

# Blackboard Faculty and Student Survey Report: Spring 2003

## Background and survey implementation

The software version in use during the Spring 2003 semester was Blackboard 5.5, level 3 (Enterprise Edition). Faculty and students using Blackboard were surveyed about their use of Blackboard in Spring term (April) 2003. The Blackboard user surveys were assessments in Blackboard course sites (one for faculty and one for students). Individuals who were instructors, TAs, graders or course builders in any Blackboard course site in Spring 2003 were added to the faculty course site; students in course sites were added to the student course site. A general announcement in a Blackboard portal module used for that purpose drew user attention to the survey/course availability. A total of 81 faculty (6.8% of 1,191 possible) and 917 students (10.7% of 8,549 possible) took the survey.

## Summary of key results

- 84% of students reported that 50% or more of their courses used Blackboard this semester, and for over half of the students, Blackboard was the only method of presenting online course materials (if there was no Blackboard site, for a class, there was no site at all).
- 41% of students login to their Blackboard sites once/day, or more; in comparison, only 19% of faculty reported expecting their students to login that frequently.
- 57% of students expect their courses to have course web sites, and an additional 35% don't expect but appreciate having a course site.
- Students and faculty reported the most commonly used Blackboard features were content posting (announcements, course documents, instructor information), collection of links, and online gradebook. Communication tools were less frequently used.
- More than 50% of faculty reported a positive impact of automatic course creations in Blackboard, new this semester.
- 95% or more of faculty and students ranked Bb as easy to use
- 68% of students and 71% of faculty said Bb was beneficial to student learning; for students, this was an increase of 10% over the same results from fall 2002.
- 78% of students and 92% of faculty said Bb was beneficial in helping them manage their class work; in each case an increase of 5% or more from fall 2002.
- 90% or more of students and faculty reported being satisfied with Blackboard this semester.

## Additional comments, feedback and suggestions

Several faculty mentioned appreciating Blackboard's course management features, but wanting to know more about how to use Blackboard creatively to enhance student learning, and more about how to use Blackboard's features. Most respondents described Blackboard as a time saving tool, but several mentioned spending a lot of time configuring files appropriately, and asked for advice about this.

Students' main complaints about Blackboard were that their My Courses lists are not configurable, that Blackboard was down once at the beginning of the semester, that certain files won't open properly on certain library or cluster computers (because of the computer configurations). Students appreciate finding their course materials on Blackboard at their convenience, and comment that many of their courses either don't use Blackboard fully, or don't update the course materials beyond the initial posting at the start of the semester.

Based on results from this survey, the Blackboard administrators could improve user satisfaction by implementing a policy that manages the My Courses lists for students, by better advertising of existing training and support opportunities for faculty, and by encouraging more faculty to use Blackboard, and to use it more fully.