

Informational Item Presented to University of Louisville Faculty Senate by Kelvin Thompson, Ed.D., Vice Provost for Online Strategy and Teaching Innovation (VPOSTI) on April 5, 2023

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

Based upon the recommendations of the Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning's Blackboard Team and with the support of UofL's Blackboard Advisory Committee, the university is undertaking a proposed five-semester phased upgrade to Blackboard Ultra Course View. This summer both individual volunteer faculty (e.g., from the Blackboard Advisory Committee) and invited departments/programs (e.g., LEAD from CEHD) will pilot Ultra Course View. Based upon the feedback collected from this group of faculty, we will either confirm the phased upgrade or not. As we proceed, additional support and promotion will be available each semester through fall 2024. This soft upgrade is essentially a modification to the user interface and user-facing functionality. That is, the backend of the learning management system (LMS) will largely be unaffected. This upgrade will occur on a course-by-course conversion basis.

Now is the time for us to pursue this upgrade. The interface and features of Ultra Course View benefit students through both ease of use and "mobile first" design, but the more robust analytics available to faculty will allow faculty members to more easily identify students who might need help or referrals to support resources. (There is some evidence to suggest this may even aid in UofL's student retention efforts.) While Delphi's Blackboard Team has been monitoring Ultra Course View since it became available in 2016, the team's assessment is that Ultra Course View is now appropriately mature and well-supported to benefit UofL students and faculty. Finally, Blackboard Anthology has offered to assist in the conversion of a number of courses and to directly provide help sessions and support resources.

Faculty and program leaders interested in trying out Ultra Course View or in upgrading specific courses for summer 2023 or fall 2023 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.*