

# Tech Snacks: OTLE Updates

As we approach the tail end of the Spring 2022 semester, OTLE has some general updates we'd like to share with you. We have results from our annual student Brightspace experience survey to share; some new Brightspace features to brief you on; and a quick overview of the new Brightspace-Banner integration system (IPSIS) and how it will affect you.

## 2022 student Brightspace survey

As part of OTLE's self-assessment process, each year we ask students to complete a Brightspace experience survey about their device usage, Brightspace habits, overall Brightspace satisfaction, and open-ended questions about how they'd like to see Brightspace improved. This year, 85 students participated in this survey.

## Key themes

### Insights for OTLE:

- Tablets seem to be becoming even more irrelevant (53% never use a tablet.)
- Students seem to like tutorial videos as a Brightspace learning tool. We may want to think about creating/pushing more videos to them in different ways. The Brightspace orientation course shell and the OTLE training sessions at freshman orientation are also among the most preferred methods of learning about Brightspace.
- Many students voiced a need for help with the Brightspace email tool.
- A handful of students want to learn how to use the Locker tool or other cloud-based file storage options.

### Insights for Faculty:

- Students continue to voice frustration about course design inconsistencies between instructors.
- When asked what faculty do that they like, a large proportion said something like "I like when instructors have an organized content area that is set up by the week." Weekly organization was a key theme, as well as organization in general.
- Students really want to be able to see their grades (surprise!).
- Weekend (Friday/Saturday) due dates can be difficult for athletes. Students apparently don't like morning due dates.
- Despite their criticisms, 85% still said that they strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "I find Brightspace easy to use."

## Brightspace updates

Over the past few months, Brightspace has begun rolling out some new features that you might find useful in your everyday Brightspace use. These features include:

**Announcements** — Instructors now have the ability to copy announcements within the same course. This can be helpful if you have general announcements that you want to use throughout the semester.

**Banner Text** — Instructors now have the ability to change the banner text within their courses. This will not change the course name or the course code, but it can help with labeling your courses if you are teaching more than one section of the same course.

**Content** — Instructors and students now have the ability to download HTML files that are created within the content area in Brightspace. The HTML files will download as an .html in the format of the device's default browser.

**Assignment Folders** — Instructors now have the ability to add new assignment folders to specific categories that already exist within the gradebook. Instructors can now “Edit or Link to Existing” grade items when creating new assignment folders and organize them in their gradebook as they go along, rather than having to do it twice.

**Discussions** — The discussion tool has been revamped to make the language easier to understand, specifically in the dates and restrictions section when creating new forums and topics. Brightspace has also added a new “Statistics” button in the discussion tool to allow instructors to view class statistics on their discussion posts.

**Email** — All Brightspace users now have the option to “mark as read when viewed in the reading pane” within their Brightspace email.

**Gradebook** — For students, the Pulse App banner is now displayed when accessing the Brightspace gradebook as well as in the notification settings. This will hopefully get in front of more students and encourage them to download the Pulse App for grades.

## **Banner-Brightspace integration transition (IPSIS)**

At the end of April, all MSU campuses are transitioning to a Banner-Brightspace integration system tool called IPSIS. This will affect how Banner information pushes to Brightspace (enrollments, course shell creation, etc.). This transition should not directly affect your workflow, but there are a few things to be aware of moving forward.

**Brightspace will update from Banner more frequently** — Currently, any data entered into Banner doesn't hit Brightspace until overnight. This includes enrollments, student incompletes, and course shell creation and merging. After the IPSIS transition, Brightspace will begin updating in shorter intervals (less than an hour) on the same day.

**Backup your Brightspace courses** — The transition to IPSIS should not have any effect on your Brightspace course shells; however we want to prepare for the worst case scenario. We recommend that all faculty back up their course shells using the Import/Export/Copy Components tool in Brightspace and choosing “export as a Brightspace package.”

**Backup your gradebooks** — We are also recommending that all faculty export their Brightspace gradebooks using the export tool inside the Grades section. You can export your gradebook as an Excel spreadsheet or a CSV file.