

Fall 2008 Blackboard Graduate Student Survey

Attempts 151 Instructions

Question 1 Which answer best describes your primary role at UMBC?

Graduate student	71.523%
Online Graduate student	27.152%
Unanswered	1.325%

Question 2 Which answer best describes your primary use of Blackboard?

As a faculty member teaching a course.	0.662%
As a student in a Blackboard class site.	94.702%
As a teaching assistant of a Blackboard class site.	1.987%
As a member of a Blackboard organization or community site.	1.987%
As a manager of a Blackboard organization or community site.	0%
Unanswered	0.662%

Question 3 How do you normally log into Blackboard?

Through myUMBC?	84.106%
Directly at http://www.umbc.edu/blackboard or http://blackboard.umbc.edu .	14.57%
Unanswered	1.325%

Question 4 Which browser do you use most often?

Internet Explorer	56.954%
Mozilla Firefox	35.762%
Safari	4.636%
Opera	0%

Other?	1.987%
Unanswered	0.662%

Question 5 Which of the following best describes your use of Blackboard at UMBC?

As a supplement to a face-to-face course	35.762%
For an online course	43.709%
For a hybrid (part online, part face-to-face) course	13.907%
Community/Organization for research or other	5.298%
Unanswered	1.325%

Question 6 Please choose the following tools that you use on a regular basis. (Check all that apply)

Course content (course documents including syllabus, PowerPoints, etc.)	89.404%
Announcements	74.172%
Email	52.318%
Discussion Boards	72.185%
Chat	3.974%
Groups	20.53%
Assignment Upload for papers/projects	60.927%
Turnitin Assignment Upload	24.503%
Wikis	5.298%
Blogs	3.311%
Wimba Voice Tools	2.649%
Pronto	0%
Blackboard Backpack	1.325%
Multi-Media: Audio/Video Files	4.636%

Question 7 How important are the following advantages to using Blackboard. (1 = Not important, 7 = Most Important)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communicating directly with other students in your class.	13.907%	11.921%	11.258%	12.583%	14.57%	10.596%	21.192%
24/7 access to course content.	3.974%	0%	0%	0.662%	3.311%	9.934%	80.132%
Increased student engagement in the course.	13.907%	9.934%	10.596%	14.57%	18.543%	11.921%	14.57%
Reinforcement of learning through practice quizzes.	28.477%	7.947%	9.272%	9.272%	10.596%	7.285%	10.596%
Secure place to post grades.	6.623%	2.649%	3.311%	9.934%	12.583%	19.205%	37.086%
Convenient place to collect research materials and communicate with colleagues	10.596%	11.258%	9.272%	16.556%	11.921%	10.596%	17.219%
Other (Please describe in the last question)	16.556%	0.662%	1.325%	2.649%	1.325%	1.987%	1.987%

Question 8 What do you consider to be disadvantages of using Blackboard?

Reliance on technology	32.45%
Learning curve to becoming proficient in the use of Blackboard	17.881%
Learning environment is too impersonal	23.179%
It's too time consuming	10.596%
Other (Please describe in the last question)	19.205%

Question 9 What do you think is the single most needed improvement about the administration of Blackboard?

Login	7.947%
Enrollment into Blackboard course and community sites	7.285%

Fair	10.596%
Poor	3.974%
Unanswered	1.325%

Question 12 . If you could pick one professor who uses Blackboard well, who would it be and why?

As of right now I have only had one professor, Professor Du. So really this question is not relevant but I feel she does a good job of utilizing the Blackboard functions.

Dr. David Shetterly, Public Policy 601. He uses the site often as a supplement to his teaching arrangement without relying totally on it. The times he did use it were helpful incorporations.

I would suppose that the instructor team for IS 631 probably makes the best use of the system.

Dr. Smith--b/c we save a lot of paper/ink by submitting documents electronically.

Zane Berge, that man lives on Blackboard. I love the way everything is answered and shared, he's an information pond.

Dr. Aryya Gangopadhyay Dr. Gerald Canfield Dr. Novicio

I would pick Dr.Chuck Hodell. His assessments have always been practical, useful, and very specific.

