MB course content limit, explain how to find out the size of a course (Steps 1-3); and how to take measures to reduce its size by: deleting large files from the content collection (Steps 4-6,); moving files to "My Content" (Steps 7-12); uploading video files to YouTube (Steps 13-18); identifying and deleting unnecessary duplicates (Steps 19-20); and checking a file's course link status (Steps 21-23).

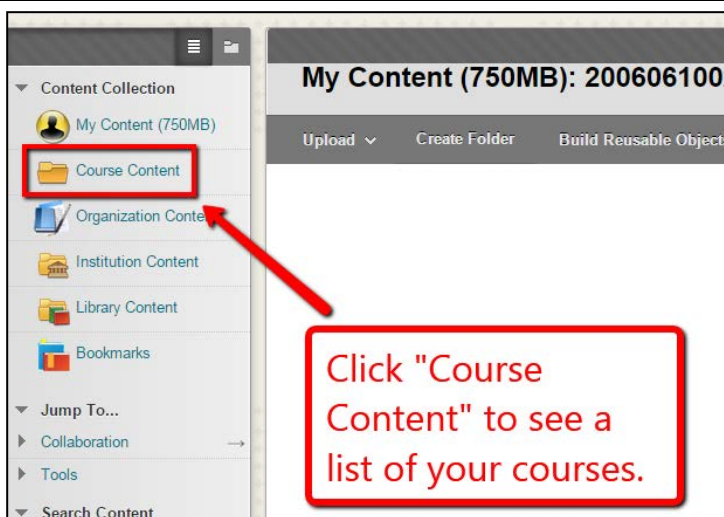There are a few things that should be clarified before we begin:

- "Course Content" refers to any files an instructor adds to a Blackboard course site either as an attachment in the Blackboard Content Editor, as a standalone file using the "Build Content" menu, or as a file uploaded directly to the course's Content Collection. This does *not* include student submissions to assignments, Discussion Board entries, text entries to Wikis, Journals, Blogs, or any linked content stored on external data servers (e.g. YouTube videos, Flickr images, etc.)

- Any DEV or live site created before April 8, 2015 does not have any content limits. The content storage capacities of those course sites are, in effect, unlimited, but you will not be able to copy those courses into live sites after April 8 if they are over the limit.

- All DEV/live courses created after April 8, 2015 have a strictly enforced 750 MB course size limit (this includes Summer 2015 course sites). **For course copy this means, starting with the Summer 2015 semester, any existing DEV or live courses with contents exceeding 750 MB will not copy over into any new course sites.**

- Furthermore, <u>all</u> courses will trigger an alert once their size reaches 650 MB. Alert notifications will read, somewhat confusingly: "You have crossed the notification limit of 650 MB and are currently at 692.89 MB [for example]. Please check if you are approaching quota limit unlimited." Faculty should see these alerts as a reminder that once a course exceeds the 750 MB limit it won't copy over into a live semester site any longer.

- However, by managing course files in their content collections, faculty can easily work within the 750 MB size limit by:

  - Limiting the upload of large files (e.g. video files, narrated PowerPoint slide shows, large image collections, etc.) to a course's content collection;

  - Storing large files on external data servers (YouTube for videos, Flickr for images, etc.) and then linking to those files from Blackboard or embedding the links within a course content area;

  - Deleting any duplicate or redundant files;

  - Moving any files that are never or rarely altered from semester to semester to "My Content" in the content collection. This might include, for example, re-usable recorded lectures, files with recurring instructions, or audio and image collections, to name a few.

  - Removing any commercial films or other large files (books, multimedia) to which you do not have usage rights, and consulting with our librarian, Joseph Hartnett (joseph.hartnett@baruch.cuny.edu) to find an appropriate solution.

