What’s New in Blackboard Q4 2016

New and Improved Features

New Blackboard Learn 2016 Theme
The upgrade features a new theme for Blackboard Learn 9.1 that provides a more modern look and feel. Most importantly, the Bb Learn 2016 theme significantly increases the responsiveness of the interface for small devices. The theme also incorporates elements from the new Blackboard design language including color, fonts, and spacing, for greater consistency between Blackboard Learn, Collaborate Ultra, and the Blackboard app.

More on the Learn 2016 theme: help.blackboard.com/Learn/Administrator/Hosting/User_Interface_Management/Brands_and_Themes/Themes/Learn_2016_Theme

New icon set
In this release, there is a new icon set for use in courses and organizations, and cancel/submit buttons will always pin to the bottom of the page regardless of device.

Drag and drop files
When instructors create content items, assignments, and web links, they can drag files from their computers to the “hot spot” in the Attach Files area. Students can also drag files to upload when they submit assignments.

If the browser allows, users can drag a folder of files and the files will upload individually.
Submission receipts

Instructors can keep track of all student submissions, regardless of whether the attempt or assignment is deleted or the submission history is changed. A submission receipt is captured at the time of submission and includes information such as attached file information, date, time, etc. This feature provides evidence for academic disputes, giving students assurance about their work.

A receipt is generated for each group member when a student submits on behalf of the group, and the anonymous state of an assignment is respected. For assignments with multiple attempts, students receive a different number for each submission.

You can access all of your students’ confirmation numbers from the Grade Center. Access the Reports menu and select Submission Receipts.

More on submission confirmations: help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Grade_Reports_and_Statistics#confirmations

Reminders

Instructors can send email reminders from Grade Center columns to students and members of groups who have missing coursework. Students receive a system-generated email that lists the course, coursework, and the due date if included.

Instructors can also send reminders for assignments with anonymous or delegated grading enabled. To protect anonymity, students’ names and attempt statuses aren’t revealed.

More on how to send reminders for missing coursework: help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Grading_Tasks/Assign_Grades#reminders

Fewer Needs Grading items

When multiple-attempt assessments are set to calculate using the first or last attempt, there are potentially numerous other attempts that will never be used for the grade calculation. This can be particularly problematic in anonymous or delegated grading scenarios where it can be difficult to determine which attempts are associated with
students and therefore require grading. A new filter is now available both in the Needs Grading workflow as well as within the Grade Center to show or hide these attempts. Attempts that won’t calculate towards the assessment grade are now indicated with an icon.

More on grading multiple attempts on the Needs Grading page: help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Grade/Grading_Tasks/Needs_Grading_Page#multiple

**Improved Self and Peer Assessments**

Non-participants during the submission period are excluded from the evaluation process. Submitters with partial or complete submissions will be distributed to peers for evaluations. By pairing an assessment with Adaptive Release, it’s possible to configure Self and Peer Assessments for individual groups.

**Improved Course Activity Reports**

The Course Activity Overview report has been updated to improve the experience for larger enrollment courses. Instructors can filter the report and break down the calculations of student activity by course groups.

**New mobile app for instructors**

**Blackboard Instructor**

Blackboard Instructor is Blackboard’s brand new mobile application that gives instructors a quick and easy way to manage courses, interact with students, and view content.

Blackboard Instructor allows instructors to:

- Manage courses anytime, anywhere
- Preview content and assessments
- Create and reply to discussions
- Review, create and send out announcements
- Host and join Blackboard Collaborate sessions

Discontinued Features

Virtual Classroom and Chat

Due to discontinuation of support for Java in several browsers, Blackboard removed the Virtual Classroom and Chat features from Blackboard Learn. Among the alternatives for those features are Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and Cisco WebEx.

Record from Webcam

Since Google removed YouTube’s Record from Webcam feature, the Content Editor has been updated with the following changes:

- The YouTube icon image has been changed.
- The alt text now reads Browse My YouTube Videos.
- The Record tab has been removed and all users are now defaulted to the Browse tab to search existing videos.

Mobile Learn

Mobile Learn app is replaced with Blackboard app for students and Blackboard Instructor app for instructors.

Adapted from Blackboard Help: help.blackboard.com