

Welcome to the Blackboard Update podcast from the Reinert Center for Teaching Excellence. I'm Sandy Gambill.

This week I want to give you a couple of pointers regarding spell-checking Blackboard. I know that many of us are frustrated with the lack of a system wide spell checker. While this functionality exists in the HTML editor, being forced to use the editor just for spell checking can be quite annoying.

Here are a couple of work-arounds that are accessible to both you and your students.

Beginning with version 2.0, the Firefox web browser for Macintosh and Windows, now includes a built in spell checker. When you click into a box you can type into on a web page, the spell checker automatically starts working. Misspellings will automatically appear in red as you type. Right clicking on the word will give you suggested replacements, and the ability to add words to the dictionary. This functionality isn't built into Internet Explorer 7, but you can download free third party solutions, such as ieSpell, that work with IE. Ispell is at the letter i-the letter e-spell.com

The other thing I want to discuss this week is our new policy requiring attendance at the two hour Fast Track to Using Blackboard in the SLU Environment in conjunction with having a first course created on the Blackboard system. This policy isn't meant to create busy work or waste faculty time, but we're finding that users who don't receive an orientation to the system quite often experience difficulty in the middle of the semester. While we try to provide same-day support for questions and issues, as we become busier

with the WebCT migration this semester, that won't always be possible. So this two hour course will get you up and running with everything you need to perform basic tasks in Blackboard. If you have questions about the policy, feel free to contact me at 977-7202. To see the training schedule and register for a seminar, visit blackboard.slu.edu

That's it for this edition of the Blackboard update. Thanks for listening.