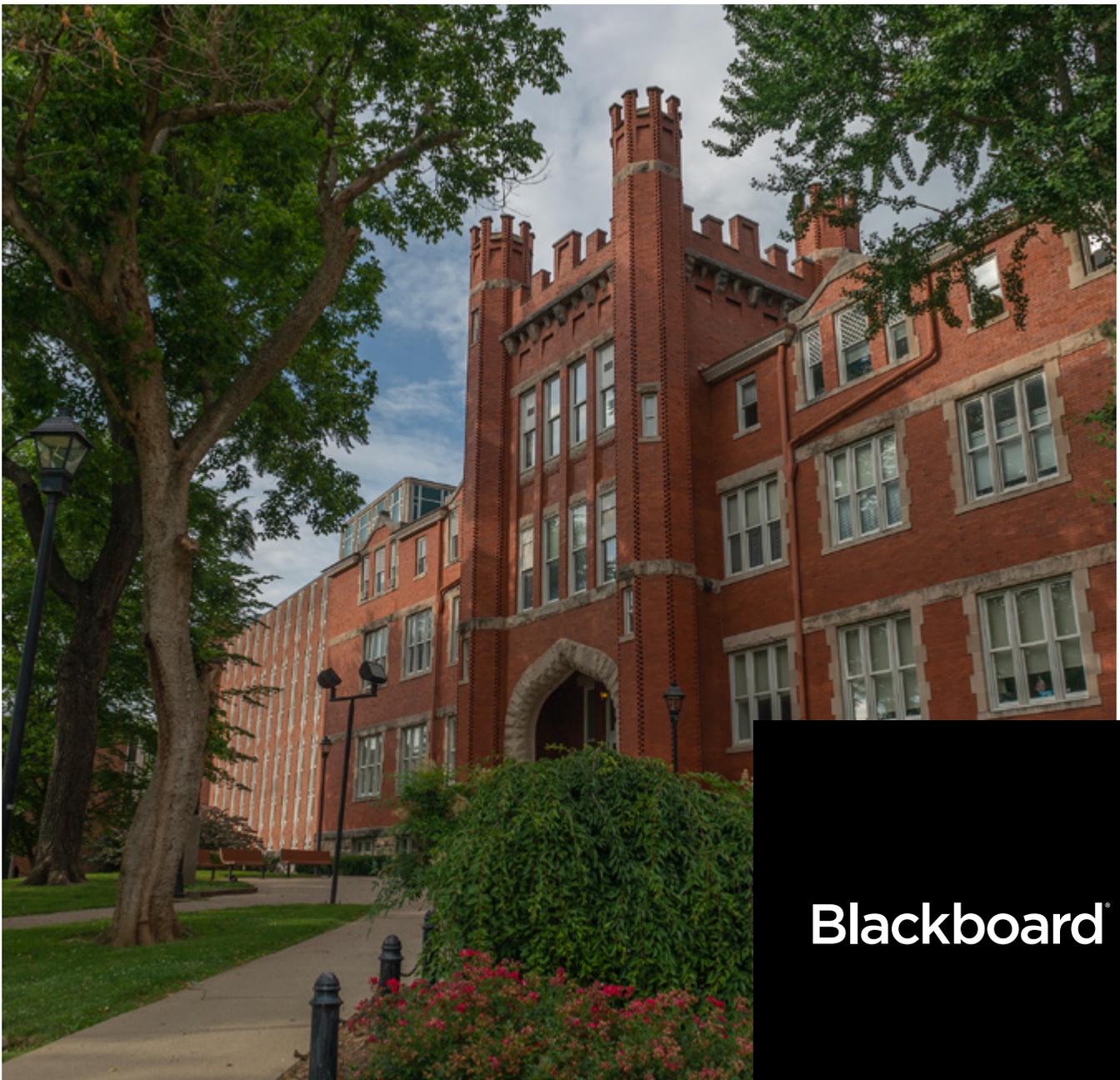




Marshall University

Expanding Access to Education
Through the Power of Technology



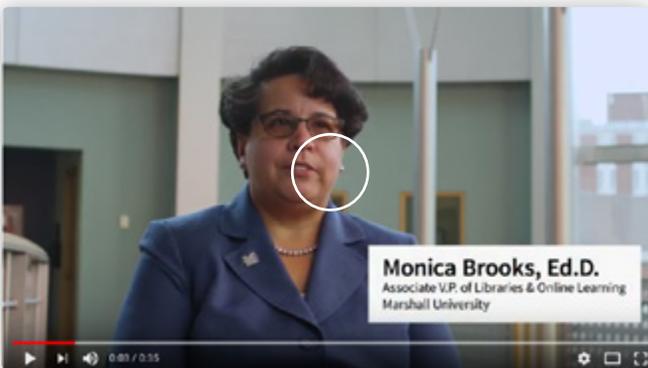
Blackboard®

Challenge

Marshall University is committed to expanding access to education across West Virginia, and beyond, through the power of technology.

