



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Students, Faculty and Staff
FROM: Torrey Lawrence, Provost and Executive Vice President
DATE: Sept. 8, 2021
SUBJECT: U of I Moving to Canvas for Learning Management

One of the most important software systems used by a university is its Learning Management System (LMS). It is the primary tool for delivering a 21st century education. U of I currently uses Blackboard. Our Blackboard contract is up for renewal, and we have spent the past months studying whether to upgrade this system or move to a new one. Continuing with our current software is not an option. Starting in January 2022, we will use Canvas as our LMS.

Factors Leading to this Decision

The Idaho State Board of Education funded three years of access to Canvas to address its goal of increasing access to online and distance learning opportunities throughout the state. It also wants to see a common system used across the state. They chose the industry leader – Canvas.

A group of faculty piloted Canvas last spring and summer. The spring cohort explored Canvas while the summer cohort used

Canvas for 300+ students in 23 courses. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive. A [report](#) of their findings is available.

Input has been sought from Faculty Senate, deans, ITS, ASUI Senate and other constituents. Every group strongly recommended moving to Canvas.

Implementation of Canvas

Building off the pilot in preparation for full implementation in January 2022, spring courses are being transferred from Blackboard to Canvas. [Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning \(CETL\)](#) will offer training, consultation and course-building support for faculty. A new course designer has been hired to assist with course development and LMS conversion. Student training will be available as we approach spring semester. Our goal is for the transition to be as seamless as possible. You will receive more information soon from the implementation team.

Change is not always easy. However, I am confident that moving to Canvas is the right decision for us. The time to make the move is now.

Torrey Lawrence
Provost and Executive Vice President

provost@uidaho.edu
uidaho.edu/provost