Digital Teaching Symposium 2026

Blackboard LMS: Exploring AI Capabilities & AVA - Empowering Educators, Shaping Learning

Blackboard

Your Presenter today



Richard Gibbons

Principal Product Manager



Trustworthy AI Framework



The institution decides when to opt in



A human is always in control



Addressing copyright and data privacy concerns

www.blackboard.com/trust-center

AI Design Assistant Timeline

JUL ‘23
Announced AI Design Assistant at AT23

AUG’23
AI Design Assistant available in test/stage

SEP
AI D
live

NOV’23
Generate imag
in Doc

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and Journal
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ir –APR’24
AI Context Picker

AUG ‘24
Image Generation Improvements

SEPT ‘24
AI Conversation Socratic Exercise
ge

Nov ‘24
Role-Play



13m+

Interactions with Blackboard AI Features

AI Features that are being trusted

8m+

Student Interactions with AI Conversations

Expanding pedagogical use cases of AI tools

53.5%

Instructor Acceptance Rate

Humans in control and checking AI outputs consistently

Demo



AI Virtual Assistant (AVA)

Blackboard

Forward Looking Statement

Statements regarding our product development initiatives, including new products and future product upgrades, updates or enhancements may be modified, delayed or abandoned without prior notice and there is no assurance that such offering, upgrades, updates or functionality will become available unless and until they have been made generally available to our customers.

AI Virtual Assistant (AVA)

Always-on, AI-powered partner that delivers personalized support to elevate every learner’s experience

- Instructors get help writing feedback on submissions
- Students get timely answers grounded in their own course
- Fairer access to AI for everyone at your institution

