

Faculty Colleagues,

I hope everyone had a great Easter Break and is now ready for the coming end of the academic year and the full launch of Brightspace. Remember you can start desinging your courses now by logging into [Brightspace](#) and on the bottom right is a create your sandbox button. Make as many of these empty courses as you want to build your new courses in. Then you can copy everything, or parts, into your actual courses. Summer courses are available now for faculty and fall courses will be shortly. Students can access credit-bearing courses 7 days before the part of term start date through 25 days after the end date. Students with N grades can be granted access longer.

Foundational Use of the LMS Requirement

Starting with all May 2026 courses and beyond, all faculty must meet the [foundational use requirements](#) in Brightspace for all their courses. In short, this policy requires that faculty will post their syllabus, use the gradebook, post all digitally available material, and add due dates (using the "Due Date" setting) for assignments, exams, quizzes, readings, and other course requirements in Brightspace.

Blackboard Ends

On June 18, 2026 Blackboard will no longer be accessible and any data in it will be erased. All Spring 2026 Blackboard courses will be imported into Brightspace in early June. Prior imports are courses offered from summer 2023 to fall 2025. You can log into [Brightspace](#) now to see your imports. If you desire any courses prior to summer 2023 or organizations to be imported, please make the request prior to May 31, 2026 [here](#). Since student data does not transfer you should download any gradebooks or other student items you desire to keep prior to June 18. All grading of items in Blackboard (for students with N grades, must be done prior to June 18). Directions for downloading student information from Blackboard is [here](#). Note: [An imported Blackboard course](#) will not be ready to use as is for Brightspace.

Brightspace Training

Want to work on your own courses with short demonstrations, guided activities, and support from VITAL and UTS colleagues throughout the day? Sign up for a two-day Course Design Labs on June 8–9 or June 10–11 ([register](#)). UTS and VITAL will also be offering [Brightspace workshops](#) throughout the spring and summer. If your department or program would like to schedule a customized session, please contact [Ankit Desai](#). All faculty are also automatically enrolled in the [Faculty Information Hub](#) course in Brightspace which contains all the asynchronous training materials. Programs supported by The Office of Online Programs will receive course design assistance through them.

Additional Educational Tools Integrated into Brightspace

Want to make your course more interactive, use formative and evaluative assessments, enhance your online discussions, and so much more? Check out these tools available for you to use that are integrated with Brightspace:

- Cloud Storage ([Microsoft OneDrive](#) & [Google Drive](#)) for sharing files and collaborating on them.
- [OneNote Class Notebook](#) for doing activities like providing readings and handouts, assigning activities, reviewing student work, and facilitate asynchronous collaboration between students.
- [Mediasite](#) (Video & Video Quizzing) for streaming videos and adding simple multiple-choice questions within them.
- [Linkedin Learning](#) features thousands of courses taught by industry experts across a wide range of subjects.
- [Perusall](#) is a social annotation tool that allows students and faculty to interact with reading materials in a style akin to social media posting.
- [Piazza](#) is a tool for faculty to manage class Q&A. Students and faculty can post questions and collaborate to edit responses to these questions.
- [Poll Everywhere](#) is an interactive polling tool that also can be used to take geolocated attendance.
- [Respondus Lockdown Browser](#) can be added to a quiz to prevent any other window from opening on the student's computer.
- [StudyMate](#) for creating flash cards, self-assessments, and learning games.
- [YellowDig](#) or [VoiceThread](#) for making more interactive discussion boards.
- [WeVideo](#) for creating, editing, and sharing high-quality interactive assessments directly integrated into your videos or stills, with AI question generation available. **NEW!**
- [Turnitin](#) replaces SafeAssign for plagiarism detection and also includes AI detection (which is not fully reliable and often requires additional evidence to prove AI usage). It also had [Feedback Studio](#) to provide enhanced tools for faculty grading. **NEW!**

Thank you for your unwavering support of our students as we enter one of the most stressful parts of the semester for faculty and students. Good luck with grading and when you do use Brightspace and set up your gradebook, you will be able to use my favorite [button of all time](#) — send grades (midterm or final) to Banner! As always, reach out with any questions at any time.

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