

The Interim Report of the Blackboard Ultra Institute

(October 3 – November 30, 2022)

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Blackboard Ultra Institute: the Interim Report

October 3 – November 30, 2022

OVERVIEW

William Paterson University of New Jersey (WPUNJ) has decided to migrate to the Blackboard Ultra Learning Management System from the previous version, Blackboard Original. During the summer 2022, to provide faculty with guidance as they plan on implementing the new Learning Management System in action, Center for Teaching with Technology (CTT) developed Blackboard Ultra Institute. The workshop materials were developed to be offered both in-person and online format. The Blackboard Ultra Institute was offered four times during the fall 2022. The in-person institute was offered three times with 9 participants and the online workshop was offered with 10 faculty members attended.

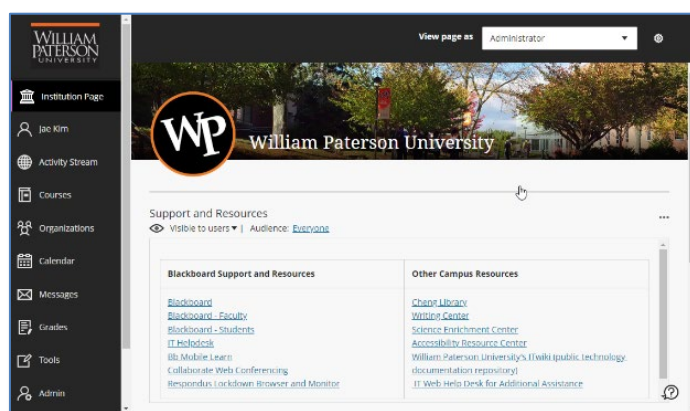
The goal of this report is to provide formative feedback to improve the faculty experience with the use of new technologies in teaching and learning using a brand new Learning Management System, Blackboard Ultra, at William Paterson University.

BLACKBOARD ULTRA

Blackboard Ultra is the premium learning management system product offered by Blackboard. It has two components, the "Ultra Base Navigation," and "Ultra Course View". The Blackboard Ultra interface brings with it a streamlined design and many upgraded tools and functionalities.

BASE NAVIGATION

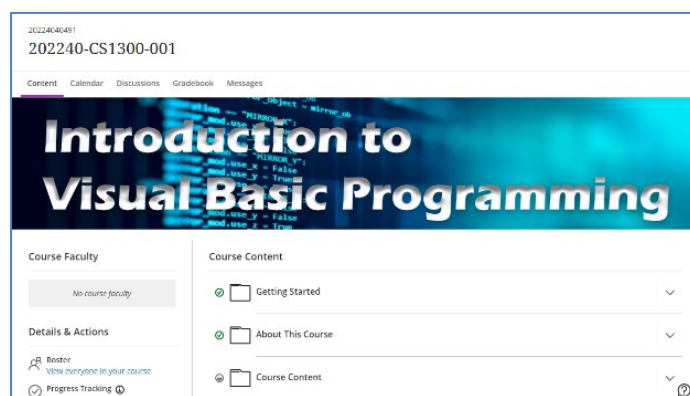
Blackboard Ultra Base Navigation is Blackboard's more modern, intuitive portal to your Blackboard courses and organizations. It provides quick access to the most critical information from across all your courses. Blackboard Ultra Base Navigation creates a more engaging, efficient, and enjoyable experience for both students and instructors. From the moment users log in, the users have access to core features in the left-side navigation. They can easily return to the list from wherever they are - even if they're in a course. The list peeks from behind the other layers they have open, including while working in a course.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ULTRA COURSE VIEW

The Ultra Course View is a simpler and more modern course experience for instructors and students. It is cleaner with a more modern design and easy-to-use workflows. It also has powerful new tools that are not

available in the Original Course View, like Discussion Analytics. Blackboard Ultra Course View provides,



- **Clean, Modern Look** - The Ultra Course View is cleaner and more modern than the Original Course View. It is simpler to use and more intuitive, as well. Tools are contextual to reduce clicks and content appears in the course using peek layers that slide from the right.
- **Content Displayed on a Single Page** - Content is displayed on a single page within learning modules and folders that expand and collapse, so it is easier for students to find the content and assessments they need.
- **Add Content Wherever You Want** - Quickly add files, links, assignments, and other content and assessments wherever you want! In addition to uploading files from your computer, you can also add content from cloud storage systems like OneDrive for Business, Dropbox, or Google Drive.
- **Add Files via Drag and Drop** - Quickly add files to your course by dragging them to the content panel of your course. You can drag one or multiple files, or even a folder.
- **Brand New Text Editor** - The brand-new text editor in the Ultra Course View is optimized to create content that is mobile-compatible, so that you and your students can access it directly from a smartphone browser. The text editor is simplified, but includes tools for formatting text, adding links and media, and embedding mathematical and scientific formulas in your text.
- **Easy-to-Understand Item View for the Gradebook** - The Item List is your new default view of the course gradebook. You can view all the coursework you have assigned and your grading progress. Quickly see how many students have submitted an assessment, how many you need to grade, and how many grades need to be posted. You also can see when you have completed grading an item. Use the toggle in the upper left to switch from Item to Grid view. The Grid view is a traditional spreadsheet-like view of the Gradebook.
- **Keep Grades Private until You are Ready to Post** - You can control exactly when students are able to see the grades you have entered. Once you enter a grade, it is private until you Post it. You can post individual grades, or wait and post all of the grades for a particular assessment at once.
- **Automatically Assign Zeros for Past Due Assessments** - If your assessment has a due date enabled, Blackboard can automatically assign a zero to any student who does not submit the assessment by the due date. You can override the zero with a grade, of course, but the automatic zero can help students realize that they have missed a due date. While automatic zeros is enabled by default, you can disable it in the Gradebook settings.
- **Set Accommodations to all Assessments** - In the Ultra Course View, you can set accommodations for a student once via the Roster, and then they will apply to all assessments in your course.

