

## Post-Conference Narrative

Name of Conference: Blackboard (Bb) World Conference

Date of Conference: July 17-19, 2018

Location of Conference: Orlando Florida

Sponsoring Organization: Blackboard

Attendee: M. Celeste Wayne, Nursing Department

This yearly event hosted by Blackboard (Bb) brought together participants from all 50 states and 34 countries from around the world. The attendees represent higher education, K-12, business and governmental institutions and include faculty and teachers, academic, school, business, IT, and communication leaders and staff. Attendees were able to choose from over 100 breakout sessions presented by experts and users and clients.

The overarching goal of the conference was to share best practices. Higher education themes revolved around trends in teaching and learning, fostering inclusive education, optimizing the student experience, and enhanced digital learning environment using the Bb platform and Bb partner integration tools.

### Tuesday, July 17, 2018:

#### *Using Technology to Transform Assessment and Feedback*

This 3-hour interactive workshop explored the capabilities of different technology tools (discussions, wikis, blogs, kahoot, videos etc.) that are available. Ideas, tips, and best practices were shared and discussed, providing the participants with a greater awareness of how these tools can be used effectively to transform assessment and feedback.

#### Top 10 Things You Didn't Know You can do in Bb Learn

1. Understand student performance with goal performance report
2. Align goals to question items and rubric criteria
3. More easily navigate through discussions
4. Large course management
5. Provide feedback via audio/video recordings
6. Efficiently set up a new course from a previous copy
7. Mark attendance in a gradebook
8. Stay on top of student submissions with receipts and reminders
9. Access Learn via a mobile browser
10. Drag and drop material into your course

#### *The Power of Mobile Learning: Driving Student Engagement and Overcoming Digital Distractions*

- Surveys show that 81% of students use their mobile device to study. Students use their devices extensively and view them as important to their academic success.

- The key to overcoming distractions is understanding potential distractions: mind-wandering, off-tasking during lecture/study (social media, texting), and multitasking.
- Some suggestions to overcome distractions:
  - Create awareness: train how to study, discuss cognitive presence
  - Create opportunities: strategic classroom use, shorter online lectures
  - Flip the classroom: flipping the classroom and create immersive mobile/tech sessions
- Creating mobile friendly contents
  - Cut the clutter – avoid bulky images and graphs
  - Need for speed – compress large files
  - One size doesn't fit all – some formats may not be accessible across all devices
  - Accessibility – some users may struggle with touch screens, buttons, and complex menu systems
  - Test drive your content – preview layouts on multiple devices to ensure that your content appears as it should be
- Content considerations: Best practices and built-in tools
  - Font size at least 12 px
  - Ensure sufficient contrast between text and background content
  - Ensure tables have column headings
  - Ensure links have text that describes the target
  - Don't use scanned PDFs
  - Tools: VoiceOver; zoom, color filters, etc.

Opening Keynote (General Sessions): Bill Ballhaus, Blackboard CEO

- Highlights:
  - Blackboard integrated platform to deliver a connected experience – a seamless consistent and always available experience across the classroom and across campus; relevant timely, and actionable data from a variety of sources that enable faculty and administrators to take actions; flexible solutions – partnerships to suit the clients' needs.
    - SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) – a cloud-computing environment; clients benefit from continuous updates with zero or minimal downtime for educators and students; supports the Ultra experience
    - Ultra – a design language system that provides simplified workflows, a modern look and feel, and fully responsive interface on all devices
    - Ally – the technology is designed to gain greater insight into the accessibility of digital course content to provide students of all abilities with immediate access to contents in formats suited to their specific needs.

Wednesday, July 18, 2018:

### *General Session: Inclusive Education Panel*

- A panel discussion on inclusive education; that every student has access to an inclusive learning environment to meet the needs of all learners regardless of physical or cognitive disabilities or learning preferences. The panelists discussed how they are changing the conversation around inclusive education and the culture change toward student success.

