Real-time connection between Banner and D2L Brightspace

Update

Due to the demands on IT for COVID-19 response, launch of the update described below has been pushed back to Fall 2020.

Highlights

- Millersville is working on an improved connection between Banner and D2L.
- The change is coming Summer 3 Fall 2020.
- D2L will remain available as the integration will require no downtime.
- New accounts, courses, adds/drops, other updates will appear in D2L in real time.
- Instructors will activate only the courses they want to use in D2L.
- Instructors will still have the option to combine courses inside D2L.
- Content, discussions, assignments, grades, other course materials will not be affected.
- Courses, enrollments, other updates will begin six weeks ahead of each term’s start.
- Term-independent D2L master courses are available by request.

More Details

For Summer 3 Fall 2020, Academic Affairs and Information Technologies are working together to implement a greatly improved method for linking together Ellucian Banner and D2L Brightspace.

Since 2010 Millersville University’s student information system, Banner, has accumulated each day’s changes into a large digest, sending updates to D2L only once per day. To better meet the needs of Millersville students, faculty, and staff, the university is working on an improved system for moving information between Banner and D2L.

Beginning with the Summer 3 Fall 2020 term, Banner will cease sending once-daily information batches to D2L. Instead Banner will maintain a constant communication link with D2L, thereby enabling account, course, and enrollment updates to appear in D2L immediately after they are recorded in Banner.

To enable these improvements, the new integration utilizes Ellucian ILP (Intelligent Learning Platform) and D2L Brightspace IPSIS (Integration Pack for Student Information Systems).

Course Creation Becomes Faster, Easier

The tighter integration between Banner and D2L will eliminate course requests (currently performed in MAX) for regular, CRN-based courses. Six weeks before the start of each term, every open Banner course section in that term will automatically receive a corresponding course space (shell) in D2L. And from that point forward, through the end of the term, any new sections opened in Banner for that term will automatically appear in D2L as well.

Because not every instructor uses D2L for every course section, Banner will create all D2L shells as inactive by default, keeping the shells closed to, and hidden from, students. Activating D2L courses is easy, and instructors will retain full control over which D2L shells they use and when.

Shells for special, non-CRN courses will remain available by request. And any instructor who wants an ongoing, term-independent D2L space, separate from her or his teaching shells, for building, updating, redesigning, or maintaining her or his courses may request the D2L master courses she or he needs.

Course Combinations Remain an Option

Sections crosslisted in Banner will automatically combine within D2L, and instructors who wish to combine other, non-crosslisted sections together within D2L will still have that option.

Please see: Combining courses

Grade Push to Banner Becomes Available

The improved integration will provide instructors the option of pushing final course grades (calculated or adjusted) from D2L to Banner. A new button in the D2L grades tool will let interested instructors begin the simple, step-by-step process when they are ready, and flexibility in the export process will allow instructors to push grades by course or by section, review the grades that will be sent, see exclusions, and enter dates of last attendance when necessary.

Afterwards, and still from within D2L, instructors will be able to review a history of the grade exports they performed.

D2L Courses Remain Otherwise Unchanged

This change will not affect materials or structures within existing D2L courses, and the new D2L shells Banner creates using the improved integration will look and function just as new D2L course shells do now. Any content, discussions, assignments, grades, or other work instructors, staff, and students have in D2L now will remain in place and completely unchanged.

Furthermore, the process to copy course materials from old shells to new—or from master courses to new teaching shells—will remain the same.

Have questions? Need more information?
Contact the IT Help Desk via the SysAid portal, by emailing help@millersville.edu, or by calling (717) 871-7777.