Teaching with Technology Tip – Grading Student Assignments in Blackboard

Using Blackboard for students to submit papers provides an electronic copy of their work that you can mark up with feedback by highlighting, underlining, or inserting text comments. You can also use a rubric in the Grading Center, or attach files as feedback if using a separate rubric, or audio or video feedback. The inline grading process works with Word, PowerPoint, Excel and PDF files types and the submitted files are marked with a date and time stamp. Student work and your feedback is automatically stored in Blackboard for one year plus one semester.

There are several assignment submission options to support a number of attempts, group work, and plagiarism checking:

1. Settings of one, multiple or unlimited attempts are useful for drafts and final papers.

2. Group submission allows one member of the group to submit the file for everyone. When you grade the work, the score and feedback are accessible to everyone in the group. This “group grading” feature saves grading time and ensures that students see the same feedback on their work. Changes to individual student’s grades within that group can be easily adjusted, however, for differentiation of effort. To grade a group assignment in the Grade Center, select any student in the group to see all members. NOTE: If you add a member to a group after you assign a grade for a group assignment, the new member does not receive a grade, as they were not part of the process.

3. SafeAssign review checks submitted papers for cited sources. Once a paper is submitted, a SafeAssign report is generated that indicates the percentage of the paper that matches existing sources. This overall score can be an indicator that you should review the paper more closely. The SafeAssign report also shows the suspected source for each section of the paper that returns a match, allowing you to easily investigate whether the text was properly attributed. A higher score is not necessarily an indication that the paper is heavily plagiarized, as SafeAssign does not evaluate whether the sources have been properly cited. This is for you to determine when you review the paper. NOTE: Using the SafeAssign “draft” mode can provide a learning experience for students, and allow them to check and modify their papers before final submission. Use a separate assignment link for draft and final paper submissions. You can also use the SafeAssign Direct Submit option to upload an individual paper for review.

Blackboard Grader App

When you are on the go, you can use the Blackboard Grader App on an iPad to grade student assignments using the keyboard, voice-to-text, or audio and video options. The Grader App supports 10 minutes of audio and 1 minute of video feedback. Note that the annotation tools only allow comments on the side of the text, not annotations within the text. Read more about using the Blackboard Grader App.