Elizabeth Stanwyck for STAT 454,

She uploads the notes for class, homeworks, projects, and tests on there ahead of time, so we can access them before the class. She even uses blackboard to access some material in class. She posts our grades and provides the weighted score through the site also!

Dr. Jeff Martens:

stays consistent with announcements and makes good use of Bb file space and names.

Kelley Engle ,she is good with it specially in posting related to the course .

Dr. Hodell.

Content is very well organized. Easy to navigate through course.

Dr. Adler - Everything needed to success in the course can be found online on BB

Dr. North-Coleman - she relies on it heavily, so that it becomes natural for students to use it. Has complementary and supporting documents/articles to help us, as well as assignments and reminders. It is great.

Dr. Linda Raudenbaush

Dr. Roy Rada

The announcement sections were always up to date. All the tools with Blackboard were utilized by this professor, compared to some other professors such as Dr. Canfield

Dr. Bradley Arnold

Jeannette Campos tries very hard and is successful in keeping documents submitted organized. She makes regular, good use of announcements and the live classroom. It all comes really close to being in a classroom - any time of the day or night.

Dr. Alonso, because she is very specific on her announcements and tasks on blackboard. He gives detail which is helpful. I also like the way she posts up the grades which helps us students know where we stand in the class.

Dr. Pattee Fletcher

The professors in the Graduate Management of Aging Services courses, with the able assistance of Kathleen Hertel. Blackboard has been very helpful for keeping in touch with professors and classmates, and keeping on top of assignments, given the busy professionals in the class.

Dr. Joyce Murphy (791P) EDUC because she is consistently updating announcements that allow me to learn assignments in class. I also can learn where I stand in my classes throughout the semester using blackboard.

Dr Chuck Hodell

Dr. Kanfield. He is using it in a truly interactive way. Always online, updating and interactive with students.

My improvement recommendation to blackboard is to improve the discussion board drill down functionality.

Dr. Andy Miller,

Dr. Miller is a great resource for working with Blackboard and helping us set up our own workspaces, wikis and discussions. More than once we have needed his help for a Blackboard issue when another professor could not help.

Hodell

Informs frequently

Responds promptly

Dr Leslie Morgan uses Blackboard for grades, announcements, powerpoint slides, and TurnItIn.

Jerri Frick. Out of all of my professors who used blackboard, she was the only one who utilized the grading portion on a regular basis and the whole time. That is very important for a graduate student who wants to know how they are doing.

This is my first semester. I studied just one class, so I could not compare between my prof. and other. However, my prof. in BIOL626 used a blackboard from time to time. He usually gave information in the class.

Dr. Berge and Dr. Hodell from ISD...they stay on top of the game...fast responses, great feedback on projects, very organized course material...always involved in class discussions

Jeanette Campos - It is the only course that I have had that has used more than the basic Blackboard features.

Berger

This is a tough question for me to answer as this is my first online Class. Cynthia Sun has done a great job providing updates, assignments, grades and discussion participation via the Blackboard.

Kathy Hertel of Mags

Campos

I don't have contact with any professors who actually use Blackboard.

Dr. Jun-Jang Jeng uses the blackboard well as he is teaching online course. So most of the study materials, assignments are pasted through the blackboard. Also exams are conducted online through it and discussion boards are used as well to participate in group discussion with other students.

None of my professors use the Blackboard better than the others.

Dr Greg Williams, because he goes beyond the usual textual presentation of information and experiments with audio and visual materials that reinforce learning and reach students with different learning styles.

While some undergraduate professors used BB very effectively, my experience with graduate professors is that they use it minimally.

Illysa Izenberg

She knows blackboard in and out and promotes us to use all the tools.

All do a fantastic job.

N/A

Dr. Greg Williams. He used a lot of the functionality in an organized and effective fashion.

Dr. Seckin and Dr. Trela both professors post all assignments and announcements and documents are updated regularly.

Dr. Moreira

Dr. Koru.

Prof. Canfield because he uses a lot of the different features of Blackboard for lessons and assignments.

Laura Stapleton. She has all of our assignments in the grade book, and keeps them up to date. She also keeps all of our course material available when we need it, and coordinates with the TA well to have our lab assignments available as well.

