MercerOnline
Mercer County Community College

A Message from the Office of Academic Affairs

Blackboard Learn, our learning management system, will be available campuswide for all courses as of July 1, 2016. *Whether you teach on campus or online, using this platform offers academic, retention, communication, and organizational benefits.*

To follow are several examples:

- Class announcements created are automatically forwarded to students' emails.
- The Course Calendar links to course assignments.
- Students and faculty can easily communicate via the integrated Bb email and video conferencing tools.
- Faculty can track attendance and update student grades.
- Students can keep track of their grades through the Bb platform.

- The Retention Center facilitates monitoring student activity and course progress.

To ensure a consistent and positive student experience, _all Blackboard course shells should at a minimum include the following_:

- Welcome Announcement to students
- Instructor Contact information
- Course Syllabus with a clear grading policy
- Grade Center (so grades are visible to students throughout semester)

Throughout the academic year, MercerOnline and the Center for Teaching and Learning offer training and peering sharing sessions about pedagogy, course design, instructional e-tools, and best practices. We encourage you to participate in these development opportunities. In addition, you can visit the https://teach.mccc.edu for resources.

Qwickly Attendance Tool

Introducing Qwickly! Qwickly Attendance is a tool that integrates with our Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) to simplify tracking and grading student attendance. Because Qwickly is used in conjunction with the Blackboard Grade Center, this tool creates a gradebook column in your course. You can either set a total number points for the course or define a number of points for each time you take attendance. You also have the option to see the entire roster or show one student at a time while you call out their names. Another great feature it has is that it can send an email to students whenever they are marked absent.

Now that we are going to LMS-for-All and all courses will have a Blackboard shell, Qwickly is a perfect tool to add to your arsenal for your face-to-face course.

Please check your emails for Qwickly training dates during Pre-Class week.

LMS-For-All: What Does It Mean For You

Starting in Summer B Session 2016, MCCC is moving to an LMS-for-All environment. Here's what that really means.

What is LMS-For-All? With LMS-For-All, *every credit section* will have a course shell in the Learning Management System (LMS), which, in our case, is Blackboard.

What can I do with it? You can use Blackboard for lots of things. Many faculty use it to:

- House the course syllabus and calendar (so students can't say "I lost mine!")
- Maintain the gradebook (eliminating the ever-present "What's my grade???" question)
- Track attendance
- Embed course materials (PowerPoint presentations, notes, etc.) and links to other resources
- Provide drop-boxes where students can submit assignments.
- Use announcements or course mail to remind students of due dates or inform them of class cancellations
- Track student progress (via Blackboard's Retention Center)

What can't I do with it? Blackboard is not your closet. Must be space conscious. There are quotas in place as storage is not free. Consequently, MercerOnline can make recommendations about what you should post in Blackboard and what you can push to the cloud. We can show you how to use the cloud for content storage. There are many other benefits to using the cloud, but that's another conversation.

Why should I use it? Blackboard is a unified platform where students can access critical information for all of their courses. By having all courses on the same system, students spend less time learning how to use various systems and more time learning course content. At minimum, share the course syllabus, post announcements, use the Grade Center, and provide supporting materials (PowerPoint presentations, etc.).

What if I need help? MercerOnline will be providing workshops on how to get the most out of Blackboard. Keep an eye on the M-Newsletter for announcements and details. For specific questions, which require an immediate response, email merceronline@mccc.edu or call 609-570-3389.

The Center for Teaching & Learning

This past fall and spring semester, The Center For Teaching Learning (CTL) has been very busy offering Lunch 'n Learn sessions. One featured Dr. Carol Bork leading a discussion on the philosophies of Ken Bain. We recently had our Blackboard Customer Service Advocate, Naveen Ramadan, give a presentation on E-Portfolios and Retention Center.

We plan to offer more of these types of trainings next year. Please check your emails for upcoming sessions or visit our site for updates: https://teach.mccc.edu/

As a complement to MercerOnline's role as an innovations agent throughout the college community, the Center for Teaching and Learning will serve to champion these efforts by providing a collaborative and comfortable environment that will facilitate peer engagement.

We look forward to seeing you as often as you'd like to visit in **CM126B!**

zoom   A New Video Conference Tool

If you've ever needed a tool to conference with students during or outside of your office hours, consider Zoom. With the Zoom tool you can set-up free conference calls with many users at once, as well as other features useful to instructors and students alike, such as breakout rooms, screen sharing and chat.

Easy-To-Use Interface

Calls in Zoom occur in a window with controls at the bottom of your screen for easy access. These controls include a detailed list of participants, screen sharing options, group/individual chat, and other enabled features.

Inviting Participants

Any participant can join the meeting in few steps. Using the Invite control in the meeting, you can send an invitation link to participants via email, IM, or by copying and pasting a link. Then all the participant will need to do is follow the link in the email, run the launcher, and join the meeting.

Features

Zoom offers access to many useful features for interacting with participants, from showing them your screen to chatting with participants individually or as a group.

- Local Recording – Clicking the Record button in the meeting controls begins a local recording of the meeting that will process once the meeting ends. Each recording is saved as an mp4 file. All video in the main screen of the meeting, as well as screen shares, will show up in the recording.

- Screen sharing – Clicking the Screen Sharing button brings up a list of your open windows, allowing you to choose one to share with the attendees. This shared window will show up as the primary view in the meeting, allowing everyone to see it in full view.

- Chat – The Zoom chat feature is very familiar to users of IM services or other video conference tools, but a nice perk in Zoom is the management of private vs. public chats. All chat rooms can be handled from the same list for easy access.

Zoom, integrates with Blackboard, and is a great tool for those of you who would like a robust video meeting tool that's easily accessible by you and students.

Fall Preview - stay tuned for information about :
- MercerOnline's and the CTL's professional development offerings for Pre-Class Week Fall '16
- Blackboard's streamlined look for easier navigation for students and faculty
- MercerOnline's start-of-semester online faculty chats
- The digital Course proposal process
- Online course proposal survey to faculty
- Invitation to reserve CTL for faculty office hours

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For assistance, call us at 609-570-3389 or mceronline@mccc.edu