Accommodations can affect due dates, by never marking a student's submission as late, or the time limit, by providing extra or unlimited time for assessments with a timer.

MIGRATION TIMELINE

Prior to the migration, the previous Blackboard Original Learning Management System was moved from in-house server to a cloud-hosting service (SaaS: Software as a Service) on May 2020. On May 2022, WPUNJ has enabled Blackboard Ultra Base Navigation. Starting summer 2022, CTT has met with faculty volunteers for using it for the first time, provided training and assistance to the faculty members with course conversion from the old (Blackboard Original) to the new (Blackboard Ultra) and specific features of the Ultra Course View.

The detailed migration process is described in the following table.

Spring 2022	Summer 2022			Fall 2022
May	June	July	August	Sept. – Dec.
<p>Enable Blackboard Ultra Base Navigation</p> <p>Set the Blackboard Learning Technology Plan</p> <p>Select 8-15 courses for course migration project with K16</p>	<p>13 Courses were sent to K16 for conversion (6/1)</p> <p>7 Volunteers were identified for piloting the Ultra Experience</p>	<p>Train and assist the volunteers to convert or develop their courses in Ultra Experience</p> <p>Have first 100 courses migrated over the Ultra courses</p> <p>Begin Communication planning for Fall pilot</p> <p>Communication reminder to Dean, Chairs, Faculty</p> <p>Plan for faculty webinar and potential in-person or virtual session</p> <p>Develop the Blackboard Ultra Institute (focused on course design and development), a certificate program that can be offered in Fall 2022</p> <p>Develop support documents and video clips</p>	<p>Continue to train and assist the volunteers to convert or develop their courses in Ultra Experience</p> <p>Reminder communication: Dean, Chairs, Faculty</p>	<p>Pilot courses go live in Ultra for Fall 2022</p> <p>Offer Blackboard Ultra Institute training sessions</p> <p>Train and assist faculty in course conversion</p> <p>Reminder communication: Dean, Chairs, Faculty</p>

THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop was created to provide faculty with guidance as they plan to implement the new Learning Management System in action.

At the end of this session you will be able to:

Session 1. What's New, Course Set Up, and Content Building

1. Identify the core features of the Base Navigation menu and their functions
2. Explain the major changes in the Base Navigation of Blackboard Ultra
3. Identify the tools that have been used in Original Course View and how to find them in Ultra Course View
4. Explain the features of the Blackboard Ultra Course View including a course banner, course availability, and student preview mode
5. Explain how to plan and build the structure of your Blackboard course in Ultra Course View
6. Differentiate the folders and learning modules
7. Describe the features of Ultra Text Editor
8. Describe how to add different types of content, such as images, videos, web links, and LTI tools

Session 2. Communication and Engagement

1. Update information that appears in User Profiles
2. Create and schedule a Blackboard announcement
3. Create a Message, using it tool email students
4. Create a Discussion forum, linking it to a content area and enabling its grading options
5. Use the Discussion options that allow you to track and grade student participation
6. Schedule individual or recurring Zoom sessions, linking them to content areas
7. Schedule individual or recurring Blackboard Collaborate Ultra sessions, linking them to content areas
8. Identify and compare the differences between how these communication tools work in Blackboard Ultra versus Original

Session 3. Assessments and Feedback

1. Add Assessment items (assignments and tests)
2. Create a question pool
3. Grade students' assignments in different Gradebook views
4. Add student exceptions in the Ultra Gradebook
5. Add manual columns and attendance column to Gradebook
6. Review the Gradebook settings in their Ultra course and modify settings as needed
7. Create Grading Schema in the Ultra Gradebook
8. Create assessment categories in the Ultra Gradebook
9. Create rubrics in the Ultra Gradebook
10. Track student progress by using the Progress Tracking Tool

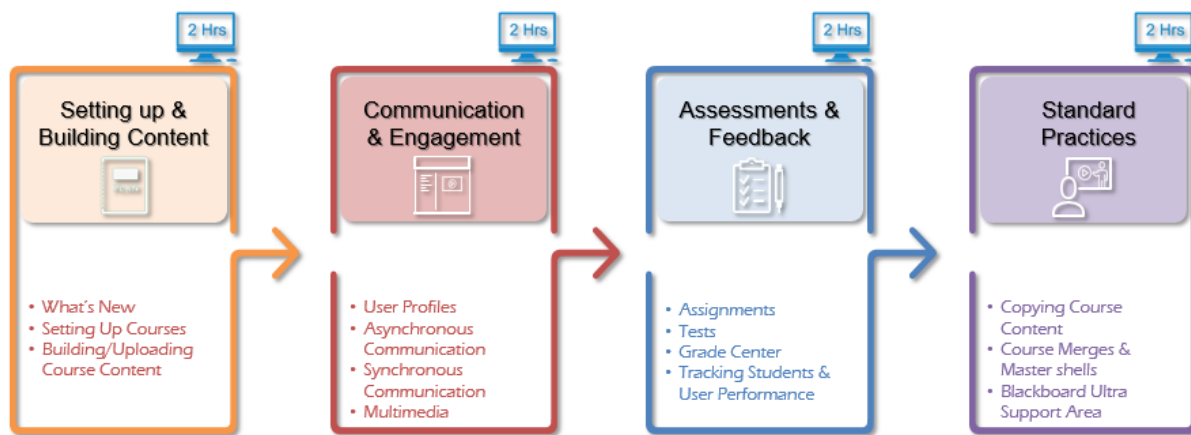
Session 4. Adoption, Unique Features, and Best Practices

1. Explain what major factors need to be considered when converting an Original course to Ultra
2. Describe different ways to build an Ultra course
3. Describe best practices for converting and building Ultra courses
4. Identify major Original tools and features that are not available in Ultra
5. Describe unique Ultra tools and features

