

**Florida Distance Learning Consortium
Quarterly Meeting
July 30-31, 2009
Seminole, Florida**

Thursday, July 30, 2009

I. Welcome & Introductions–

John Opper, FDLC

The Florida Distance Learning Consortium (FDLC) Quarterly Meeting was called to order and attendees were welcomed by John Opper, Director of the Consortium. Jim Olliver was introduced from St. Petersburg College and welcomed the attendees to the Seminole Campus. Since our last visit to this campus they have grown 100%. In addition to those meeting in Seminole, a number of people participated in this meeting via Elluminate web conferencing.

Review and Approval of Minutes

John Opper, FDLC

A motion for approval of the May 2009 minutes was made by Ruth Ann Balla of Miami Dade College and seconded by Tom Cavanaugh of the University of Central Florida. The minutes were approved with no objections.

New attendees were recognized and included:

Peter Casanova Engineering Services & Software (ESS), Michelle Maisonet Casanova with ESS, Hector Valle of Daytona State College, Marc Bagley with Angel, Andy McCullough of the University of Florida, Barbara Sloan of Tallahassee Community College was an original FDLC member and has returned again, Jennifer Clister of the University of Miami, Bill White of Valencia Community College, Charles Delano of Central Florida Community College.

II. Executive Director Report

John Opper, FDLC

Dr Opper spoke about the assignments from the most recent legislation. HB assigned governance to the Division of Colleges (DoC) and Board of Governors (BoG). Priorities are to look at the legislative assignments. The logo and blurb referenced in the legislation, to be given to the institutions for placement on institutional websites are in draft and will be shared soon.

New Legislative Budget Requests for next year's session were due in June. There is no idea of where that will go but recent news is that revenues are holding.

Online Registration Task Force is moving forward with names nominated by the DoC and BoG. An email was sent to those people identified and Dr. Opper is awaiting confirmation from each of them. The goal is gather a wide range of people to deal with the many aspects of this project. They will build on the work done by the Distance Learning Task Force from last year and will most likely meet five times. Fortunately there are other states that have gone this path before us which we can learn from. The goal is to try and have a good solid draft by this November so that the final version is ready by February. This is the same timeline for the Textbook Task Force.

Data Elements- the Data Elements recommendations were sent to the DoC and BOG data elements work groups for consideration.

Distance Learning Fee- we will be asked to report on anything that fits the new 80% or more definition and all members were reminded that courses should be listed in the Florida Higher Education Online Course Catalog.

Planning- For the upcoming fiscal year we have reviewed the Distance Learning Task Force report and most important items were captured in the legislation and are moving forward. There are some activities that we need to determine who should work on them from our members. All members were encouraged to become involved in a committee and to share suggestions.

John recently participated in a conference call with California's Delta Initiative and learned that they have an LMS futures work group that assesses the options. This group will meet on a regular basis to keep abreast of the options for their state. John contacted Phil Hill of the Delta Initiative about the possibility of members participating in the next webinar reviewing LMS Issues conducted for the California State University System and sent an email to the membership shortly after the meeting sharing the 2nd call that was held on August 11th.

John recommends awaiting SACS to see what is needed prior to being scared into purchasing something for the future.

III. Associate Executive Director Report

Susie Henderson, FDLC

Equella Software Buyout for the Orange Grove- Susie Henderson is happy to announce that the Orange Grove (OG) software buyout was supported by the DoC and BoG for Higher Education. Following years will cost \$85,000 for maintenance and support and gives us a stable platform for the Orange Grove's statewide Higher Education system. They are now on Version 4.0 in Equella and available for third party sign-on like Turnitin and other products now available to integrate with your LMS. Open Text Books is something that is available for anyone and there are currently 89 available in the OG. The desire is to make Open Text Books available for 20-25 General Education Classes but they need to know which courses are most needed and should be targeted. Susie believes that the print on demand industry will change the text book industry enormously.

Open Text Book Task Force- Susie discussed the charges assigned to the Open Text Book Task Force. The first meeting was held July 22nd and a survey will be coming out that needs to get to every faculty member in Florida. There are seven charges in total.

Repository Conference- In August, the FIPSE OnCoRe Blueprint project will sponsor a conference. This one-day conference, **Digital Repositories for Learning: moving from why to how**, will take place in Vancouver, BC on August 11, and focus on addressing and overcoming challenges faced in creating and sustaining educational repositories. Details are at: <http://www.oncoreblueprint.org/Conference/About.htm> The repositories conference is offered in conjunction with the Open Ed 2009 Conference, August 12-14, in Vancouver, British Columbia.

