

## Spring 2007 Blackboard Faculty Survey

Attempts 70 (Total of 80 attempts for this assessment)

### Question 1

What is your role at the university? (F)

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| Full professor      | 8.571%  |
| Associate Professor | 8.571%  |
| Assistant Professor | 20%     |
| Lecturer            | 22.857% |
| Adjunct             | 38.571% |
| Unanswered          | 1.429%  |

### Question 2

Which answer best describes your primary use of Blackboard? (B)

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| As a faculty member teaching a course.                       | 91.429% |
| As a student in a Blackboard class site.                     | 0%      |
| As a teaching assistant of a Blackboard class site.          | 1.429%  |
| As a member of a Blackboard organization or community site.  | 7.143%  |
| As a manager of a Blackboard organization or community site. | 0%      |
| Unanswered   | 0%      |

### Question 3

How do you normally log into Blackboard? (B)

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Through myUMBC?  | 72.857% |
| Directly at <a href="http://www.umbc.edu/blackboard">http://www.umbc.edu/blackboard</a> or <a href="http://blackboard.umbc.edu">http://blackboard.umbc.edu</a> . | 24.286% |
| Unanswered   | 2.857%  |

### Question 4

Which browser do you use most often? (B)

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Internet Explorer | 51.429% |
| Mozilla Firefox   | 37.143% |
| Safari            | 11.429% |
| Opera             | 0%      |
| Unanswered        | 0%      |

### Question 5

Which of the following best describes your use of Blackboard at UMBC? (b)

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| As a supplement to a face-to-face course     | 80%    |
| For an online course                         | 7.143% |
| For a hybrid class course                    | 7.143% |
| Community/Organization for research or other | 2.857% |
| Unanswered                                   | 2.857% |

Question 6

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

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Course content (course documents including syllabus, PowerPoints, sound/video files, etc.) | 92.857% |
| Announcements  | 87.143% |
| Email  | 80%     |
| Discussion Boards  | 57.143% |
| Chat   | 7.143%  |
| Groups   | 14.286% |
| Assignment Upload for papers/projects  | 24.286% |
| Turnitin Assignment Upload   | 15.714% |
| Wikis  | 0%      |
| Blogs  | 5.714%  |
| Wimba Voice Tools  | 7.143%  |
| Pronto   | 0%      |
| Blackboard Backpack  | 0%      |

Question 7

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

| Answers  | 1       | 2       | 3       | 4      | 5       | 6       | 7       |
|--|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Communicating directly with other students in your class.                      | 11.429% | 1.429%  | 0%      | 5.714% | 11.429% | 20%     | 41.429% |
| 24/7 access to course content.   | 8.571%  | 1.429%  | 0%      | 5.714% | 8.571%  | 15.714% | 55.714% |
| Increased student engagement in the course.                                    | 8.571%  | 17.143% | 21.429% | 10%    | 20%     | 11.429% | 4.286%  |
| Reinforcement of learning through practice quizzes.                            | 7.143%  | 1.429%  | 8.571%  | 1.429% | 45.714% | 10%     | 4.286%  |
| Secure place to post grades.   | 27.143% | 2.857%  | 4.286%  | 4.286% | 11.429% | 8.571%  | 31.429% |
| Convenient place to collect research materials and communicate with colleagues | 41.429% | 7.143%  | 8.571%  | 4.286% | 10%     | 1.429%  | 11.429% |
| Other (Please list in the last question)                                       | 12.857% | 1.429%  | 1.429%  | 1.429% | 1.429%  | 1.429%  | 7.143%  |

Question 8

What do you consider to be disadvantages of using Blackboard? (B)

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Reliance on technology                                 | 31.429% |
| Learning curve to becoming proficient in the use of it | 24.286% |
| Learning environment too impersonal                    | 7.143%  |
| It's too time consuming                                | 22.857% |
| Other (Please describe in the last question)           | 18.571% |

#### Question 9

What do you think is the single most needed improvement about the administration of Blackboard? (B)

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Login   | 0%      |
| Enrollment into Blackboard course and community sites   | 8.571%  |
| Server reliability                                      | 21.429% |
| Student training and support                            | 2.857%  |
| Faculty training and support                            | 17.143% |
| Performance (e.g., "slowness, error messages, looping") | 25.714% |
| Other (Please describe in the last question)            | 15.714% |
| Unanswered  | 8.571%  |

#### Question 10

Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of Blackboard as a learning tool? (B)

|                    |         |
|--------------------|---------|
| Very good          | 55.714% |
| It's okay          | 40%     |
| Not very effective | 4.286%  |
| Unanswered         | 0%      |

#### Question 11

If you could pick one professor who uses Blackboard really well, who would it be and why? (B)

Except for slow IT / Administrator feedback on technical concerns/ glitches, and in setting up new shells and transferring content from semester to semester, Blackboard is a very useful tool that I will continue to use and encourage student use.

