

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS MEETING
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2009

The LMS team met on Friday, October 30 at 10:30 a.m. in room 325 in the Phillips Building.

Members present were: Karen McPhaul (presiding), Susan Horton (ex-officio), Steve Leadon, Tracy Mancini, Brent McCardle, Megan Nicholson, Erin Riney, Becky Roehrs, Dave Sorenson (ex-officio), Janice Stuart, Charlene West, Peter Wooldridge. No visitors were in attendance.

Karen McPhaul began the meeting by thanking the members for their willingness to serve on the committee. Karen gave the committee a brief overview of the objectives for the team and for the meeting. Karen asked the members to briefly introduce themselves and give an overview of their experience with Blackboard or another learning management system (LMS).

After introductions, Karen reviewed the [team's charge](#) and the status of our current learning management system. The team's charge is to study current issues and alternatives related to the college's LMS and to recommend to Executive Council a future path by February 28, 2010. After that date, the team will continue to serve in an advisory capacity during implementation of the learning management system selected.

Karen provided the group with a [Fact Sheet](#) on the college's current usage, financial considerations, and alternatives to Blackboard. Currently, the state pays for Durham Tech's annual Blackboard license fee under a statewide contract with Blackboard that will expire June 30, 2011. There is no indication if the state will renew the contract or will continue funding for Blackboard beyond that date. If the contract isn't renewed, the college will have to pay the fee to use Blackboard or move to another system. Even if the contract is renewed, we will have to move to a new version of Blackboard.

The committee discussed the \$40,000 annual fee the state is currently paying to cover the cost of Blackboard for Durham Tech. This fee allows us to install Blackboard on a server and to install Blackboard on a test server. The state also pays another fee for the 24-hour support, which is provided through a separate company (not Blackboard).

There was a discussion about other LMSs and the training and support that would be needed to change from one system to another system. There are two "open source" LMSs available that are gaining popularity: Moodle and Sakai. While these products are free to download and use, Durham Tech would need to purchase services (for customization and support) and possibly add-on products to meet our needs.

The committee decided it would be beneficial to review a course in Moodle and Sakai to gain a better understanding of the products. Karen indicated that she would follow up with one of the colleges using Moodle to see if they can provide a demonstration for the committee. She also indicated that a company would be willing to provide a demonstration for Sakai.

Migrating course content from one system to another could take from 3-23 hours per course. There are considerations that need to be explored regarding how to transition course content.

Some colleges have developed manuals on how to move portions of the course content from one system to another. Also, all training and support material will need to be rewritten.

Karen recommended we develop general criteria to review the systems we are considering. This will help the committee generate pros and cons of each system.

The committee brainstormed a list of criteria (to be refined later):

- Usability
- Content conversion and creation
- Interconnectivity, collaboration and assessment
- Support
- Interoperability with existing tools
- Scalability and Sustainability
- Accessibility

The next meeting will focus on learning more about Moodle. The committee members should see if instructional materials are available for Moodle and/or Sakai. The committee is scheduled to meet next on Friday, November 13 from 10:30-12:30 p.m. in room 325 in the Phillips Building. We also decided to meet on Friday, December 4 from 10:30-12:30 p.m.