



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Date: December 18, 2017
To: Karl Kowalski
IT Council Chair
From: Lisa Hoferkamp
Faculty Alliance Chair
Subject: UA BlackBoard Upgrades

As per the IT Council request that the Faculty Alliance (FA) discuss and offer recommendations regarding scheduling of system-wide scheduling of maintenance to the course administration program, BlackBoard (BB), I am writing to share the results of that discussion. The FA understands that updates and upgrades to BB are important to efficient operation and that the latter may require 1 - 2 days, during which BB will be unavailable to its primary users. To successfully complete a system-wide process such as this, all stakeholders must be involved in the identification of acceptable 1 – 2 day time-windows. The FA recommends administration of a survey to faculty stakeholders aimed at identifying time intervals over which inaccessibility to BB would be least disruptive. The IT departments at each university would administer the survey through that university's faculty senate (FS). Upon completion, discrepancies among universities would be resolved through the FA and a final recommendation made to the IT Council through FA.

The discussions that lead to the recommendation described above produced a second FA suggestion for the IT Council. The FA recommends that the University of Alaska purposely remain 1 BB upgrade behind the most recently published version. This practice would allow UA to glean implementation best practices from other institutions that have chosen to run the newer version.

Respectfully,

Lisa Hoferkamp
Chair, Faculty Alliance