6. Use new Ultra features in your Ultra course shell
7. Apply online course design best practices and the Ultra course templates in course building
8. Explain how you would take advantage of the unique Ultra features and tools to convert your existing course or build new Ultra courses.
9. Identify resources of Ultra help sites, tutorials, and guides.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACKBOARD ULTRA INSTITUTE

To achieve the stated learning objective above, a two-day in-person / online workshop was developed and offered to provide the essential knowledge and skills in Blackboard Ultra with the participants. The workshop was comprised of self-study and hands-on components. A self-study component was consisted of reading lecture notes, exploring the Web resources, and responding to the discussion questions as needed. Each session, participants were asked to read the lectures and additional readings provided by the facilitator. After completing the readings and the lessons, they were asked to answer a series of questions designed to stimulate reflection on the discussion board. The hands-on component was consisted of a set of the Do-It-Yourself assignments. The participants were encouraged to complete each feature of the Blackboard Ultra tools. They were asked to post their works to the designated assignment folders.



The following is the schedule of the workshop:

	Day 1 In-person	Days 2 Remote	Day 3 In-person	
10:00 am – 10:30 am	Session 1 – Getting Started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • What's New (Interface, Base Nav., Features) • Course Building and Navigation 	<i>Self-paced asynchronous activities</i>	Session 3 - Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments • Tests • Rubrics 	10:00 am – 10:30 am
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building/Uploading Content • Multimedia (Mashups, YuJa, images) • Tracking Student/User Progress • User Profiles 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade Center 	10:30 am – 12:00 pm
	Presenter: Jae Kim		Presenter: Sena Bulak	
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Session 2 - Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous Communication (Discussion Boards, Messages, Email, Announcements) 		Session 4 - Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Practices and Procedures • Getting Additional Assistance • Participant Presentations • Group Discussion and Q&A 	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous Communication (Zoom, Collaborate, WebEx, Teams) 			2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
	Presenter: Housen Maratouk		Presenter: Ming Jian	

THE WORKSHOPS AND THE PARTICIPANTS

There were three in-person workshops and one online workshop offered during fall 2022.

A total of nineteen faculty members was successfully completed the workshops. Among the participants, nine faculty attended for in-person workshops and ten faculty participated in the online workshop.

Originally fifty-three faculty members signed up for the workshops. Due to schedule conflicts and other reasons, nineteen faculty members could not be able to participate fully in the workshop, and fourteen faculty members were able to participate one or two sessions but could not complete the workshop.

The following table shows the attendees of each workshop.

Blackboard Ultra Institute Attendees (Fall 2022)

	In-person			Online
	Oct. 3-7	Oct. 24-28	Nov. 14-17	Nov. 28-30
Fully Attended / Participated	Sanaa Gokeh Gigi Mohamad Raymond Schwartz Ana Cristina Siqueira	Carlos Carbajal Cassandra Fenyk Kevin Martus Martha Witt Barbara Suess		Maria Tajes Kate Makarec Bela Florenthal Luis Gino Guzman John Bae John B Orozco Keumjae Park Carlos Carbajal John Malindretos Sara Almuina Viz
Partially Attended / Participated	Djanna Hill Gabe Wang	Denise Bellog Samuel Fancera Diana Peck Saeed Shekari	Anthony Giradri	Umamaheswari Venugopal Elizabeth Birge Raza Mir Rogel Nuguid Weihua Liu Rosa Soto Alice Baldwin-Jones Bruce Diamond
Not being able to Attended / Participated	Vivek Agnihotri	Sandra Alon Heejung An John Bae Judith Francis Daniel Halewicz Ronald Jones Weihua Liu		Donna Rennar-Potacco Solomon Nyaanga Ahmad Nassiripour Heejung An Thomas Owusu Madeline Garcia Bahar Ashnai Ellen Frye Michelle Fenwick Arnold Lewis Berhanu Kibret
Completed Total	4 Faculty	5 Faculty	0 Faculty	10 Faculty
	9 Faculty			10 Faculty

Those who participated in all sessions and completed all the assignments on their sandbox course shell were considered as successful participants. Based on these criteria, the following faculty members received the certificate of completion of the Blackboard Ultra Institute:

Sanna Gokeh
Gigi Mohamad
Raymond Schwartz
Ana Cristina Siqueira
John B Orozco
Keumjae Park
Sara Almuina Viz

Carlos Carbajal
Cassandra Fenyk
Kevin Martus
Martha Witt
Barbara Suess
John Malindretos

Maria Tajes
Kate Makarec
Bela Florenthal
Luis Gino Guzman
John Bae
Carlos Carbajal

Survey Results

Upon completion of the Blackboard Ultra Institute, the participants were asked a climate survey (using Qualtrics software). The workshop attendees were invited to voluntarily participate in the survey data collection. Fifteen faculty members responded to the survey.

The survey included close-ended and open-ended questions related to the faculty members' experiences with Blackboard Ultra and their perceptions of its quality and utility. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete. No individual received compensation for participating in the survey. Respondents could skip any items on the survey and could terminate their participation at any time. See Appendix A, Climate Survey: Blackboard Ultra Institute, for a copy of the survey questions.