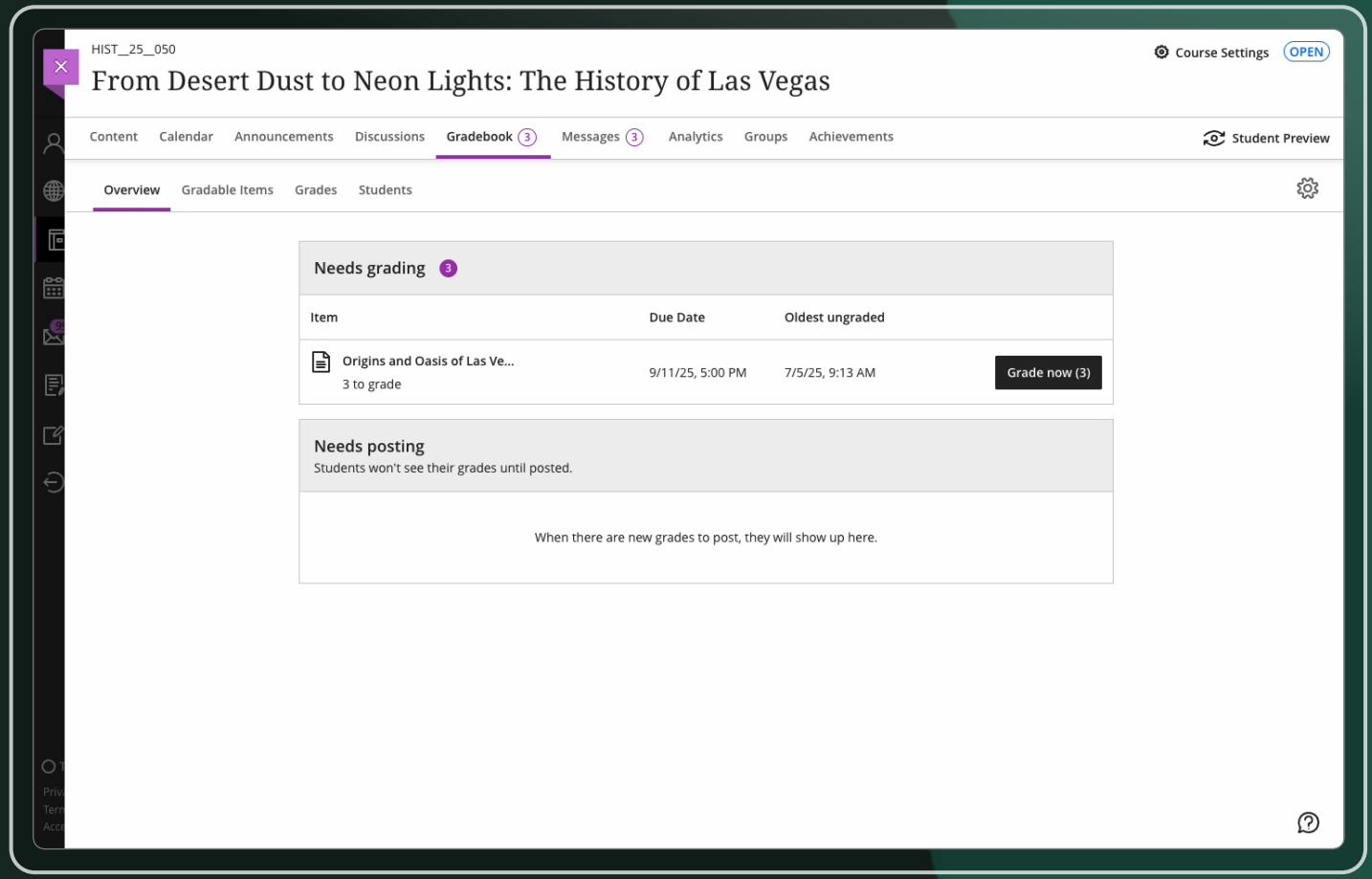


Every AVA capability stays available in test and stage instances until 31 December 2026

Assisted Feedback

Available Now!

- Enable instructors to provide higher quality feedback more efficiently
- Rewrite existing feedback to improve spelling, grammar, and readability
- Generate suggested overall feedback based on graded rubric



