Transition to Blackboard Learn (9.1):
Frequently Asked Questions

Will I get help transferring my Blackboard 8 courses to Blackboard Learn (9.1)?

Yes. Blackboard will transfer all Bb 8 courses to Bb Learn (9.1).

When will the transfer occur?

May 19, 2011, 5:30 PM – June 1, 2011, 7:00 AM. Blackboard will be unavailable for faculty and students during this time frame.

How long can I use my Blackboard 8 courses?

Summer semester, 2011 courses will still use Blackboard 8. Beginning in the Fall semester, 2011, all courses will be in Blackboard Learn (9.1).

When will I have access to Blackboard Learn (9.1)?

Temporary Access: In early May, 2011, you will have access to versions of your courses that Blackboard transferred in February, 2011. Thus, you can explore and learn to use it, in the context of your courses! If you wish to save any changes that you make in Blackboard Learn 9.1 before the final transfer begins on May 19, you can backup your courses.

Long-term Access: Your Bb Learn 9.1 temporary course will be replaced with your Bb 8 course from May 19, 2011. You may also upload the backup of your temporary course.

What kind of training will be available?

(a) Live workshops (not mandatory) and (b) Online resources, for which the faculty provided positive feedback to OED, eLearning.

What kind of support will be available?

Two eLearning support staff in the UAMS Office of Educational Development will be available. Additionally Blackboard has an On Demand Learning Center, for faculty and students.
Transition to Blackboard Learn (9.1): FAQs (continued)

**How different is Blackboard 9.1?**

It is very different. Previous versions were essentially WebCT. Blackboard 9.1 is the first true integration of Blackboard and WebCT. Because WebCT programming is over a decade old, some functions that you are used to will no longer be available. However, Blackboard 9.1 is more modern and robust, with numerous enhancements. Navigation and management will be much more intuitive. Here are some examples of new features:

- Drag and Drop file upload
- Drag and Drop course menus
- A simple “Edit Mode” button replaces the Build, Teach, and Student Tabs
- Wireless mobile access via iPhones and iPads
- Printable grade reports
- Blogs, Journals, Wikis

**Are there any other major differences?**

Yes. Unlike previous versions, in which UAMS provided servers to host the system, Blackboard Learn (9.1) will be hosted by the company. Some of the advantages are:

- Blackboard Learn uses a robust version of Oracle, which UAMS does not have and would cost several hundred thousands of dollars to purchase.
- UAMS currently spends a lot of time and resources implementing upgrades and installing patches. The time and resources can be used otherwise.
- An economic evaluation by UAMS IT has demonstrated that transitioning to a server hosted by Blackboard is advantageous.
- Since Blackboard is used heavily from off-campus, a hosted solution will eliminate that network traffic on UAMS resources.

**Why transfer to Blackboard Learn (9.1) now?**

(1) Most importantly, Blackboard Learn (9.1) is a modern upgrade in resources for our faculty and students.
(2) Given the academic calendar, the only two times this transition could occur are either during the summer or during the Christmas break. Christmas break is undesirable, because it would be an extremely short time frame for faculty to make the transition. Moreover, use of two different Blackboard learning systems, within the same academic year, is undesirable.
(3) Relatively few colleges or universities still use Blackboard 8 and the company is planning to withdraw support for it.

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