

UT TeleCampus Communiqué
August 8, 2006

SPECIAL EDITION -- BLACKBOARD OUTAGE AND UPGRADE

UTTC will upgrade its Blackboard installation from version 6.2.3.23 to version 7.0.404.2 next week. This upgrade will provide many new features for faculty and students. But, the upgrade will require that the system be unavailable part of the week.

Blackboard Outage Scheduled:

With hosting courses from all 15 of the campuses within the UT System, it is impossible to find a time for a planned outage during which no faculty or students are affected. We have therefore planned the outage when the least number of faculty and students are affected. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience and hope that this notice will allow for alternate plans to be made, if needed.

The UTTC Blackboard installation will be unavailable from 11 p.m. Central time on Monday, August 14 through 8 a.m. Central time on Friday, August 18. This will affect course access in the following ways:

Summer courses – Summer II and Summer Long courses at UT Brownsville, UT Permian Basin, UT San Antonio, UT Tyler and UT Southwestern which end on August 10, 11 or 12 will be the most affected summer courses. **If you are teaching one of these courses, we recommend that you download the gradebook if you will need access to assessments to meet campus deadlines for turning in summer grades.** Please let us know if you need assistance in doing this. To allow for students to see any end-of-term feedback, we will leave students in the final summer courses until Friday, August 25. Please note that summer students who lose course access when grades are posted prior to August 14 will not have that access reinstated.

Fall courses – Fall courses from UT Health Science Center Houston, which began August 7, will lose course access during the outage. Fall courses from UT Dallas, which are scheduled to begin on August 17 will need to begin one day late, on August 18. Other fall courses will not be affected, except that they will not be available for faculty or staff for semester preparations and they cannot be opened early (not before August 18).

Professional development courses – Students in the Paralegal program courses which end August 18 will have their course access extended for one week. If you would like to have course access extended for other professional development students, please let us know.

Faculty involved in the most affected courses will be individually contacted by UTTC Student and Faculty Services staff beginning today to address concerns.

There are several positive changes that you will find in the upgraded Blackboard system. These are primarily enhancements that will add to your teaching and interaction options. Please take a moment to review the attached document for the complete list. Feel free to contact UTTC Student and Faculty Services if you have any questions.

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