<u>Step 1</u> **Checking the Size of Your Course** To check the size of your courses' content collections, click the "Content Collection" link that appears at the top of any Blackboard page.	Click "Content Collection" link from Blackboard Homepage.
<u>Step 2</u> In the Content Collection homepage, select "Course Content" from the content collection menu at the left of the screen to see a list of all of your courses and the size of their respective content collections.	Click "Course Content" to see a list of your courses.
<u>Step 3</u> On the Course Content page, you'll find a list of all your courses arranged alphabetically by course name. See the "Size" column to view the size of each course's content collection. In this example, none of the courses are anywhere near the 750 MB limit. This will probably be true for most of your courses as well, and no further action for these courses is necessary.	Size of course content collections
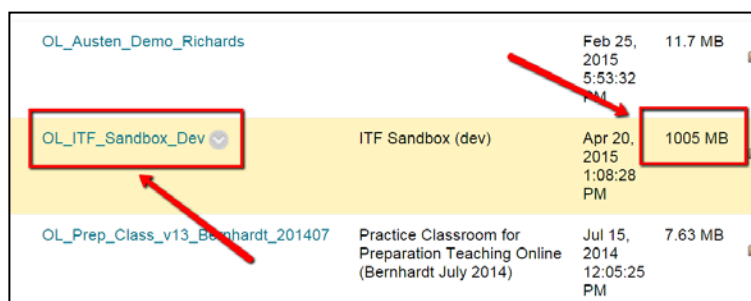
Step 4

However, if you find that one or more of your courses is close to or exceeds the 750 MB limit, you will need to clean out those courses' content collections.

Here, the course "OL_ITF_Sandbox_Dev," at 1,005 MBs, exceeds the limit and needs to be cleaned out. To get started with that process, click on the name of the course to see its contents and begin freeing up space.
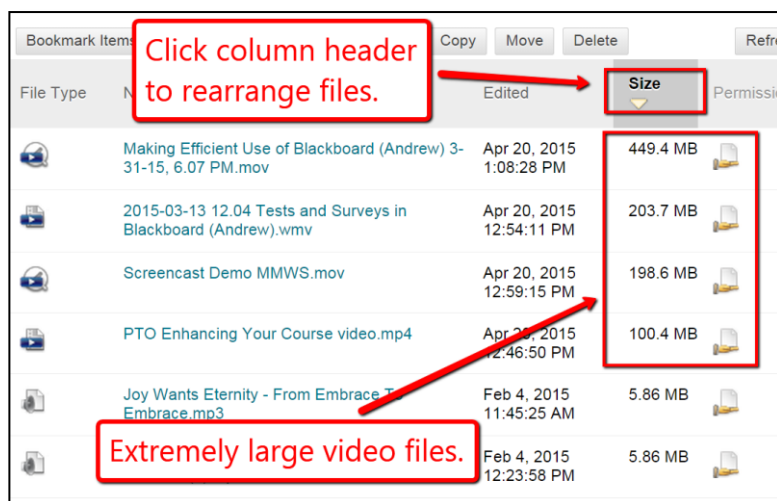

Step 5

The first thing to do is delete or move large files (>25 MBs) from the course content. You can do this easily by clicking the "Size" column header to arrange the contents in descending order of file size so that the first files you see will be the largest ones in this collection.*

Right away, we see that there are four large video files taking up most of the space budgeted to this course. These should be deleted (Step 6), and moved to either "My Content" (Steps 7-12), or an external video hosting site like YouTube (Steps 13-16).

