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Digital Teaching Symposium 2026

# Blackboard Beyond the Classroom: Collaboration, Community and Connectedness with Virtual Student Success Fest


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# Presenters

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# Agenda

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Beyond the Online Classroom

Reach. Teach. Demonstrate.

Virtual Student Success Fest (VSSF)

Extending the Experience through Blackboard

Continuous Improvement & Beyond the Numbers

# The student success challenge

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### Resources exist

Institutions invest in advising, tutoring, counseling, library services, technology, and academic support.

### Connections can be missing

Students may not know what is available, how services relate to their needs, or how to access support.

### Timing matters

Information delivered too early can be forgotten before students have an opportunity to use it.

**The question: How do we connect students with the right support at the point of need?**

A CONNECTED PROCESS

# The Reach, Teach, Demonstrate framework

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## 01 REACH

Establish the connection

Faculty and staff • live virtual sessions • interaction

## 02 TEACH

Build knowledge and awareness

Service presentations • practical guidance • questions

## 03 DEMONSTRATE

Support access and application

Blackboard • revisit information • navigate resources

**AWARENESS → UNDERSTANDING → ACTION**

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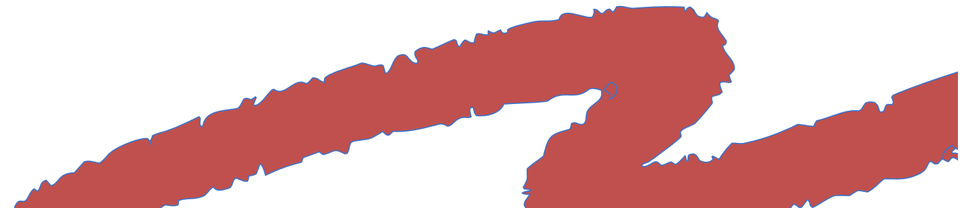
# REACH: Connect students to the people behind support

- Real-time interaction with faculty and staff
- Direct introductions to academic and student support services
- Opportunities to ask questions and receive immediate responses
- Connections across academic levels and campus affiliations
- Reduced dependence on physical campus participation

**154**

**study participants**

**January 2024 – August 2025**



A DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATION

# REACH: Who participated?

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**30.5%**

online campus students

**37.7%**

main campus students taking some online classes

**22.7%**

graduate students

**16.2%**

first-time freshmen

## Participant experience

Overall satisfaction

**4.82 / 5**

Would recommend VSSF

**98.7%**

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# TEACH: Turn connections into practical knowledge

- Online Student Success
- Time Management
- Math Online
- Academic Integrity
- Student Resources / Care Team
- Library Services
- Counseling Services
- TRIO Student Services
- Student Q&A

STUDENT-IDENTIFIED VALUE

# TEACH: What students found useful

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Students identified sessions spanning academic, practical, and personal support:

- **Online Student Success**
- **Time Management**
- **Student Resources and the Care Team**
- **Library Services**
- **Counseling Services**

# TEACH: Deliver learning close to the point of need

### Traditional timing

Information may be delivered weeks or months before classes begin.

Students may have limited opportunity for immediate application.

→

### VSSF timing

Sessions were scheduled approximately one week before classes.

Information was closer to the moment students were preparing to use it.

**94.2%**

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# DEMONSTRATE: Extend the experience through Blackboard

## LIVE VSSF SESSIONS

- Personal connections
- Faculty and staff introductions
- Presentations and explanations
- Real-time questions and answers

## BLACKBOARD

- Continued access to supported programming
- Opportunities to revisit information
- A central location for resources
- Access beyond scheduled live sessions

**From attending a session to accessing support independently**

**VSSF Blackboard Org**

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

# What the research tells us

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**4.82**

**Overall satisfaction**

**4.79**

**Content relevance**

**4.78**

**Program quality**

**Presentation effectiveness**

**Likelihood to recommend**

## 98.7% would recommend VSSF to other students

All mean scores are on a five-point scale.

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# Beyond the numbers: What students told us

## What worked well

- Comprehensive information
- Engagement and accessibility
- Practical value
- Increased confidence and preparation

## What could improve

- More interactive activities (n=6)
- Live website demonstrations (n=4)
- Multiple shorter sessions (n=3)
- Additional evening/scheduling options (n=5)

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# Why the model makes sense

### Just-in-Time Learning

Deliver information close to when students need it; support timely preparation and potential application.

### Tinto’s Student Integration Theory

Build connections between students and the institution through virtual engagement with people and resources.

### Digital Equity & Accessibility

Create additional opportunities for students across campus affiliations to participate without relying solely on physical presence.

Virtual access can expand opportunities; it does not eliminate every accessibility barrier.

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# Institutional implications: From events to infrastructur

**01**

Build cross-departmental partnerships

**02**

Make faculty and staff visible and accessible

**03**

Coordinate academic and student support services

**04**

Schedule programming around student needs

**05**

Extend programming through digital platforms

**06**

Evaluate participation, satisfaction, and utilization

**Student success is a shared institutional responsibility.**

# Future directions: Strengthen each stage

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## REACH

Expand scheduling options
Increase student engagement
Strengthen cross-departmental participation

## TEACH

Add interactive activities
Offer shorter, focused presentations
Use more practical examples

## DEMONSTRATE

Expand Blackboard-supported resources
Include website walkthroughs
Examine ongoing access and utilization

### Future research

**Longitudinal outcomes • Virtual/face-to-face comparisons • Blackboard engagement and utilization**

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## THE TAKEAWAY

# Reach. Teach. Demonstrate.

### REACH

Connect students to the people who support them.

### TEACH

Give students knowledge they can use.

### DEMONSTRATE

Show students how to access and apply resources.

**Student success is not simply about making resources available.**
**It is about making them known, understandable, and usable.**

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# Thank You

#DTS26