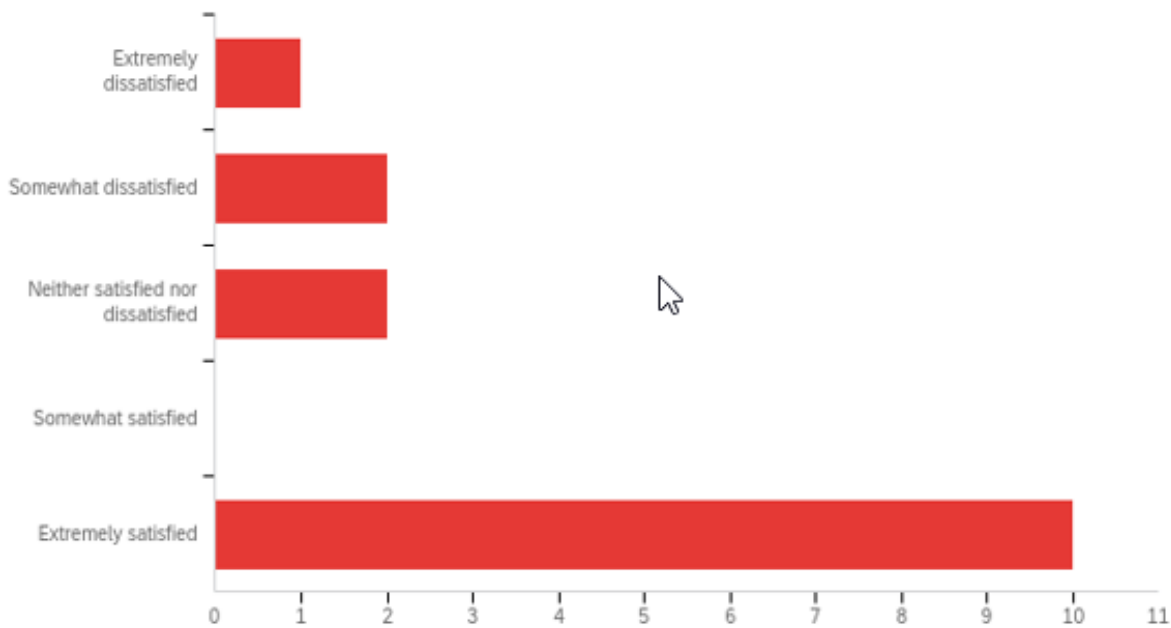
All survey responses are confidential and are reported in the aggregate. Individual comments are not reported with any combination of demographics that allows for identification of individuals.

At the end of the workshop, the following questions were asked to the participants:

1. Now that you have completed the Blackboard Ultra Institute, how satisfied are you with Blackboard Ultra for adopting it in your course?
2. You will have noticed differences between the older version, Blackboard Original, and the new version, Blackboard Ultra. Based on your experiences, which do you prefer?
3. Please rate your feeling about the Blackboard Ultra tools and features designed to support the following teaching and course management tasks:
4. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about Blackboard Ultra:
5. Which of the following formats do you think works best for the Blackboard Ultra Institute?
6. How do you feel about the pacing of this workshop? Was it too short, too long, or just right?
7. What do you like MOST about Blackboard Ultra? Why?
8. What do you like LEAST about Blackboard Ultra? Why?
9. Are there any specific features or tools in Blackboard Ultra that you would have liked to see us cover and/or spend more time on? And is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience using Blackboard Ultra from the workshop?
10. Do you have any additional recommendations on how to improve the Blackboard Ultra Institute? This might include (but is not limited to) suggestions regarding content, pacing, scheduling, etc.

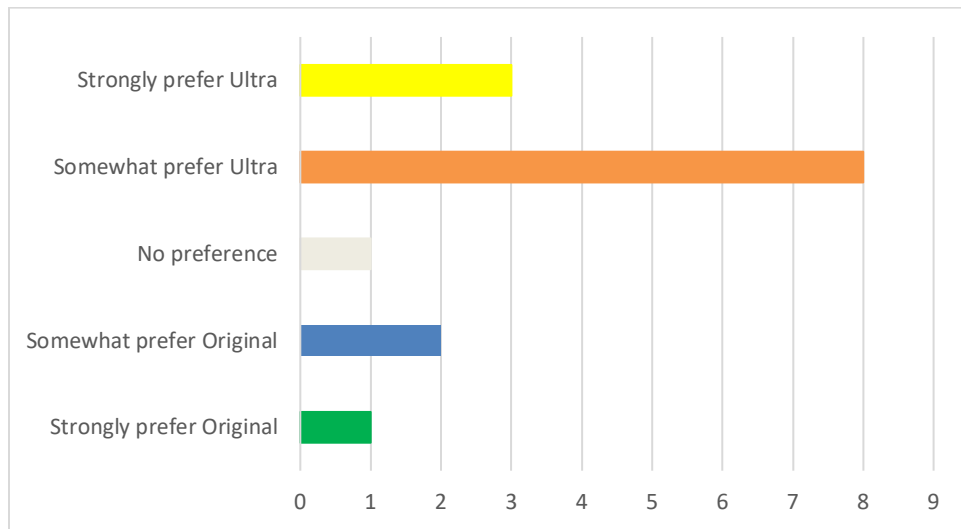
How satisfied with Blackboard Ultra

The faculty respondents were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the features of Blackboard Ultra. Ten faculty members responded that they are extremely satisfied (66.67%). However, three participants (26.66%) replied that they are extremely dissatisfied (1) or somewhat dissatisfied (2). There were two respondents answered they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (13.33%).



Preference (Ultra vs. Original)

Seventy-three percent (11) of faculty respondents prefer Blackboard Ultra over Blackboard Original and 20% (3) prefer Blackboard Original over Blackboard Ultra.