*You can click any column header to rearrange files according to that column's criteria.
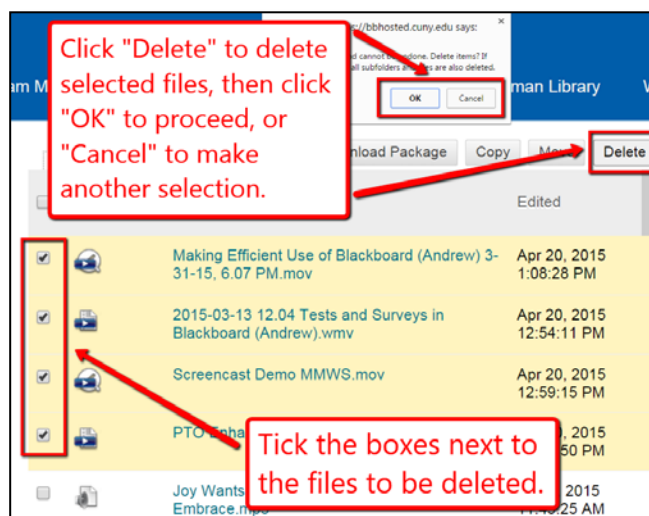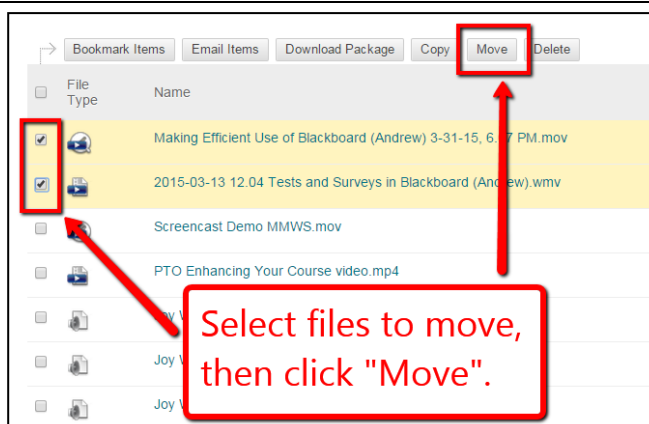
|	
Step 6 **Deleting Large Files** To delete files, tick the boxes to the left of all the files you need to delete and click the "Delete" button above the list. This will bring up a warning from Blackboard asking if you really want to delete these files permanently. Click "OK" to delete, or "Cancel" to go back and make another selection. You will see a green notification banner at the top of your screen once the deletion is complete.	
Step 7 **Moving Files to "My Content"** To move files from the course content collection to your personal Blackboard content collection (i.e. "My Content"), first select the files you'd like to move, then click the "Move" button above the list.	
Step 8 On the "Move Content" screen, click the "Browse" button next to the "Destination" field in the middle of the page.	
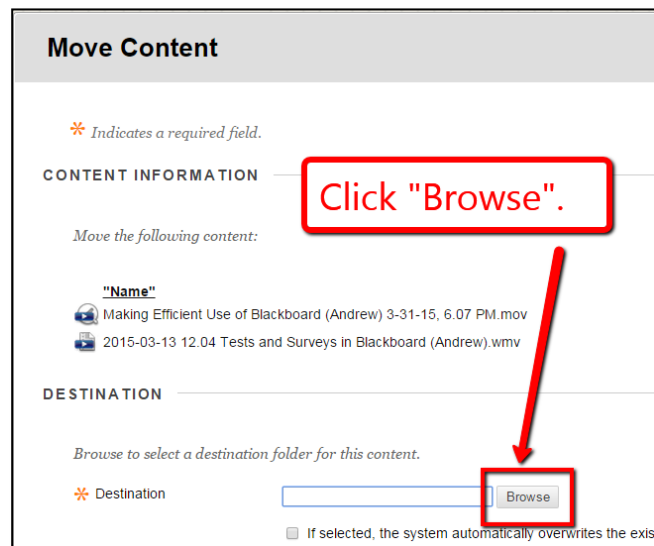
Step 9

A content collection browsing window will open. By default, this window opens into your "My Content" collection. You can tell that you're in "My Content" because your UUID will be displayed in the "Location" field. Unless you've previously uploaded content to your "My Content" collection, this destination folder will almost always be empty. To upload the file to "My Content," click the checkmark in the grey box to the right of your UUID and click "Submit" to proceed.