I don't know.

I haven't seen another faculty member's use of the tool, so I'm not qualified to answer this question.

NA

None. Conceptually weak system. Not possible to use well.

Linda Oliva. She uses it extensively.

Greg Walsh. He teaches in the ISD program. He uses creative ways to teach in a standard environment (e.g Keynote with audacity files)

This question makes no sense.

Too many to name - but those who use the more complex supplemental technology, from Powerpoint at the low end to other voice and sound packages at the other.

Dr. Hodell, he applies the theories related to distance learning and student centered activities.

Don't know-you tell me

George Chinnery - his use of technology in the classroom is amazing. The students don't feel isolated by the technology. They feel engaged. He uses technology the way it's supposed to be used.

Gary Burt. First online course in the department.

I'd pick myself. I haven't seen other professors or instructors use BB as much or as well as I do, although I don't have a lot of experience in other professors' classes! I really enjoy using BB. It provides a common classroom space for students and me to communicate, for them catch up on missed classes, and to read posted assignment and related materials. I try to personalize my postings and messages to them in order to add back the flavor they'd get from face-to-face communication. That's hard to do, but as a writing instructor, I look at that personalization as adding "voice", a writing skill that I should be able to model for them. Also using BB, it's important to respond in written messages. That's more time consuming, but the students need it. In the classroom, spoken comments to the whole class might suffice, but online, comments have to be individualized to each student. I really try to do that also, although I'm sure sometimes my comments are not as helpful as they could be and may lead to other questions that I would detect immediately face-to-face but that go unasked because of the online platform. The hardest part of online teaching for me is establishing a community of learners. I've added more exploratory discussion boards, but they are not working as well as in-class discussion groups. I've also added peer reading and feedback, but it is more exciting and interesting to them to do this also face-to-face. Any suggestions about this? I also enjoy BB because it lets me reduce the amount of paper used in my courses. Students don't have to print and hand in their work, but can submit it in BB. I don't have to make so many handouts and copies, but can assign materials for study and reading that I've scanned and posted.

Don't know

Not seen any other professor's BB sites

Sokolove: discussion boards are used very well.

na

Not much time to look at other professor's Bb portals, particularly if they lock guests out. dunno.

Question 12

Which workshops would be beneficial to you? (Check all that apply) (F)

User and Document Management (Beginner)

- \* Password-protected class & group space
- \* Attach or copy/paste documents (Expiration) 5.714%

Communications (Intermediate)

- \* Announcements
- \* Email, messages
- \* Discussion & chat 21.429%

Assessments (Advanced)

- \* Electronic assignment delivery & collection
- \* Quizzing, surveys, course usage 60%

Question 13

Which of the following training delivery methods do you prefer? (F)

- Observe a colleague in my department 12.857%
- Attend a workshop by OIT staff 32.857%
- Request a one-on-one consult 14.286%
- Attend a workshop by/for instructors in my own department 25.714%
- Unanswered 14.286%

Question 14

Which incentive would influence your decision or ability to teach online? (F)

- Potential or realized improvement of student learning 34.286%
- Curiosity 1.429%
- Use of a computer or software 1.429%
- Peer pressure from colleagues or my discipline 0%
- Financial reward (e.g., stipend, license revenue) 24.286%
- Course release time 15.714%
- Other (Please describe in the last question) 10%
- Unanswered 12.857%

Question 15

Which obstacles have influenced your decision or ability to use Blackboard? (F)

- Lack of time 37.143%
- Lack of reward or incentives 10%
- Poor preparation of students 10%
- Prefer face-to-face environment 24.286%
- Not convinced student learning improves 22.857%

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Lack of training or support                  | 20%    |
| Other (Please describe in the last question) | 5.714% |

Question 16

Do you use audio services such as a data projector, VCR, or DVD player in your classroom meetings? (F)

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| I use them regularly in my class (at least 50% of the class meetings) | 41.429% |
| I use them occasionally (less than 50% of the class meetings)         | 38.571% |
| I don't use them in my classroom sessions                             | 14.286% |
| Unanswered  | 5.714%  |

Question 17 How are AV services provided for your class meetings? (F)