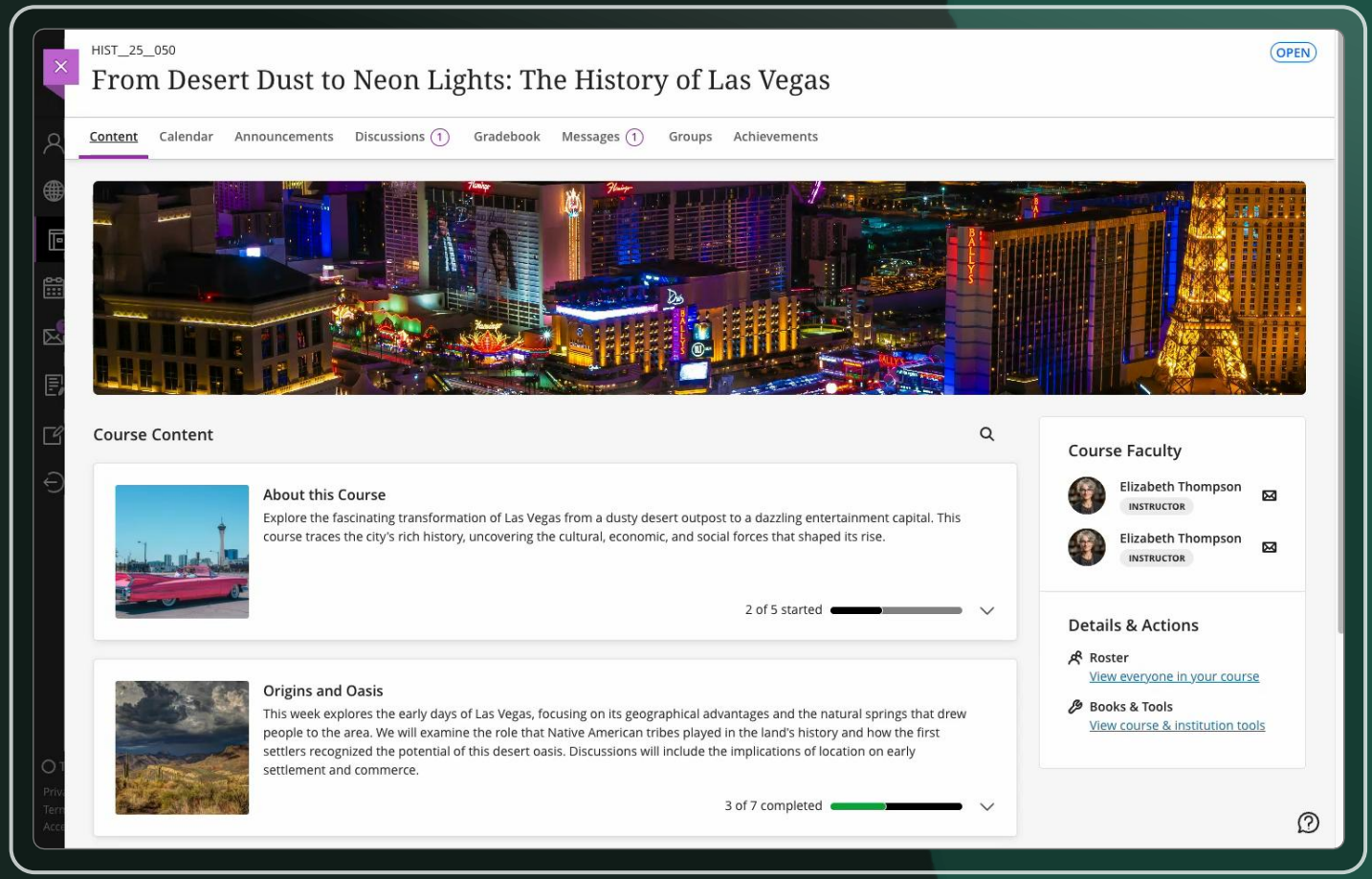
REQUIRES AVA

Blackboard

Automated Responses to Student Messages

Available Now!

- Instructors spend on average 10% of their time responding to repetitive messages from students
- AVA can step in quickly if the answer can be sourced from course contents
- Instructors can review the message and intervene with additional information
- Course level control to enable at the most appropriate time



