

Informational Item Presented to University of Louisville Faculty Senate by Kelvin Thompson, Ed.D., Vice Provost for Online Strategy and Teaching Innovation (VPOSTI) on October 4, 2023

Update: Status of Soft Upgrade to Blackboard Ultra Course View (over five semesters between Summer 2023-Fall 2024)

The faculty senate was previously briefed on the proposed upgrade to Blackboard Ultra Course View on April 5, 2023. At that time a summer pilot of Ultra Course View was announced as the first step toward the proposed five semester upgrade. Results from the feedback would determine whether any changes to the plan were warranted.

In summer 2023, 26 instructors taught 58 courses in Ultra Course View. Communication was maintained between participating faculty, their students, and the UofL Blackboard Technology Support team as a means of gauging successes and challenges. Additionally, anonymous questionnaires were provided to participants to solicit deeper feedback. Faculty input has been overwhelmingly positive, with instructors commenting how this Blackboard version is more intuitive, user-friendly, and efficient. Constructive comments were swiftly resolved by the UofL Blackboard Technology Support team who assisted instructors with navigating features in the new user interface. Some items were escalated to the vendor (Anthology/Blackboard) such as enhancing the process of adding faculty to the course for increased efficiency. Summer pilot faculty are to be commended for their participation and feedback. Given this positive pilot result, we are excited to move forward with the university's migration through fall 2024.

This fall (2023) a total of 95 faculty and 142 courses are being taught in Blackboard Ultra. The next phase in the upgrade process will be for all spring 2024 course shells to be developed in "Instructor Choice Mode." Faculty will be able to preview their course in Blackboard Ultra Course View and choose this option or revert to the previous Blackboard ("Original") mode. Instructors are encouraged to choose Blackboard Ultra Course View and submit feedback so that faculty input continues to ensure this version of Blackboard serves faculty and students in the best possible way.

Faculty and program leaders interested in trying out Ultra Course View or in upgrading specific courses should reach out to Alicia Dunlap (Alicia.Dunlap@louisville.edu) or complete the request form at <https://louisville.edu/delphi/blackboard/bb-request-forms/ultra-course-request>

To navigate to the form linked above:

1. Start from <http://louisville.edu/delphi>
2. Select "Blackboard"
3. Click "Request Forms" (on left menu)
4. Choose "Ultra Course Request"
5. *PLEASE NOTE: ULink credentials are required.*