

THE SAVVY SCHOLAR

GREAT **TEACHING** | **STRONG** SUPPORT

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

Volume 4, Issue 1



Welcome Back to Another Great Year

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Amarillo College! As we gather once again as a community of educators and support staff, we are filled with anticipation and excitement for the journey ahead. Our shared commitment to excellence in education, student success, and community engagement is what sets Amarillo College apart! This academic year promises new opportunities, challenges, and achievements, and I have no doubt that together, we will continue to make a positive impact on the lives of our students and the Amarillo community at large. We look forward to witnessing the remarkable accomplishments we will achieve together in the months ahead.

Save the Date

ACES 2024

1/10/2024
Amarillo College
Washington
Campus
8:30 AM-3:30 PM

Ultra Upskill

9/22/2023
Amarillo College
Washington
Campus
Ware 205V
8:00 AM-5:00 PM

[Zoom Link](#)

As we embark on this new academic adventure, please remember that your colleagues and the resources of the Center for Teaching and Learning are here to support you. Whether you are a seasoned educator or new to our campus, your contributions are valued and essential to our collective success. Let's approach this year with enthusiasm, collaboration, and a commitment to nurturing the potential within every student who walks through our doors. Thank you for your continued dedication and hard work, and here's to a fantastic year ahead.

In this issue:

- Blackboard Updates
- Interactive Slide Decks
- Ultra Upskill
- Focus on Surgical Technology Program
- Mandatory Tutoring Tasks in Watermark

Recent Blackboard Releases

Blackboard is constantly improving their LMS for both instructors and students through monthly releases, which will be featured in the CTL newsletter.

- [Question Banks - Reuse Questions](#)
- [Adding Exemptions](#)
- [Drag and Drop Desktop Folders to Course Content](#)
- [Upload Questions from a File to Tests](#)
- [Learning Module Image](#)
- [Turning Off Messages Tab](#)



Elevating Engagement with Interactive Slide Decks for Student Learning

We often think of slide decks as a teaching tool that helps us organize and present information to our students. What if slide decks could be used as an interactive tool that gives students the opportunity to create and take ownership of their learning? With a few simple steps, you can create interactive slide decks that can be used in your Blackboard Ultra courses.

What are the benefits of using interactive slides with your students?

First, students can be creative and add their own voice and style when adding to the interactive deck. They are given basic instructions for what to include on their slides, but are given freedom to choose how they want to represent that information. Second, adding information to the slides is the responsibility of the students, and helps them take ownership of their learning. Next, these activities can be completed in collaborative groups where students can learn from their peers and talk through concepts. Finally, interactive slide decks can be used for a variety of activities making them a versatile add in for online and traditional courses.

Ready to learn how?

Follow the link below for a short tutorial on how to create and add a Google slide deck into your courses.

[Creating Interactive Slide Decks](#)



Blackboard Ultra Upskill

Blackboard Ultra Upskill

With the new Blackboard Ultra user interface, we have decided to make some changes to Blackboard ER. We will still host this workshop 8am to 5pm once a month for your

convenience to get assistance with Blackboard. No need to schedule an appointment, just come join us In-Person or on Zoom.

During these workshops, we will also go over new monthly Blackboard feature releases that you can incorporate into your courses.

Keep an eye out for the Ultra Upskill banner on the Blackboard Institution Page and the Ultra Upskill email sent from CTL for further information!



Focus on Surgical Technology

When an operating room swings into action, surgical technologists are standing by, an important part of the team trained to ensure successful patient outcomes. The Surgical Technology Program at Amarillo College is designed to prepare students for this challenging career in one year.

[Learn More Here](#)

Surgical Technology week is September 17-September 23.



Watermark Mandatory Tutoring Tasks

Pam Madden, Director of Retention guides you through assigning a mandatory tutoring task in Watermark.

Click here for a short [VidGrid video](#).

If you need further assistance, contact [Pam with an email](#) or at extension 5087.



Building for Impact at Teaching for Transformation 5



STEM Wears Their Sunglasses to Gain a New Perspective



Teaching for Transformation 5

GREAT TEACHING | STRONG SUPPORT

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CTL Mission Statement:

The Center for Teaching and Learning promotes transformative, evidence-based, and engaging professional learning for the enrichment of faculty and administrators to ensure the academic success

of all students at Amarillo College.

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