Solution

For more than 20 years, Marshall has partnered with Blackboard to continuously transform to meet the specific and evolving needs of their students leveraging Blackboard's flexible solutions to create an experience for students, in the classroom and across campus, that is connected, insightful, and personalized. Marshall partners with Blackboard to provide a comprehensive digital learning environment, deliver a connected campus experience across all aspects of campus life, foster an engaged learning community with relevant and personalized communications, and support and adapt to a new student experience.



“Marshall has been fortunate to have Blackboard’s comprehensive digital learning environment, so we have an array of resources from the company which helps support our teaching learning platform,” 📺 reflected Monica Brooks, associate vice president of Libraries and Online Learning. Marshall has created a comprehensive digital learning environment that meets the unique and evolving needs of their students including Blackboard Learn, Blackboard Collaborate, Analytics for Learn, Blackboard SafeAssign, Blackboard Outcomes and

Assessment, Blackboard Ally, and the Blackboard mobile applications. To better support faculty and students with their learning environment, Marshall augments their internal user support process with Blackboard LMS Help Desk services to ensure 24/7 end user help. To simplify campus life, Marshall utilizes Blackboard Transactions with the campus card for all cashless transactions on and off campus. To maximize class time and provide simple and secure access, Marshall has implemented Blackboard Credentials, including biometrics. Finally, Blackboard Mass Notifications and Blackboard Security solutions play a crucial role in the university’s safety and security plan.

Results

Across 10 campus locations and multiple learning modalities, Marshall offers over 100 innovative undergraduate and graduate degree programs in a broad range of fields, contributing to the development of society and the individual. According to Kristen Huff, instructional designer, “At Marshall University, we use Blackboard to really grow a lot of our institution initiatives. It’s so seamless that in a lot of ways students don’t even realize some of the things they use on a daily basis are Blackboard products.”  Huff added, “The use of Blackboard tools has really streamlined a lot of processes across the university that have taken a tremendous amount of time and staff in years past.” 



Connected Experience

“Blackboard helps us create a connected experience for all of our students and faculty by creating a one stop shop where they can find everything for teaching and learning.”

Gillian Sochor
Instructional Designer

Facilitating Learner Engagement

As Instructional Designer, Gillian Sochor explained, “Blackboard helps us create a connected experience for all of our students and faculty by creating a one stop shop where they can find everything for teaching and learning. Students don’t realize that they are moving from one product to the next because it is very seamless and very intuitive. Blackboard helps me design courses that engage learners with faculty members by providing us with tools that hold student interest, tools that help students learn in new and exciting ways.” 

Within their learning environment, faculty utilize Blackboard in creative ways to engage learners. Mallory Mount, assistant professor of dietetics, uses breakout groups for her graduate students to collaborate synchronously on clinical nutrition case studies. Within the breakout groups, small groups of graduate students review patient case studies and develop a plan of action. Then, students submit their collaborative work through the assignment feature in the learning environment. Professor Mount can then assess their work as a group, but also provide individual feedback as well. Mount also uses assignments to ensure her students are prepared to provide nutritional assessments in the field. Students record themselves performing nutritional assessments on family members or friends, and then submit their videos via the assignment feature. Through the assignment feedback loop, Mount provides detailed, personalized constructive criticism for each student.



Video: See more...



“Blackboard has really simplified my life and allowed me to stay connected in all areas of campus.”

Hannah Petracca
Student Body Vice President



Video: See more...

Connected Campus Experience

Marshall takes full advantage of the power of Blackboard to simplify and connect all areas of campus life including attendance, transactions, and access. Student Body Vice President, Hannah Petracca, stated, “Blackboard has really simplified my life and allowed me to stay connected in all areas of campus.” 

Blackboard helps simplify all aspects of campus life at Marshall. Student Jimil Vineyard shared, “My freshman and sophomore years, I had meal plans. Blackboard made it very easy for me to just be able to swipe my card and have access to food or get into the library.” Petracca agreed, “It is really convenient that you don’t have to carry a key to get into your dorm. You can just tap your ID card to unlock the main door of your dorm to get in. It provides safety and convenience because you don’t have to carry another extra set of keys.”  Petracca enjoys quick and easy access to basketball and football games as well, “You don’t have to stand in line and wait for a ticket or bring money. You just swipe your ID card and get right into the game. You don’t have to miss anything, which is really awesome!” 

