Blackboard Ultra Navigation will be activated here at Loyola during May of 2018.
It is important to distinguish between “The Ultra Experience” and “Ultra Navigation”. Blackboard Ultra Experience is a new version of Blackboard with a completely different look and feel. The Ultra Experience is designed to comply better with accessibility guidelines, to adapt more readily to viewing from devices with various screen sizes, and to provide a more consistent organization of course materials across all courses.

Loyola is not implementing the Ultra Experience at this time.

During May of 2018 we are implementing Ultra Navigation, which is one step, but not the final step, toward the Ultra Experience.
Ultra Navigation changes a more limited set of Blackboard features. Specifically, Ultra Navigation changes:

- the login screen,
- the landing page, which is the first screen seen after logging in, and
- a new navigation panel.

There are small changes in the appearance of buttons and icons inside of a course, but no major changes are made to the organizational structure or appearance of any course or course content.
Let’s review what some of these screens look like now, in the Original Experience, and then examine how they’ll look after Ultra Navigation is turned on.
First, let’s review how things look now.
The login screen asks for a username and password, and contains a link to a general help page for Blackboard users.
After logging in, users see the My Institution page, which lists courses, provides links to a variety of Blackboard tools, and has tabs at the top for links to university resources.
Inside of an individual course, the appearance and organization of materials can vary widely, depending on settings specified by the instructor or other course developer.
Now let’s compare the same features under Ultra Navigation.
The login screen looks different, but contains the same three main elements. It asks for a user name and password and provides a link to Help for Blackboard Users. The link is now in the form of text rather than an icon. This screen, and all Ultra Navigation screen may have a different appearance on different devices, at it adapts automatically to the size of the display screen used.
After logging in, the first page seen is the Activity Stream, which calls attention to the most recent events in your courses, and will be the most common way of entering courses that are in progress. The screen shown here is made up of two independent parts, a Navigation Panel on the left, and the Activity Stream page on the right.
The Navigation Panel is always on the left hand side of all Blackboard screens, although it might be partially covered over by the content of other screens. It is always the same, providing links to courses, the Blackboard Calendar, Messages, Grades, and other tools, and having a link to the Institution Page at the top.
The Activity Stream will tell instructors when students have submitted assignments, posted to discussion boards, or sent course messages. It will remind students of upcoming due dates, and grades the instructor has posted. The Activity Stream is not specific to a single course, but lists current activity in all active courses in which the user is enrolled.
By clicking on the Courses tab in the Navigation Panel, you can get a list of all your courses. Clicking on any one course will open it. Users can mark individual courses as hidden, which removes them from the list. Instructors have the option of marking courses private, which makes them unavailable to students, or marking courses as complete, which lets students see course content but prevents them from submitting any kind of work. Users can adjust the filter settings at the top right of the screen to find hidden, private, or completed courses.
Inside of a course, the organizational structure and files are the same as in the original experience. The appearance of the text or buttons in the course menu, and of the standard icons for different types of course contents, is a little different. Note that the Navigation panel is still visible on the left, although partly obscured by the content of the course. Clicking the “X” icon near the upper left will close the course, making the underlying page visible again.
By Clicking on the Institution tab in the Navigation Panel, you can go to the Institution Page. Scrolling down on this page will reveal sets of links to selected university resources. The artwork on this page is still under construction.