REQUIRES AVA

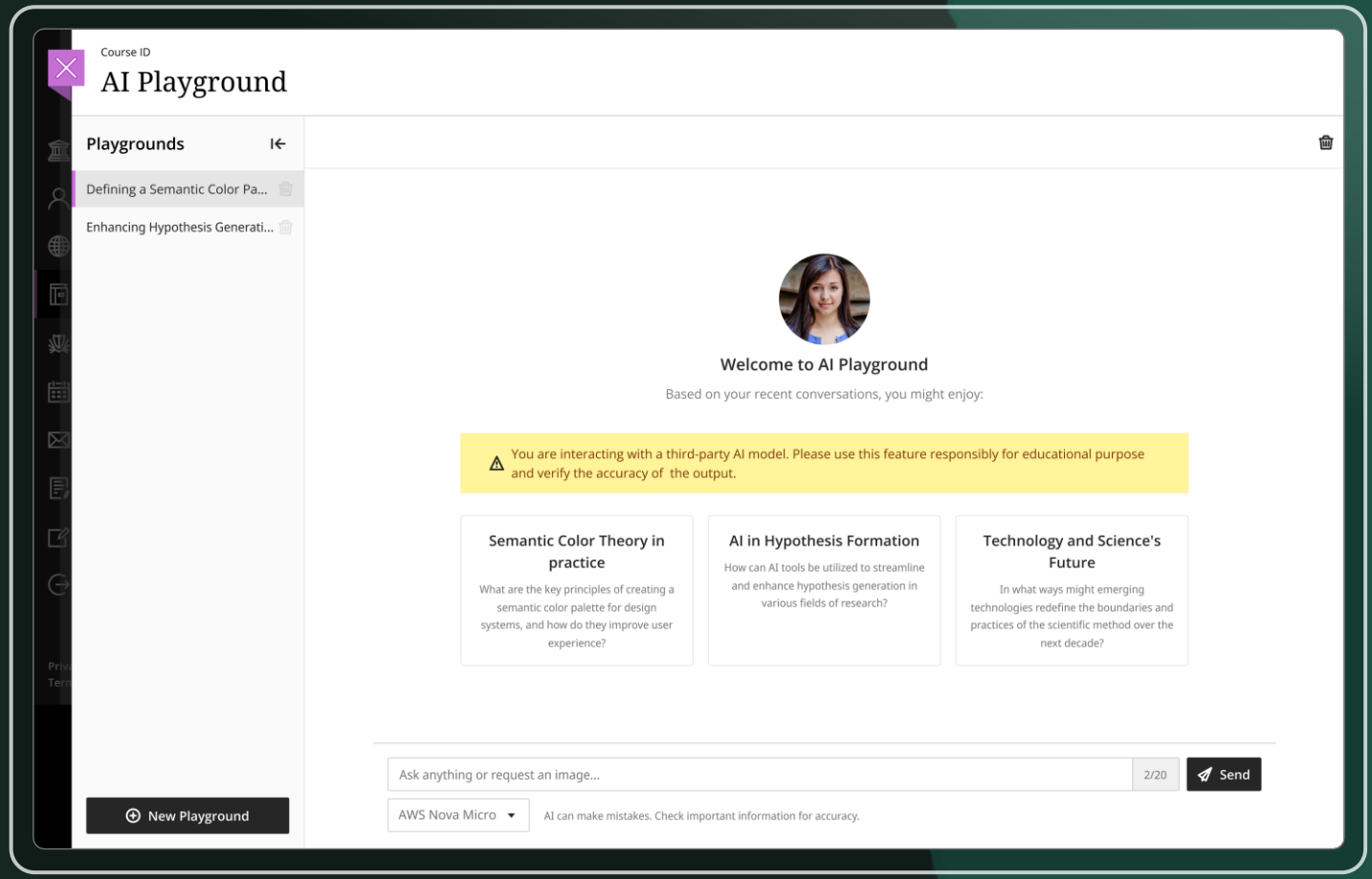
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Student AI Literacy and Equity – AVA Playground

Available Now!

- Equitable access to AI models can be challenging for institutions to provide
- The new AI Playground provides a place for Blackboard users to interact with several AI models
- Provides equitable access and helps improve AI literacy

