

## **IT Steering Committee**

**4/19/19**

### **Teaching Blackboard Plan**

- Presented by John Fritz, Associate VP, Instructional Technology
- There will be a phased rollout of Bb Ultra, by college, as noted in the handout provided.
- Any faculty member can convert their courses to Bb Ultra now and there is a \$100 stipend per faculty member to convert all courses and attend training.
- There will be an increase in ambassadors to help with the conversion, 15 to 32.
- For further details, please see the handout.

### **Feedback on Interim Policies**

- Presented by Mark Cather, Chief Information Security Officer.
- Comments have been integrated into the updated policies on 1) Firewalls and 2) Electronic Media Disposal. The policy on Acceptable Use is still in the process of being updated.

### **House Bill 716**

- Presented by Mark Cather.
- If House Bill 716 had passed, it would have required us to bring the privacy standard of Europe to Maryland, dramatically increasing regulations for private information, which is overly burdensome for institutions. This year, the bill died in the Senate, so it is on hold until January, 2020.
- Representatives from higher education, State DoIT, and local governments will work to craft a policy that will work and is feasible, in response to HB 716.

### **Support for Video Conferencing/Cisco WebEx**

- Presented by Damian Doyle, Senior Director of Enterprise Infrastructure, DoIT.
- UMBC has purchased WebEx and will roll it out in late spring/early summer. DoIT is testing and customizing now. This will replace existing audio conference solutions.
- DoIT will cover most calling charges and will work with individual units as needed.

### **Voicemail Transition Plans**

- Presented by Damian Doyle.
- DoIT has begun a project to replace the more than 25-year old voicemail system with a modern VoIP voicemail solution. Target completion date is Fall 2019.
- Users will have four choices to consider:
  - Voicemail will be sent as an audio file to your UMBC email address and deleted from the system;
  - Process voicemail on your phone in the traditional way;
  - Dual delivery, a combination of the two options above;
  - Listen-only mailbox: You create a greeting with your preferences on how you should be contacted, but no VM message will be accepted.
- For further details, please see the hand out.

**CRI Update**

- Presented by Tony Moreira, Vice Provost For Academic Affairs.
- Academic Affairs approved \$93K in computer replacements, which will all be ordered this month prior to year-end. (The original budget was \$80K.)

**Windows 7 End of Life**

- Presented by Damian Doyle.
- Windows 7 is no longer being supported, so any machines with windows 7 will need to be updated to a newer version.
- DoIt does have a work around for any machines that run software that is only compatible with Windows 7, but this will be rare.

Feel free to send questions my way.

Sharon Paul

spaul@umbc.edu

# Campus Voicemail Migration

The campus voicemail system is over 25 years old and in need of replacement. DoIT has begun a project to replace that system with a modern VoIP voicemail solution. The plan below outlines our expected steps and timeline with a target completion date of Fall 2019.

We are designing four choices for those with voice mail boxes to consider.

1. As the default option if you do nothing, voicemail will be sent as an audio file to your umbc email address and deleted from the voicemail system. In discussions with voice mail users in DoIT and several focus groups across the campus, and confirmed from conversations with other universities we found that receiving voicemail as email was the most flexible option. By deleting the message after it is sent you will not have to remember the arcane commands to manage messages;
2. Process voicemail on your phone in the traditional way of using your phone to access and delete messages;
3. Dual delivery, a voicemail will be saved in the traditional way but also sent to your email; or
4. Provide a listen-only mailbox that would allow you to create a greeting with your preferences on how to contact the person but not accept voicemail.

In addition, one area of emphasis for this project is to improve the capability and reliability of call-processing services, these are the ways that users can navigate through menus to get to the proper service.

The proposed timeline and plan:

- **Call Processing Boxes: *Current - Early Summer***
  - 50 call processing boxes, requires 2 hours of work each and department coordination

Call processing boxes are typically departmental lines such as phone trees and listen-only boxes, the best example of which is x5-1000. We pulled our records and have been working with departments to move these over to the new system.

- **Gather Voicemail Details from Campus: *April - May***

The details of who owns which voicemail box is less accurate in the old system. To gather the information necessary for a migration we will first work with departmental IT staff who will validate the information we have for each of their respective areas.

Additionally we will publish a short form to the campus asking users to input their extension and verify their departmental information, along with options to change their delivery mechanism from the default email to traditional phone based voicemail.

- **Staff Voicemail Migration:** *Early - Late Summer*

During the summer months we will focus mostly on staff since a larger population of faculty tend not to remain on campus. We will take the information gathered in April through May and start by moving small groups of mailboxes. As we refine the process we will increase the size of the migrations. Key stakeholders with potential conflicts like admissions and student affairs will be contacted separately to schedule around important events.

