LMS Committee Meeting
March 5, 2010

Members present: Karen McPhaul, Dave Sorenson, Susan Horton, Janice Stuart, Becky Roehrs, Tracy Mancini, Charlene West, Megan Nicholson, and Steve Leadon.

Visitors attending: Dr. Bill Ingram

The meeting began with a few brief updates:

Susan relayed to the group that the survey for the faculty members using Blackboard was almost complete. The expectation is to make it available for faculty input beginning next week.

Dave informed the group that he had updated the test install of Moodle to the latest stable release. The update includes bug fixes for security related issues and also made some changes to the gradebook. Dave mentioned that members may want to go in and take a look and see the changes first hand.

Karen relayed information of her discussion she had with Dr. Ingram regarding the System Office's Moodle report and its conclusions. She said he had concerns about that report and would be attending the meeting later in the morning. She reported that she outlined the options available to us and their potential costs and Dr. Ingram indicated that he could find funding for any of the options under consideration and that we should not rule out any option based on what the system office may decide to do.

Discussion moved on to thoughts about recent webinars and information sessions the committee had been attending. Members first discussed Rsmart's Sakai webinar. Becky stated that her first thought was content conversion and she said the it looked like Rsmart has viable content conversion tools available. She went on to say that she liked the interactivity available in Sakai and felt it was superior even to what was available in Blackboard. She feels usability and interactivity was "impressive" particularly in the area of portfolios. Members discussed the advantage for having an e-portfolio resource for use by students taking ACA, CIS, ENG and other courses. Question was asked about possible additional cost to adding the portfolios to a Sakai site.

The committee also discussed the Rsmart webinar about content conversion into Sakai. Karen felt like the presentation was a very realistic presentation of the challenges of converting content. Charlene made the comment that what ever direction that we decide to go (Moodle or Sakai) it would be beneficial to offer a workshop focusing on organization of a course because the systems are laid out differently then Blackboard.

Tracy said that she liked the Sakai Blogs and Wiki tools. Currently it can be cumbersome to integrate 3rd party tools. Saki's tools seemed more advanced than Moodle's tools.

Tracy also raised the question about hosting options. During the discussion that followed, pros and cons were discussed about hosted situations vs. hosting the LMS ourselves. Karen gave a rundown of RSmart's cost structure and then recapped what we know about the costs of Remote Learners Moodle services.

rSmart's Sakai Services *Cost Estimates*		Remote Learner's Moodle Services *Cost Estimates*	
$15,000	Implementation package. Includes 2-days end user training, 2-days sys admin consulting, system configuration, integration with SIS (Colleague)	$5,000 $5,000 $5,000	2-day end user training 2-day sys admin training Consulting on configuration, SIS integration
$5,000	Migration assessment. rSmart's experts would convert a handful of representative courses and provide detailed recommendations for a content migration plan.	$5,000	2-day training on content migration
$42,000	Annual hosting/admin support fee. Fee is same whether we self-host or have them host. Includes end-user access to "help" screens created by rSmart.	$9,000 $3,500	Annual hosting/admin support fee. Annual support fee if we choose to self-host.

Datatel Moodle Rooms:

The next webinar discussed was the Datatel/ MoodleRooms presentation. Half of this presentation was a demonstration of the Moodle LMS. The other part was how MoodleRooms has packaged their Moodle to work with Datatel web portal, webadvisor and Equella (data repository).

Drafting a recommendation:

Karen had passed out a draft outline for discussion with a focus on the first question for this meeting. That question was:

Which path(s) will we recommend?
• Switch to Moodle
• Switch to Sakai
• Remain on Blackboard
• Investigate further
• Pilot 1 product
• Pilot 2 products
• Other options?

Charlene compared Moodle to DOS in that you really needed to know a lot more to function than you do in Sakai or Blackboard. Becky feels the moving to Moodle would be a step back. She says that Moodle is not intuitive compared to Blackboard and Sakai.

Charlene asked if the support that comes with Rsmart for Sakai would include support for students. It would not. More investigation is needed as to whether the System office supplied helpdesk could be used.

We went on to discuss that if we chose Sakai what additional value would using Sakai give us over Blackboard. Additionally, the question was raised about how to pilot Sakai? Do we use a free site at MySakai? Do we run our own instance? Susan raised the thought that at a minimum we needed some type of training opportunities to train the trainers and the administrators for a Sakai instance.

At this point Dr. Ingram joined the meeting and spoke to the group. He told us that his main concern was finding the LMS for the college that works and is the best for our institution, our students and our circumstances. He thanked us for our work and is looking forward to getting our report.

When discussion continued, the possibility of a partnership with UNC Chapel Hill was a suggested. UNC-CH has piloted and is moving towards Sakai.

After some discussion members of the committee identified that there seemed to be a consensus forming that while we are not yet ready to recommend a full scale migration to Sakai, a pilot of Sakai is the direction we wanted to take. Karen suggested that we start to focus future meetings to figuring out the pilot process. She also felt like it would be a good idea to continue documenting the things we have learned about the products.

Janice suggested that all the members of the committee provide some input to be included in the final report. It was agreed that that could be a useful addition to the report. She also suggested that efforts to continue training with Blackboard continue. A concern was raised that some might not want to learn Blackboard if we are moving to something else.

The next meeting of the LMS team will be March 19th 2010 from 10 am – noon Room 941 Tech Center.