Blackboard 9.1 SP8 Demo Days

This document contains a collection of questions asked during the two day demos. The time stamp is the approximate time the question was asked. Some answers have content added to them that was said at at different time.

April 11,2012

Q: Are the videos and support documentation available to users at no cost? (30:30)
A: Yes.

Q: Can students change themes just for themselves? (36:30)
A: The themes are instructor controlled.

Q: What control do institutions have over the themes? (36:50)
A: The institution can turn them off, but can not easily put themes in and take themes out. They can create a default theme that is the only one available.

Q: What is a mashup? (42:30)
A: It is pulling through an aggregating service, i.e. YouTube.

Q: Can you put multiple videos in a mashup item? (42:50)
A: Yes.

Q: How is that different from a content area? (43:25)
A: A content area encompases items. A content area is displayed in the left side course menu.

Q: What is the difference between a folder and module? (44:30)
A: A module contains a table of contents and gives the student a more structured approach to move through the content.

Q: Are the modules new to Blackboard? (45:20)
A: I am not sure. The features for the modules in 9.1 are driven by the innovation brought in by webCT.

Q: What is a blank page? (48:45)
A: A blank page is an HTML page that allows the instructor to put in whatever content they want.

Q: Is there a way to provide student with a single start point and a map of what they are going to do all at once? (49:45)
A: The easiest way off the top of my head would be to use the folder model. In the first item give the outline then adaptive release the items.

Q: Can you link other parts of the course in the HTML page? (51:00)
A: I think you can but that is not something that is straightforward.

Q: What is the purpose of the HTML page: (51:30)
A: A way for the instructor to display content in a clean way.

Q: You mentioned conditional content can you talk more about that? (51:45)
A: Adaptive release allows the instructor to place requirements on an item before students can view another item. This can be done by grade, date, group, review, and specific student.

Q: Is there a way for the instructor to see each student's progress? (54:00)
A: Yes, the instructor can view this date in the performance dashboard. This report can be item or student based.

Q: When using external publisher content is there anything that needs to be done to bring the assignments to the grade book? (57:00)
A: There is nothing that needs to be done. Any work done on the publisher's side is brought into the grade book. (Please note the example given was with McGraw-Hill Connect, the exact workings may vary with publisher.)

Q: Do you have any data about feature and tool usage? (1:00:00)
A: We do not have specific information, we do not have direct access to the institutional data. Institutions can purchase Blackboard Analytics that has robust student reporting.

Q: Can you expand on peer evaluations and student portfolios? (1:06:50)
A: There is a self and peer assessment tool. I do not know if this has been changed since 9.0. We are working a new feature that will allow students to put assignments they turn into courses into their portfolio. This will leverage the outcomes feature.

Q: Do you know if the creation for the ePortfolio is changing? (1:10:00)
A: Yes, it will be getting a lot of work. Going forward we will be standardizing on the content system portfolio product. It is possible that it will come out early next year.

Q: When you are working with a publisher are you sensitive to the fact that users would like to view their content on mobile devices and eBooks. (1:12:00)
A: We are actively involved in this conversation with the publisher. They have the final say in how their content is accessible.

Q: Can you discuss Blackboard's mobile strategy? (1:20:40)
A: We are looking native applications for mobile devices. This allows the app to present content in a way that works for the platform.

Q: Is there a way to adjust the size of the windows that pop up in the iPad app specifically the discussion board? (1:23:25)
A: Not at this time, some of the windows you can move to expand. The discussion board you can not.

Q: Is there anything in core Blackboard that does not work with the mobile apps? For example can you take test, discussion boards.(1:25:00)
A: You can not take test through the app. We are still working on that to figure out how to give institutions the control they need.

Q: Is the mobile app still only accessible over wifi and Sprint. (1:29:00)
A: Yes, if you are a Sprint customer you can access it over the Sprint network and wifi. If you are not a Sprint customer you can only access it over wifi. This is if you have the free version.

Q: Is the process of embedding video in a answers on a quiz the same as assignments? (1:34:10)
A: Yes, you can use mass ups or add your own video.

Q: With the 'Auto-Submit' option do you still receive an exclamation point in the grade book? (1:38:25)
A: No, when the time is up the test is submitted and a grade given.