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| I am assigned a classroom with permanently mounted data projector or TV/VCR/DVD | 52.857% |
| I have an AV cart delivered to my classroom                                     | 24.286% |
| I don't use AV services in my class   | 15.714% |
| Unanswered  | 7.143%  |

Question 18

Overall, how would you rate the service you receive from Classroom Technologies (AV Services). (F)

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Very good or excellent. Equipment works as I expect and need it to work                         | 35.714% |
| Generally satisfactory. Occasional issues arise that impact my class but these are not frequent | 44.286% |
| Unsatisfactory. Frequently there are issues that impact my classroom activities                 | 5.714%  |
| I don't use AV services in my classroom sessions  | 10%     |
| Unanswered  | 4.286%  |

Question 19

Thank you for participating and please include any other additional comments/suggestions you may have about the use of Blackboard at UMBC.

I think it would be helpful to have a Blackboard environment automatically set up (with students already enrolled) for each of my classes.

I think it would also be beneficial to have an ELC community Blackboard environment that would allow students from different ELC classes/levels to interact. For example, if a group of students were going on a trip to Ocean City, level 4/5 students could read an article from Baltimore Magazine and compare Ocean City with Fenwick Island on the Discussion Board. Level 3 students could then read one of those discussion boards and write a reply that gives their opinion about which beach they would prefer to visit. Level

2 students could read a level 4/5 paper and write a Discussion Board that expresses what activities are available to do at Ocean City. Level 1 students could have the teacher read one of the discussion boards (that is projected on an overhead) and students could work together to highlight the activities that are available to do at Ocean City, then they could use one of the Level 2 students Discussion Boards to check their answers (the teacher would print out a well-written level 2 response for the students to use).

All of my courses are taught off campus, therefore, I have not been able to request the AV services I need from the AV department. There needs to be some sort of option for faculty who teach off campus in the evening to obtain data projectors.

I don't like navigation through the new Discussion Board as much as I did the earlier version.

I would never teach a class entirely online. And while I'm sure all the fancy communication stuff is fun for students, I'd much rather they spend their time reading the material and writing their papers than playing with technology. Technology is convenient - to provide them easily with supplementary materials, links to good websites, global announcements, and so on. But I couldn't, for example, accept papers online, since I can't sit in front of a monitor for hours and hours reading them. I have colleagues who do amazing things with wikis and all that, but they are ALWAYS online, and I choose not to spend my time that way.

I really appreciate having Blackboard as a place to post documents and announcements that students need and to email them easily -- and am happy with how it works for that.

I do not, however, want to spend any more time that I already do interacting with students through an electronic medium because, for me, it is far less efficient, complete, and rewarding than interactions in the class and office hours -- plus I hate sitting at the computer anyway and want to reserve as much of that time as possible for my own writing. I am especially resistant to a. the idea that the students should chat on-line about the course material and then I should read all their thoughts and give them credit for this, and b. the expectation some students are developing that I should post notes from class on-line for them. I could go on and on about what my problem with these emerging expectations are, but I will leave it at that.

Oh, one minor problem: I have trouble updating and re-posting documents of the same name.

AV personnel are friendly and try to help, but the AV / IT infrastructure at UMBC is an embarrassment for a university supposedly with an IT emphasis. The plethora of different IT/ AV hook ups and systems, the utter lack of availability in most classrooms of up-to-date working AV equipment, and the number of glitches in existing IT equipment and systems raises the stress level of instructors and students and negatively impacts the quality of instruction. UMBC needs a massive and immediate campus-wide IT recapitalization and has needed this for more than a decade and a half. I had to purchase and use my own computer because of the dearth of modern, available, and up-to-date computers in the majority of UMBC classrooms. Many of my colleagues just do without any kind of IT/ AV in their classrooms and students (the customer) do notice.

If UMBC is going to continue to tout itself as a tech center, they need to step up to the plate and get a handle on their IT/AV crisis.

One disadvantage of BB is changing environment/software. For example, Digital Dropbox. A strong advantage of BB (convenience to the students) is also a disadvantage to the extent they procrastinate. BB is not "entirely" reliable (though I imagine it is typically server issues).

I very much enjoy the BB environment. The downside seems to be that, when students know material is posted on BB, they are definitely less likely to attend lecture. This is why I gave it an "okay" as a learning tool. If used properly (by the students and faculty), it would be great. Human nature being what it is, however....some things are left to be desired. No fault of the software, though.

I very much enjoy the course material "storage" features (e.g., notes, slides, syllabus, etc.). It makes it convenient for the "good" students if they really need to miss (though, for the poorer students, it gives them excuses to skip class).

