

Welcome - glad you joined us!

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A PUBLIC SITE.

In an effort to ensure access to UMassOnline's community of users as well as others who might provide insight as we undertake the LPR, all content, comments and attachments are accessible by the public.



Image derived from, "7 Things You Should Know About LMS Alternatives," EDUCAUSE E-Learning Initiative (ELI), July, 6, 2010

Introduction

At the e-Learning Application Cabinet (eLAC) meeting on December 4, 2009, UMassOnline introduced the need, rationale and approach for selecting the next iteration of UMassOnline's learning platform, including the learning management system and support environments. UMassOnline encouraged the ELAC to nominate 4 to 5 individuals from each campus such as faculty, learning management system (LMS) administrators, tech support and instructional design staff to provide insight and input. In addition to the UMass campuses, UMassOnline's hosted partners as well as Massachusetts Colleges Online (MCO) were also invited to participate in creating a process to produce a Request for Information (RFI). The result was the formation of the Learning Platform Review (LPR) Committee. This was reaffirmed with the eLAC at the July 23rd, 2010 meeting. The following documentation represents UMassOnline's, the LPR Committee's and our campus partner's current understanding of the design, development and delivery of online education within UMassOnline as well as our approach for identifying a platform to support those endeavors.

UMassOnline is currently running Blackboard Vista 8, which is supported until January, 2013. Understanding that not only will the platform itself, Blackboard Vista, but UMassOnline's contract with Blackboard end, UMassOnline is compelled to not only assess the current state of learning management systems, but also our own capacity to create, support and advance a platform for the development and delivery of online education, as well as the continually evolving state of academic and administrative technologies within the University of Massachusetts and across higher education.

Having broad representation from throughout the sector, for example UMassOnline's hosted partners and Massachusetts Colleges Online (MCO), is not new as UMassOnline's previous LMS selection process in 2004 included currently hosted and MCO campuses and resulted in the selection and successful implementation of WebCT Vista. Indeed, it is desired for this process to expand participation to include a wide variety of organizations specializing in academic technologies generally and online learning specifically such as LMS vendors and service providers, professional organizations (EDUCAUSE, JISC, NERCOMP, Sloan) and peers--other colleges, universities and systems.

How to Participate

Using Confluence

Considering the broad constituency and geographic diversity of the UMassOnline user community (5 University of Massachusetts campuses, plus 10 hosted public and private institutions, composed of multiple academic and administrative departments and staff, each with different needs and requirements as well as relationships with UMassOnline), it is extremely challenging (often impracticable) to organize in-person meetings and activities. In order to provide continuous access and development, most of our activities will take place in this wiki-space of Confluence. While this format may be new to many, there are multiple examples of not only universities, but providers of online education, using collaboration software like wikis to manage their programs, projects and production.

- [California State University, Chico's Technology & Learning](#)
- [Cornell University's Distance Learning Support](#)
- [Ohio State University's e-Learning Continuum](#)
- [Pepperdine University's Graziadio e-Learning](#)
- [Purdue University Teaching and Learning with Technology](#)
- [SUNY Learning Network](#)
- [Tufts Distance Learning Consortium](#)
- [University of Maryland Learning Technologies](#)
- and many others...

In addition, many of UMassOnline's current technology providers, including [Blackboard](#) and [Oracle](#), not only embrace collaboration tools like wikis, but use Confluence themselves to work with their communities.

Collaboration through Community

Specific to our efforts here with the LPR to identify a new LMS, UMassOnline is following the lead of many other colleges, universities and systems that have engaged publicly in their requirements gathering, evaluation and decision-making processes — capturing the collective insights from our broad and diverse community or users. This approach attempts to capture the spirit, and value, of what many working within education and IT have expressed as "transparency and openness." Jason Snyder, Chief Technology Officer of the Information Technology Division for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts speaking about the [importance of open data and collaboration](#), offers, "Posting this information improves the transparency of government, and provides insight into our services beyond anything that we could perform alone." UMass Lowell Chancellor, Martin Meehan, during his inauguration which capped a week of forums, lectures and exhibits under the theme of *Building a New Vision Together: Excellence Through Innovation*, [stated](#) "To help realize our new vision, I will be an active listener, a collaborative leader who is accessible and responsive, who values accountability, transparency and an optimistic, entrepreneurial spirit. I say to each member of this community — to my new colleagues — I will need your help to guide this University forward." Ray Henderson, President of Blackboard Learn, [commented on openness, transparency, and blackboard's latest release](#), "We're taking inspiration from the open source movement. The lessons that I'm learning from that... are there's a discipline both from social media and from open source about transparency and how you do business. There's a greater expectation of transparency; you see that being reflected in what we're doing programmatically to all parts of our business."

