

## **Blackboard Futures at ASU**

### **Version 2**

**August 4, 2009**

Based on faculty requests and on our better understanding of the exciting new changes coming with the new Blackboard Learn system, we (ITS and ITTC) have decided to take what we feel is the best alternative in moving forward with the upgrade of the Blackboard system for this Fall.

By listening to faculty requests and with bench marking comparisons of other Universities that have already upgraded, we feel it is best that we delay the upgrade to Blackboard Learn and take an additional semester to truly ferret out the changes of the functionality included in the Blackboard Learn environment so that we can optimize and take advantage of the best practices right from the beginning.

With that said, the following is what to expect going forward:

#### **(1) Migration from Blackboard 6 to Blackboard 8**

- a. Blackboard 6 will not be available to students after the second summer session of 2009.
- b. Faculty will have access to the Blackboard 6 course materials for migration purposes only, through January 11, 2010.
- c. The remaining 84 faculty on Blackboard 6 must migrate their course materials to Blackboard 8 by using instructions at the ITTC website or by calling the ITTC x2334 for assistance.
- d. Blackboard 8 will be the only choice to use for teaching and for student use in the Fall 2009 semester.

#### **(2) Populating/Enrolling Students into Blackboard 8 Course Shells**

- a. Blackboard 8 will be the only Blackboard version to be used for teaching during the Fall 2009 semester.
- b. Faculty will no longer have to activate the auto-enroll utility to populate their Blackboard 8 course shells.
- c. Beginning Fall 2009, the Blackboard system will populate students into course shells for all courses listed on the Banner System that are open for registration.
- d. Blackboard 8 will pull information from Banner daily at 7AM, 12Noon, 5PM, and 12 Midnight for all instructor and student data. Late registration, over rides and add-ons will automatically be processed on an on-going basis.
- e. For all courses open to registration on the Banner system, a Blackboard course shell will be automatically created, named and numbered to match Banner and populated with registered/paid students.

- f. This auto-created Blackboard course shell will be empty of all course content/materials and will not be “active” or made available for student viewing until the Banner listed instructor for that course releases it for viewing.
- g. The auto-created course shells will be set up for those individuals listed on the Banner system as the “Instructor(s) of Record”. Only they will have access to the course shell.
- h. Banner makes no distinction in the various roles, i.e. faculty, TA, etc., only percentage of responsibility, therefore only the “Instructor(s) of Record” will receive auto-created course shells.
- i. The instructor will need to load course content, materials, set parameters etc. and prepare the populated auto-created course shells in order to put them in use. This can be done by use of the “COPY” feature in the control panel of the old course or the ITTC is available to train faculty on how to complete this step.
- j. Again, after content is placed into the course shell, it must be made available for viewing (activated/released) by the teaching instructor before students can view it and have access to it. This can be done by use of the “SETTINGS” feature in the control panel of the course or the ITTC is available to train faculty on how to complete this step.
- k. Auto-created course shells that go un-used by teaching instructors for the entire semester will be deleted from the Blackboard system on the commencement day of each semester (3 times per year).
- l. At the end of the semester, courses will be marked as unavailable to the students but the course content is still available to faculty.

### **(3) Adding Students, Teaching Assistants and/or Instructors to your Course Shell**

- a. Instructors will no longer be able to add students, TAs or any type of users to Blackboard courses.
- b. Adding a co-instructor, TA or GA will need to occur first within Banner and then they will subsequently be automatically pulled into Blackboard from Banner. These types of additions will need to be made by your College/Department administrative assistants that have been trained by the Registrar on how to do it. To add these types of users, contact your department /area assistant to have them enter the appropriate information into the Banner system.
- c. Only registered and paying students will be added to the Blackboard roster after they have completed the appropriate registration process.

### **(4) The New Blackboard Learn Environment**

- a. Going forward, all instructors and professors that will use Blackboard Learn will be required to go through a 45-minute hands-on training session before being allowed to use the Blackboard Learn system.
- b. Two options are provided for the hands-on session. Options are – (1) a live training session

available at various times at the ITTC, or (2) an online session available 24x7. To see the class sessions and/or to register, you can go to the ITTC website at [www2.astate.edu/ittc](http://www2.astate.edu/ittc) and select the Scheduler at the bottom of the home page.

c. The 45-minute session will provide you with the needed information to successfully start using the new Blackboard Learn system and will provide you access to it so that you can continue exploring its many new and exciting features.

d. Once you complete the 45-minute session, you will then be given access to the Blackboard Learn system to begin your transition and learning of the new functionality.

d. The ITTC will announce and publicize when the 45-minute training sessions will be available by August 15th. In the mean time and going forward, several short videos describing the features and the Blackboard Learn functionality can be viewed by going to the ITTC website homepage at [www2.astate.edu/ittc](http://www2.astate.edu/ittc).

#### **(5) Timeline for the Blackboard Learn Upgrade and Availability to Use It**

a. Beginning Monday, September 7, 2009, a "Test" environment of the Blackboard Learn system will be made available for instructor activity and training use only. Any content loaded, configured and tested by faculty is subject to loss due to this being a temporary "Test" environment. Instructions and training on how to make regular backups will be provided by the ITTC.

b. If any content or configuration that is set up by faculty within the "Test" environment during training needs to be saved and carried forward for use in the Spring 2010 semester, it will be the responsibility of faculty to export the content to a local hard drive to save it. It can then later be imported into the "Live" Blackboard Learn production server in December. Assistance in doing this can be provided by the ITTC.

c. Training sessions, online tutorials, and information to help faculty learn and understand the new Blackboard Learn system will be made available at the ITTC as described in item (4) above.

c. The official upgrade to Blackboard Learn will occur on commencement day (December 19, 2009) of the Fall 2009 semester. From that date going forward, it will be the only "live" production course management system available for use by students.

d. Professors, instructors and all users of Blackboard 8 will not have to do anything to their content in order for it to be loaded into the Blackboard Learn system. This process is merely an upgrade to the existing Blackboard 8 system. The populating and enrollment of students into Blackboard Learn will occur as described in item #2 above.

More information regarding this transition will continue to be sent out via the Faculty listserv and the Daily Digest to assure that you are kept informed on a timely manner.

Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.

ITS and ITTC