



Choosing the Right Learning Management System

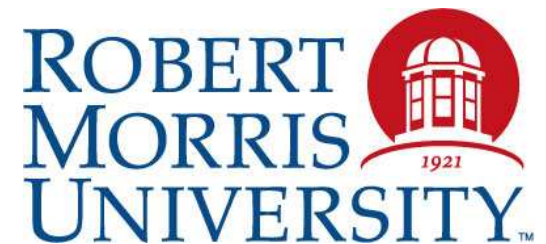
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Objectives

- Identify **Online Instructor Competencies** as they relate to the deployment of online courses
- Identify **Features, Capabilities, and Strategies** in LMS-supported courses that will promote a better learning experience
- Share the results of a recent **Faculty Investigation** of current LMS systems
- RMU's Progression: Where we are thinking about going next



I. Online Instructor Competencies

- Technological Competencies
- Administrative Competencies
- Design Competencies
- Facilitation Competencies
- Evaluation Competencies



Online Instructor Competencies

Technological

- The primary goal is to assure overcome barriers due to technical components.
 - Becomes proficient with all technical systems used in the course.
 - Helps learners troubleshoot technical systems.
 - Refers problems to appropriate sources and follows up to assure resolution.



Online Instructor Competencies

Administrative

- The primary goal is to assure smooth course operations and reduce instructor and learner overload.
 - Provide an unambiguous roadmap through the instruction.
 - Provide clear objectives, expectations, and policies.
 - Post course materials (syllabus, assignments, discussion topics, etc.) so learners can plan.
 - Assure that all learners are 'on board' at the beginning of a course.
 - Return learner calls/emails quickly to allow learners to progress.
 - Refer problems to appropriate sources and follow up to assure resolution.



Online Instructor Competencies

Design

- The primary goal is to assure adequate learning outcomes and satisfaction.
 - Plans activities that allow learners to attach personal meaning to content.
 - Provides opportunities for hands-on practice and application.
 - Balances design to help learners manage load.
 - Helps learners assess their learning and attain personal learning goals.
 - Incorporates social aspects to improve satisfaction, provide a realistic environment, present multiple viewpoints, and overcome anonymity.
 - Assures materials are easy to use.



Online Instructor Competencies

Facilitation

- The primary goal is to provide social benefits and enhance learning.
 - Sets or facilitates setting of communication rules and group decision-making norms.
 - Provides compelling opportunities for online discussion, negotiation, debate.
 - Moderates discussion, contributes advanced content knowledge and insights, models desired methods of communication.
 - Fosters sharing of knowledge, questions, and expertise.
 - Contributes outside resources (online, print-based, others) and encourages learners to do as well.
 - Responds to discussion postings adequately without 'taking over.'
 - Provides acknowledgment of learner contributions.
 - Moderates disagreements and group problems.



Online Instructor Competencies

Evaluation

- The primary goal is to assure that learners know how they will be evaluated and help learners meet course objectives.
 - Provides learners with clear grading criteria. Uses rubrics, grading criteria, or examples to help learners recognize expectations.
 - Assists learners who are having problems completing the assignments.
 - Allows learners to track assignment completion and impact on final grade.
 - Quickly acknowledges receipt of assignments.
 - Provides feedback and help with remediation, as needed.
 - Contacts learners who have not completed assignments and helps them plan to complete assignments.



II. LMS Features, Capabilities, and Strategies

- Usability/Functionality
- Interaction
- Hosting
- Technology
- Assessment
- Cost



Usability/ Functionality Rubric Items

- Ability for instructors to copy parts of one course to another
- Ability to archive an entire course
- Ability to import content items (test banks, course packs, etc.) into the course



Interaction Rubric Items

- Ease of developing student to content interactions
- Ease of developing student to teacher interactions
- Ease of developing student to student interactions
- Ease of developing student to technology interactions



Hosting Rubric Items

- Hosted solution available
- Company longevity
- Is the company reputable?
- Does benefit justify expenditure?



Technology Rubric Items

- Scalability: platform is flexible enough to grow with RMU
- Interoperability: easily integrated into existing IT structure and interacts easily with other hardware/software
- High uptime
- Multiple levels of user privileges



Assessment Rubric Items

- Instructors can create self-assessments that students can take multiple times
- Instructors can create a database of questions that the system will randomize to create a unique self-assessment for each student
- The system automatically scores multiple choice, multiple answer, ordering, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and true-false questions, and can display instructor-created feedback and links to relevant course material



Cost Rubric Items

- Company longevity
- Is the company reputable?
- Does benefit justify expenditure?



Rubric

- Copy of the Rubric available upon request

1	LMS Platform Evaluation Rubric	eCollege	Blackboard	Moodle	Angel	WebCT
2	Assessment Area					
3	Interaction					
4	Ease of developing student to content interaction					
5	Ease of developing student to student interactions					
6	Ease of developing student to instructor interactions					
7	Ease of developing student to technology interactions (ease of use)					
8						



III. Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

- **Strategic Assumptions**
- **General Assumptions**
- **Teaching Implications**
- **Impact of Change**
- **RECOMMENDATIONS**



Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

Strategic Assumptions

- Classes/programs will continue to grow
- The need for online courses will grow significantly over the next five years.
- More and more feeder institutions use LMS systems and many of our transfers come from these schools.
- Online education can serve a population who are geographically challenged but who want access to the types of programs and education we offer



Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

General Assumptions

- Quality of online courses is related to the development of a quality course not the format (i.e., LMS).
- Online learning environments are a trend in pedagogy
- LMS's reviewed offered sufficient functionalities for today and at least for several years to come
- Online pedagogy will continue to grow in the global education market
- One LMS has become the defacto industry standard and that it is used by most academic institutions nationwide



Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

Teaching Implications

- LMS does not determine how we teach; we need a flexible LMS that allows a variety of teaching/learning styles
- Online learning environments provide students and faculty with viable alternatives that facilitate learning and provide access not geographically or time bound
- One LMS provides greater flexibility and ease for instructors in designing and implementing different pedagogies
- Implement online evaluation tools that consider student outcomes, student reactions, faculty reactions and faculty pedagogies



Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

Impact of Change

- **Faculty**
- **Training**
- **Support (Student and Faculty)**
- **Cost (Price Structure)**
- **External Evaluations**



Faculty Review of Current LMS Systems

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **It is the overwhelming recommendation of the LMS Evaluation Committee that the administration consider a transition from the current learning management system platform. It is further recommended that the new contract for an LMS be negotiated to seek the best price structure to ensure continued growth of online education. It is still further recommended that we establish a standing committee for online learning.**



IV. RMU's Progression

- 2000 – 2006: eCollege
- 2006 – 2011: Blackboard
- 2011 and beyond: ???
 - Sakai
 - Moodle
 - Desire2Learn
 - Angel