IV. Should Florida have a Postsecondary Education Online Education Conference? Susie Henderson, FDLC

The membership was asked of interest and need for a Florida Postsecondary Education Online Education Conference. Todd Thuma of Indian River SC is worried that their faculty cannot attend a training or conference but would do it online. Josh Strigle of Central Florida CC thought that if it was once a year, they could have some staff attend as it would be beneficial.

Charles Fox of Polk SC, Ruth Ann Balla of Miami Dade C, Josh Strigle of Central Florida CC, Heather Jones of St. Johns River CC and Kelvin Thompson of U of Central Florida volunteered to assist with this committee. Susie recommended contacting North Carolina to see what they have done for several years. Bill Vilberg of the U of Florida felt that the presentation we had at FETC several years ago was very useful.

V. Learning Management Systems- Overview and Market Update

Marti Harris, Higher Education-Gartner

Marti Harris, the Research Director for Higher Education- Gartner connected via Elluminate for her presentation.

Consumer-ization of IT- individuals will increasingly run their own systems and we will have to accommodate with social networking being the new environment of choice.

The higher education learning systems are evolving into learning platforms.

Marti pointed out that the iPhone is unique for its cool factor **and** it's an outstanding product. It had such a fast and large impact on the marketplace. So many providers in the education industry have started to think about an iPhone app which is changing the way even education thinks.

Some valuable research of Gartner showed how people utilized technology during their day. Time using television and magazines has decreases with consumer generated video increasing and internet blogging. More people are generating their own video and this will surely impact education in the future. Imagine students submitting a video with their application to an institution or course.

Blackboard's purchase of Angel was a surprise only that it was to Blackboard. Certainly the purchase of WebCT increased their customer base but with the purchase of Angel, Blackboard acquired good technology and patents as well. Angel had a good piece for migration from one company to another and perhaps the new patents will be valuable to them. Marti feels that the most valuable asset was bringing on Ray Henderson. He will be a valuable asset and it will be interesting to see how it takes off. The patent challenges with Desire2Learn were reversed on Monday, July 27th. This is not something she believes Blackboard is ready to give up on and therefore would not be surprised if there was more to this now that Blackboard has the new patents from Angel. As this evolves how do we move with the evolution? For a software company, it is hard to diversify. Many good acquisitions are being purchased.

Moodle is the open source learning management system that Marti hears the most about as a possible replacement for other applications. 37% of respondents to a survey were using Moodle in some way.

There has been a lot of work with Microsoft and their institutions that are working with Sharepoint, however there is potential for more. There will be more software providers that will be entering the marketplace this year that will make it interesting. She expects it to happen before Educause this fall.

Users of Blackboard were encouraged to go to version 9 for their upgrades and most especially support.

Any institution entering new renewals, Marti suggested entering short-term contracts so that options are open to new developments as they come.

Todd Thuma of Indian River SC asked if the Gartner survey is available online or for us to share with our faculty and staff back at our home institutions. It is currently being finalized and will be used in a

presentation this Fall after which it will then be available. She will work with Dr. Opper to make the slides available to members as soon as possible. Questions online were targeted:

Chad Hyatt of Hillsborough Community College- Have you researched portal solutions?

Marti thinks they are already seeing it with institutions utilizing Sharepoint as a portal. This is something she expects to see incorporated as a social network portal. She expects to see this emerging soon.

Question from Kelvin Thompson of U of Central Florida- Could you talk about commercial networking platforms?

John asked what she feels is the future of Angel for users in the room? She does feel that student systems are critical. Educators are at the mercy of a small group of providers. She feels that Blackboard will not continue to support Angel past 2013. Ultimately Blackboard will need to get everyone on one application to move forward with. She expects to see Angel used to allow both Angel and Blackboard be able to run through a portal environment. She doesn't see an ongoing roadmap for Angel other than how to integrate it. Does she see Moodle moving forward or does she expect to see the patents directed at open source? She doesn't expect to see patents directed at Moodle. She is seeing an increase in providers supporting and partnering with Moodle.

Susie asked how anyone could acquire Moodle since it is an open source product. It is available for download for anyone but cannot be "acquired" by another company as it is a community project. More information will be available from our Moodle presentation later in the meeting.

VI. BREAK

VII. Update for the Educational Technology Cooperative, Southern Regional Education Board

Workshop: Learning from Our WORST Practices

Myk Garn, SREB

Are we trying to make money on this or trying to save money?

Are we trying to improve student success? We know we can do that.

