

Distance Learning Committee Recommendation
Presentation to Presidents' Council by Chair of Distance Learning Steve Beining

This is the second presentation to the Council on the topic of the DLC's recommendation for the college to adopt Moodle as its learning management system. Included here are responses to the questions asked at the December 8th meeting; the questions are shown below in bold italic print.

I anticipate **no direct monetary costs** related to course conversion for:

- **Instructional Materials (e.g. multimedia or textbook resources):** Materials used previously in a course should transition between platforms and continue to work.
- **New or different computer software or hardware for faculty or students:** Hardware and software requirements for Moodle are less than those required for the newer version of Blackboard.

I anticipate the major "cost" to be time; time needed to move instructional materials from one platform to another and re-contextualize the course into the new design space.

The movement of instructional materials between platforms will be undertaken by the DL office with intern help and will occur in three phases:

- **Phase 1** involves the movement of materials to the new platform
- **Phase 2** involves a conference between the instructor and designer to recontextualize the course
- **Phase 3** will involve a conference to ensure the faculty member understands how to use the quiz and grade book tools prior to instruction.

Note: Phase 2 and 3 are optional depending upon the instructors understanding of the course tools and willingness to self-study (For self-study options, see consultation/training plan)

I estimate **it will take 453 hours to convert the courses during phase 1**, almost all of this is to be provided by DL dept staff.

Phase 1 estimate is based on the following conversion factors:

Quantity of Courses + Complexity of Courses (i.e., more complex courses require more time) + 3 Step Conversion Process = Time needed to convert

Note: The 453 hours does not include time for direct consultation with faculty to discuss design options and related restructuring, which happen in phases 2 and 3. Allocations for this time is articulated in the phase 2 and 3 plan below.

There are approximately 380 Internet-supported courses

- 175 unique online titles (435 sections)
- 85 unique hybrid titles
- 120 web-facilitated face-to-face courses (actual number is yet to be determined)

Levels of Complexity of Internet-supported Courses

Already Converted [4%] – courses that have been converted as part of the pilot

Simple [77%]– consists of 3 to 10 “buttons” or “tabs,” minimal use of nested folder structures, less than 35 instructional items/activities, less than ten quizzes/exams

Simple with Nested Folders [7%]– consists of 3 to 10 “buttons” or “tabs,” some use of nested folder structures, less than 35 instructional items/activities, less than ten quizzes/exams

Complex [9%] – More than 10 “buttons” or “tabs,” extensive use of nested folder structures, 35 or more instructional items/activities, no advanced tools such as “groups” or “branched lessons”

Complex with Advanced Tools [3%] – More than 10 “buttons” or “tabs,” extensive use of nested folder structures, 35 or more instructional items/activities, uses advanced tools such as “groups” or “branched lessons”

Complexity/Time commitment

1 hour to move materials for a simple course, 1.5 hours for simple course with nested folders, 2 hours for a complex course and 3 hours for a complex course with advanced tools.

Phase 2 and 3 conferences – These one-on-one conferences are a time for faculty to learn how Moodle operates and how to re-contextualize the course activities/routines to fit into the new “flatter” design space of Moodle.

The roles of the conferences is to ensure that instructors know how to log into their course(s), understand basic functions/commands, know where their content has been placed, discuss ideas for recontextualizing the course and understand the assessment tools and gradebook. Since there are approximately 225 full time and part time instructors teaching internet-supported courses, we estimate spending approximately two hours with each faculty member (one hour for phase 2 and one hour for phase 3 conferences) or 450 hours of conference time.

What are the staffing implications?

The DL and Business Departments are discussing the addition of project coordination Interns to assist with the project.

The breakdown of time spent is as follows:

| Activity | DL Instr. Designers** | Interns*** | DL Faculty / each |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Phase 1 transfer | 168* | 285* | |
| Phase 2 conferences | 185* | 40* | 1 hour |
| Phase 3 conferences | 185* | 40* | 1 hour |
| | 538* hours | 365* Hours | 2 hours |

*Over 15 Weeks

**Instructional Designers are Steve and Joel

***Interns are to be hired (in process)

Is there enough time to get the work done? Based on the work schedules of staff involved in the project, there is enough time to get the work done.