I have yet to figure out how to administer online assessments/quizzes that I am 100% confident are not at risk of academic misconduct.

With respect to the AV question(s). I use AV extensively in my undergraduate courses - this semester I am only teaching a graduate course and prefer more lecture/seminar based interactions (with chalk).

My biggest gripe with Blackboard comes after the login, when every now and then the system redirects me and won't load Blackboard until I delete all my cookies. Then I lose all my stored data in the browser from other web sites, just to log into Blackboard. This happens at least every 10 days, and is very annoying.

Thanks.

Ability to use Turnitin and on-line assignment tracking and grading is the most important part of Blackboard for me.

The kluginess of the grading spreadsheet is a bit of an issue. I don't grade through Turnitin but rather through the gradebook. The ability to arrange and eliminate gradebook items is a problem.

I often use revision assignments in Turnitin which add additional gradebook items for which there are no points assigned. It helps me track who turned what it but students get confused about whether there should be points for these follow up assignments or not. Maybe there is another way to do this but it requires too much monitoring to keep current and turn off the gradebook item for the students.

Please provide more advance training opportunities.

I have a multi-section course. Sometimes I need to send customized communications to a subset of my students. I find the groups email and the groups file exchange to be indispensable for that reason.

I would like a super-advanced blackboard workshop to learn what all those exotic sounding functions are on blackboard that I never use, and that blackboard does such a \*#@%\* job educating the users about. (Their "help" manual stinks.)

Nothing will ever convince me to teach an online course. It's not appropriate for the subject matter.

I wish there was a 'quick study' for each topic in Bb. (Or I wish where to find it.) For example, I'd like to know how to use 'turnitin' and have dabbled with it and clicked around but can't figure out how it works.

I am working with the wimba voice tools and like it that I can mail Jeffrey Berman (or sometimes call him) when I have a specific question or problem. Is there such a thing for Bb as well? How fast is it?

Workshops are ok, but it seems that I learn things better when I fiddle with it and then have someone to turn to (and get a quick answer) when I get stuck.

i would use AV equipment every class period if it wasn't the cart - that cart is awful, immobile, junky. the rooms in the tech bldg with internal systems are great - we should have those for every single classroom.

i know you don't think of chalk and erasers as tech support, but someone should. we have no supplies and it's impossible to teach my preservice teachers to be functional teachers in some of the classrooms. we need good av and whiteboards in every room.

i would use blackboard more if my computer was more reliable. i have had to return my laptop to tech support too many times - it's a brand new dell and is umbc property and should function better than it does, and tech support should have easier, more lasting solutions to the issues.

Current disadvantage/need to improve: Need to enroll/drop students manually. I gather that better tie-in to registrar info may occur later.

Thank you all for the way BB works at UMBC. It's gotten better and better. This year I love the gradebook. If I only used the gradebook, the class email capabilities (such a relief not to type in those addresses!), and posted class materials and information, BB would be worth the time and trouble, not to mention the other benefits. Every professor should use BB if not just to save as many trees as possible!

The main problem I have is that I have to click through too many windows to get to standard tasks like posting handouts, assignments, or email. Some kind of personalized shortcuts would be useful: even something like "tasks recently performed"--so that you can get to Courses/Phil 100/Control Panel/Course Documents/Assignments without clicking five times!

I think the biggest misconception about online learning is that it is an equal substitute for face-to-face. I think the online community appeals to a different kind of student, perhaps students who don't do as well in a traditional classroom. I don't know that learning is better in either. I think a lot of that depends on the instructor.

Teaching an online course has taken me much more time than a face-to-face course. The time commitment is more. You're "on" all the time and you have to have fast turn around times. If you want your students to be engaged, you must make more of an effort to engage them and really get to know them. I think smaller (10 -15) students in an online community is better.

The instructor has to be the one who is making these efforts, though. Students see and understand the effort of the teacher.

The major problem I have with Blackboard are user interface issues, in particular the number of mouse clicks and screens I have to go through to do frequent tasks, such as entering grades.

I took online classes as a grad student and use Bb now to supplement my EDUC 681 class. I have had no problems using any of the features I prefer. The expansion of the Web 2.0 apps is nice.

This is a really useful tool. I still have worries though when it comes to archiving or adapting a course when the version of the Bb software has been upgraded.

The log in webauth cycle is frustrating when using myUMBC

The AV staff is top-notch - they always are responsive to requests and are very knowledgeable.