To make life even easier for students, Marshall has implemented biometric dining access.  With biometrics, Marshall University students enter campus dining halls with their fingerprint, as an alternative to the student ID card. In the past, if a student forgot his or her ID card, the student would need to run across campus to get a temporary card to access their meal plan. The biometric system does not register or keep images of the students’ fingerprints. The enrollment process for each student only stores five points per index finger and the process follows industry best practices by encrypting the data to safeguard student information. Since it’s not uncommon for students to lose or forget their student ID card, this system offers added flexibility and convenience to students that opt into the biometrics access program.

Fostering Engaged Communities

Blackboard helps Marshall engage with the learning community, even in the case of emergencies. As Jon Cutler, chief information security officer, explained, “Blackboard helps us create a safe and connected campus experience.”  Marshall takes a mobile first approach to providing notifications of health and safety issues on campus. Students, faculty, and administrators appreciate receiving notifications

instantly on their phones. For example, Marshall leverages the notification solution to communicate a campus closing due to inclement weather.



“For student success, being available 24/7 with technical support is very important.”

Monica Brooks
Associate Vice President of
Libraries And Online Learning



Video: See more...

Providing Personalized & Prescribed Pathways

With the support of Blackboard, Marshall provides personalized and prescribed pathways for students with the aim to drive student success. According to Brooks, “The Blackboard Help Desk is very important because we are not available 24/7. Having that first line of defense opportunity for the student to be able to contact someone either by chat or by phone when they’re experiencing technical difficulties is really helpful.” With Blackboard, Marshall can scale their resources to better support the student experience. She added, “For student success, being available 24/7 with technical support is very important. West Virginia is extremely rural. This is not a state that has 100 percent access to bandwidth. If a student is experiencing a problem in their locale - they could be in Jane Lew, Paw Paw, or Cucumber, West Virginia - and have a problem at night. Having a human being available 24/7 through the Blackboard Help Desk is really important because there is an opportunity for someone to get assistance.” 

In alignment with its strategic diversity and accessibility initiative, Marshall has been piloting Blackboard Ally this summer. To ensure all students can effectively access digital content, Marshall is leveraging Blackboard to assess the current state of accessibility of their digital content, provide assistance and guidance to faculty to improve accessibility, and to create more accessible alternative versions of their content automatically. Brooks reflected, “Technology is wonderful; especially for an individual who might be experiencing some kind of challenge, whether it be a sight impairment or hearing impairment. We can use the Blackboard Ally tool to help us be inclusive, provide an opportunity for Universal Design for Learning, and provide a way for students to consume content regardless of any of their challenges.” Huff added, “Blackboard has really helped us meet accommodation needs for students- whether it be for an extension of a test time, or captions, or a transcription of a lecture. The implementation of Blackboard Ally will really help us with the conversation with professors who may not understand what it means to make content accessible. Blackboard Ally will automatically take your file and they will make it more accessible for the students. Faculty are thrilled. Making courses accessible makes courses greater for every student. They help every type of learner.”

Flexible Solutions

Driving Academic Effectiveness

Marshall is using Blackboard's flexible solutions to help with several key academic initiatives. "Marshall University, just in the last two years, has added 15 new programs using Blackboard. We're able to reach our students no matter where they are anytime, anyplace,"  according to Brooks. Huff added, "Marshall has created several new and online hybrid programs. We've also increased our student retention and recruitment because we are able to offer those programs online now." 

Marshall's university assessment initiative is one of the most significant projects on the campus at the moment. "We are using Blackboard to help us close the assessment loop. With Blackboard, we have concrete information that ties back to our program outcomes. Blackboard has helped us leverage the technology so that we can be more efficient and effective,"  explained Brooks. Associate Vice President for Assessment and Quality Initiatives, Mary Beth Reynolds, oversees the university's assessment process. Marshall University has defined nine learning outcomes for students such as critical, inquiry based thinking, quantitative thinking, and others. Reynold leverages Blackboard to gather evidence of student learning from actual student work samples from classrooms around campus. This meaningful student work, collected from Blackboard courses with ease, helps Reynolds and her team evaluate whether students at Marshall are progressing and demonstrating mastery of university learning outcomes. Reynolds noted, "This process gives us a very robust assessment of how students are doing now, and we can make sure that students are progressing over time as they should." Reynolds and her team use this process to identify areas of weakness and make recommendations to improve student learning across the institution. Brooks added, "With Blackboard, you have the ability to use rubrics tied to specific program outcomes to demonstrate your academic integrity, to demonstrate how you are meeting program outcomes, and to demonstrate how your students are going to be prepared, specifically, for their profession when they leave the nest." Reynolds added, "Blackboard's flexible solutions certainly help us be more efficient in terms of university assessment." Finally, Brooks reflected, "Everyone dreads accreditation time. If can be painful. If you have Blackboard, it does not have to be." 