Q: Can you hide the timer on a test so it does not take up so much space? (1:40:30)
A: No there is not.

Q: How often does the automatic save happen on a test? (1:41:20)
A: I believe it is about every 5-10 seconds.

Q: Does the auto save still occur with essay and short answer questions? (1:41:40)
A: Yes.

Q: Is the instructor able to provide video feedback to a student through an assignment? (1:50:10)
A: If they have the Kaltura plugin.

Q: How does a student get the feedback from an assignment? (1:53:40)
A: They would access it from the comments section in 'My Grades".

Q: Can the student view the rubric? (1:54:30)
A: Yes, the instructor can allow student access to the rubric at their discretion.

Q: Can a student reply to an instructor's comments? (1:54:40)
A: No, they would need to take it up with the instructor separately.

Q: Is there any notification to the student that there are comments from the instructor? (1:54:45)
A: No, we found that students do not avoid 'My Grades'. There is a separate notification piece that you can integrate.

Q: Can you talk about the dashboard a bit? (1:55:30)
A: See recording

Q: Is there a way for students to create individual tasks and viewable in a course? (2:02:00)
A: They would appear on your personal dashboard, a course only shows tasks related to the

course a groups within the course.

Q: Are students able to upload video assignments and discussion board posts? Currently they have a limited view of the text box editor. (2:06:30)
A: I think the answer is yes.

Q: Are you able to edit content collection files without download then upload? (2:08:55)
A: Yes through the BB Drive program.

Q: Is there any Google Doc integration? (2:13:20)
A: Yes, through a building block, Bboogle.

Q: Is there way to delete multiple gradebook columns at once? (2:16:50)
A: No, there is not.

Q: Is there a record of communication between students and instructor? For both the student and instructor to see the information. (2:33:06)
A: There is not unless they use messages.

Q: Blackboard 9.1 has a lot of features. Is there a point when there are two many features: (2:42:25)
A: You can limit features to new instructors and as they become more familiar with the system release specific features. We are working on bringing in features that use new technologies while keeping the core functionality.

Q: Are there any plans to have SCORM content communicate with the grade center? (2:47:00)
A: Not currently but we are working Rustici, the owner of scorm.com, to bring more functionality with SCORM in Blackboard.

Q: Is there any conversion tool to go from Learning Objects to the Blackboard tools? (2:54:90)
A: Not that I am aware of.

April 12,2012

Q: When creating an item is there a way to link to a discussion board group in the description? (28:15)
A: It does not currently allow that.

Q: Is there any way to create default institutional settings for certain options, i.e. having the default view for mashups be embed instead of thumbnail.? (28:30)
A: That is not currently available.

Q: Is there a built in way to add streaming video that you own? (30:50)
A: You would need to purchase a streaming service, Blackboard does not stream.

Q: Is there a way to bring an external wiki into the grading workflow? (37:00)
A: They would need to use the Blackboard wiki if it were a graded assignment.

Q: When grading an assignment can the student's assignment be viewed in a center panel and the rubric on the right? (46:45)
A: That is not currently how they are configured. In blog, wiki, journals and discussion boards the rubric is viewed on the right.

Q: Will students have access to the source file, through BB Drive, after the course is made unavailable? (56:45)
A: There access to the file would end, unless you made the file specificly available to them.

Q: Is there a capacity for BB Drive? (1:01:20)
A: Yes, this is set by the institution and can be done per user.

Q: In the grade center is there a column for group? (1:05:50)
A: You will see each of the columns in the grade center. Students who are not in a group will have that column grayed out.

Q: When you do a course copy do adaptive release rules come over? (!:13:10)
A: Yes, you will need to go back and adjust the dates.

Q: When grading an essay test by question can it randomize students per question? (1:29:45)
A: Yes, if you grade anonymously.

Q: If pulling from a pool how does the grade by question work? (1:30:30)
A: It will work fine but it will be possible to have only one student response for a question.

Q: Is there anything in our current system that would not be able to copy over in our current system?
A: Yes, AOI WYSIWYG editor.

Q: Are there plans to improve the calendar soon? (2:10:50)
A: We are currently working on where to go with the calendar but there are no plans to change it in the near future.