Alternatively, you may hover over the "Browse" tab at the top of the window and select a different destination for your files.
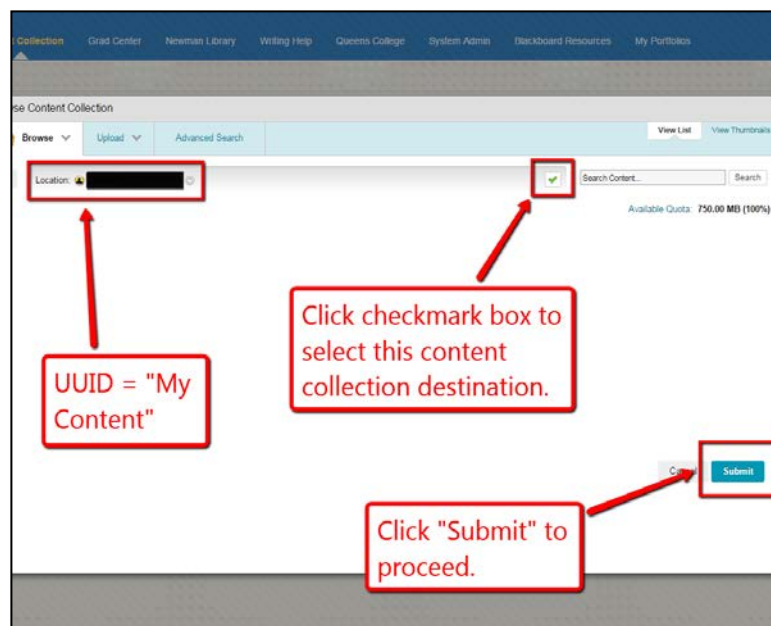
Step 10

After clicking "Submit," you will be brought back to the "Move Content" page. Double check to ensure you've selected the correct destination folder (your "My Content" destination will appear in the destination field as "/users/[UUID]"), then click "Submit" to proceed.
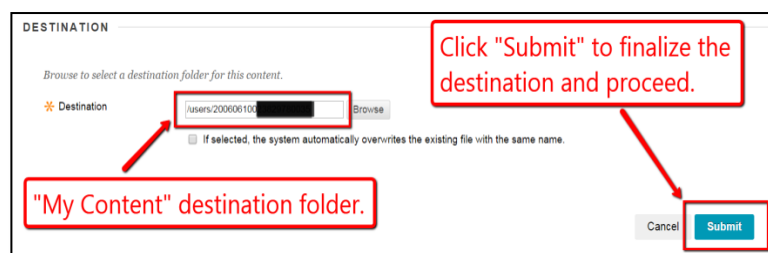
Step 11

The system will return you to your course content collection where you should see a green notification banner at the top of the screen indicating that the files have been successfully moved. You will also notice that the files no longer appear in the course content list.
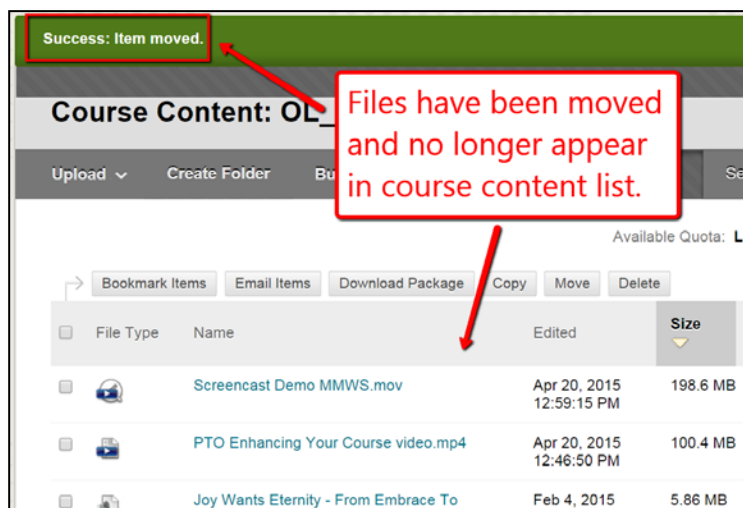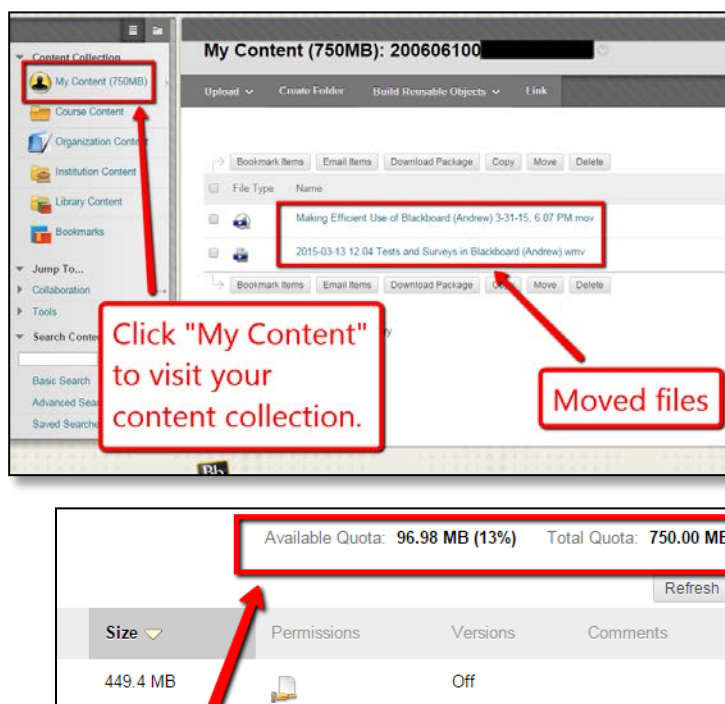
Step 12