Indeed, a quick search among our peers within higher education reveals several examples of other LMS evaluation projects made transparent and open to the public:

California State University, Channel Islands	McMaster University	University of Minnesota
California State University, Chico	mouth University	University of North Carolina – Charlotte
Central Queensland University	Miami University	University of Notre Dame
Colorado State University	North Carolina Community College System	University of Northern Texas
DePaul University	Queensland University of Technology	St. Petersburg College
Duke University	University of California. Los Angeles (UCLA)	SUNY Learning Network
Durham Technical Community College	University of Canterbury, New Zealand	Western Michigan University
Louisiana State University	University of Iowa	..and others.

Watch this space

In order to stay abreast of the latest activities in the developments of the LPR, interested parties are encouraged to check back regularly. As this forum is open all, many comments, discussion, edits and additions may occur without your direct involvement. Confluence provides several mechanisms to follow developments from detailed to casual by sending notifications to participants when any change is made to specific pages of interest.

To do this:

1. Mouse up to the 'Browse' menu located in the upper right hand corner of this page and select 'Advanced' from the menu items that appear.
 - The 'Advanced' page will open.
2. In the left-hand panel, click 'Start watching this space'. This link will be replaced with a new link to 'Stop watching this space'.

You will now be notified by email whenever a page within the LPR space of Confluence is added or updated, comments are made to a page or an attachment is uploaded.

Contribute to the dialog

The goal of this space is to communicate status, assess progress, critique activities, enable collaboration and ultimately provide a rationale for the decision-making process in identifying the next iteration of UMassOnline. Active participation is vital for our success. You may participate by reading along as this space and the LPR evolves, however ideally you will feel compelled and comfortable to contribute your own thoughts. There are many many really smart folks across UMassOnline, Massachusetts and higher education doing really interesting and innovative things. None of us is smarter than all of us, and we hope to collect that wisdom here.

If you would like to add your thoughts simply click on the "Add Comments" link at the bottom of any page within this wiki. A rich text editor will appear, and you can add any thoughts you may have regarding the topics discussed on the page. Ideally your comments should be related to the information on the page you are commenting as this will help us to organize our thoughts and focus our discussions. You may chose to include your name — or not — if you feel it is relevant.

Comments will be reviewed, with a goal of "rolling-up" the information or addressing the criticism or question in the documentation of the page so that should another person find the page, they will not need to provide the same comment as the information or response is now included in the updated page. This will result in comments themselves being deleted, but the ideas and information being incorporated. **ALL COMMENTS WILL BE ADDRESSED**, even if unpopular or unflattering. While the LPR may not adopt any specific comment, we will provide a rationale that explains our assessment of submitted work and the decision behind including or dismissing the contributions. Indeed if a commenter feels we have mis-understood or mis-represented a point of view, we encourage further discussions through commenting. **Unprofessional comments will be deleted without comment.**

Table of Contents

- [1. Why are we doing this?](#)
- [2. What are our goals?](#)
- [3. Who's involved?](#)
- [4. How are we doing this?](#)
- [5. When, what's the timeframe?](#)
- [6. Resources](#)
- [7. RFP Responses](#)

Recent Updates

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- [O'Brien, Kevin](#)
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- Henderson, Stefanie
 - 3.3. Meetings updated Jul 19, 2011 • [view change](#)
- O'Brien, Kevin
 - LPR Meeting Notes - July 7 2011 updated Jul 07, 2011 • [view change](#)
- Henderson, Stefanie
 - 3.1. LPR Committee Members updated Jul 06, 2011 • [view change](#)
- Patrick Masson
 - 4. How are we doing this? updated Jul 06, 2011 • [view change](#)
- Henderson, Stefanie
 - 4.4. Course, Content and Platform Migration Considerations updated Jun 23, 2011 • [view change](#)
- O'Brien, Kevin
 - 4.4. Course, Content and Platform Migration Considerations updated Apr 06, 2011 • [view change](#)
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