WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to a new year!

Here's to an amazing 2015 and even better 2016 from all of us at DLIT.

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Get Your Blackboard Course Ready for a New Semester!

New Semester? Check Your Course Before the First Week of Classes!

Another new semester has arrived. We are just days (2) away from the start of the spring 2016 semester. Many of us have moved last fall's content over or re-purposed course materials from last spring. Copying course content from previous semesters saves us time and effort that we would otherwise spend re-inventing the wheel.

As you prepare to unleash your hybrid or online course resources to your students via a course in Blackboard Learn, you will need to take some things into consideration to ensure a smooth start to the semester.

Here are a few steps you can take to help guaranty a good start for you and your students:

1. Get your course's dating life straight. – Content Availability & Due Dates
2. Take….these Broken Links! – Check Your External Content
3. Get a second opinion! – Is Your Course Navigable?

Get Your Course's Dating Life Straight
(Content Availability & Due Dates)

Date Adjustment. Nothing can be more frustrating for your students than having an assignment that is due in the syllabus but unavailable in your Blackboard course. Obviously this is not done on purpose to confuse the students. Some content from a

previous semester could have been date specific and so a new semester needs new availability dates. Checking your due dates is also an important part of getting your course's dating life straight. Not only to ensure that you have days and dates mentioned correctly throughout your course, but you want to ensure you don't have things due on holidays etc..

This date checking session also provides you with a good opportunity to make changes for the better. Think back to your previous semester when you taught the course. Maybe there wasn't enough time to complete an assignment, or maybe there was too much. Make changes to this semester's calendar based upon issues or opportunities from the previous semester.

Blackboard provides a great tool for date management inside your course. The Date Management tool can be found here: Control panel>Course Tools>Date Management. The tool allows you to change dates based upon:

- Using the Course Start Date
- Adjust by number of Days
- List all Dates for Review

Being aware of your course's dating life will greatly benefit you and your students.

Take….these Broken Links!
(Check Your External Content)

One of the primary benefits of posting files and content in Blackboard or any Learning Management System is that you can feel very secure in the knowledge that within reason, your content/files will always be accessible. This is NOT true with links to external content. Whether you are linking to an Internet article, a YouTube video, a SlideShare presentation or some other external content, you never know when that content might disappear.

This is why it is uber-important for you to check links to external content prior to releasing it to your students. This means checking prior to the start of the semester as well as just before your students have to use the content. Ensuring that links to external content work before your students need them will help reduce pain and frustration within your Blackboard course.

Get a Second Opinion!
(Make Sure Your Students can find Their Away Around)

So, you have dotted your i's and crossed your t's. Your course dates are adjusted and your links have been checked. You've even read through your course and feel pretty good about it. There is another best practice you can use to help ensure success for your students when it comes to your Blackboard course.

Why not have a colleague, a friend even a family member read through course instructions to make sure they make sense? Unfortunately 'they' haven't invented a pill that conveys all knowledge of how to operate inside a Blackboard course yet so the importance of contextualized mechanical & academic instructions is key for any LMS-based course. Layering instructions throughout your course will help your students feel like they have way-points to guide them as they move along through their learning journey.

Your course might make sense to you the twelfth time you've read through it, but there might be some obstacles that people who have never seen it before could come across. So getting a fresh perspective on your course is always a best practice. Ask a colleague, your instructional designers at DLIT, a family member, heck even your son or daughter could help in this endeavor.

These three steps can go a long way toward reducing consternation and frustration for both you and your students as they and you move through your Blackboard course.

Need more tips on getting your course ready for a new semester?

http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/ajc0262/pdf/brochure_bb_bp.pdf

Blackboard Jumpstart Workshops

In this fast paced, focused session you will learn the critical skills about using Blackboard, particularly if you are using it for the first time and need to get your course ready quickly. Topics will include course management, content organization, basic communication, and using the grade center. The sessions for the 2016 Spring semester will be BEFORE the semester begins, as we know that is just the time faculty members might need assistance in preparing their Blackboard courses, especially those who are new to Blackboard. Please join us for any of the following four workshops:
Wednesday, January 20 (10:00 AM – 12:00 PM) or (2:00 PM – 4:00 PM), DAL 1, Rm 336

Next week we're also starting this semester series of our **Blackboard Innovative Teaching Series or BITS**. This faculty training program will bring best practices and evolved online pedagogy training to you in a concise and effective series. Each session will consist of a 60 min *pre-recorded* webinar plus 90 min hands-on practice that have been designed for educators and will be led by our staff members. These sessions are designed to share innovative practices — content that is applicable to educators of all disciplines.

BITS #1: Top 10 Things You Didn't Know Learn 9.1 Could do

Presenter: Lisa Capan, Sr. Customer Success Advocate, Blackboard, Inc.
Equipped with more learning alternatives than ever before, today's students are placing unprecedented demands on faculty and educators to deliver on the expectation of a more personalized, engaged, and flexible educational experience. As a result, educators like yourself must address a number of critical issues that sit at the heart of keeping students engaged in this ever-shifting landscape. This session will focus on workflows and features that you can leverage TODAY in Blackboard Learn.
Thursday, January 21 (1:00 PM – 3:00 PM), Dal1, Rm 336

Issues and Trends in Edtech in 2016

Presenters: Jeff Borden, Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning Innovation, Saint Leo University, Tanya Joosten, Director of E-learning Research and Development, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Mark Leuba, Competency Based Education Facilitator, IMS Global Learning Consortium.