In the menu at the left of the screen, you can click "My Content" to see the files you just moved here.

Note that your "My Content" collection also has a 750 MB limit, so it's best to keep the files you upload here relatively small.

You can also see how much available space you have left in your content collection, displayed as a percentage.
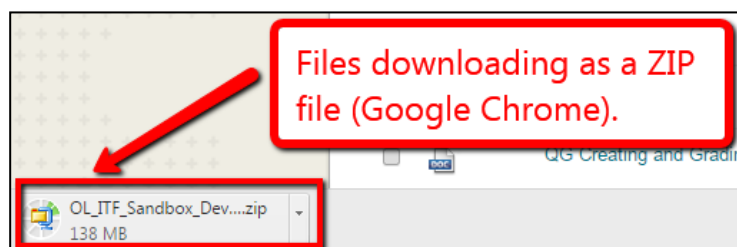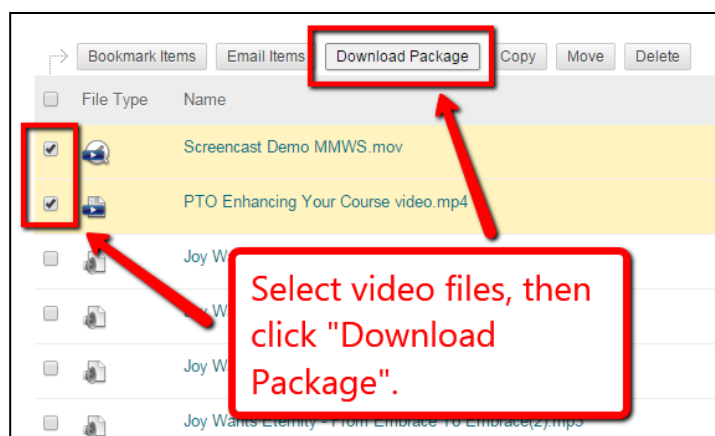