There are currently several discussions going on with how the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) can help institutions collaborate. Their upcoming conference in 5 weeks will discuss this. Louisiana, Oklahoma and Mississippi are looking at strategic plans for online learning. Where are the tipping points? There was a Rice University study that showed low usage of their content. How do we address and increase that usage? Guidelines of state level funding of content? Content should be required to be licensed under creative commons. Their survey last year actually showed very little of the respondents had content that was readily sharable. There is more need for research. Pedagogy and time on task along with richness of content are most important. Myk recommended a good book to read: Interrupting Class. The country of Singapore moved all of their instruction online three years ago and they currently close all classes for one week and all instruction is online for that week to test for emergency preparedness. This is where we all need to be moving.

The US is no longer the leader in High School graduation rates. The rest of the world is catching up and our student's interest is lagging. We cannot just pay more and get more technology so we can teach more students in a classroom using the same old system. We need to transform what we're doing. We have to increase the ability for learners to change how they can use our learning environments. We need to be good change agents. We need to be prepared to change to be good change agents. Another great book recommended: Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations.

He discussed the value of looking at Worst Practices versus only looking at the Best Practices and how we can learn from it.

Failing to plan is planning to fail. It's all about learning to design in a more organized fashion.

VIII. Committee Meetings

IX. Adjournment

Friday, July 31, 2009

I. Consortium Committee Reports:

Dr. Opper discussed two Consortium contracts that were recently renewed with Blackboard and Desire2Learn.

Conversation with Blackboard began in February and led to a new 3 year pricing agreement, discounts are 12% and then 4% for the two following years. Best price was promised for long standing member institutions. If a member institution's current agreement did not have the better price, the better price would be honored whether by new contract or old. The new agreement also included one advisory seat on product advisory as well as a Blackboard Day. If anyone would like the addendum and pricing please contact the FDLC.

Desire2Learn pricing will not increase this year! Standard increase limited CPI annually. Discounted pricing for Live Room integration. Desire2Learn is continuing to work on third party integrations.

Two other items: the Department of Education's State College System received a grant for Smarthinking licensing which subsidized 30,000 hours. For those online, there is a second year of the grant coming through as well.

National news has been discussing the swine flu. The vaccine has been prioritized on distribution. Last on the list of vaccines is most likely to be the young college age. This is something that our institutions need to think about addressing due to the chance of it hitting the campuses.

II. LMS Review 2009 at the University of Florida: Sakai Selected for next generation learning management system

Doug Johnson, UF Sakai at University of Florida

While the review for a new LMS was in process, Blackboard announce decisions to end the formerly WebCT Vista and also shared that they would not have a transition process. Given this, it changed the choices at UF greatly as no matter what they decided it would be a rough process. The selection team began with a market analysis to see what the key leaders and who was adopting various systems. They narrowed their focus to Blackboard 9, Desire2Learn, Angel, Moodle and Sakai. They submitted a survey to students and found that students found Student Management Systems to be either useful or very useful. They then contacted the vendors and worked with faculty. Vendors were invited in March to come and present. Blackboard didn't come back to them and so when the focus groups began, they were missing. The team ran 24 focus groups with 9 key features. They used the various features in each application to compare the differences. Great feedback and lots of work but important. One difficulty was that the committee members ran the focus groups but were not themselves well versed on using the tools for the focus groups. The outcome ranked Angel, Sakai and then Moodle for Usability.

Review:

Usability was where they assessed how the key features fared. Angel was by far the leader in preferences by quite a lead. Migration would be the same across the board. Their decision matrix led them to lean toward Sakai and they spent the better part of a month assessing the decision of Angel vs. Sakai. The committee was split on this decision for a month until they finally sat down with both vendors. In speaking with the leading universities involved with both LMS', they learned of the Sakai 3 project. That was what tipped them toward the Sakai choice. The report which was written and delivered to administration, based the decision that Sakai was more than just an LMS and more of an environment with research and collaboration sites, e-portfolio integrated and being developed by Universities for Universities. Open source community with Community governance, community-delivered code, priority of development and many peer institutions involved. They also had enhanced collaboration with autonomy from proprietary systems and the ability to shape our own destiny. One week later the announcement of Angel being purchased by Blackboard reinforced their decision. They are currently planning and aligning funding. Current severe budget cuts lead them to wait until the money materializes. Their plan is to start the implementation this Fall so that they may start getting user feedback and set-up prior to transferring courses. Spring 2010 they will begin with courses, then a pilot in Summer 2010. Fall 2010 should start on Sakai 2.6 with full roll-out. They are hoping for full conversion by Fall 2010 as Blackboard expires October 2010. Their hope is this will save them approximately \$200,000 in licensing costs. The report is available at :

