Missouri S&T Blackboard Policy

Prescribed use of Blackboard at Missouri S&T
The Blackboard learning management system is provided as a means to facilitate or enhance the following campus activities.
- On-campus and distance learning instruction
- Collaboration on faculty research projects.
- Departmental collaboration
- Campus-wide training initiatives
- Activities related to the operation of a university organization.

Use of Blackboard is subject to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and all policies, procedures and standards set forth on the IT Policies and Procedures web page.

Course/organization creation and retention
IT provides the service of automatically creating Blackboard courses once they have appeared in course data provided to IT by the Registrar. These courses are created with their availability set to 'No' by default. This allows Blackboard instructors the ability to prepare coursework for current or future semesters before students are able to see it. This preparation time varies by instructor. Hence, it is the responsibility of the instructor to set a course's availability to 'Yes' when the instructor is ready to allow students to access the course. IT will mark all courses from the previous semester 'unavailable' one month after the semester ends. Instructors can easily mark the course available again if they need a student or students to still see it.

IT provides automated blackboard course enrollment updates for students and instructors based on class roster information and instructor assignments provided to IT by the Registrar. Enrollment information is reflected in Blackboard once it appears in data provided to IT by the Registrar. Enrollment of Blackboard users in a course or organization above and beyond any automated enrollment is the responsibility of the course instructor or organization leader.

Blackboard courses are retained on the system for a period of two years. At the end of this period, the instructors assigned to the course will be notified that the course will be removed in one month. After one month, the course contents, enrollment, and the entire course itself will be purged from Blackboard and will not be recoverable. It is the responsibility of the instructor to archive, export or copy off any content they wish to retain prior to the end of this one month window.

Blackboard organizations are created by IT, upon request and review, for any of the prescribed uses of Blackboard set forth above. The organization request should include which campus entity is requesting the organization, a desired name for the organization, a person to fill the initial leader role for the organization, a description of the purpose the organization will serve and a desired lifetime for the organization. Blackboard organizations for student groups must be requested by the organization's faculty/staff sponsor. Individual students may not request the creation of organizations. The Blackboard organization's ID is preset by IT. IT will make every effort to accommodate the desired organization name. Organizations are created with their availability set to 'No'.

Organizations are retained on the system until the desired lifetime for the organization has expired or the organization has been inactive for a period of one year. Organization removal will be handled in the same manner as course removal described above.

A Blackboard course--its contents and its enrollment--are under the control of the instructor(s) that are teaching it, or the department that is offering the course in the event no instructor is available. A Blackboard organization is under the control of the organization leader(s).   The following Blackboard options accessible from the course/organization control panel or a submenu have been preset or disabled to help ensure security and accommodate the course and enrollment automation:

- Create and batch create users
- Course/Organization Copy
- Course/Organization ID and name – these are preset values based on a naming scheme utilizing data obtained from the registrar.
- Change user password

Given that an instructor has the capability to modify or remove course content after the end of a semester; IT cannot guarantee coursework availability in a course. Requests for submitted coursework should be directed to the instructor for that course.

Grades recorded in Blackboard
The grades contained in Blackboard are for informational purposes only. UM Student's official grades are found in Joe'SS as posted by the Registrar.

Backups
Nightly backups are made of the Blackboard database and course/organization content directories. These provide system administrators the capability to recover data and services in the event of a catastrophic system failure. These backups do NOT provide the capacity to retrieve point-in-time data recovery of per-course information (i.e. recovery of a course document, homework assignment, discussion board thread, or grades that have been accidentally deleted).

User ID lifecycle
User accounts in Blackboard for persons who have a UM SSO User ID will be created in an automated fashion once their SSO Id appears in the Missouri S&T Active Directory (AD) domain. For faculty/staff, this normally corresponds to the employee's start date. For students, this normally corresponds to the time at which they attend a PRO session or register for classes.

Students that currently reside on a different UM campus requiring Blackboard access will have their account created through automation once they are enrolled in their Missouri S&T course. Employees at another UM campus who require access to Missouri S&T's Blackboard system may request an account by submitting a ticket to the Missouri S&T IT Helpdesk.

User IDs can be created on a case by case basis for external, non-UM users for participation in existing Missouri S&T Blackboard courses for research collaboration or any of the activities set forth by the prescribed

use section of this policy. The User ID will use an appropriate identifying prefix chosen by the Blackboard administrator and will consist of the users last name followed by first initial and any additional characters required to ensure uniqueness. A purpose for the account will be recorded at account creation time. All accounts are created in an enabled state.

Blackboard User IDs will be created only for a particular person, not for resource accounts.
So called 'test' User IDs will not be issued. In the event that a user needs to examine or test a specific function of blackboard before using it in a production manner, they should contact the IT Education Technology group to receive assistance in the use of the product.

User IDs corresponding to UM AD accounts will be disabled when normal IT user maintenance procedures dictate that local campus resources are removed for that user. The User ID will be removed completely from Blackboard when the courses they were enrolled in have been removed via the course retention policy described above.

User IDs created for external, non-UM users will be disabled after 12 months of inactivity and will be removed from the system 12 months after that.

Maintenance Window
The IT department performs scheduled periodic maintenance on Blackboard to ensure the continued stability of the service. This maintenance is performed from 5:30 to 10:00pm on the second and fourth Friday of each month. Users are warned that it may be necessary to interrupt services during this time to complete maintenance activities. IT reserves the right to perform emergency maintenance as needed to prevent any catastrophic events that are likely to occur or to recover services from such an event. This may result in interruptions of Blackboard services. Information about scheduled Blackboard maintenance services can be found on IT Press (http://itpress.mst.edu).

Policy Review
This policy will be reviewed annually by ITCC and IT at which time any requested modifications will be reviewed for possible inclusion in the document.

References