Step 13

Uploading video files to YouTube

Videos tend to be relatively large in size so it's a good idea to keep them out of your content collection altogether. The easiest way to do this is to set up a YouTube channel where you can store all of your course-related video content. You can then link to the videos on YouTube from your course (see our "Uploading Videos to YouTube and Embedding in Blackboard" Quick Guide for more details: http://spsfaculty.commons.gc.cuny.edu/quick-guides/).
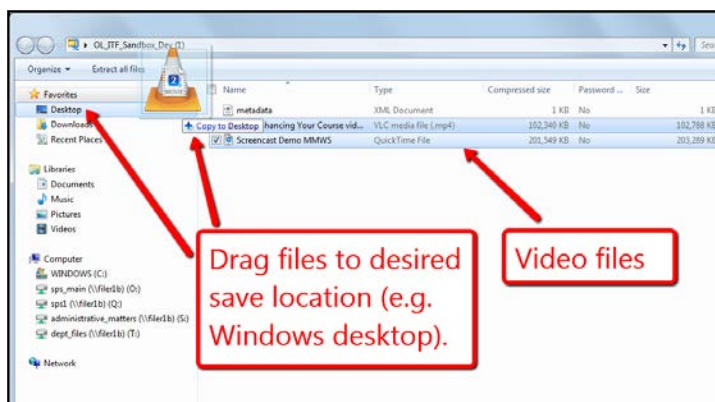
To begin, you must first download the videos to your computer. To do so, go to your course's content collection and select the video files you'd like to download, then click the "Download Package" button above the content list. The selected files will begin downloading as a single .zip package.