In partnership with aws



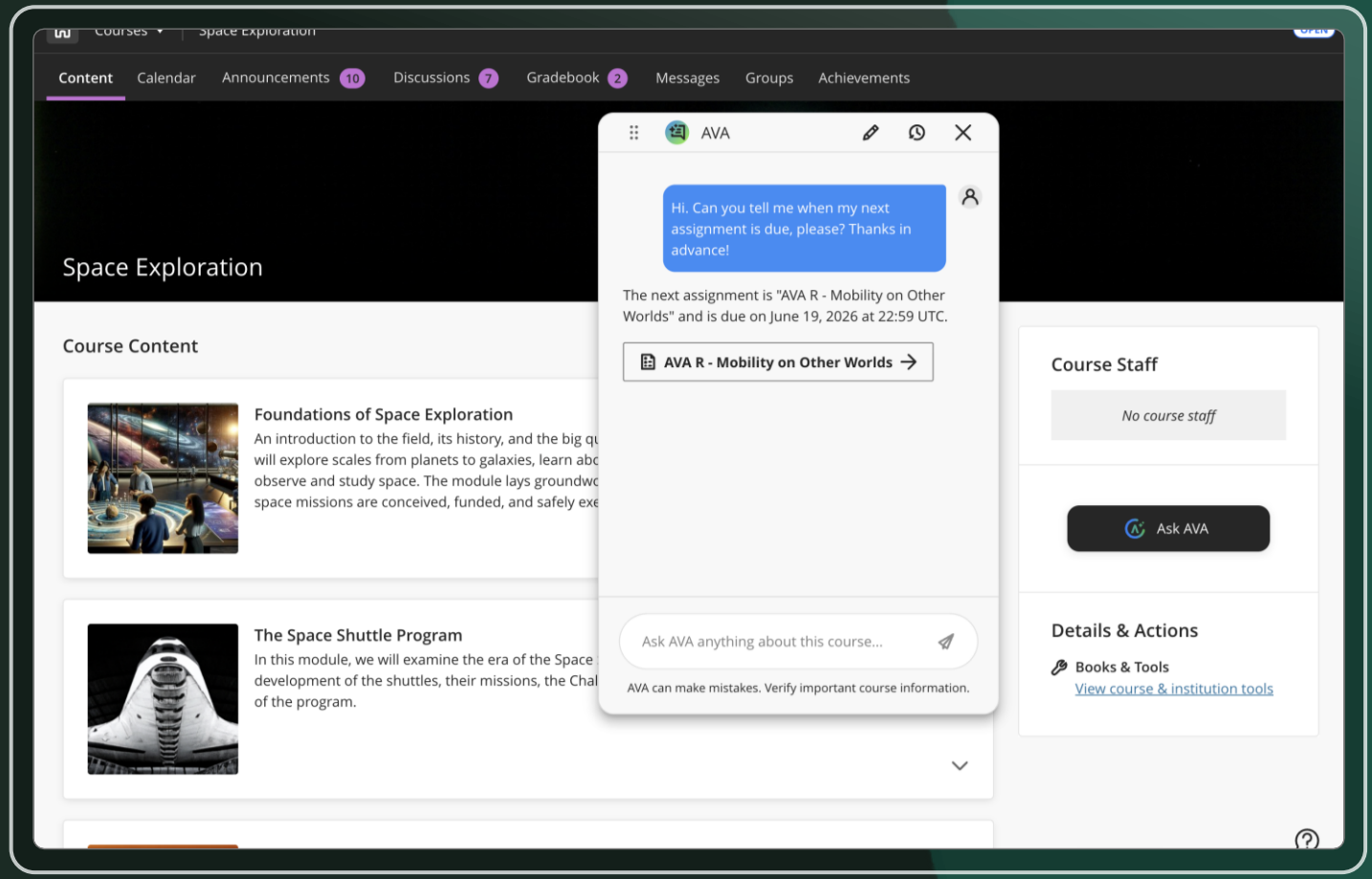
REQUIRES AVA

Blackboard

A Dedicated AVA Virtual Assistant

Now: 1-3 Months

- A dedicated Virtual Assistant available right from the course outline
- Get quick answers common course-related questions
- Shaped by Early Adopter Program feedback
- Builds a foundation for future AI interactions