UF CMS Review Report available at <https://ss.at.ufl.edu/services/reports>

Sakai <http://sakaiproject.org/portal>

Sakai 3 <http://3akai.sakaiproject.org/dev/>

Susie asked what kind of staffing is anticipated to support Sakai. Staffing at UF is rather fuzzy. The current support is spread across 3 different units, with no one assigning to just the LMS. On his staff are a total of 8 including himself, which is just one of the three units that will be supporting Sakai program at the University of Florida. He does not anticipate any growth and during the transition there will be some stretch. The programming group is the one under most review as the report recommends either hiring or re-allocating to support the needs of the system and becoming a real partner with the development of the Sakai 3 project. Some of the current license cost can be diverted to supporting any needed staffing. Sakai has Wiki and Blog capability and they are trying to decide how they will allow it but initially they will be deploying them for communication during the transition. The decision will be make later whether to continue their use.

III. rSmart

Spencer Harris, via Elluminate

rSmart's Role in Open Source Communities includes approximately 39 Sakai customers with 60% hosted by rSmart. They have packages Sakai and distribute it in a fully open source manner. Institutions do not need any developers through rSmart. The last couple of years have shown a lot of growth and maturation with Sakai.

rSmart gives a set package of services for Sakai including a dedicated project manager, configuration workshop where they come to your campus for 4 days giving functional training.

Sakai does not have to be called "Sakai" and there is no requirement to show branding of rSmart. You may call it whatever you wish and create your own unique version.

Anyone interested in contacting rSmart may contact Spencer at:

Pricing is based upon either FTE or seats, whichever is best for your institution.

IV. A Report about a Large Scale Implementation of Moodle UF College of Education Ben Campbell

Ben Campbell gave a presentation on their implementation of Moodle at University of Florida's (UF) College of Education. Open Source Software is FREE, as in freedom. Free to use, to distribute, modify and improve upon. It is not always cheaper. Moodle basics, is based on PHP architecture, configurable, includes most LMS features out of the box and plays nicely with just about anything. There are 39,000 registered sites in 203 countries with 152 sites that have more than 10,000 users. And 730,000 registered users on moodle.org Over 550 modules and plug-ins are available.

Ben stated the best thing about Moodle is that you can make it do anything. This is also the worst thing about it. UF College of Education site is managed by Ben Campbell along with Remote Learner. There are 16 colleges at UF. They host their own system and are completely separate.

History of Moodle-ing:

- 2005 first test installation by a grad student with 2 courses offered online and less than 50 users.
- In 2006, they offered a fully online College of Education degree.
- 2007, moved to Remote Learner hosting, grew very quickly. They were running it on OSX which was a huge mistake and they moved it to Linux before going to Remote Learner. Integrated with Elluminate with single-sign on. 500+ enrollments per term and over 1500 users in database.
- 2008, UF started 6 more graduate degree programs with only online courses. They grew to 800+enrollments per term, with 700+ logins daily and 250 course sites now available.
- 2009, 1200+ enrollments per term (graduate courses only).400+ course sites and 10,000 page views daily.
- Since 2005: Total downtime has been 75 hours. They have closed 4000 support tickets and have 300 users with a teacher role.
- Technology Costs For Moodle ONLY: \$20,000 annually beginning Monday with redundant server configuration instead of single server
- Support staff- 1.74 FTE
- Licensing Fees- \$0

Tribulations- currently no SiS integration is available and the grade book is difficult to configure. Version 2.0 is due out later this Fall and they hope to see improvement there.

A demo of Equella plug-in and test login was given to those present.

V. Moodlerooms

Martin Knott, CEO and Cheryl Steele

Cheryl explained her decision to go to Moodlerooms and her desire to work with an open platform.

Top Ten List:

1. No license fees and no acquisition angst
2. Accessible
3. Flexible
4. Scalable
5. Feature-rich
6. Standards based
7. Foreign Language packs with 81 translations available
8. OS agnostic- Windows Mac Solaris, Linux
9. Global Development= rapid innovation fixes
10. World-wide community of support

There are over 24 million users of Moodle (all active users). Why Moodlerooms? Four of her team came to Moodlerooms from Angel. Moodlerooms runs a clustered environment with load balanced, fully redundant system. They are Sun-certified configuration set to scale to over 1 Million concurrent users. Hot fixes can be applied to base line codes running on multiple servers.