|	
Step 14 Once the .zip package has finished downloading, you must then extract or "unzip" the videos from the package. To do so, open the .zip package by double-clicking it. Then, drag the video file or files to your desired save location and drop them (in the inset photo, we dragged the video to the desktop). This process is the same for both Windows and Mac machines.	Drag files to desired save location (e.g. Windows desktop). Video files
Step 15 Now your video files are ready to be uploaded to YouTube. To do so, sign into YouTube and click "Upload" in the top right corner of any YouTube page.	Click "Upload" from the YouTube homepage.
Step 16 Click the upload icon that appears in the center of the YouTube Upload page and select the videos you'd like to upload from the browse window that opens.	Click to select videos from file navigator. Select videos and click "Open"
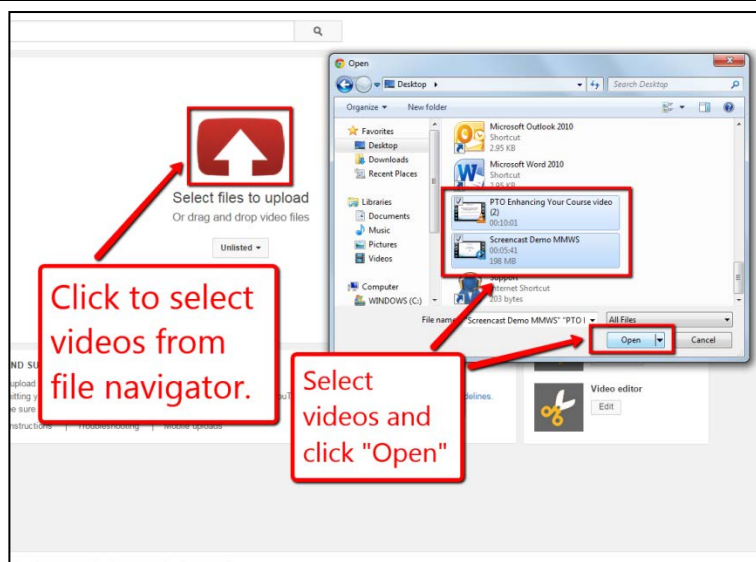
| Step 17	
Your videos will begin to upload immediately. Depending on how large the files are, it may take a while for the videos to finish uploading and processing. You can follow their progress on this screen, and add or change the videos' titles and/or descriptions.	
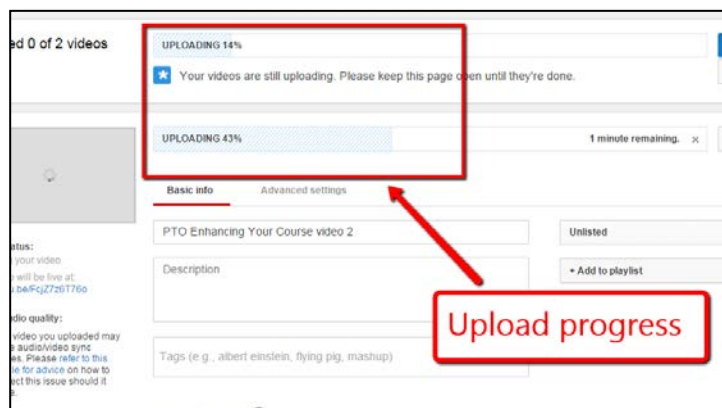
Step 18	
Once the processing is complete, the videos are now ready to be linked to or embedded in your course site without affecting your data quota (see our "Uploading Your Videos to YouTube and Embedding Them in Blackboard" Quick Guide for a complete step-by-step tutorial: http://spsfaculty.commons.gc.cuny.edu/quick-guides/). Your video will be assigned a URL and you'll be given a link which you can copy and paste or embed into your Blackboard course site.	
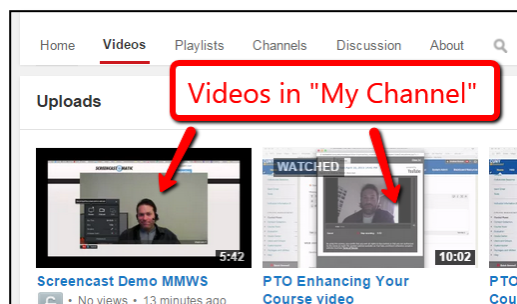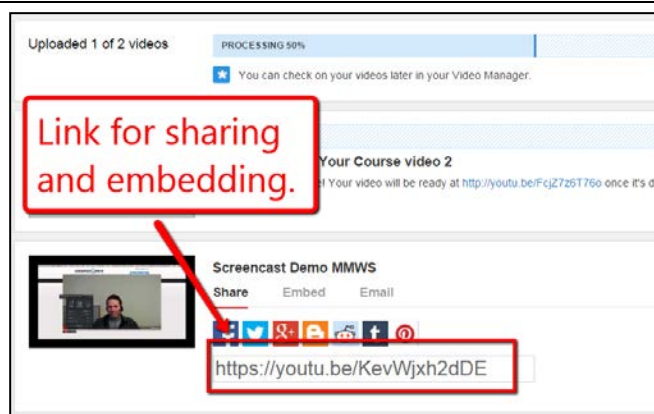
Step 19	
Deleting Duplicate or Unused Files	
Finally, you should delete any duplicate, redundant, or unnecessary files from both your "My Content" collection and your course's content collection.	
To identify duplicates, navigate to a content collection and sort the files by name by clicking the "Name" column title.	
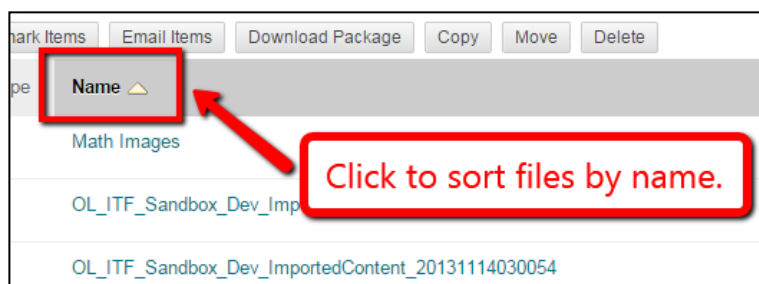
Step 20

