

Communications Archive

Blackboard Ultra Rollout 2024

Blackboard Impact Announcement

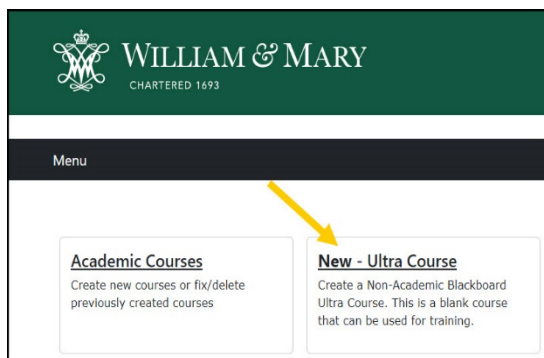
Get Ready for Blackboard Ultra Courses this Fall

Dear Instructors,

Beginning in Fall 2024 the university will be using [Blackboard Ultra Courses](#). This change impacts all instructors using Blackboard for academic courses in the fall. Below you will find a checklist that will highlight resources available to help you get started.

Blackboard Ultra Transition Progress Checklist:

- Attend an Ultra Overview - 30 minutes session(s). Dates and calendar invites available at www.wm.edu/it/ultra.
- Create your Ultra Course Sandbox using [Blackboard Course Generator](#) and [learn how to migrate your Original course content to Ultra](#).



- Enroll in the Blackboard Demo Course to view features of Ultra Course as a student. Directions are available at www.wm.edu/it/ultra.
- Attend [Blackboard Ultra Day](#) April 4th or 5th (repeat sessions). Please visit the site to register for this event.
- Attend an open lab session: Coming in April. Dates will be posted in the Digest.

The more items you can check off the checklist, the easier the transition will be for the fall semester. None of your previous course content will be lost as we

transition to Ultra Courses. You will still have access to the Original Courses in your listing per the [Blackboard Course retention policy](#).

Instructors will be able to transfer content from Original Courses to Ultra Courses using the built-in copy content feature within Ultra. Learn more about transitioning your course by watching the [copy content video](#).

We are excited to offer training and support throughout this transition. Visit the IT website to learn about all things [Blackboard Ultra](#)

Sincerely,
Information Technology

For questions, please get in touch with the Technology Support Center (TSC) at support@wm.edu or 757-221-4357

Email to summer instructors

Summer Course Creation

Dear Faculty,

I am reaching out to you because you have been identified as teaching for the summer 2024 term.

As we prepare for the transition to Ultra courses on Blackboard for the fall semester of 2024, we are updating the Blackboard Course Generator. **Beginning April 8th**, faculty will be able to create their fall courses but only in the Ultra format. The generator will be enhanced to facilitate the creation of courses in the Blackboard Ultra format.

If you intend to teach this summer and prefer to maintain your courses in the Original format, we request that you create them before the April 8th deadline. If you opt for the Ultra course format for the summer, you can create your courses starting April 8th.

For Summer 2024:

Original Format: To retain your Original course format, go to <https://bbhelper.wm.edu> and select your summer course. You can then choose an existing Original course to copy. This will connect your course to banner enrollment. Please complete this process by April 7th.

Ultra Format: If you plan to utilize Ultra courses for the summer, you'll be able to create your course starting April 8th. Please note that after this date, your Original courses will not

appear in the generator listing for duplication, but they will still be accessible in Blackboard. Tutorials on [transitioning or copying your Original course into an Ultra course](#) can be found at the IT Blackboard Help for Faculty site at <https://www.wm.edu/offices/it/services/blackboard/blackboard-ultra/>.

In closing, **if you wish to have your summer course in the Original format, you must create it in the Generator by April 7th.** Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

Kristy Walker

Teaching & Learning Academic Application Specialist

William & Mary, Information Technology

Provost 5 Things email

Dear colleagues,

Thomas Jefferson, amateur astronomer, [attempted to view an eclipse](#) on June 24, 1778 from Monticello, but was disappointed by cloudy skies across Virginia. Fortunately, today in Williamsburg we have gorgeous weather and a partial solar eclipse will be 80-85% visible starting at 2 p.m. and peaking around 3:15 p.m. The departments of Art & Art History and Physics are hosting a safe viewing in the Sunken Garden with telescopes, binoculars and solar glasses while supplies last. A limited number of solar glasses will also be available at Swem Library. I hope you can find some time to observe this rare phenomenon and join many of us who plan to be there.