The staff member will receive a personal post 3 weeks prior to their move date asking them to login and setup custom messages. If they choose not to customize their messages they will still be able to receive voicemail, but with the default greeting. There will be follow up mails as the migration approaches to staff that have not logged in and setup their mailbox. After the migration, they will receive a follow up email with instructions and additional resources should they need further assistance.

- **Faculty Voicemail Migration:** *Late Summer - Fall*

As we complete the staff migration and fall semester approaches we will start inquiring to faculty in the same way we did staff. Once semester is in full swing we will begin our faculty migrations in the same manner as staff. They will receive an email a few weeks prior to the migration with setup details and another following the migration with support documentation.

- **Review and Identify Outliers:** *Late Fall - Winter*

During this phase we will monitor the legacy voicemail system for usage to identify any boxes that were not moved or captured during the gathering and migration phase.



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# UMBC Makes Major Investment in Instructional Technology

## Phased rollout of Bb Ultra better supports campus e-Learning

April 4, 2019 8:06 AM

Earlier this week the Provost and Deans agreed to a DoIT proposal to go forward with a broad investment in instructional technology support staff, software tools and training stipends for faculty. As part of this effort, DoIT will also be delaying the date for moving all courses to Blackboard Ultra, originally announced and planned for the start of Fall 2019, and extending to Fall 2021.



Specifically, DoIT and the Division of Professional Studies (DPS) are investing in four instructional technology positions to be on board by the start of summer, and recently purchased Blackboard's Ally software for improving accessibility. Also, DoIT will increase the number of Blackboard Ultra ambassadors from 15 to 32, and provide more opportunities for on-site and online training workshops, including "lessons learned" from colleagues who've already switched. Finally, DoIT and the Provost's Office are partnering to offer one-time, \$100 stipends to all faculty who 1) attend or participate in any Ultra training, and 2) complete the process of migrating their existing course(s) by the new phased rollout summarized below, based on the "Blackboard Use by College" report (requires myUMBC login with ad\ before username):

Term Start	College/School/Division	SP19 Bb Courses *
Fall 2019	DPS, Erickson, SOWK, UAA	37, 22, 31, 28, respectively
Spring 2020	CNMS	150
Fall 2020	CoEIT	275
Spring 2021	CAHSS	831

To be clear, any faculty member from any college, school, department or division can switch to Ultra now -- as 145 courses have done this term already and since we piloted Ultra in Spring 2018. But within each organization above, DoIT will also focus on supporting each instructor based on a course's "archetype" of prior Blackboard usage at

UMBC, which we've seen is [different from most institutions](#) Blackboard hosts on its "cloud" or Software as a Service (SaaS) system. Note: UMBC moved to the Blackboard cloud in [2017](#).

"The move to Blackboard Ultra presents a real opportunity for DoIT to work with faculty to improve overall course design, accessibility and effective practice," says **Jack Suess**, Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer. "In some departments, this is working with faculty to provide training to develop online or hybrid courses, especially in collaboration with applied graduate programs. In other departments, faculty may be interested in deepening student engagement or outcomes."

As part of the broader e-Learning strategy, DoIT will continue or expand support for the following:

**Course Design:** DoIT first introduced [Quality Matters](#) and online/blended teaching workshops to the campus through the DPS-supported [Alternate Delivery Program](#) (ADP) for summer & winter programs. Drawing on more than a dozen years of experience working with over 75 faculty, DoIT [refined the ADP model](#) in 2015 to include skill builder, course designer and quality booster workshops (and stipends) to participating faculty teaching in Fall and Spring courses, too.

**Accessibility:** DoIT is now supporting [Ally](#), a new tool by Blackboard designed to identify and help address inaccessible course content. Currently, it is only available for Ultra courses.

**Assessment & Academic Integrity:** We'll continue to offer training and support in effective practices with [Adaptive Release](#), which DoIT has found is associated with higher use of course content by students, as well as [SafeAssign](#) and [Respondus Lockdown Browser](#).

**Learning Analytics & Student Success:** We'll continue to leverage [analytics](#) to help identify historically high-enrollment courses that have also reduced high DFW rates, to perhaps reverse-engineer [effective practices](#) that could be used in other courses.

**Academic Continuity:** We'll encourage all faculty to become familiar with and use core Bb functions (e.g., announcements, gradebook, discussions, Collaborate video conferencing) that can support academic continuity in the event campus is closed for an extended period of time.

While there have been delays in some [functionality](#) not yet available in [Blackboard Ultra](#) (e.g., group management, specific publisher integrations, some gradebook calculation options, etc.), [recent reviews](#) by UMBC faculty also suggest Blackboard is heading in the right direction overall. For many reasons, including a more streamlined user interface, responsive design to support mobile device usage, and enhancements to improve content accessibility, Ultra is an improvement over the core 9.1 version release of Blackboard we've been using since 2012.

