



OFFICE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION & FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Report and Recommendation of the LMS Task Force

October 4, 2023

Blackboard Ultra

Following the full rollout of Ultra in the Fall of 2022, there were several reported technology incidents and complaints by faculty and students. ODE staff documented several incidents that resulted in loss of tool function, test failures, loss of data, and loss of access by users. Prompted by these concerns, in late Fall, ODE invited faculty and students to respond to surveys that were distributed via email. These surveys collected quantitative and qualitative feedback on a variety of items. The feedback from these surveys indicated widespread dissatisfaction with Blackboard Ultra. ODE's support team also expressed significant dissatisfaction with Blackboard technical support, and reported chronic instability of key tool functions in Ultra.

LMS Task Force

In January of 2023, ODE presented its findings to the AUM community in a town hall meeting, and recommended that the Provost appoint a representative task force to further research and make recommendations about the LMS situation at AUM. The Provost approved that recommendation, and an LMS Task Force was established. The following members served on the Task Force:

Ed Walker (*College of Business*)

Erin Klash (*College of Education*)

Amy Locklear (*College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences*)

Wendy Dubose (*College of Nursing & Health Sciences*)

Clarissa Arms-Chavez (*College of Science*)

Timothy Lewis (*OnLine Advisory Team-OLAT*)

Tobias Mense (*ITS*)

Bill Broadway (*ITS*)

Sheila Washington (*Registrar*)

Daniel Moody (*Library*)

Paul Fox (*Academic Success*)

Neal Kelley (*Continuing Education*)

Swati Dey (*Distance Education*)

LaKayla Moore (*Distance Education*)

David Walker (*Distance Education*)

LMS Review Process

The Task Force met throughout the Spring, Summer, and early Fall of 2023. Over the course of 15 meetings, the Task Force carried out the following tasks.

1. Made decision to formally investigate alternatives to Blackboard Ultra
2. Developed structure and timeline for review and recommendation
3. Narrowed list of potential Learning Management Systems to Canvas and Brightspace D2L
4. Hosted campus demonstrations from Canvas and D2L
5. Provided faculty and staff access to sandbox sites for Canvas and D2L
6. Conducted personal interviews with leadership at approximately twenty different universities that adopted Canvas or D2L
7. Developed surveys, collected and analyzed data from each event and interview

Task Force Recommendation

On October 3rd, the Task Force met to discuss the findings from the events, presentations, surveys, interviews, discussions, hands-on reviews, etc. A survey by ballot was conducted, and ***by unanimous decision, the Task Force recommends to academic leadership the selection of Canvas as the new learning management system.***

On behalf of Auburn University at Montgomery, we thank the members of the Task Force for their time, sincere diligence, and collegiality in this endeavor.

David Walker
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& Faculty Development Institute
Auburn University at Montgomery