Blackboard Service Pack 11 Changes

As changes and enhancements are made to Blackboard they are made available to us as service pack upgrades. In general, new features come out in the service packs as a result of customer feedback and technology changes. Here is the list of updates in this service pack:

- Discussion board updates
- My Blackboard integration
- Global navigation menu
- Calendar updates
- Retention Center
- New textbox editor
- Test item evaluation
- Fill in the blank test question enhancement
- Video anywhere
- Inline assignment grading

Discussion Board Updates

The discussion thread detail page is redesigned yet maintains all of its existing functions. Some key changes are:

- All of the posts in a thread are now visible at the same time on one page.
- Posts made by forum managers and moderators now contain the user’s course role and forum role.
- When replying to a post, the content editor appears on the same page, in the context of the discussion.
- You can use a new forum setting to require students to post to a forum before they can see other students’ posts, thus prohibiting students from checking other students’ posts before they create and post their own.
- To learn more about the updated feature, watch this video.

New Textbox Editor

- The new textbox editor enables simple content creation through an easy-to-use interface.
The editor reads, writes and renders modern HTML so the content you created in Microsoft Word will display properly.

The toolbar contains icons to allow you to resize images, find/replace content, and easily add rich content by pulling in mashups from YouTube, Flickr and Slideshare.

Another feature is that you can expand the textbox for full-frame editing.

Additionally, there is a new math editor in Blackboard Learn that simplifies creation and delivery of equations by enabling editing directly from the textbox editor. The new math editor supports saving and copy/paste of equations using mathML.

Watch a video on using the new textbox editor. [Video on Text Editing](#)

### Test Item Analysis

The new item analysis feature helps you easily assess and refine your tests and quizzes by evaluating the quality and validity of each question and that question’s ability to discriminate between students who understand the material and those who do not. Ineffective questions can be easily identified and then you can quickly correct them with the automatic re-grade feature. As the instructor, you will be able to access an at-a-glance summary of your Blackboard assessments. This summary provides insight into student performance on that assessment and how the question items performed. From the summary page, you can see a list of questions sorted in order of discrimination with the most ineffective listed on top. A simple red dot next to a question tells you if the question requires review. After examining the question, you can see whether it was poor wording, vague answer choices or some other factor. If you decide to change or update that question, you can immediately take action right from this page by clicking the Edit Test button. You will be taken directly to the assessment where you can use the automatic regrading feature to either update or delete the question and regrade it – even if students have already completed the assessment the updates will flow automatically into the Grade Center.
In summary, with the new Item Analysis feature, you can quickly and easily ensure that your assessments are successful discriminators of student performance. Click here to watch a video on item analysis.

**Fill in the Blank Question Enhancement**

You will now be able to take advantage of using contains and pattern match logic when grading Fill in the Blank questions. That means you no longer have to rely upon an exact match for Blackboard to automatically grade these questions. So you no longer have to enter multiple answer choices when creating a Fill in the Blank question in order for Blackboard to grade the question for you.

**My Blackboard**

My Blackboard enables faculty and students to stay up-to-date on what’s going on across all of their courses in Blackboard. The critical information is consolidated in a simple way, with notifications and updates combined. Students have the ability to control what notifications are seen and how they are transmitted.

**Global Navigation Menu**

The entry point to My Blackboard is a new Global Navigation Menu. This menu is available all the time in the top right corner of the Blackboard screen and provides quick access to your Courses, Settings, Blackboard Help, and the new My Blackboard tools.

To learn more about this feature, watch this video.

**Calendar Update**

When accessed from My Blackboard or the Tools menu on the Blackboard @ IVCC tab, the updated calendar displays a consolidated view of all institution, course, organization, and personal calendar events for a user. Calendar events are color coded to indicate which place they belong. When accessed from a course, instructors and students see only the course calendar from the course menu on the Tools page.
You can use the calendar course tool as a primary way of managing and communicating the schedule of events and assignments in the course. The calendar supports due dates from the Grade Center for gradable items. Clicking on calendar items allows you as the instructor to view or edit the item, or grade attempts on the associated item. Students can use filtering options to selectively view only course level items. They can then click on an item to view item details, and if supported, create an attempt against the item. You can also export your Blackboard calendar into your Google calendar now.

Additionally, there is color coding and you can move course items around using drag & drop on the calendar. Due date changes in the Grade Center will automatically be updated to match.

For more information regarding the New Calendar watch this video.

**Retention Center**

The Retention Center provides an easy-to-use data visualization and pre-configured rules for identifying at-risk students in a course. The Retention Center automatically calls out students who may need your attention, making it easier to catch and respond to risk factors quickly to help the at-risk students succeed in the course. This replaces the Early Warning System found in the previous Blackboard version.
Watch a video about the Blackboard Retention Center.

For example, your test question is —Who was the first president of the United States? Instead of trying to enter all possible correct answers for the blank (George Washington, Washington, President Washington, President George Washington, etc.), you can simply select contains and type Washington.

**Video Everywhere**

Video Everywhere is available in the textbox editor. All users, students and faculty, will be able to record video and upload directly to YouTube safely. The feature provides the ability to record a video on the fly using a webcam and have it seamlessly embedded in course materials, interactions, and feedback through the content editor and reuse previously recorded videos by choosing from one’s own —library of videos. All you need is Blackboard, a webcam and a personal YouTube account. YouTube accounts are free and can be created by students and faculty.

More information regarding this feature is available [here](#).

**Inline Assignment Grading**

Inline Assignment Grading enhances the grading experience for faculty in Blackboard Learn. Instead of requiring you to download student-submitted files to view or edit those submissions, instructors can now see those files "inline," i.e. in the web browser. Annotation tools also allow you to provide feedback comments, highlights, and even drawings directly on the inline view of the document. These comments are then available directly to students from Blackboard. Your annotated comments can be printed for review with students in a face-to-face conference. Inline assignment grading is available for Word, Excel, PowerPoint and PDF files.
To watch a video about this feature, [click here](#).