Professor Campos - I love the way she posts schedules and responds to work. I also LOVE the use of Wimba for class lectures.

Pf.Hodell was out standing in using Blackboard. He fully used all functions of it relating to our course: making homepages, collecting data and analyzing.

Dr. Greg Kearsley used blackboard very well he provided us with both synchronous and asynchronous sessions. He also recorded the sessions and posted them for us to go back and use.

Mary Tabaa used Blackboard very well.

Professor Alonso because she continually to put up our grades on a weekly basis, and all of the information that we need for the class is all located online.

Dr. Chen, Information Systems. Consistent with communication through BB and helpful students in a useful way.

Dr. Gunes Koru

n/a

Colleen Grisham, because she seems to monitor the class frequently, always responds to questions and she also is able to find a way to resolve a problem if the technology does not work.

Linda Oliva - She uses all aspects of Blackboard: discussion board, syllabus, documents, grading. It is really easy to keep track of her class even when I don't have my materials handy, I can just look everything up on Blackboard.

Bo Arbogast. He's very organized and uses the discussion board effectively to answer questions and encourage interaction between students.

Dr Williams and Dr Berge because they keep students up to date and use the tool as more than just a repository for documents.

Dr. Mauri Collins (EDUC605 The Adult Learner) let students acquire various content and resources and facilitate students to discuss and do group work online.

Greg Williams

No preference.

Roy Rada. Excellent use of BB functionality.

Dr. Komlodi. She reinforces what is taught in class with PowerPoint presentations and in class user groups. She also notifies us with important updates/changes via email distribution.

Good communication.

Greg Kearsely

The staff in the ISD program, which is mostly all online. I would say particularly the Adult Education and ISD I were the best I participated in.

This is my first semester. I have only had one professor thus far.

It is a toss-up between Dr. Aryya Gangopadhyay and Dr. Lina Zhou. I've taken a couple of classes from Dr. Gangopadhyay. I think the quizzes that he gives are very thought provoking. The ability to study and retake the quiz not only improves grades, it improves learning.

I took one class from Dr. Zhou. She, and her TA Heather Holden, were both reactive and proactive in their use of the site. Questions were asked and answered. Materials were well prepared and presented. Grading was prompt. Her class was the best I've taken, so far.

Although not asked, I'll answer anyway. Worst use - Dr. Norcio and his TA.

This is my first online course. However, Dr. Hodell did a great job of managing the course through Blackboard and utilizing all of the functions within Blackboard.

Question 13 Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of Blackboard as a learning tool?

Very good	45.695%
It's okay	50.331%
Not very effective	1.987%
Unanswered	1.987%

Question 14 "How would you rank OIT's effectiveness in providing computing labs for the following purposes (1 = most effective, 7 = least effective). If you do not use a computing lab, you may skip this question?"

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Access to personal drives or network space	4.636%	3.311%	4.636%	5.298%	2.649%	5.96%	3.311%
Access to specialized software (e.g., SPSS, Matlab, etc.)	3.974%	3.311%	2.649%	6.623%	7.285%	2.649%	3.974%
Audio/Visual file editing	4.636%	3.974%	3.311%	7.947%	4.636%	0.662%	1.987%
Availability of a high speed Internet connection	5.298%	1.987%	5.298%	4.636%	1.987%	5.298%	5.298%
Instructional use during a class (e.g., demonstrations, shared use of software or files)	5.298%	5.298%	1.325%	5.96%	3.311%	3.974%	3.311%
Pay for Print	3.974%	1.987%	2.649%	5.298%	2.649%	3.311%	3.974%
Other? (please specify at the end of this survey)	5.298%	0.662%	1.325%	0.662%	1.325%	0%	1.325%

Question 15 How do you get help when using Blackboard?

Send an email to blackboard@umbc.edu	11.921%
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Fellow student	29.801%
Blackboard Help tab	19.868%
Course/community manual	4.636%
OIT staff directly	3.311%
OIT Help Desk	11.921%
Unanswered	18.543%

Question 16. Thank you for participating and please include any other additional comments/suggestions you may have about the use of Blackboard at UMBC. (Remember to click "Submit" when you have finished.)

Blackboard is outdated technology for distance learning. It supports limited interactivity, and it is not SCORM-compliant. Why not replace it with something more modern?

