Banner-Blackboard Integration

The Banner-Blackboard integration is the utilization of the data stored in Banner for automated course creation and enrollment in Blackboard. Banner is UTHSC’s Student Information System (SIS) and the official system of record for course information, enrollment data, and student records. Blackboard is UTHSC’s Learning Management System (LMS) that supports the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of courses. It has become an industry standard among institutions of higher education to integrate their SIS with their LMS. Currently, our Blackboard system requires manual course creation and enrollment. At the beginning of each term, representatives from our academic programs and faculty contact the Educational Technology team, sending large amounts of enrollment data and course information for manual entry into Blackboard. The Blackboard-Banner integration would eliminate the need for this manual process, decrease the likelihood of enrollment errors, and make courses available to course administrators sooner. We would also like to take this opportunity to clean up our Blackboard environment, removing unused courses and user accounts that are currently occupying valuable space on our production server. Our tentative go-live timeframe for this project is Spring 2016.

Automated Course Creation and Enrollment
Using Banner as the system of record, Blackboard will automatically update:

- student status (active, inactive)
- course status (availability for students and staff)
- instructor of record, teaching assistants, and graders
- student enrollment (enrolled, dropped, withdrawn)

Master Course Templates
Each term, new courses will be created from designated master courses serving as templates for the newly created courses. The master template will house all reusable course content while the courses automatically created each term will serve as temporary shells housing data specific to the current term.

Preemptive Course Availability
Courses will automatically be created based on banner data. Any Faculty and Staff associated to a course in banner will also have access to that course in Blackboard. Students will automatically be enrolled in the courses for which they are registered, also based on Banner data.

Automatic Course Archiving
At the conclusion of each term, after final grades have been posted, ITS will automatically archive courses. Those archive files will be stored based on the established course retention policy

Standardization and Policy Development
Creating standards and developing policies will help minimize unexpected downtimes, allow more optimal usage of storage space, reduce enrollment errors, and deter data loss. We hope to collaborate with the academic programs in the creation of the following standards and policies:

- Course Naming Conventions
- Course Size Quotas
- User and Course Retention Policies
- Standard Enrollment Periods
- General Course Administration Policies

Timeline for Blackboard Course Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses will be made available to students</td>
<td>One week before course start date as listed in Banner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active courses in Banner will be created in Blackboard and associated instructors will be given access</td>
<td>One day before registration opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will be enrolled in courses</td>
<td>Daily, from six weeks before the start of the term to two weeks after the start of the term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courses will be archived</td>
<td>Shortly after the end of each Fall (December 31), Spring (July 15), and Summer (August 15) terms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courses will be purged from Blackboard</td>
<td>One to two weeks after courses are archived for each term</td>
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<tr>
<td>User accounts whose NetIDs are no longer active will be purged from Blackboard</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
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</table>

Benefits of the Integration

- More accurate course enrollment data.
- Decrease demand on faculty and staff within the colleges for course enrollment and archiving.
- Better utilization of two UTHSC enterprise software applications.
- Better course retention practices.
- More compliant with industry standards for system integrations and data usage.

Ability to designate college-level administrators for access to all college courses and deliver targeted information to students, faculty, and staff via custom college tabs.

Feedback from Colleges

Colleges will work with the Blackboard administrators to choose which courses will serve as master templates for the term specific Blackboard sites that will be automatically created each term. All other Blackboard versions of that course should be archived and purged.

Ensure primary instructors, teaching faculty, and graders are accurately assigned to Banner courses for Spring 2016.

Encourage students to register on-time.
Banner is UTHSC's Student Information System (SIS) and the official system of record for course information, enrollment data, and student records. Prior to the start of each term, the courses being taught during that term are loaded into Banner and given an active status for the upcoming term.

The Blackboard team will work with the colleges to identify previously built courses that will serve as Master Course Templates (MCT). The MCT are permanent, long-term version of the course that will only house course content and faculty/staff enrollment data that will be reused each time the course is taught. The MCT will not contain student enrollment or any student data. The MCT give faculty the opportunity to build their courses well in advance of the start of the term. When the term-specific course shells are created, the empty course shells will be populated with course content and faculty/staff enrollment from the MCT if a properly formatted MCT exists for the course.

The day before registration opens, course information will be extracted from Banner. The course information will be used to create a Blackboard course shell for each active course section being taught that term. Along with general course information like the title, course number, prefix, CRN, and course start and end dates for the term, the data extract will also include the faculty and staff members associated with the course in Banner.

Shortly after the end of each term (Fall: Dec. 31, Spring: July 15, Summer: Aug. 15), course archives will be created for all of the term-specific courses. Those archives will be stored locally here at UTHSC and made available upon request by a Blackboard Administrator. Term-specific courses will be purged from Blackboard one to two weeks after the course archives are created and stored.

During this active enrollment period, registration updates that occur in Banner will be propagated to the appropriate Blackboard course overnight. Course availability for students will be automated using the course start and end dates from Banner. Students will automatically have access to their courses one week before the start date in Banner. Students will lose access to their courses one week after the end date of the course.

The term-specific Blackboard course will be populated with information from Banner and the MCT Blackboard course. All of the general course information, such as title, course number, prefix, CRN, and course start and end dates will come from the Banner extract. The course content, such as assignments, discussion board postings, PDF files, quizzes, etc. will come from the Blackboard MCT. Faculty and staff enrollment will be a merged group of faculty/staff associated with the course section in Banner as well as any faculty/staff enrolled in the Blackboard MCT template. Student enrollment will come directly from Banner via a nightly feed that will be activated four weeks prior to the start of the term and remain active until two weeks into the term.

Blackboard - Banner Integration 2016