### *Analytics at Blackboard: Values, Vision, and Velocity*

- Discussion focused on the “marketing” of the product: timeline, partnerships with institutions and their success stories, product updates, and future plans
- Blackboard analytics – a line of data and analytics products designed to help colleges and universities to optimize the student experience:
  - Bb Intelligence – improve enrollment, increase student retention, optimize institutional performance
  - Bb Analytics for Learn – improve instructional design
  - Bb Predict – support intensive advising
- The analytics portfolio:
  - New Bb Portfolio feature, provided with participating product license
  - Single point of entry, centralized approach to data ingestion, definition, and reporting across Bb products
  - Turnkey product integration
  - A highly-scalable, stable, cloud-centric stack that builds on the foundation that Predict created
  - This is an addition to, not a replacement of the advanced analytics toolset; it creates new opportunity

### *Best Practices for Creating Your Exemplary Course*

- Discussed the Blackboard Exemplary Course Program (ECP) rubric, tips and tricks, for creating an exemplary course
- Showed examples of exemplary courses
- ECP rubric:
  - Course Design
    - Make course objectives transparent and measurable
    - Vary content and present it in small segments
    - Guide learners to work in meaningful ways
    - Technology is creatively used to enhance online classroom
  - Interaction and Collaboration
    - Several communication activities are included
    - Create a community of learning
    - Guidelines and expectations on quality interaction is clearly articulated

- Assessment
  - Link assessments to objectives and identify criteria for success
  - Use a variety of assessment types
  - Provide numerous opportunities for self-assessments
- Learner Support
  - Provide orientation materials to course and LMS
  - Provide links to plugins or other needed technology
  - Share expected response time for replies and feedback
  - Links to policies and support information within your course
  - Use standard formats
  - Consider alternative resources for students with disabilities
  - Provide opportunities for feedback during and after course

**Thursday, July 19, 2018:**

*General session and Keynote:* Shiela Johnson, a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist, she shared her story and valuable insights on education and success.

All in One Place: Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

*General Session:* Shankar Vendantam: Host of NPR's Hidden Brain, he shared some research-based findings on how the unconscious mind influence our behavior. He encourages people to look at the world in different and interesting ways.

*All in One Place: Teaching Learning, and Assessment*

- New Bb Assessment and Accreditation Solution is introduced.
  - Seamlessly integrates into Learn
  - Scalable evidence collection and reporting tool
  - Facilitates multiple assessment approaches
  - Provides insight into the design and delivery of the curriculum
- Bb partnered with EAC Visual Data to address three unifying product themes: academic effectiveness, learner engagement, and education insight.
- Outcomes Assessment: Juried assessment approach (outside the course, committee review -team of faculty- using a rubric in the Outcomes Building Block specific to the learning outcome); collects only from Assignment Module in Learn Courses
- Primary Assessment/EAC Visual Data: Facilitates the primary assessment approach (inside the course) – instructor scored rubrics and use of exams; reports student performance aligned with goals; automates reporting on course rubrics and exams for secondary rubrics or exams in Bb; collects any place in Learn that can attach a rubric (all gradable items, grade book columns, observational activities, tests)
- Analytics for Assessments: Leverage grades on tests or assignments for Assessments;

- Reports: Goal performance exception report; School performance against goal; Section performance against goal

#### *Using EAC Visual Data to Automate the Assessment Process*

- EAC Visual data streamlines the process of collecting and reporting student performance on Bb Learn tests and rubrics across courses and over time
- Using EAC integrated in Bb, Walden University shared the journey to using electronic rubrics to collect assessment data in order to make the assessment less manual and more detailed. EAC is now used to access, analyze, and interpret the collected data.
- Implementation
  - Electronic rubrics imbedded in Bb (Word & Excel)
  - Install EAC Visual Data
  - Integration of Rubric item/test item data in Learning Outcomes Assessment
  - Reports:
    - Overall student performance – assignments
    - Test item analysis
    - Rubric item analysis

#### *Making Online Videos Interactive: Insight into Social Presence, Engagement & Content Analytics*

- Using the OnQ video capturing tool, it facilitates interactive group experience
- OnQ features enables tracking reactions, communications, and engagement moment-to-moment: students can write comments and react to what they are viewing in real-time.

#### *Creative Content in Online Courses*

- The push for creativity: high expectations for online courses; students expect it; the workforce demands it
- Creative Content
  - Give options for learning
  - Allow students to select their own topics of interest
  - Consider using different mediums
  - Provide thoughtful feedback
  - Provide opportunities for authentic and reflective learning
  - Goal setting: linked to the course; facilitates problem solving; connecting course ideas to their personal journeys
  - Role playing and story-telling
  - Authenticity: practical and useful; connect to students' lives
  - Selecting the right medium: consider whether the technology helps or distracts from the content; avoid using technology for the sake of using technology
  - Using Visuals: reach more types of learners; keep it simple; show relationships and patterns; connection to the content should be evident

- Using Audio/Videos
- Using presentation software: chunking content
- Creative content meets individual learning needs through a variety of learning tools; there is no “typical” student