

Dear USC Faculty Member:

To assist you with end-of-the-semester use of Blackboard 9, the Center for Scholarly Technology (CST) is offering a new Blackboard-on-wheels support program.

>From December 9 through December 16, 2009, the CST's Blackboard support team will come to you and provide personalized Blackboard training in your office. The program is available to all faculty, departments, and schools.

To schedule a personal Blackboard training session for yourself or your department, send an email to [blackboard@usc.edu](mailto:blackboard@usc.edu) at least 24 hours in advance of your desired training time with the Subject line "Blackboard on Wheels." (In the event that we are not able to schedule an office visit at your preferred time, we will arrange a personalized online session for you.)

Because the performance of Blackboard 9 is dependent on the processing power of the computer you use, we have also provided some tips below to help ensure that your experience with Blackboard is as smooth as possible.

Sincerely,

USC Blackboard Support Team

#### TIPS FOR USING BLACKBOARD 9

1. Use a High-Speed Internet Connection

Access Blackboard on a reliable, up-to-date computer with a fast Internet connection, preferably a wired connection. Avoid using a wireless or dialup connection.

2. Update Your Browser

For improved performance, update your Web browser and use only the following supported browsers: Firefox 3.5, Safari 4.0, or Internet Explorer 8 (IE). Do not use IE 7 to access Blackboard 9; upgrade to IE 8 instead.

3. Close Unnecessary Programs, Tabs, and Windows

Blackboard 9's performance is dependent upon the processing power of the computer you use. For optimal performance, before you open Blackboard we suggest that you close any unnecessary programs, tabs, or browser windows.

4. Maximize Your Browser to View the Entire Grade Center

To view the entire Grade Center, maximize your browser window and use your vertical and horizontal scroll bars.

5. Use the ENTER or RETURN Key When Entering Grades

For greater speed and efficiency, use the ENTER or RETURN key on your keyboard after entering each grade. Using the TAB key or left-clicking the mouse to move to the next entry will open an unnecessary prompt and will slow down the process of entering grades.

Once you have pressed the ENTER or RETURN key, you can enter the next grade right away. There is no need to wait for each grade to save before entering the next grade.

#### 6. Download Student Assignments in Batches

Instead of downloading assignments one at a time, it is quicker to download all of your students' assignments into one file by using the batch download feature. For step-by-step instructions, go to [www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9\\_docs/reviewing\\_assignments\\_offline\\_quicksteps\\_9.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9_docs/reviewing_assignments_offline_quicksteps_9.pdf).

#### 7. Download Turnitin Assignments in Batches

You can also download all of your students' Turnitin assignments in batches. For step-by-step instructions, go to [www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9\\_docs/downloading\\_turnitin\\_papers.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9_docs/downloading_turnitin_papers.pdf).

#### 8. Use the Timer Option When Creating Tests

Turn off Force Completion under the Edit Test Options wherever you created your test. When Force Completion is enabled, students who lose their Internet connection will be shut out of your test and will not be able to resume taking it.

Instead, use the Timer option to allow students a certain amount of time to complete and submit the test. The timer starts when the student begins the test and stops when the student submits the test, regardless of the student's Internet connection status.

### ADDITIONAL HELP

#### Assign Percentage Values to Tests and Other Assignments

Assigning weighted values to tests and other assignments can be an intricate process. For help setting up grading categories and columns or adding percentage weights to tests and other assignments, view the following how-to movie or download the quick-step guide.

\* To view an instructional movie on weighted grades, go to

[www.usc.edu/its/blackboard/support/bb9/assets/movies/weight\\_grades/weight\\_grades.html](http://www.usc.edu/its/blackboard/support/bb9/assets/movies/weight_grades/weight_grades.html)

\* To download the Creating Weighted Grade Center Columns step-by-step guide, go to

[www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9\\_docs/creating\\_calculated\\_columns\\_quicksteps\\_9.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/its/cst/community/bb9_docs/creating_calculated_columns_quicksteps_9.pdf).

#### 24-Hour Telephone Support

For immediate help, call the Customer Support Center at 213-740-5555 and choose Option 3. Telephone support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year round. You may also send an email to [blackboard@usc.edu](mailto:blackboard@usc.edu).

#### Self-Help Materials

To access self-help materials, including instructor how-to movies, guides, and workshops, go to [www.usc.edu/its/blackboard/support](http://www.usc.edu/its/blackboard/support) or click the Blackboard Help tab at the top of any Blackboard page.