DoIT appreciates all of the good will and effort by faculty who have switched to Ultra as well as the feedback we've received over the last year. In addition to contacting anyone on the [DoIT Instructional Technology staff](#), if there are questions, concerns or suggestions, we encourage people to also contact UMBC's [Bb Ultra Ambassadors](#), the Bb Faculty Advisory Group or [Faculty Senate Computer Policy Committee \(CPC\)](#).

For more information, visit [umbc.edu/go/ultra](http://umbc.edu/go/ultra).

**\* Includes "combined" courses with more than one PeopleSoft section. Typically, DoIT sees about 82% of all course sections using Bb each Fall and Spring semester.**

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## UMBC Blackboard Use Differs from Most Schools

Findings based on Bb's "course archetypes" research

December 11, 2018 11:23 PM

Earlier this year, Blackboard released a "course archetype" system administrator's tool that allows institutions to see how the company's Learning Management System (LMS) software is being used across campus. The "course archetype" tool was informed by Blackboard's 2016 [research](#) on clients it hosts, including UMBC ([since 2014](#)). The primary reason DoIT was interested in the "course archetype" tool was to get a better understanding of the depth and complexity of our current Bb usage, as we gauge the work to be done to move to our Ultra migration in Fall 2019 (see [umbc.edu/go/ultra](http://umbc.edu/go/ultra)).



A few observations are worth noting:

1. Blackboard's course [archetype research](#) initially focused on more than 3M students, in 70k courses from 927 institutions hosted by Blackboard in Spring 2016. After extensive filtering for courses between 10 and 500 students, at least average student use of 60 minutes, and faculty use of the grade book, the resulting data set for analysis "included 601,544 learners (16.25%) in 18,810 (26.87%) courses" (p.2 of the [study](#)). When DoIT ran the course archetype tool on our 1,469 active FA18 Bb courses, only 464 (31%) did not meet the same enrollment size and usage criteria compared with 51,190 (73%) of the 70k courses hosted by Blackboard, but also filtered off for the study.
2. Blackboard found the vast majority of courses it studied were "supplemental" (content-heavy, low interaction) or "complementary" (1-way, instructor-led, minimal communication) courses, or 53% and 24%, respectively (77% total). By contrast, DoIT found nearly 40% of UMBC's remaining 991 FA18 courses are characterized at the top end of Blackboard's course design archetype: "evaluative" (heavy use of assessments) and "holistic" (high LMS activity with balanced use of assessments, content and discussion), or 21% and 18%, respectively (or 39% total).

3. Except for students checking grades, Blackboard found that other high student LMS activity wasn't necessarily associated with better student outcomes. We've not looked at how our UMBC students' activity is associated with outcomes (yet), because the term isn't over, but we'll do so after Fall 2018 grades are submitted in early January.

Course Archetype	Characterized by	FA2018 # of courses	UMBC %	Compare to Bb %	10% Ultra Goal	15% Ultra Goal	20% Ultra Goal	25% Ultra Goal	33% Ultra Goal
Supplemental	Content-heavy, Low Interaction.	82	4.22%	53%	6	9	12	16	20
Complementary	1-way communication through content, announcements, gradebook	222	15.11%	24%	22	33	45	56	73
Social	High P2P interaction through discussion board	134	9.12%	11%	13	20	27	34	44
Evaluative	Heavy use of assessments	306	20.83%	10%	30	46	61	77	101
Holistic	High LMS activity with balanced use of assessments, content, discussion	267	18.18%	2%	27	40	53	67	88
Unknown	Unavailable courses?	14	0.95%	-	1	2	3	4	5
Filtered		464	31.59%	-	46	70	93	116	153
		1469			145	220	294	370	484

Special thanks to [Mariann Hawken](#), DoIT's Coordinator of eLearning and certified [Blackboard MVP](#), and [Tom Penniston](#), our Analytics Specialist in Instructional Technology, for this analysis.

DoIT needs to explore our own data further, but UMBC's Blackboard courses appear to represent a significantly different profile compared to most Bb client institutions hosted by the company. We've always had [high adoption](#) -- typically 95% of all students, 87% of all instructors and 82% of all PeopleSoft sections use Bb during any given term. But when we first started our own learning analytics [research](#) in 2007, just over 40% of all our Bb courses used the grade book, even though the annual "Undergraduates and IT" Educause [national study](#) has frequently found that students value checking grades more than any other LMS function. Typically, about 73% of all active UMBC Blackboard courses now use the grade book, a characteristic common to many of our [most active Bb courses](#).

"DoIT has always wanted to use analytics to help inform and grow the depth and sophistication of our Bb LMS usage," says John Fritz, Assoc. Vice President for Instructional Technology, who profiled UMBC's course design experience in a [2017 Educause article](#) that also referenced Bb's course archetype research. "Our institutional Blackboard usage suggests UMBC may be helping higher ed better understand how good LMS course design could be one of the most scalable student success interventions any institution can pursue."

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