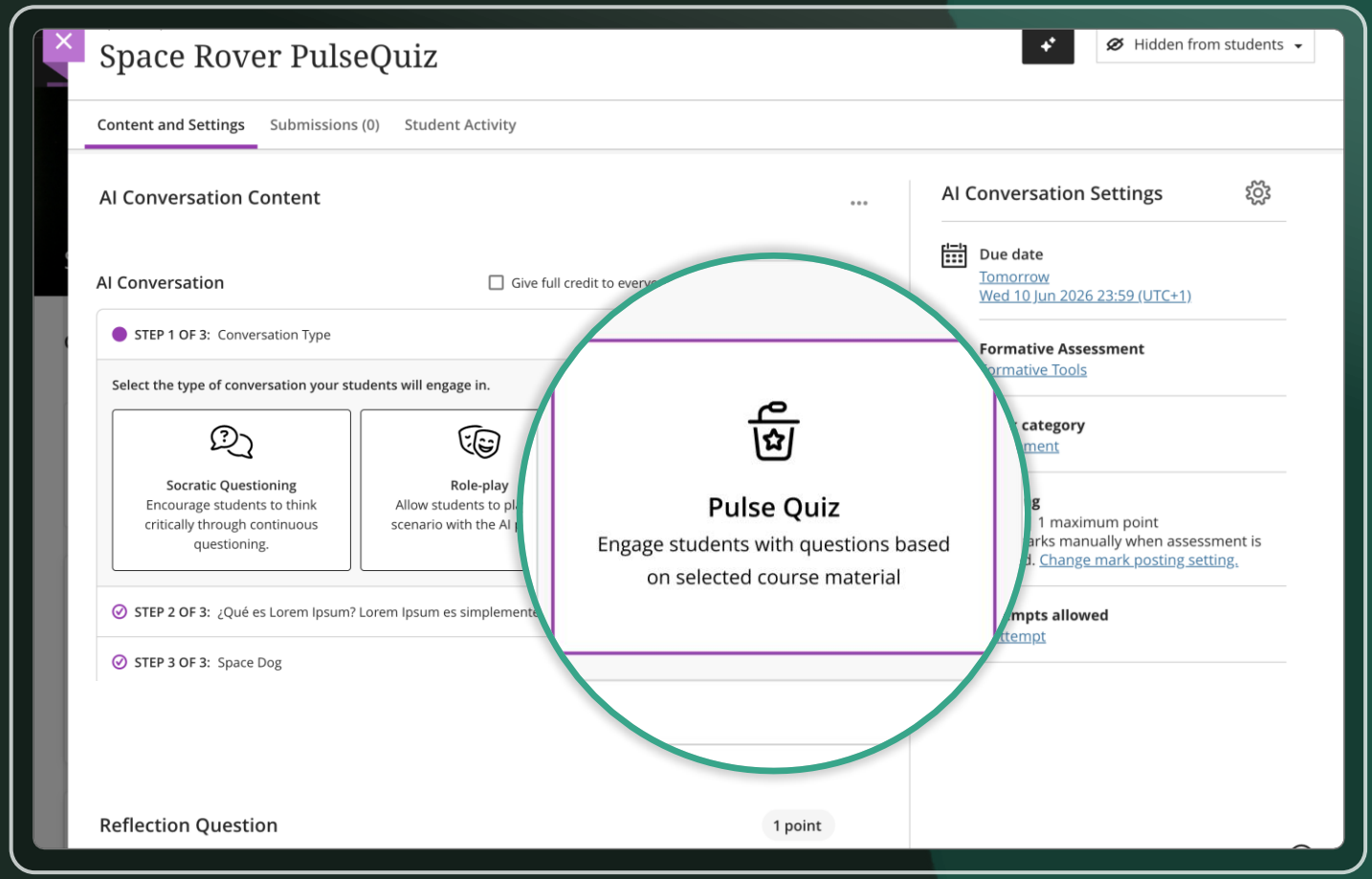
REQUIRES AVA

Blackboard

Give Every Student Their Own Set of Grounded, in Context, Personalised Questions

Now: 1-3 Months

- Pulse Quiz - A new AI Conversation type, exclusive to AVA
- Point to the material you've just covered, and questions are built from it
- Each student gets questions personalized to them
- Student get immediate feedback per question, with a summary at the end



