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**To:** Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning <[vpntl@villanova.edu](mailto:vpntl@villanova.edu)>  
**Subject:** LMS selection update

Dear Faculty Colleagues

I am excited to provide an update regarding the selection of our next learning management system (LMS), the replacement for Blackboard. I want to thank all of the faculty, students, staff, and administrators who have been involved in this exhaustive process over the last year.

Guided by our strategic plan, we sought an LMS that would allow for further innovative teaching and learning in the decade ahead appreciating our desire to expand our capabilities in the graduate space and wisely use our financial resources to fund other important initiatives. I am excited to announce that Provost Maggitti has selected D2L Brightspace.

### **About the Comprehensive Review Process**

With our strategic plan in mind, an LMS Steering Committee—composed of members of the faculty, the offices of the Provost and Online Programs, UNIT and other administrators was formed to spearhead this initiative. Three LMS finalists were selected—Anthology Ultra, D2L Brightspace and Instructure Canvas—and a formal request for proposal (RFP) process followed.

Since then, we have held a faculty pilot program and student focus groups; engaged in in-depth conversations with each vendor company and other institutions who use each LMS; collected survey responses; spoken to external consultants and reviewed market data. In total, we have generated over 1,000 pages of supporting documentation which was summarized and presented to the Provost.

The team distilled all of this input into six key categories for consideration:

- Ease of User Experience for Faculty and Students
- Degree of Innovation Now / Potential for the Future
- Commitment of Company to Partnership / Future Collaboration
- Upfront One-Time Cost / Expense over Life of Contract
- IT/Administrative Need to Implement and Maintain the System
- Capability to Support Fully Online Degree and Non-Credit Professional Education Courses

### **Community/Stakeholder Feedback**

Input from almost every category eliminated Anthology Ultra as a viable solution. The majority of the 20 faculty who participated in the pilot over the summer preferred Instructure Canvas over D2L Brightspace—although many noted that both Canvas and Brightspace would be a suitable choice. In support of Canvas, they noted its ease of use, with several pointing to their prior experience using the system. The faculty further provided excellent insight into how we don't just want to "transition" but rather "transform" our current Blackboard courses in an optimal way to achieve their learning objectives and the faculty support that will be needed to do so.

Looking at the other factors, Brightspace was deemed to have the most innovative and robust features in course development for those people and groups interested in using them while offering comparable features to Canvas for those who use basic functioning. D2L also spent time on site with the team prototyping what some unique features may look like in our environment, further solidifying their

commitment to the University. In addition to a clear advantage on this customer support, they further offered a very competitive price, \$1M lower over the life of the contract. UNIT found their system had a slight advantage in terms of IT integration. D2L also had the superior storefront for our 5,000 students taking noncredit courses.

### **LMS Selection**

Taking all of the above into consideration, D2L Brightspace was selected by Provost Maggitti. This LMS will best situate the various constituents at Villanova for success in the coming decade and enable the University to meet its strategic goals while continuing to provide an excellent educational experience to our traditional undergraduate students. Brightspace will provide innovative and excellent tools to promote student learning and will distinguish and support the amazing pedagogy of our faculty.

**The campus community will officially switch to D2L Brightspace for the summer semester 2026.** Prior to this official move, courses will be available in the new system to provide time for design and development. Additional communications about timing, training, moving materials, and preparing for the launch will be sent in the coming months.

Thank you again to all of you who participated in this very important initiative, and we look forward to more input as we prepare to transition to our new LMS.

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