



Dear Colleagues:

Summer is a time for relaxation and rejuvenation. It is also a time to reflect on the successes and challenges of the academic year while beginning to plan for the start of the next school year. CITAL staff hope you will take the time to rest, relax, and take care of yourselves.

# Summer time!

We are also hoping that you may find time to spend with us and engage in some interesting summer professional development activities. Whether it is perusing the newly redesigned CITAL website, learning more about Simple Syllabus, engaging with colleagues at our Summer Symposium, playing in an LMS sandbox, checking out the changes in Blackboard, or reviewing Quality Matters resources, we have a lot of opportunities and welcome your participation. This special edition newsletter will outline a few of the exciting things going on with CITAL.

From,  
**The Center for Innovation in Teaching, Assessment, and Learning**

## Center Innovation Teaching Assessment Learning

### New Location & Website

CITAL has a new home in Kretzmann Hall (116-121), including an upcoming collaboration space for faculty to workshop ideas, meet in small groups, or work individually on projects related to teaching and learning. While the Faculty Study and the One Button Studio in the Christopher Center Library will remain spaces for faculty collaboration and content creation, having activities near the CITAL Offices (118-121) will serve to better support faculty. More information will be provided soon. In the meantime, view the newly redesigned [CITAL](#) website and learn more about Ed, Cindy, and Gina on our [About Us](#) page.



### Get a Head Start on Your Fall Classes

Attend workshops in June, July, & August.  
Reserve your seat now!



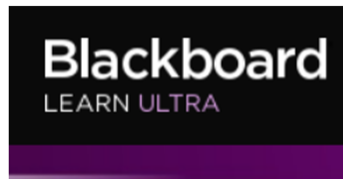
Simple Syllabus workshops are in full swing. These hands-on sessions provided by Gina Rue are perfect for faculty who are either just getting started or have specific questions on how to use Simple Syllabus. To support this new requirement for the fall semester, CITAL is hosting a total of 19 Zoom workshops and encourages faculty to reach out for one-on-one sessions, via email or through the [CITAL helpdesk](#). The full workshop summer schedule and registration can be found here: [VU Upcoming Workshops](#)

### Virtual Summer Teaching Symposium

Join your VU colleagues for a virtual teaching symposium on **Tuesday, July 18**. VU instructors will share some tools and ideas that have made their teaching more effective. There will be sessions on new ways to grade that motivate students to succeed, interactive online tools, and innovative pedagogies such as student philanthropy and role-playing.

# SUMMER SYMPOSIUM

The schedule and registration can be found here: [Summer Symposium](#)



### Learning Management Systems - 'Try Before We Buy'!

Our longtime Learning Management System (LMS), Blackboard, will be transitioning to the new Learn Ultra platform soon. Along with new features and upgrades comes a significant difference in the student and faculty experience. With this in mind, due diligence suggests the university explore other LMS providers to compare features and benefits.

As a first step in the evaluation process, we are inviting faculty to participate in 'sandbox' test environments this summer and throughout the 2023-2024 academic year for the following LMS providers:

- [Learn Ultra](#) (Blackboard)
- [Brightspace](#) (Desire to Learn/D2L)
- [Canvas](#) (Instructure)

#### Interested in Providing Your Feedback?

Faculty who wish to participate will be provided with test environments and support from vendors, CITAL, and IT. As a part of the review process we will be asking that all participating faculty evaluate a set of common features and provide feedback on their experience with each of the potential new LMS systems. Faculty will also be encouraged to experiment in the system beyond most commonly used features. Still interested? Request access here: [LMS Sandbox Request](#).

### New Blackboard Course Master Shell

You spoke, we listened. Speaking with faculty is one of our favorite activities and allows us to better understand course needs and expectations. One such need requested by faculty was to revise the default course template in Blackboard. The template has been significantly simplified to reduce the amount of pre-populated information, while still providing guidance and relevant examples for new and existing faculty to enhance the teaching and learning experience. More information, including images of the new template, can be found here: [Course Master Shell](#).



### Quality Matters Workshops

[Quality Matters \(QM\)](#) is a course design rubric for blended and online courses but is also valuable for any course using technology to deliver content. During the upcoming fall term, CITAL will be hosting a number of "Introduction to Quality Matters" workshops for faculty. These will be general overview sessions to provide background information, what is included in the QM membership and how faculty can access the digital version of the rubric for anonymous self-evaluation. CITAL also plans to begin offering "Applying the QM Rubric" workshops in the late Fall and Spring for faculty to work with the rubric in a hands-on and interactive way. You can find more information on upcoming workshops here: [VU Upcoming Workshops](#)

[Visit the CITAL Website, Your One-Stop-Shop for Faculty Resources](#)

[Submit a CITAL Helpdesk Ticket](#)