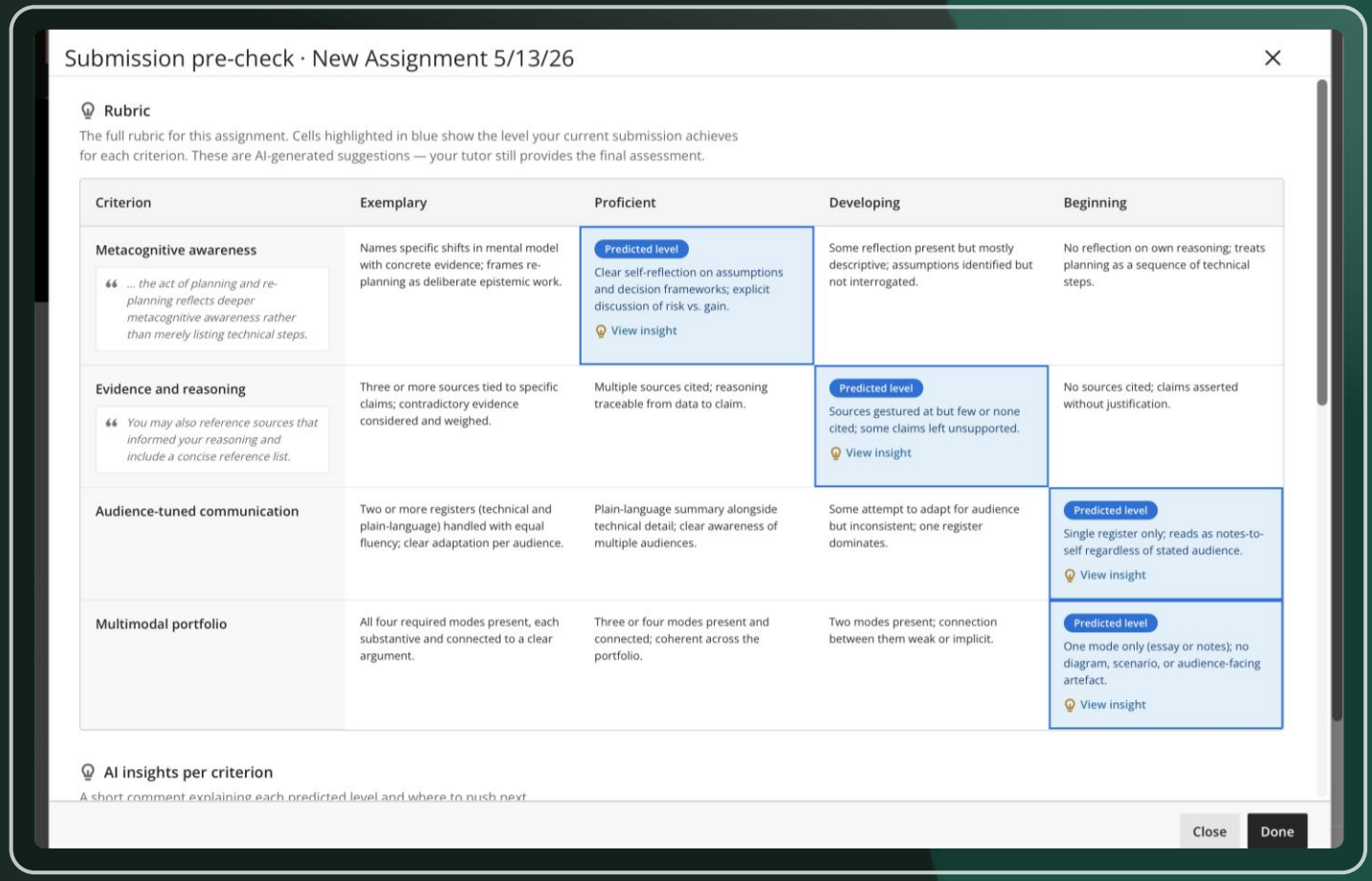
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Scalable Formative Feedback

Later: 6+ Months

- Students check their work against the rubric before submitting supporting independent learning
- Rubric-aligned formative feedback for every student, as they draft
- Feedback arrives while drafting, so students have time to act before submitting
- Instructors see how drafts evolved without adding to their workload