Duplicate files are marked with a number in parentheses at the end of the file's name. In this example, there are a number of duplicates of the file "Joy Wants Eternity – From Embrace to Embrace," each one marked with a number—"(1)," "(2)," etc—for a total of four extraneous duplicates.
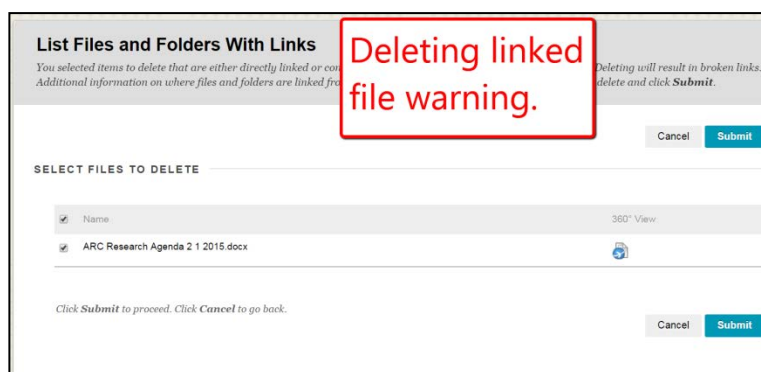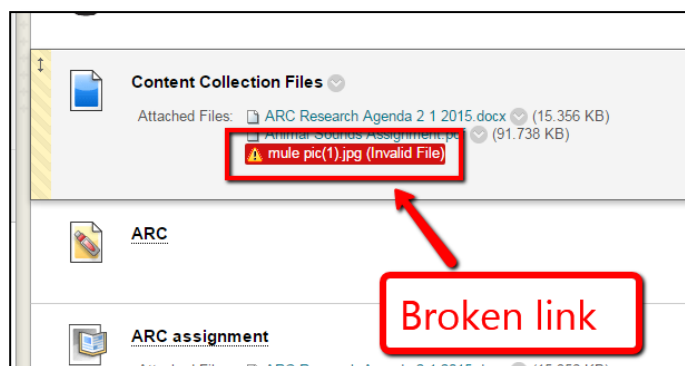
To delete the duplicates, select the files by ticking the boxes to the left of the file names, then click "Delete" as in Step 6.

Step 21 **Checking for Links** When deleting files from the content collection, keep in mind that some of these files might be linked to an item somewhere in your course. Deleting linked files will result in a broken link, meaning that students will not be able to retrieve the file, despite the link itself being still being available. However, if you attempt to delete a linked file, you will receive a warning notifying you that the file you are attempting to delete contains a link to your course before you actually delete it. If you still wish to delete the file, you can click "Submit". Click "Cancel" to return to the content collection.	
Step 22 You can see whether a file contains a link to your course before deleting it by accessing the "360° View" from within the content collection. To do so, hover the mouse over the file you're considering for deletion, click the downward-facing arrow and select "360° View" from the menu.	
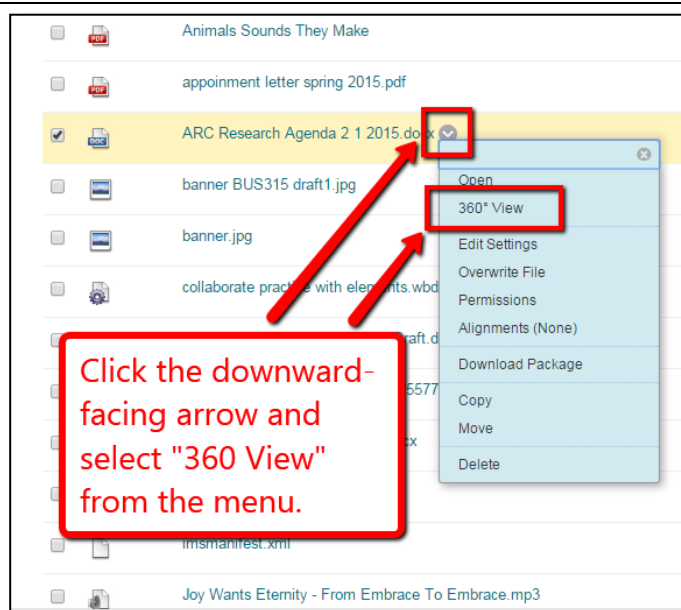
Step 23
 	
The "360° View" page contains a number of data about the file including its permanent URL, date created, etc. To see the file's link status, scroll down to the "Links" section under "File Activity."
 	
If the file is linked anywhere in your course, you will see that information here, including the course ID and name, course instructors, and the course items attached to it.
   -   Only delete these files if absolutely necessary. Make a note to remove the broken link from the course and replace it with a new link to another file.
 	
If there are no entries in the "Links" field, it means this file has not been deployed in any courses.
   - Consider whether you need the file or not. If not, then go ahead and delete it.	