I am glad to use the grade feature for the discussion board. I find the collect feature a little cumbersome - often times when I grade boards - it says that the number of responses are higher than what I can see and I can't figure how to see them - I have tried both hidden and published.

question 14 - I much prefer to see my students, so I use bb as tool, not as the primary teaching medium

A library tab would be useful for my students.

Some of the questions should allow multiple responses, especially the AV delivery, since I teach in 3 different classrooms with two different levels of support in the room.

My main problem with Blackboard is the poor user interface. Almost everything takes too long, and I often wonder why I'm not just slapping the files onto my userpages page.

One reason I don't use Blackboard for delivery of grades is that it's \*not\* secure, or wasn't the last time I checked. Grades in transit should be encrypted.

The only feature that I wish could be used is the automatic removal of students who have dropped the course. I realize there are complications with this, but it would be most useful in my large class.

I hate that Bb works "better" in IE than FF -- cut-n-paste doesn't work consistently, for example. I use Bb less because I also tried taking a class with it, and it's too easy to ignore (when I'm in student mode, anyway.)

1) I like the online quiz ability. It saves me a lot of time in lab. One problem I have with the quizzes, however, is that about 5% of students are "locked out" each quiz. Usually this happens because they click on "SAVE"... we instruct them not to. Is there a consistent problem with the SAVE function that you know of?

2) One improvement I'd like to see involves the interface for entering a list of grades on a given grade item. If you click on the item, a list of student names appears on the far left of the screen and the place to enter the grade appears on the far right. It is annoying to try to make sure you have the right grade associated with the right name. Is there any chance that you can reformat to have the place to enter the grades RIGHT NEXT to the name? Perhaps on the left side of the name? This would solve some data entry errors that we have had.

3) Your survey above had some problems. For question 14 (a "check all" question), I was not able to check all that apply. Also, a question about disadvantages I left blank because I did not see any of the options as disadvantages.

Thanks for listening!

I think Blackboard lacks the technology needed for providing a virtual lab environment that is needed for hands-on training. Hence purely online courses tend to suffer in the amount of hands-on material that can be effectively covered using Blackboard.

Question 10---I think you need to give 4-5 options 3 didnt seem like enough. I was not sure where to put myself. I would be curious to hear the results!

Currently taught courses should come up to the top when you login, instead of having to hunt around for them.

Students don't like Blackboard and are very resistant to using it.

Question 8: Other

The disadvantage in my opinion is that people on the web cannot access my course information freely. I have often found valuable material on the web to teach a course, that I have incorporated into my course (with the permission of the original source). Since Blackboard can only be accessed by registered UMBC members, I believe that we are not given the option to share course material freely with other colleagues at other universities.

Question 9: Other

In my opinion, there is not enough help available for Blackboard users. I find the Blackboard help on the top of the page is fairly useless. Often times I find information on how to access/enable/modify a particular feature of Blackboard by searching the Internet. I think the help files on Blackboard need vast improvement. I don't have time to attend the training sessions, so I would much rather prefer help files that I can read up and understand the system whenever I need to.

Also, I would like to have the option to create a test\_student account, so when I put up a survey or something, I can login as a student and see how student's view the particular

survey, etc. I find the lack of this option crippling, because I don't know if I did things right, and I don't know how the student's actually see what I just implemented. While there may be an option to send Blackboard Admin email and get this test\_student account created, I would much rather prefer to have the option to create the account ad-hoc.

E-mail delivery has been spotty. Often Students report not received emails I send thru Blackboard. Other than that it has been fine.

You need to "advertise" more the things that one can do with the blackboard, and not only to the teaching faculty, but also to those of us doing research at UMBC. I can see many ways that I could use the system, but I did not know all the ways the blackboard could be used and I still have many questions I do not know where to get answers for. ecp

Students do not take much advantage of the DiscussionBoard, and it becomes a waste of my time to check it every day.

One disadvantage to using Blackboard is that it is not ADA compliant. I have a student who is visually impaired and Blackboard was not useful this semester in communicating with this student.

Question 8 - a lot of clicks to perform some basic functions  
Return to face to face conversation hours. Web-based approached pale in comparison to small groups and face-to-face learning. Improve your grading software, it is slow, clumsy and unreliable.

I will be teaching an online course in the fall and am looking forward to exploring Blackboard's many features.

I would like the ability for a few classes each semester to teach "online" in real-time. I'd like to be able to host audio-enabled discussions, put up PPT slides, and, if possible, see students who have cameras mounted on their computers and let the students see me.

I'd especially like to have this option available so that I can avoid class cancellations due to weather.

Too many students don't bother to show up

OK