On the other hand, the current response times from OIT (unacceptably slow) are not encouraging when it comes to increasing the dependency on computer systems managed by them. (I would recommend that individual departments start moving towards developing their own computing infrastructure.)

improvement - being able to access web mail from the blackboard areas for each course

I find the UI of BB old fashioned and clunky. The use of frames and java contributes to this sentiment. I did like the new ability to subscribe to threads in the forums though.

The multiple choice questions are too ambiguous. Many times, students were only given 20 questions for an entire chapter's worth of material. It is not possible to correctly gauge a student's understanding of the material with such few questions. In addition, many of the questions had answers that were not "black or white"; and in many instances, at least two of the proposed solutions could have been selected as the 'correct' answer. Please include more "essay-type" responses to quizzes so that students have a fairer chance of demonstrating her or his understanding of the covered material.

Question 8 - I don't see any disadvantages.

It is like any other tool. When used effectively it is superior. But, the key is the professor using the tool.

Question #9: It's probably a function of my relative inexperience with Bb, but I find the Discussion Board application, which I use heavily, to be difficult to format properly. This is particularly true with "cut and paste" entries that I prepare in a word processor and paste into Bb. Line spacing in the final version is unpredictable.

Question #14: As an on-line student, I don't use the labs.

The interface/login screen is confusing. Maybe think about a redesign?

Provide better "Online Help" for off-campus users, e.g., using library services, databases, and journals (how to access them via https).

I have retried more than once to find the academic integrity tutorial that is required for all graduates, with no luck. I followed the instructions located on the graduate school/academic integrity page, and could not find it. VERY frustrating. I realize it could be me, but I did follow the directions - 2 times. F.Y.I.

Cannot submit quizzes via Firefox.

Blackboard is a great tool and for the most part the layout is a good one. One suggestion I have is to allow students to be able to view all assignments including the submissions that they have previously made. For example, under the assignments link there could be a "view all previously submitted assignments." Students should be able to view all required assignments, this way students can see what's due, what has already been submitted and what remains to be submitted. This may be a feature that is controlled by the teacher, either way it would be helpful instead of having to navigate to the "This week" button then scrolling through all that other stuff to find a place to submit assignments.

Assignments could be one of the navigation buttons on the left and students should just be able to click on that and select the title of the assignment they wish to upload and then submit from there.

Thanks.

I have consistently faced problem while logging in to the blackboard using Firefox. If possible please resolve the issue to make the blackboard more convenient to use.

I heard about a "digital dropbox" of some kind, where students can submit assignments and professors can grade and correct them as a one-on-one arrangement that only the two parties can view but most people I speak with (professor and fellow student) seem confused about where this is or how to do this, so we email assignments back and forth instead. We all seem to be very interested in it, so if it does exist please promote it more and if it does not exist maybe consider making something like it.

I don't think many professors at the Shady Grove campus know how to use Blackboard. Maybe more training is needed.

I find BB very useful for posting articles and sources in electronic format for students. It would take up a great deal of copies/resources to use hardcopies. I use the course documents section frequently.

The Gradebook is useful, but not very flexible. I don't like that I can only see 25 students on one page. It slows me down to have to click through pages to find a student. I did see that there were going to be improvements to the Gradebook for Spring and I am looking forward to trying out the new features.

Frames are nasty. Having to change my user-agent to post an assignment is a terrible hack. Infinite loops between the auth server and blackboard are a pain, particularly when it is just a matter of a stale cookie. Not quite sure why Java is needed for the rich text editor as there are several nice ones that don't require it. Asking someone who does web application development all day to critique a web app is opening up a can of worms...

Everything is working well in Blackboard. I really don't have any complaints.

None.

I like to have my blackboard. An important problem that I got is a network problem. If you improved that, it would be great.

Since we are "ONLINE" graduate student, perhaps we could be used as a model for global collaboration, social networking, and new era workforce. As an "ONLINE" student, the discipline is far more different than going to a traditional classroom. We could provide some insight of what would be the future workforce with new work performance measures. Maria Weese

No additional suggestions

I am having trouble when sending assignments to the professor through the units, and have not been able to resolve it yet. I get an error message to please send a valid file.