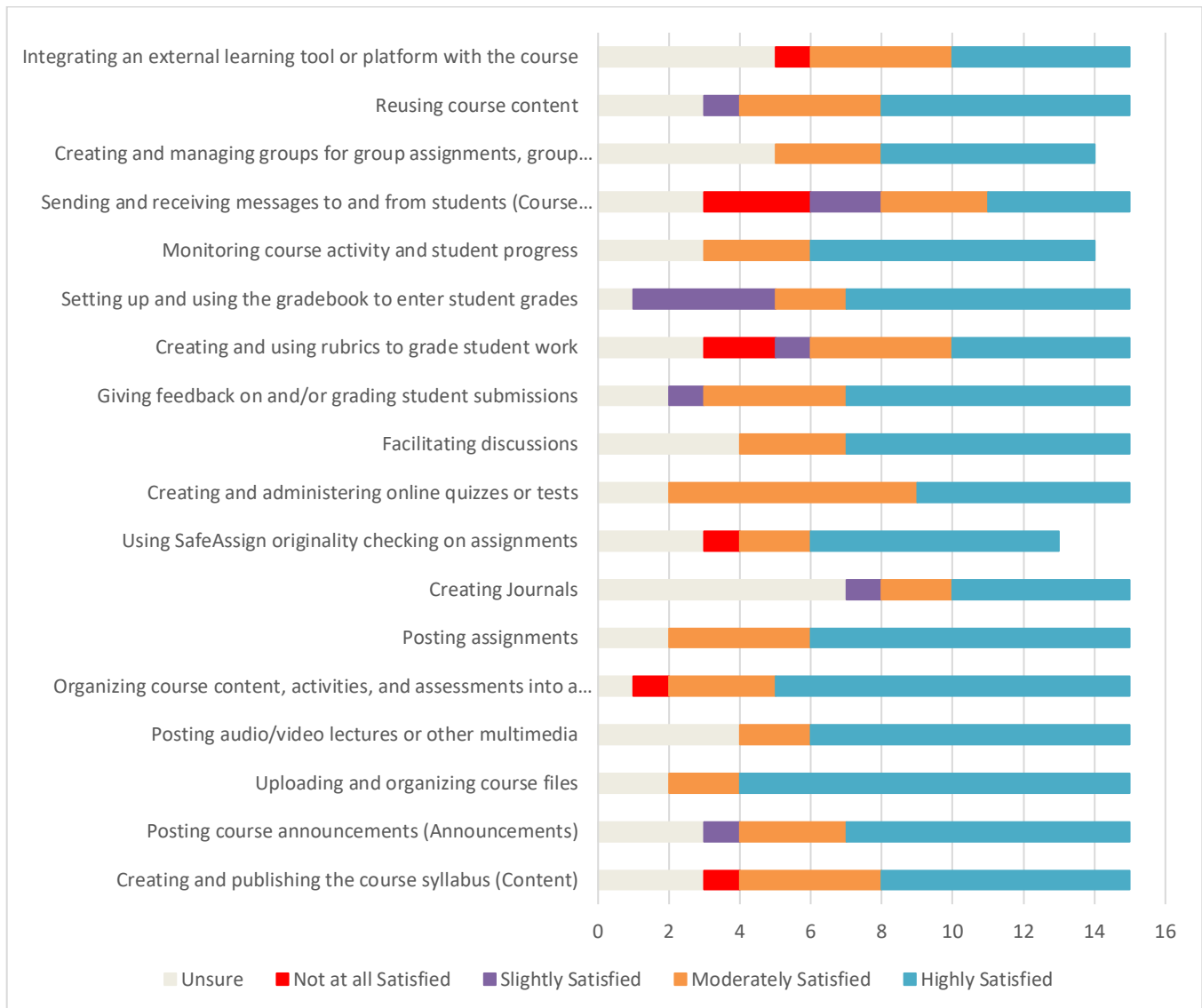


Level of Satisfaction with Ultra Features

The faculty respondents were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the features of Blackboard Ultra. Majority of the faculty respondents responded that they were highly or moderately satisfied with the features of Ultra as follows:

- Creating and publishing the course syllabus (74%)
- Posting course announcements (73%)
- Uploading and organizing course files (87%)
- Posting audio/video lectures (73%)

- Organizing course content, activities, and assessments into a series of modules (87%)
- Posting assignments (87%)
- Using SafeAssign originality checking on assignments (69%)
- Creating and administrating online quizzes or tests (87%)
- Facilitating discussions (73%)
- Giving feedback / grading on student submissions (80%)
- Setting up gradebook (67%)
- Monitoring course activities and student progress (79%)
- Reusing course content (73%)



The highest rated features on a scale of 1 to 5 (unsure, and not at all satisfied to highly satisfied) were Uploading and organizing course files and Organizing course content, activities, and assessments into a series of modules with a mean of 4.33; the next highest rated feature were posting assignments with a mean of 4.20. The lowest rated feature was creating journals with a mean of 2.87. About 47% of respondents (7) replied they were not sure while the other 8 faculty were rated satisfied.

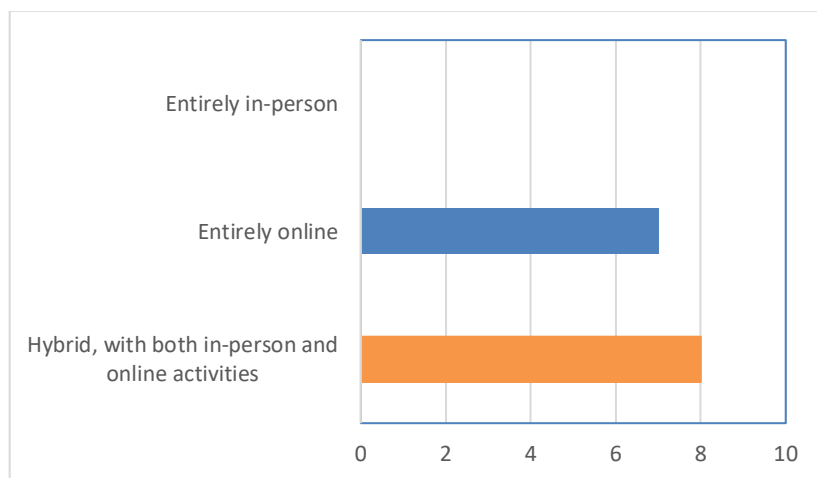
Level of Agreement with Statements about Blackboard Ultra

Respondents were also asked to rate their level of agreement with a variety of statements about Blackboard Ultra (see Table below). All of the statements were rated by faculty respondents with a mean of 3.93 or above on a scale of 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The highest rated statement was Blackboard Ultra enabled me to do what I wanted for my course(s) with a mean of 4.53 (agree rating). The lowest rated statement was Blackboard Ultra increased my efficiency as a teacher with a mean of 3.93 (agree rating).