In 2015, trends in edtech included more emphasis on open educational resources, less hype around data analytics, and a nail in the MOOC coffin. Informal and formal blended learning models, including competency-based education, continued to grow. Adaptive learning emerged as a compelling business model for edtech companies and a strategy for increasing student success and completion at institutions. IoT, the Internet of Things made its way into lexicon of higher education, despite no real strategies for managing IoT in higher ed. What edtech trends and issues will impact higher education in 2016?
Will the higher education reauthorization act finally get passed? What are the implications for the growth of competency-based education and what is the potential it could hinder the development of adaptive and personalized learning programs? Will OER continue to gain traction as resources become easier to utilize? Will accessibility finally get the attention it requires?
Join us along with WCET's visionaries and leaders for a discussion of what edtech trends and issues are on the horizon. What should we be thinking about as we kick-off the 2016 academic year? What emerging issues are we seeing at UNT Dallas?
Thursday, January 21, 2016 @ 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM, Founders Hall, Rm 127

Articles

(Click the images to read the articles)

3 Things That Will Impact eLearning in 2016

3 Things That Will Impact eLearning in 2016 » eLearning Brothers

If you're wondering what's ahead for eLearning in 2016, be sure you're thinking about mobile, the cloud, and big data.

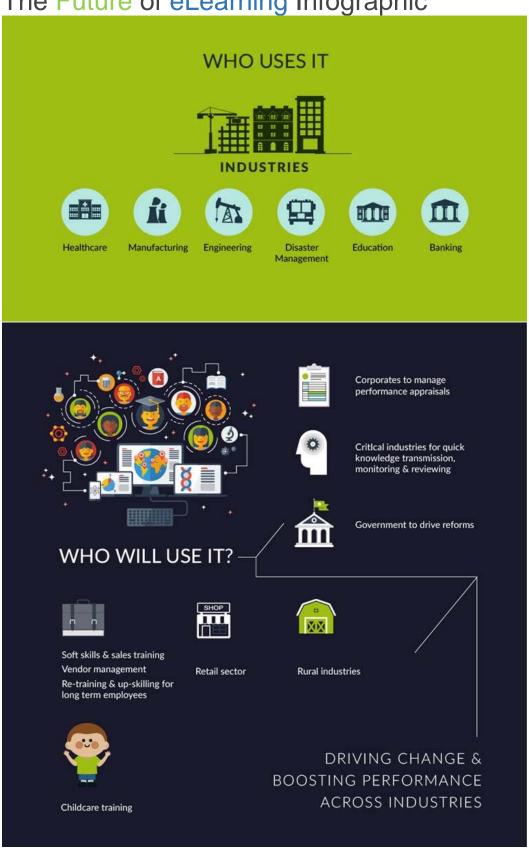ELEARNINGTAGS.COM | BY E-LEARNING BOOKMARKING SERVICE - E-LEARNING...

Read more…

6 Simple Tricks To Make Your eLearning Course Stand Out

eLearning is a dramatically expanding industry and way too many eLearning courses are pumping into the market every day. But many of the eLearning courses are poorly made. A good eLearning course is all about providing a good user experience and the right content. Here are 6 easy ways to make your eLearning course stand out and create a rockstar learning experience.

Read more …

6 Simple Tricks To Make Your eLearning Course Stand Out - eLearning...

eLearning is a dramatically expanding industry and way too many courses are pumping into the market very day. But many of the courses are poorly...

ELEARNINGINDUSTRY.COM | BY UTKARSH TALWAR

The Future of eLearning Infographic

WHO USES IT

INDUSTRIES

- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Engineering
- Disaster Management
- Education
- Banking

WHO WILL USE IT?

- Corporates to manage performance appraisals
- Critical industries for quick knowledge transmission, monitoring & reviewing
- Government to drive reforms

- Soft skills & sales training
  Vendor management
  Re-training & up-skilling for long term employees
- Retail sector
- Rural industries
- Childcare training

DRIVING CHANGE & BOOSTING PERFORMANCE ACROSS INDUSTRIES

WHAT eLEARNING WILL LOOK LIKE

MOOCs
mLearning
Multi-Device Learning
Screenless Projection
Holography
Gamification
Virtual/Augmented Reality

Via: blog.aimsdigital.com

More

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN 26	**Blackboard Open Lab**
	(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM)
	DAL1, Rm 336
JAN 27	**How Does Blackboard Work?** *[Workshop]*
	(5:30 PM - 7:00 PM)
	DAL1, Rm 336
JAN 28	**Office Hours: Students Share Successful Feedback Tips** *[Webcast]*
	(11:00 AM - 11:45 AM)
	Founders Hall, Rm 127

FEB 1	**UI Design Principles for E-Learning** *[Brown Bag]*
	(12:00 PM)
	Founders Hall, Rm 127
FEB 2	**Blackboard Open Lab**
	(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM)
	DAL1, Rm 336
FEB 3	**Teaching with Technology** *[eFLC]*
	(3:00 PM – 4:00 PM)
	Founders Hall, Rm 127
FEB 4	**Unlocking The Grade Center** *[Workshop]*
	(2:30 PM - 4:00 PM)
	DAL1, Rm 336

Contact Us!

The **Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies** invites faculty and staff to join and participate in our development programs. These events provide an opportunity to network with faculty from other departments, learn new instructional strategies and tools, and become aware of best practices in online teaching and learning.

Hope to see you there, and don't forget to register for our workshops and sessions!
Please contact us with ideas and suggestions for future events:

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