# DIGITAL DIGEST

**Lone Star College — Online Services**

## April 2025

### How'd We Do?

Thank you for reading our newsletter. Please take our survey to give us your feedback on it.

## Simple Syllabus is Coming Soon

Lone Star College is introducing Simple Syllabus, a powerful new tool intended to help standardize and streamline syllabus creation across the college. With Simple Syllabus, you'll be able to easily update all your syllabi using a centralized template and publish them directly to D2L, while students benefit from having a consistent location, layout, and content. Simple Syllabus will be available to all LSC faculty starting this Fall.

Ready to get started? Sign up for one of the upcoming training sessions:

- Tuesday, April 22 at 2:00 PM
- Thursday, May 1 at 11:00 AM
- Friday, May 2 at 1:00 PM

Keep an eye on the VTAC Event Calendar for additional training sessions coming this summer. All sessions will be recorded and made available in VTAC, along with additional training documents and resources.

## New Quiz Experience Becoming the Default

On **May 12**, the New Quiz Evaluation Experience in D2L will become the default, which means that the Classic Quiz Evaluation interface will be retired and no longer available.

**Turn it on**

This updated experience has been opt-in since last November, and many instructors have already made the switch. It offers a cleaner layout, quicker access to student attempts, and a more efficient grading flow. The look and feel also match the Assignment and Discussion tools that were updated in recent years, so it should feel familiar. All the key grading features are still available and all question types are supported, though you might notice some differences in how feedback and navigation are handled.

There's nothing you need to do—this change will happen automatically.

If you haven't tried the new version yet, now is a good time to have a look. Please refer to the New Quiz Evaluation Experience article to get started.

As always, the Online Services team is here if you have questions or need assistance.

Need D2L support? Visit the Virtual Teaching Assistance Center.

## Semester Wrap Reminders

The spring semester is coming to a close. Here are a few links to common end-of-semester tasks:

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|---|---|
| Faculty Assistance …………………………….. | Virtual **Teaching** Assistance Center (VTAC) |
| Student Assistance …………………………….. | Virtual **Learning** Assistance Center (VLAC) |
| Converting a Word doc to a D2L quiz? ……… | Use Respondus 4.0 |
| Need to print your D2L gradebook? ………….. | Export Grades and Print Grades |
| Want a paper copy of an exam in D2L? ……… | Print a Copy of the Final Exam |
| Have a student with an incomplete? ………….. | Extend Course Access for a Student |
| Teaching over the summer? …………………….. | Review the Semester Start Checklist |
| Want to learn about Simple Syllabus? …………. | Simple Syllabus Training |

## AI Chatbot in VTAC/VLAC

Recently, OTS launched an AI-powered chatbot in myLoneStar for students. It's named Ellis C.—get it? Now, Online Services has trained and deployed Ellis C. on the Virtual Teaching Assistance Center (VTAC) and the Virtual Learning Assistance Center (VLAC) knowledge bases to provide quick and comprehensive answers to questions.

By clicking the chatbot icon in the lower-right corner of those sites, both students and faculty can access Ellis C. to ask questions related to their online courses and course tools. Available 24/7, this additional support option is just one more way we're working to assist faculty and students and promote student success.

Online Services, in collaboration with OTS, will continue to train and improve Ellis C. so that it becomes even more helpful over time. At the end of each conversation, please leave feedback on how the chatbot performed—your input helps ensure Ellis C. is the best it can be.

## Course Tours Return

Have you ever wondered how your colleagues organize their D2L courses? The popular Course Tours are back and being actively updated by faculty across the system! These short video tours give you a behind-the-scenes look at real course setups, shared by the instructors who created them. It's a great way to spark new ideas and see what's working for others. If you have a course you'd like to showcase, we'd love to feature your work—reach out and let us know!

### What's In A Name?

Recently, Academic Affairs finalized its reorganization—and with it came our new department name: **Online Services**. Aside from the new name, the rest of our department structure remains the same. Remember, Online Services is here to provide excellent service to the entire LSC system. The VTAC site remains your one-stop shop for support, and you can still reach us at vtac@lonestar.edu with any questions.

**LONE STAR COLLEGE**
**Online Services**

# Final D2L Email Migration Round-up

As you are aware, Lone Star College decided to retire the internal email system within D2L. Over the past two years, the D2L email system at LSC has been compromised multiple times, resulting in student identity theft and thousands of spam messages being sent to other colleges and universities. This led to LSC emails being blacklisted, which began to affect our ability to conduct business. Given that D2L is no longer updating their email tool, they recommended we transition to our current M365 system, which offers enhanced security. This change also simplifies communication for students, as they now have a single inbox to monitor all LSC-related information.

To assist you with this transition, we have prepared several articles offering guidelines and tips to ensure a smooth and seamless experience:

**Send Outgoing D2L Emails to Outlook** — **Setup Rules in Outlook to Separate Student Emails**

**Organizing Your Outlook Emails** — **Microsoft 365 FAQ**

## Fusion Conference

**D2L** Every year, D2L hosts a learning conference called Fusion. This year, the conference will be in Savannah, Georgia, but D2L is once again offering a FREE virtual option that includes the main livestream as well as on-demand sessions.

For faculty who are interested in D2L professional development, here is a link to the Fusion 2025 schedule and the registration link. It's a great opportunity to learn about D2L tools, get advice from others in your field, and have some fun!

### Summer Course Design

Summer is a great time to meet with an instructional designer and refresh your course. Whether you're updating assessments, improving activities, or exploring new ideas, even small changes can make a big impact. Let's collaborate and get your course ready for fall!

## D2L Course Purge in May

If you were teaching courses for Lone Star College in 2017, then those courses from seven years ago are scheduled to be purged from D2L starting on May 9.

Within the D2L environment, this means that *all data is removed*, including course activities, files, student work, grades, and attendance data, and is *completely unrecoverable*. This should not be confused with the data archiving we do; these are completely different processes. Briefly, archiving maintains all course data. It just hides it from your main D2L homepage to keep down clutter.

If you really need to keep that 2017 course, we recommend that you create a sandbox and copy your course components into that. An instructional technologist or designer can help you with that. But be aware: this does not retain student data.

Doing a course purge will help forestall D2L performance issues caused by an overabundance of stored data and help maintain a high-quality user experience. Also, be assured that our purge policies are in compliance with both government and LSC-specific date retention policies.