Here are the Top Five Things to Know this week:

1. Beginning today, all newly created courses in Blackboard will be in the Ultra Course format. IT has provided a [guide to Ultra Courses](#), which includes how to get started from a blank course as well as how to transfer original courses to the new version. All existing original courses will remain in Blackboard until transferred. For more detailed questions, please contact the Technology Support Center at support@wm.edu.
2. [The Williamsburg Institute](#) and the [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute](#) present "Cultivating a Legacy: Embracing Education Through the Lens of History," an event enacting a conversation between Thomas Jefferson and his professor/mentor George Wythe. This immersive historical interpretation of 18th century discourse will provoke conversation about the importance of education, critical thinking and the pursuit of common ground. [Register for free](#) to attend from 7:30-9 p.m. on April 12 at Kimball Theatre.

3. In honor of April being national Sexual Assault Awareness month, the offices of Health Promotion and Compliance & Equity, along with The Haven, are hosting several events inspired by survivors: trauma-informed self-defense, trauma-sensitive yoga, art therapy and more. [All may register](#) using the Campus Recreation portal. The American Counseling Association also designated April [Counseling Awareness Month](#) to recognize the important role counselors and counseling educators play in communities. On Friday, April 12, W&M's School of Education invites you to join in honoring Teal Day, encouraging awareness of the support counselors themselves need, by wearing teal and using the hashtag #CounselorsHelp on social media.
4. W&M's Democracy Initiative podcast released the latest episode, "Democracy x Careers," about the intersection between these two Vision 2026 initiatives. Host Emily Tavoulaareas '04 mediates the discussion with Roxane O. Adler Hickey of the W&M Washington Center; Michael Ryan of the Graduate Career Management Center; and current junior Ally Swindell, Semester in DC student interning at the U.S. State Department. They dive deep into how W&M prioritizes experiential learning and internships to propel students into careers & help to build life-long relationships on and off campus. Visit the [Democracy Initiative Podcast homepage](#) to listen.
5. The shout-out for this week goes to everyone in the W&M community who joined to make One Tribe One Day a remarkable moment of Tribe pride and generosity. The result: 11,516 students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends contributed more than \$3.7 million for over 800 designations across campus. What a way to celebrate the 11th year of OTOD! You can read [W&M News](#) for more details about this year's success.

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Email sent from Deans and Department Chairs

Dear instructors,

There is a major change coming to Blackboard **that will impact all instructors** and students for Fall 2024. Blackboard is [upgrading to Blackboard Ultra](#)! This change presents a whole new design to Blackboard which will cause your courses to look different. Blackboard Ultra is designed

to provide a more intuitive experience and better mobile capabilities. The tool is more modern, and IT has received positive feedback from the early adopters.

Because of this major change, we are asking all instructors to learn more about Ultra now, during the spring 2024 semester, to be ready for the changes in the fall. Please visit the [Blackboard Ultra webpage](#) to learn more including future training dates, view video tutorials, and find resources.

Additionally, Blackboard will be on campus all day [April 4th and 5th](#) to share more information. Please [register if you are able to attend](#).

IT is hosting multiple training sessions throughout the spring. Please attend one or more of those sessions to get yourselves ready for fall. All the training sessions are on the IT website as well as advertised in the W&M Digest.

If you are only able to devote a portion of your time to the Blackboard change currently, please at a minimum [watch this video](#).

Because Blackboard Ultra is significantly different from Blackboard Original, you are not able to copy your courses like in previous years. Rather, you will create a blank course and use the “Copy Content” button within Blackboard Ultra to bring over your course materials. You can create an Ultra Course today following the video above, copy your content, and be prepared for the fall well ahead of time.

Please share this with your colleagues now so all instructors are prepared for Blackboard Ultra.

Thank you!

Michael T. Murphy, Ph.D.

Executive Director of Client Services

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