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about Blackboard Ultra:	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither Agree nor Disagree 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Total N	Mean
Blackboard Ultra enabled me to do what I wanted for my course(s).	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (13.33%)	3 (20%)	10 (66.67%)	15	4.53
Blackboard Ultra seems easy for my students to learn how to use.	1 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	3 (20%)	5 (33.33%)	6 (40%)	15	4.00
Blackboard Ultra increased my efficiency as a teacher.	1 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	4 (26.67%)	4 (26.67%)	6 (40%)	15	3.93
Using Blackboard Ultra is beneficial to my students' overall learning.	1 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	4 (26.67%)	3 (20%)	7 (46.67%)	15	4.00
Blackboard Ultra seems useful for my teaching.	0 (0%)	1 (6.67%)	1 (6.67%)	6 (40%)	7 (46.67%)	15	4.27

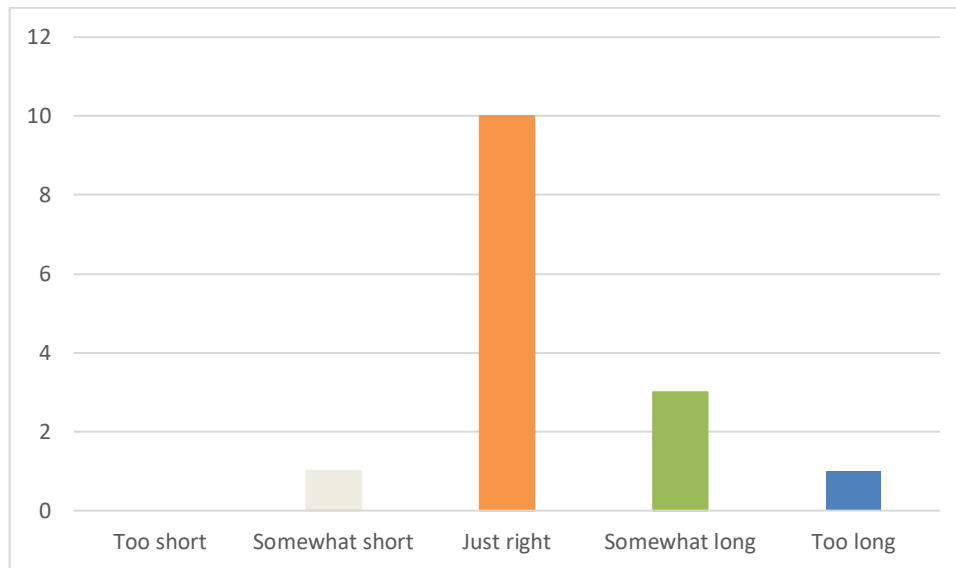
Workshop Format

Fifty-three percent (8) of faculty respondents prefer Hybrid with both in-person and online activities and 47% (7) prefer the entirely online format. None of the faculty members prefer entirely in-person workshop.



Pacing of the workshop

Sixty-seven percent (10) of the respondents replied the pacing of the workshop was just right. 27% (4) participants answered it was long. 1 faculty member rated it was somewhat short.



MOST Liked about Blackboard Ultra

What do you like MOST about Blackboard Ultra? Why?

- The option to use more complex grading methods (calculations) & the flow of Ultra seems more intuitive
- In the Ultra Course View, Announcements appear as a pop-up when students enter the course. They must dismiss the pop-up before accessing any files or assessments in the course
- User friendly to access, blackboard calendar with due dates of assigned tasks, grading ease, etc.
- It was ridiculous that they tried make a new system. The previous one was more streamlined, with fewer bells and whistles. The newest features are too "busy" for the students; things such as "upcoming deadlines" and "activity stream" are simply annoying to the students and completely useless.
- Creating exams. The interface for entering questions were streamlined without needing to scroll down.
- The gradebook presentation of "to dos" for the instructor; Creation of test questions is simpler.
- The interface is more like other LMSs that I have used; more intuitive.
- The module-based design is a great way to organize the course
- I cannot say, because I just was introduced to the features and at this point in time cannot (should not) judge.
- I like that content is all in one place.

Least liked about Blackboard Ultra

What do you like LEAST about Blackboard Ultra? Why?

- Not sure it is that much better than the traditional Blackboard platform - however, the more I use it, the better I can assess this.
- The new message function. I had one student who only used the new function and I missed it until taking this workshop. It counterintuitive.

- Rubrics
- Inability to send emails to students through gradebook, restricted rubric modification
- "Messages" through blackboard is completely redundant. Email is the best way for students individually to contact faculty. Most of us have our email open all day long, but NOT the blackboard. Please also see my comment above, and take it as "LEAST," because to be honest, there is NOTHING to like most about blackboard ultra. It is an old lady in a new dress, with the for-profit company charging all universities more money. Talk about the Emperor's New Clothes!!!
- Rubric-time consuming.
- Disappearance of the function to email several students at once from the gradebook. In text boxes, you cannot alter the size of images.
- Still seems a bit clunky when it comes to posting items.
- Getting used to it and the time involved in the switch
- because I just was introduced to the features and at this point in time cannot (should not) judge.
- I still wish there were an easy way to create and integrate audio/video feedback.

Features needed to be covered more

Are there any specific features or tools in Blackboard Ultra that you would have liked to see us cover and/or spend more time on? And is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience using Blackboard Ultra from the workshop?