REQUIRES AVA

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One More Thing

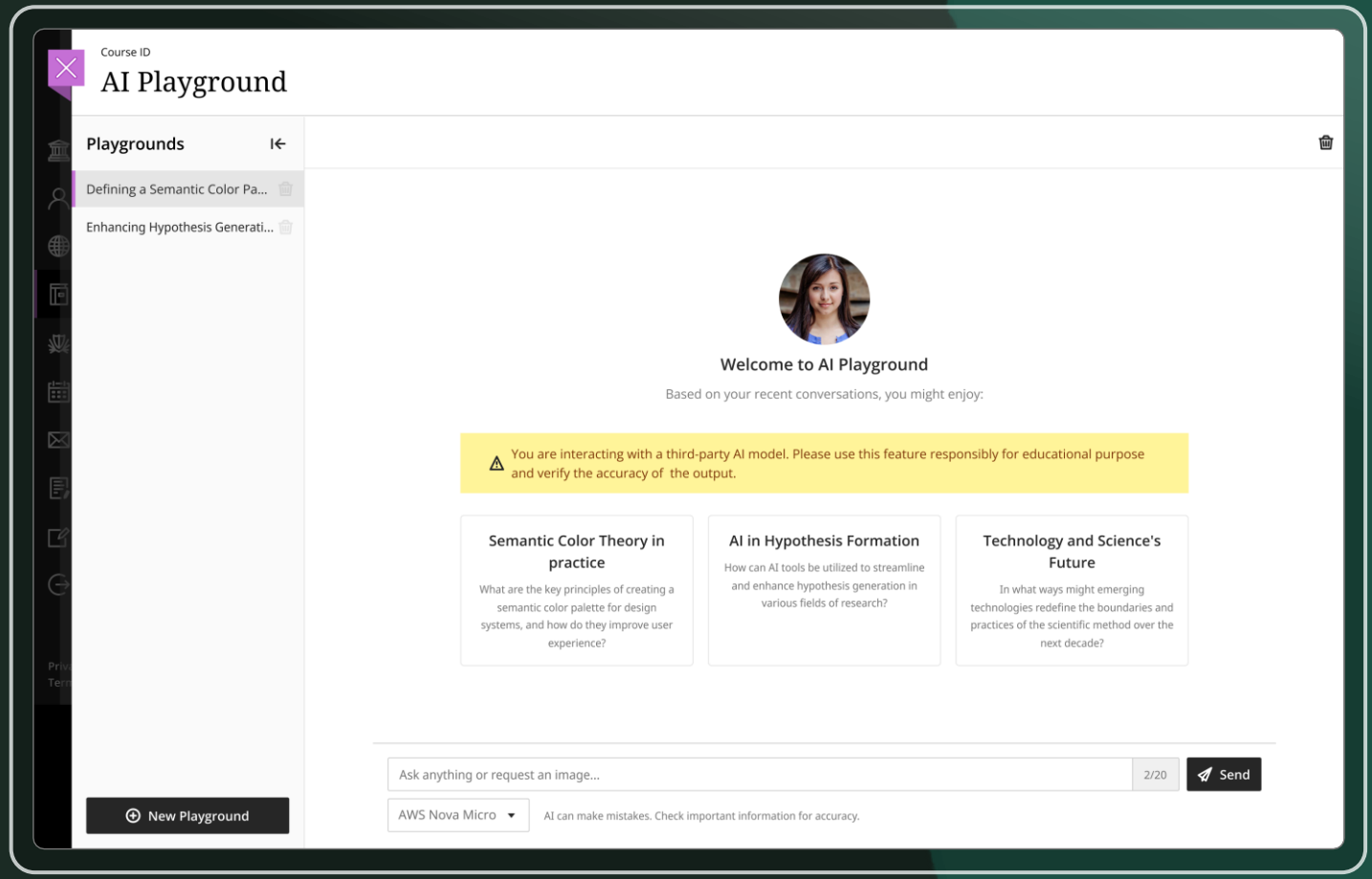
Blackboard

AVA Playground in Assessment

Later: 6+ Months

- Have the AVA Playground as an option in assessment settings
- AVA Playground surfaces in the students assessment space to assist with AI interactions
- Visibility to the instructor of how AI has been used as part of the submission

In partnership with aws



REQUIRES AVA

Blackboard

Questions?




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