Good morning, colleagues:

Monday's *derecho* and, in its wake, power outage, damage, and downed trees continue to affect many of us. As of this afternoon, MidAmerican Energy reports over 5,000 customers still without power in Des Moines alone. So, recognizing that a weather event of this magnitude has likely limited our individual cognitive bandwidths even more than usual in the run-up to welcome week, I'll keep this as brief as I can.

In today's updates:

- Recap: Transition to Blackboard Ultra Base Navigation.
- Online Design Dialogue Recordings
- Cameras and Virtual Teaching—A Close-Up
- Printing and Photocopying for On-Campus Classes
- Covid-19 Protocols and References

Transition to Ultra Base Navigation (UBN)

This past weekend, ITS successfully moved Blackboard courses onto the Ultra Base Navigation (UBN) system. This move is the first phase in a the campus-wide upgrade to Blackboard Ultra from Blackboard Original. That transition will take place over the coming school year and is guided by input from the LMS Review Task Force and the LMS Advisory Committee.

For now, this transition primarily affects navigation leading into courses. Very little has changed about the actual function of courses, although within courses, some features are slightly differently configured. For more information on what has changed and how to get started with UBN, visit this ITS Knowledge Base guide.

The most noticeable change past users of Blackboard Original will encounter is the uniform look and feel of the background color/pattern scheme. This standardized background and frame ensure compliance with principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) protocols, specifically to make sure course content and controls are accessible to people with visual and motor impairments.

However, courses are still customizable in other ways, including:
- Adding banner images.
- Embedding images throughout the content.

Please visit the Drake ITS Knowledge Base guide on creating images and banners for more guidance and direction. Please Also see Karly Good's campus-wide email newsletter "Teaching with Technology Tips and Tricks" of August 6, 2020 for additional details on recent and upcoming changes and updates to Drake's teaching and learning technology environment.

Online Teaching Resources

- Christina Trombley, executive director of Drake Online and Continuing Education, continues to post videorecordings of the Online Design Dialogue Series on the DOCE faculty resources page.
- Zoom continues to post videorecordings of training sessions and user guidance sessions. While Drake users should use the ITS Knowledge-Base guidelines as the first stop for learning about how to use Zoom in the Drake IT/Blackboard environment, Zoom-hosted trainings can be useful supplements. It's important, however, to be aware of some of the differences between what the Drake license provides and what Zoom trainings sometimes cover. (For instance, there is no automated cloud storage of recordings for Zoom sessions at Drake and we do not have access to "Zoom Rooms"—open meeting spaces available to users for indefinite periods). That said, here's an introduction to hosting and managing meetings using Zoom.

Cameras and Virtual Teaching—A Close-Up

Some have asked for more on the do's and don't's of camera use in virtual classrooms, including more detailed guidance and more nuanced discussions and reflections on the topic. To that end, you may wish to consult the following resources:

- "Cameras Be Damned," by Karen Costa. In this short piece, Costa advocates for student privacy and mental & emotional health as primary factors in determining how we use cameras in our virtual teaching.
- "Is it Really Wrong to Make Students Turn on their Video Camera During Virtual Class?" by David McGuire features a useful infographic/quick guide to responsible and responsive camera-use policies. (As is frequently the case, K12 educators are quite far along in their nuanced thinking about these issues).

The key take-away from these and other resources and guides is this: Except with very rare exceptions, students should not be expected to turn on their cameras. Camera use during synchronous online sessions should only facilitate learning, not serve as a means of control or surveillance.

Also, please remember, as you conduct your virtual class meetings: Per federal Title IX and Clery Act reporting requirements, faculty (and other employees) are required to report behavior that they would otherwise be required to report even if the behavior is observed, or they become aware of suspected misconduct, in a digital/virtual environment. Jessica Morgan-Tate, Drake's Title-IX coordinator, will announce additional training and resources soon, so stay tuned.

Printing and Photocopying for On-Campus Classes

Given the tendency of students to wait till right before class to print out papers, to use the follow-me printer closest to their classrooms (as opposed to using printers in buildings where there are many printers available), and to congregate around printers waiting for their work to print out, please try not to require students to print material for your classes, including homework assignments. Instead, strive for a paperless classroom: Blackboard offers many easy-to-use features for accepting student work electronically.

Likewise, consider limiting printed materials for distribution to your class: The less frequent the exchange of artifacts in class, the better. If at all possible, readings should be provided electronically or through prepared course packets for students to purchase; doing so, of course, requires more advanced planning.

Online Covid-19 Protocols and References

Remember to check [Drake's Covid-19 response webpages](#) frequently, as updates on policies, protocols, and approved and recommended practices are centralized there. There are separate tabs for students, faculty, visitors, etc. I would highly recommend acquainting yourself with the information provided to students in addition to information that pertains directly to the faculty or staff roles on campus.

Additionally, facilities services continues to prepare classroom arrangements. Facilities workers are expecting to move and/or zip-tie chairs and put up any necessary barriers and dividers by August 31. Please expect these changes to happen closer to that deadline since we are teaching virtually for the first week. At the moment, facilities workers are focused on preparing residence halls and other student-life areas of campus. Please plan to use the furniture as it is arranged in classrooms.