Steve has approximately 27 hours per week to devote to ID tasks (27 X 15 = 405)

Joel has approximately 20 hours per week to devote to ID tasks (20 X 15 = 300)

Two interns will work 19 hours per week (2 X 19 X 15 = 570)

225 Faculty Members will devote 2 hours each to the process (plus time for self-directed design)

What is the actual dollar amount we would save by moving from Blackboard to Moodle? What is the actual cost to implement and run Moodle? Middleware costs?

The DLC initially recommended adopting the basic (non-integrated) version of Moodle and to integrate the system into the portal as time and money became available. After reviewing the departmental budget, product timelines, and costs of the enterprise (integrated) version, I feel the plan should move the college toward full integration of Moodle Joule with the Datatel portal (Datatel Connector) within the timeframe of this implementation plan.

The DL dept spends \$59,000 per year to run basic Blackboard. It will spend \$78,000 per year to run the integrated Moodle/Datatel system.

Cost savings are realized when one compares similar function sets across the two platforms. The DL department budget can support the implementation of the fully integrated LMS. The following numbers represent the savings for the fully integrated enterprise versions of Blackboard Version 9 and Moodle Joule/Datatel Connector.

| Product | Annual | One-time | Totals |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Bb Enterprise V 9 | \$124,000 | \$50,000 | \$174,000 |
| Moodle "Joule" from Moodlerooms | \$52,000 | \$4,500 | \$56,500 |
| Datatel "Connector" | \$26,000 | \$5,800 | \$31,800 |
| Joule Pilot (February to June) | 0 | \$5,500 | \$5,500 |

Total for BB Enterprise with Datatel System Integration = \$174,000 (\$50,000 one time)

Total for Moodle Joule with Datatel System Integration (and 5 month pilot) = \$93,800 (\$15,800 one time)

Total Annual Costs

Blackboard Enterprise = \$124,000

Moodle Joule/Datatel = \$78,000

Annual Savings (after first year) = \$46,000

What is the specific IT support that will be needed? One time expenses or ongoing (to lend the best support to students)? (Does IT Services have the manpower and time to make the switch and support system needs?)

Learning Management System impacts to ITS

Moodle will be “hosted”, meaning that the IT functions of system configuration, maintenance, (including back-ups, hardware upgrades, etc) and technical support will be outsourced to Moodlerooms. The DL department has and will continue to provide faculty and student support for Moodle. Consequently,.

Datatel/Moodle System integration impacts to ITS

Datatel touts this as a “turn-key” [Turnkey means that a product or service is designed, supplied, built, or installed fully complete and ready to operate] solution, therefore, minimal impact on ITS is expected.

What are the resource implications to our students – what does the added value get students?

There are many benefits for students within the learning system. Here are some of the enhancements that students can expect from Moodle:

- Moodle provides an easy to use interface and more intuitive course design structure.
- Social learning tools, such as blogs and wikis are built-in. These tools can increase the level of faculty/student and student/student interaction in a course.
- Student profiles and the Moodle messaging system allow students to have their own presence in the learning system allowing them to interact in new ways; for example, a cohort group could stay in touch even as their coursework diverges or students with shared interests can network with each other.
- Moodle Joule has an integrated portfolio system that will allow students to build portfolios for a variety of assessment needs.
- Moodle provides a place for students to post notes at the site, course, or personal level, helping them keep track of their information.

There are benefits for students gained by integrating Moodle and Datatel. Here are some of the enhancements that students can expect from Moodle/Datatel integration:

- Getting started in online courses will be easier because courses are accessed through MyClackamas (no redundant registration/enrollment process)
- Single sign-in for MyClackamas and the LMS will eliminate keeping track of an extra password

Would the integration process require special support to infrastructure?

No special support for infrastructure would be required

What specific training is anticipated for faculty and students? (How to best support students in a learning environment.)

See Handout