- Overall, it was a good workshop - but with the required group work, it may not be best for self-paced option, but more with a group option. Perhaps more time on imbedding videos and making your own screen-shot videos. I used FlashBack Express to make my screenshot videos - a free app that gives me the freedom I require.
- Grade center
- Gradebook
- Nothing specific
- I tried to participate in the workshop, but I am just completely overwhelmed with grading, meetings, and an article due soon to my editor. I've been looking at the materials posted by you.
- Too early to determine. Will get back to you as I play with it more.
- Gradebook overall grade settings and calculations.
- I thought it was a great program.
- BbUltra is less cluttered and more organized for students to find what they are looking for
- Nope

Any recommendations

Do you have any additional recommendations on how to improve the Blackboard Ultra Institute? This might include (but is not limited to) suggestions regarding content, pacing, scheduling, etc.

- Only recommendation is perhaps to remove the need for group work for the self-paced option. Other than that, this was a great workshop! Thanks!
- no.
- no
- Nothing specific for now
- The best thing that you can do is to stop telling faculty that blackboard ultra is so different. In fact, it is nearly the same thing as the old version, so they never should have wasted universities' money, in implementing it. Although I could not attend the sessions at the times offered - hey, maybe post everything in written documents - NO VIDEOS please, they are too slow!!!! - and faculty can peruse what they need, at their convenience. Many thanks!!!

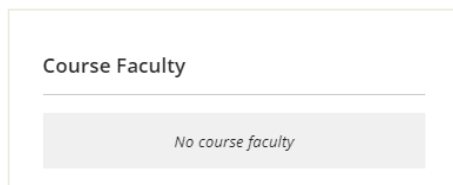
- Thank you IRT!
- The workshop was a very in depth approach to Blackboard from a very basic start. I think many instructors who are already familiar with the original blackboard could benefit from a more targeted and shorter workshop about the specific aspects that are new and not so much of aspects that have just been given a new look. A specific workshop on Overall grading settings and calculations in the Gradebook could be useful.
- No
- None at this point
- The introductory shell could have included example quizzes/test questions.
- Just more time for hands-on experience with Ultra.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE BLACKBOARD ULTRA INSTITUTE

Based on the feedback and comments from the participants, CTT will continue to improve the workshop materials, activities, and related services (i.e., Course Banner Creator).

Message function/Disappearance of Email function in gradebook - Faculty complained that it is not user friendly and the faculty contact is not available on the student page. Faculty are looking for email feature on Blackboard instead of messages. Because faculty believe that it is the best way for students individually contact faculty.

Instructor information is not available on student's Bb page. This results in students are not being able to communicate with the instructor using the message function in blackboard. Since there are no way to communicate ways given inside of Blackboard Ultra with instructor, it may be a serious problem. The issue was reported the behind blackboard tech support team. However, they could not fix the issue at the moment.

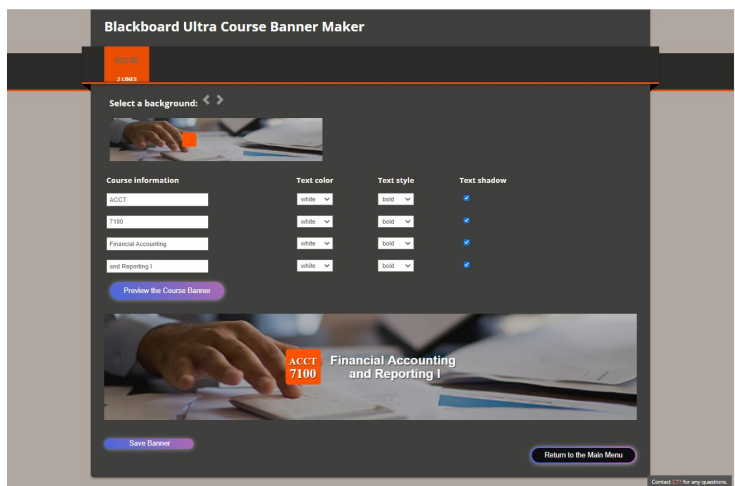
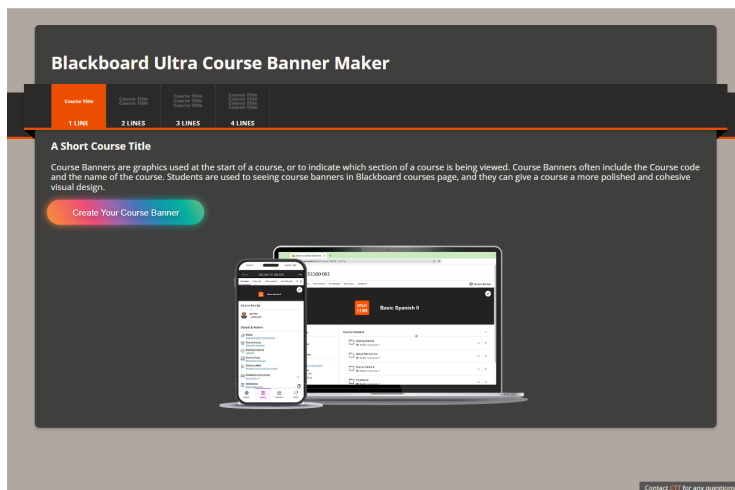


Rubric function - the ways to create it and/or import already existing are the same as in Blackboard Original. However, using it to grade student's work is not the same. Usually the rubric was displayed on a separate page to make it easier to grade. In Blackboard Ultra, you will need to expand each grading item and then grade it one by one. It takes more time to grade one assignment and it may discourage faculty to use it. CTT contacted Blackboard Tech Support team and got confirmed that Blackboard is aware of the issue and working on the improvement to make it as same as usual. It is expected to be available in spring 2023.

Cannot change the size of the image in the text editor - Blackboard Ultra does not allow the images added using the text editor. It uses the exact size in the image file created so that it results in different look and feel of the page design. CTT contacted Blackboard Tech support team. However, they do not have any plans for this feature to be updated yet.