Video: See more...



“Blackboard notifications make me feel safe and secure by informing me when something’s happened.”

Chase Lucas
Recent Graduate



Video: See more...

Integrating With Every Aspect of Campus Life

At Marshall, the Blackboard student ID integrates every aspect of campus life. As Todd Hunter, accounting assistant, described, “At Marshall, the ID card is the life of a student. Our ID card is used for everything. It is the one card that we can use for anything from dorm access, to meal plans, ticket events, commerce, and even finances.” To support the integration with all aspects of campus life, Marshall has a network of over 400 Blackboard readers on and off campus.

Delivering Personalized Communication

And of course, Blackboard is an essential part of Marshall’s plan to ensure timely, personalized communications to promote a safe and secure campus. Petracca insists, “Blackboard’s notification system allows me to feel safe and secure because anytime there’s any dangerous situation going on on-campus or around campus, we are notified immediately.”  Recent graduate, Chase Lucas, agreed, “Blackboard notifications make me feel safe and secure by informing me when something’s happened.” And, of course, students like Jimil Vineyard, appreciate knowing when to stay home, “My sophomore year, we had a big snow. The university was closed, even though Marshall doesn’t usually close. The notification system informed me that we’d be on a delay system. Because the Blackboard notification system runs through the university, I knew I could trust the information. Especially because my little Honda would not make it out in the snow.”

Adapting To Support A New Student Experience

With budget cuts across the state and the nation, Marshall, like many institutions, has not been able to replace staff as quickly as they would like at times. “The Blackboard Help Desk helps us scale our resources tremendously. Students today want instant results. They want instant answers. We do not have a large staff, but Blackboard has helped us streamline our process so that we can get the most out of time and the most out of our effort,”  explained Huff. Graduate Director and Professor of Criminal Justice, Kimberley DeTardo-Bora, added, “Blackboard helps Marshall meet today’s students’ expectations because it is timely, accessible, and modern. Students are getting a rigorous experience, but at the same time, they are able to work at their

leisure and get a quality education as a whole.” Lucas agreed, “You don’t have to be in the classroom. You can be anywhere, wherever you are comfortable; you can be in a coffee shop and are able to engage with one another in limitless ways.”



“We use Blackboard to promote academic honesty in a way that is seamless with the rest of the course.”

Kristen Huff
Instructional Designer



Video: See more...

Data-Driven Insights

Delivering Education Insight

As Brooks eloquently noted, “At Marshall, and other institutions, everything is data driven. ▶️ Brooks and her team analyze teaching and learning data to understand student and faculty behaviors and characteristics. She added, “We use that data to improve continuously and to find ways to enhance teaching and learning at Marshall.” ▶️ The online learning team is able to analyze practically everything that happens in their learning environment through Blackboard Analytics to identify students who may be at risk. ▶️ From this data, Brooks and her team, “...identify weaknesses or little areas where we can work with faculty or work with individuals on campus who play a role in student success. It’s extremely helpful to have Blackboard show us students who may be at risk.” The instructional design team uses Blackboard data to create better courses through analyzing learner engagement within their courses. In addition to continuous improvement and student progression and retention efforts, Marshall leverages Blackboard data-driven insights to promote academic honesty. DeTardo-Bora explained, “Students have the ability to check what problematic areas may exist within their papers with respect to plagiarism. The student, then, has the opportunity to make corrections enabling a better learning experience. A lot of students think they understand what plagiarism is and what it is not. Blackboard SafeAssign highlights problematic passages enabling students to better discern where their papers may need adjusting.” Huff summarized, “We use Blackboard to promote academic honesty in a way that is seamless with the rest of the course. The tools are built into the learning environment and we do not have to pay another vendor an exorbitant fee that goes up each year. Blackboard offers these services so we can help with academic integrity and academic honesty.”

“Blackboard helps us make informed decisions, especially when we’re expending precious state funds and resources in an environment of shrinking resources,”  Brooks concluded.



“Blackboard’s reporting is streamlined. We can check any specific reader on campus. It makes it easy for everybody to use.”