Moodleroom Partners include:

CISCO, ORACLE, Google, Sun Microsystems, Novell, Class.com, IBM, Moodle, and Equella.

New on the horizon- feel free to contact Cheryl via Cheryl@moodlerooms.com

VI. Remote Learner

Bryan Williams

Bryan Williams of Remote Learning pointed out that Open Source Software can bring cost savings and control over learning pedagogy if key questions are answered during the selection process:

Is there a community of users? Is there dependable and responsive leadership? And an active developer group? Does documentation exist? Will the application communicate with other technologies?

Moodle community became active in 2001 with many developers among their user base. Moodle is the most widely used LMS worldwide. Moodle is very intuitive and easy to use, it is a true community.

Remote Learner has history, continuity beginning in April 1992 as an Educational Technology Company. They are a leading Moodle partner. Also an Alfresco partner, Jaspersoft partner, and Kaltura partner, with developers and instructional award-winning staffers on staff. Moodle is an LMS and not a CMS. This adds a curriculum management component, gives a user group, and allows for tracking of participation. Auto notification features

with business intelligence component using Jaspersoft engine allow generation of reports. Alfresco is the premier open source LOR. Both Remote Learner and MoodleRooms are co-hosting a Moodle conference at the Sloan-C conference this Fall, for those interested in attending.

- Next Steps- Most attendees agreed and raised their hand to demonstrate their interest in finding out more on an open source solution. Dr. Opper stated that we would schedule an Elluminate session to discuss but also offered to share the contact for the Delta Initiative as he recently participated in a conference call. They are going to be holding another call on August 11th for those interested. Please send your slides that you wish to share to Heather Thompson. Much thanks to Vicki Westergard for all of her work in hosting this meeting!

VII. Adjournment at 12:17 p.m.

Members and / or their Representative:

Brevard CC – Chuck Kise
Broward C- Lisa Ciardulli
Central FL CC – Josh Strigle
Daytona State C – Hector Valle
Edison C – Mary Myers
FAMU – Fran Fitz
Florida SC at Jacksonville – Nancy Cooley
Florida Gulf Coast U- David Jaeger
Florida Hospital College of Heath Sciences – Dan Lim
Florida Institute of Technology – Mary Bonhomme
Florida International U – Debra Sheridan
Indian River SC – Todd Thuma
Lake City CC – Sam Hall
Lynn U – Mary Tebes
Miami Dade C – Ruth Ann Balla

Northwest Florida SC – Ron Walls
Pasco-Hernando CC – Cheryl Sandoe
Pensacola JC – Holly Vaughn
Polk CC – Charles Fox
Santa Fe College- Kim Kendall
Seminole CC – Wilma Hodges
South Florida CC – Melanie Jackson
St. Petersburg C – Vicki Westergard
State C of FL Manatee-Sarasota - Nancy Edwards
Tallahassee CC – Barbara Sloan
Univ. of Central FL – Tom Cavanagh
Univ. of FL – Andrew McCollough
Univ. of South FL- Sally Davis
Univ. of Miami – Bill Vilberg
Valencia CC – Bill White

Guests:

Blackboard/ Angel Learning – Marc Bagley
Board of Governors- Carole Hayes
Central Florida CC- Charles Delano
Desire2Learn – Shari Pobjecky
Engineering services software (ESS) – Peter Casanova
ESS – Michelle Maisonet
Lynn U – Nero Harding
Lynn U – Elizabeth Yagodzinski

Moodlerooms – Cheryl Steele
Moodlerooms – Martin Knott
Pasco-Hernando CC – Michelle Mercer
Remote Learner – Bryan Williams
Remote Learner – Rod Deter
Smarthinking - Cindy Hewitt
SREB- Myk Garn
Student – Gregory Sandoe
U of Miami – Jennifer Clister

Elluminate Participants (may not reflect those that were on briefly):

Rebecca Andre
Steve Jensen
Spencer Harris
Bill White, VCC*
Ruth Ann Balla, MDC*
Vance Burgess, UWF
Kelvin Thompson, UWF
Jillian Manzer, FKCC
Heather Jones, SJRCC
Chad Hyatt, HCC
Bob Shaw
Anne Guiler, PBCC
Karen Bickley, FSU
Nero Harding, LU*
Jacquie Busboom, LSCC
Barbara Truman, UCF
Gloria Kersh

*notes those that were in physical attendance as well as virtual.

Not all affiliations could be verified without the user name sharing that information.

Florida Distance Learning Consortium Staff:

Susie Henderson
John Opper
Heather Thompson