The survey results suggested that the faculty did not prefer the entirely in-person workshop. However, they prefer the entirely online or hybrid workshop. For the upcoming workshops, CTT will offer it via online after January 9, 2023 workshop. In case of the needs of in-person workshops, CTT will offer individual workshops for the faculty.

The course banner creation process seemed to be complicated because it uses Adobe Photoshop to get a course banner. It takes additional training on the application. To make the process of a course banner creation, CTT has created a web-based course banner creator. The faculty can simply select the background of their banner and the type the course code and title to make their course banner. The course banner creator can be accessed at <https://wpunj.edu/bb/CourseBannerMaker/index.html>



Some faculty recommended the following:

- An easy way to create and integrate audio/video feedback
- Gradebook - overall grade settings and calculation
- The introductory shell could have included example quizzes/test questions
- More Hands-on

CTT will make the workshop incorporating the listed items as needed.

Conclusion

William Paterson University of New Jersey (WPUNJ) has decided to migrate to the Blackboard Ultra Learning Management System. During the summer 2022, to provide faculty with guidance as they plan to implement the new Learning Management System in action, Center for Teaching with Technology (CTT) developed Blackboard Ultra Institute for both in-person and online offerings.

During the workshop, faculty were guided through a well-developed process of gaining exposure to, and then experimenting with key features and functions of the Blackboard Ultra Course View. It was designed to walk faculty through the process of migrating online content from Blackboard Original into Ultra and then to gain familiarity with, and feedback on, the following tools: Folders, Learning Modules, Course Banner, Syllabus, Announcements, Discussions, Assignments, Tests, and the Grade Book.

During the fall institutes, participants consistently reported that Blackboard Ultra was intuitive and easy to use. Participants further indicated a preference for Blackboard Ultra's modern interface, logical structure, tool functions, and efficiency. In short, and as evidenced in the faculty testimonials, the Institutes agreed that Blackboard Ultra could both improve and economize their instructional effort. Many participants who volunteered indicated they favored a move from Blackboard Original to Ultra.

CTT created surveys on the Blackboard Ultra Experience as well as on participants' overall experience in the Original. For each tool, participants were asked to rate its ease of use along a five-point scale, ranging from very difficult to very easy. Participants were also given the opportunity to provide an open-ended narrative response in each of the surveys. Faculty responses were consistently positive, especially regarding Blackboard Ultra's ease of use.

Faculty members participating in the Blackboard Ultra Institute recommended that it would be a right decision to transitioning from Blackboard Original to Ultra. The faculty have found Blackboard Ultra easy to learn, easy to use, and an overall better system for hosting and delivering classes.

Appendix A
Climate Survey: Blackboard Ultra Institute



Thank you for attending and completing the Blackboard Ultra Institute. You have been invited to participate in this survey to express your perceptions and feelings about Blackboard Ultra.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Should you decide to participate, your responses will be kept confidential and will be reported only in aggregate in published reports. Individual comments will not be reported with demographics that would allow for identification of individuals. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dr. Jae Kim, Senior Instructional Designer at CTT, at kimj@wpunj.edu.

This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You may terminate your participation in the survey at any time. Then proceed to next page to begin the survey.

Blackboard Ultra Institute Survey

- Q1: Now that you have completed the Blackboard Ultra Institute, how satisfied are you with Blackboard Ultra for adopting it in your course?
Scale: Extremely dissatisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Extremely satisfied
- Q2: You will have noticed differences between the older version, Blackboard Original, and the new version, Blackboard Ultra. Based on your experiences, which do you prefer?
Scale: Strongly prefer Blackboard Original (older version), Somewhat prefer Blackboard Original (older version), No preference between the two, Somewhat prefer Blackboard Ultra (new version), Strongly prefer Blackboard Ultra (new version)
- Q3: Please rate your feeling about the Blackboard Ultra tools and features designed to support the following teaching and course management tasks:

	Unsure	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
Creating and publishing the course syllabus (Content)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting course announcements (Announcements)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uploading and organizing course files	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting audio/video lectures or other multimedia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizing course content, activities, and assessments into a series of modules or lessons (Content Area, Learning Modules)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating Journals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using SafeAssign originality checking on assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating and administering online quizzes or tests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitating discussions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Giving feedback on and/or grading student submissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating and using rubrics to grade student work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting up and using the gradebook to enter student grades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring course activity and student progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sending and receiving messages to and from students (Course Messages, Send Email)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating and managing groups for group assignments, group discussions, and/or group projects (Groups)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reusing course content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrating an external learning tool or platform with the course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about Blackboard Ultra:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	ⓧ Not Applicable
Blackboard Ultra enables me to do what I wanted for my course(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blackboard Ultra seems easy for my students to learn how to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blackboard Ultra seems to increase my efficiency and effectiveness as a teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using Blackboard Ultra is beneficial to my students' overall learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blackboard Ultra seems useful for my teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5: Which of the following formats do you think works best for the Blackboard Ultra Institute?

Scale: Entirely in-person, Entirely online, Hybrid, with both in-person and online activities

Q6: How do you feel about the pacing of this workshop? Was it too short, too long, or just right?

Scale: Too short, Somewhat short, Just right, Somewhat long, Too long

Q7: What do you like MOST about Blackboard Ultra? Why? (open text box)

Q8: What do you like LEAST about Blackboard Ultra? Why? (open text box)

Q9: Are there any specific features or tools in Blackboard Ultra that you would have liked to see us cover and/or spend more time on? And is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience using Blackboard Ultra from the workshop?
(open text box)

Q10: Do you have any additional recommendations on how to improve the Blackboard Ultra Institute? This might include (but is not limited to) suggestions regarding content, pacing, scheduling, etc. (open Text box)

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.