Todd Hunter
Accounting Assistant

 **Video:** See more...

Accessing Data Across All Touchpoints

For Hunter’s roll in accounting, Blackboard enables him to easily access data across all touchpoints, simplifying his work. Without Blackboard, Hunter believes his job would be much more difficult. Collecting, assembling, and accessing data from over 400 touchpoints on campus is no easy task. Hunter explained, “Blackboard’s reporting is streamlined. We can check any specific reader on campus. It makes it easy for everybody to use.” Marshall can easily track a student’s transactions, access points, and spending with ease. Marshall can leverage data from any touch point to make decisions and improve the campus experience. For example, Student Activities can monitor the success of events such as a trip to the bowling alley to determine if an event should be repeated or not in the future. Or, Marshall can monitor how ticket sales for an event are performing at various locations on campus and adjust as needed.

Empowering The Learning Community With Relevant Insights

With Blackboard, Marshall empowers the learning community with relevant insights. As Cutler puts it, “Blackboard helps us create a safe and connected campus experience.”  On a regular basis, Cutler leverages emergency communications testing best practices with Blackboard to ensure crucial notifications are reaching the learning community without issue. Marshall can troubleshoot any issues with the testing data to ensure broad and accurate reach with the notification system. These practices ensure Marshall can empower the community with crucial information when inclement weather or dangerous situations arise.

Understanding Student Needs & Expectations

According to Diana Adams, instructional designer, “Blackboard helps us [Marshall] keep up with student expectations by meeting them where they are.”  Vineyard could not agree more, “I am a full-time student and I have two jobs. So, from the mobile standpoint of Blackboard,



“We can allow students to have access to education, through Blackboard, they would not otherwise have access to.”

Kelly Prejean
Associate Professor of English



Video: See more...

knowing when my assignments are due, knowing when I should turn something in, getting notifications for those assignments when they're supposed to be due- that's very helpful to me just because I'm always ripping and running. Obviously, I always have my phone on me, so when I get that notification, I think, 'Okay, I need to make time to do this because it's coming up.'”  Hunter added, “Our Blackboard campus card system, the mobile apps, and everything else, provides the convenience that students are looking for. That's what students want. Students want the ease and convenience of one card. With Blackboard, we have been able to achieve that.”

Beyond convenience, the power of Blackboard technology enables Marshall to expand education opportunities for students. Marshall supports many adult students returning to education who have families and responsibilities that they must balance with their education. Associate Professor of English, Kelli Prejean, asserted, “Blackboard allows us to reach students who are working. Most students, especially in this area, cannot afford to attend school without working, and our students are working two and three jobs. They have other responsibilities. We can allow students to have access to education, through Blackboard, they would not otherwise have access to.”  For Detardo-Bora, Blackboard has helped her expand her graduate Criminal Justice Program. Detardo-Bora explained, “We started to see a decline in our enrollment in the traditional brick and mortar classroom for our graduate program. We were not reaching a lot of the practitioners such as probation officers, law officers, or corrections officers who have a full-time job. We have doubled our enrollment and we project, or at least hope to, triple our enrollment within the next couple of years.”  Huff added, “Blackboard helps drive student success at Marshall by offering a wide variety of ways for us to reach our students and for faculty to reach out to those students. Everything that we do is driven by student success. Every decision that we make in online learning and at our university is based on what will be best for the student.”

Blackboard, Your Partner in Change

Blackboard®

20
YOUR PARTNER IN CHANGE
YEARS

*“We appreciate Blackboard.
They’ve been with us for over
20 years.”*

Todd Hunter
Accounting Assistant

For more than 20 years, Marshall has continuously transformed to meet the specific and evolving needs of their students with Blackboard at its side. Cutler said, “There is much that we value with the partnership with Blackboard. It is one company, but there are a number of products and while there is a certain independence with those products, those products are designed to work well together. Blackboard certainly makes it easier for us to acquire, deploy, and manage those products and services.” 📺 Huff added, “The thing that we value most about our partnership with Blackboard now is that I really feel like we are being heard. I really appreciate the effort that has been made the past few years to be on track with roadmaps, to be transparent with information, and to really be honest with us as an institution.” 📺 Brooks appreciates Blackboard’s experience and expertise in education, “We’re working with individuals who are former teachers. We’re working with individuals who are former faculty members at other institutions. That’s extremely important - colleague speaking to colleague.” 📺 For Hunter, he enjoys the dependability, “We appreciate Blackboard. They’ve been with us for over 20 years. With partnerships that come along, you have a growing family. They help you out. They are looking out for you. They know what the challenges are going to be. They know what’s going to happen. Not everybody knows what tomorrow holds, but if you have somebody that is always trying to help look out for you, it becomes a great partner, and great partners are hard to come by.” 📺



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