I like how convenient Blackboard is. My only dislike is how long it takes to navigate between the different features.

The more I use it, the more comfortable it is to work with. The program seems kind of outdated though. Some of its functions, especially when editing courses, pages, etc., are not very intuitive. But, it works well as long as the professors know how to use it!

I had issues uploading files with Blackboard using the latest version of Firefox.

As an online student I would like to feel as part of the class for that I think, it will be great if there can be some Video links available of the lectures by Professors.

sometimes it is very hard to log in to blackboard. The server seems to get locked

I had no issues with Blackboard and did not have to seek any assistance in this area.

I found it very difficult to use BB when I started my first online class - the help was insufficient and contacting the help desk was difficult because I had an off-campus email. It has taken me almost 2 classes to become familiar with BB - this type of learning curve makes it very difficult to learn the course content if you are trying to figure out how to use the delivery vehicle for that content. A tutorial for beginning online students would be very helpful - stress beginning - it should be basic.

I would like to see the professors use more technology within blackboard such as the wiki's, posting documents, podcasts, etc. It looks like blackboard has many features however I do not know or have been required to learn how to use them in my classes. The majority of my professors only use the discussion board, grades, and announcements.

I would like to be able to go back into my old classes to review the information such as links and articles. I am unable to log into any of them.

I feel teachers could better utilize BB as a learning tool. Especially helpful would be posting class powerpoint lectures. I would be able to listen more effectively in class if I did not have to concentrate on copying the PP slides.

I understand that teachers believe attendance would drop if PP of lecture were available. There are better ways to encourage attendance (special handouts, more weight given to attendance in grading.)

It's hard for me to comment because the BB tasks I most often utilize are not very difficult. It would be nice if squirrel mail were beefed up some but I'm not even sure if that's applicable to BB. Thanks for the chance to comment.

re Q8: no disadvantages to blackboard

re: Q9: I have had no problems with blackboard and find that the OIT team has been doing a great job.

This is my first online course so my comments are a bit vague but, thus far, the Blackboard website has addressed my needs appropriately.

8. The Discussion Board; after you read the Thread, it should either Archive or the list of posting should be in descending chronological order. The latest posting should be listed first because the last posting is the one I have not read. The older postings should remain retrievable since I may have the need to go back and review a comment or posting from the past.

9. Don't fix anything it is working!

Remark on this Survey:

Q7 and Q14 should have an option for "Not Applicable," I do not use all the listed items therefore I should have the option to select "Not Applicable." Both of these questions require an option for all the items listed, so it does not make sense for me to make a selection that do not necessarily apply to me.

Why do you have to save every question's response? How come you can't just make one submit? This is pretty inefficient to save after every question. Some of the question had to be saved/submitted three or four time before it actually saved.

Sometimes I have trouble getting Blackboard to work with Safari. It's gotten better though since last year.

Question 8: navigation is sometimes a guessing game.

It works for me!

I often get stuck in a loop trying to log in. It is most annoying. I use a Mac with OS10.4 and have tried it with Safari, Firefox & Camino. I get the same problem with all 3 browsers. If I have timed-out from a previous log-in I will always get this error!

When I need help with Blackboard, I e-mail my friend that works for Blackboard.

I don't find it a very effective tool. It's quite complicated to find anything and I've been using blackboard since undergrad.

Login always requires clicking through an annoying dialog window

Blackboard can be sluggish at times of high demand (e.g. midterms and finals)

On the wiki tool, the revision history feature is really lacking. Unlike wikipedia, it does not show specific changes, but rather shows that a certain user changed a sentence. The whole sentence is highlighted as a change, instead of just the specific word that was changed. This really compromises the usefulness of the wiki tool.

no additional comments

The discussion boards are atrocious. I would have expected a much better discussion board system for those that are online-only students. The text entry application is especially flaky and never seems to work the same way in different browsers, not to mention I have to click through a security dialog every time I enter a post.

Qu. 8 You need to add an option for seeing no disadvantage when using Blackboard.

Qu.15 You should have chosen the Multiple Choice pull down for this question.

It would be nice to have a feature, where the TA is notified when new posts are placed on the discussion board.