Announcing the General Availability of Blackboard Learn, Release 9.1, April 2014

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Bulletin/Advisory Information: Blackboard is pleased to announce the General Availability of Blackboard Learn™, Release 9.1, April 2014 (Build: 9.1.201404.160205). This notification contains important details of this release, so please review the entire message.

Highlights of New Features and Enhancements - Teaching and Learning

- **Student Preview** - The new Student Preview feature provides the capability for an instructor to see the course exactly as a student would see it. It accomplishes this by allowing the Instructor to easily transition into and out of a system-managed preview account that is automatically enrolled in the course as a student. This provides all the advantages of a “dummy” account while absolving the instructor and System Administrator of the management overhead.

- **Portfolio Improvements** - Blackboard has improved the Portfolio framework to replace Basic and Personal Portfolios. The new framework will automatically convert existing Portfolios so they remain fully accessible in the newly improved and simplified authoring workflow. Portfolios are now tightly integrated with courses providing students the ability to convert course assignments into Artifacts. Instructors may also formally require a Portfolio as a submission to an assignment in a course.

- **Anonymous and Delegated Grading** - Blackboard has implemented a robust Anonymous Grading feature to add another layer of fairness and impartiality to Grading capabilities. Without knowing who submitted the assignment, a Grader is not influenced by a student's previous performance, class participation, conflicts, race, gender, or perceived student aptitude. Delegated Grading promotes reliability and removes bias by using grades and feedback from more than one Grader. These features may be used together or individually to meet grading requirements.

- **Assessments: Significant Figures** - Blackboard has improved Calculated Formula Questions by adding the ability to define the significant figures required and used in the creation of answers and the automated grading process.

- **SafeAssign** - Blackboard has enhanced the SafeAssign service to provide a more seamless integration with native Blackboard Learn Assignments and updated the SafeAssign Originality Report interface. With this update, the SafeAssignment content type is removed from the content areas, and SafeAssign becomes an additional feature available when creating native Blackboard Learn Assignments. All Blackboard Learn Assignment features are available in tandem with SafeAssign services with the exception of Portfolio submissions to Blackboard Learn Assignments.

- **Financial Aid Reporting** - The Financial Aid Building Block, released as a standalone Building Block in 2013, is now available with the Blackboard Learn 9.1, April 2014 Release. With increased scrutiny in the awarding of United States Federal financial aid monies to students enrolled in courses, there is a need to demonstrate a student’s substantive academic contribution to a course as a justification for the award of such monies. Blackboard is providing a solution to assist institutions in meeting the reporting requirements for Return of Title IV Funds rules (also known as “R2T4”). The Single and Multi-Course User Participation Report provide data on the student contribution of academic content within a Blackboard Learn course. These reports are also useful in other regions, as they provide evidence of student activity within courses.

Note: Some features in the Blackboard Learn 9.1, April 2014 Release use the Building Block architecture. They are enabled by default, and those Building Blocks cannot be removed or reverted back to functionality that existed in prior Service Pack releases.