

LMS Review Meeting Notes

June 18, 2013

The Review Committee discussed the comments that were submitted following the demonstrations. The comments will help the team construct an RFP as part of the official procurement process. Summary comments follow:

Blackboard

The biggest advantage is that the product is a known quantity, and it would not require a migration process. It was noted by several people that Bb offers many useful features and components that we either have and don't use, or do not license. Concerns focused on the frame environment, the mobile interface/functionality, Bb's course-centric nature, licensing costs, and responsiveness to customer concerns.

Sakai/Longview

Many positive responses focused on the openness, flexibility, and customizable interface of Sakai as an open source product. It was reassuring to hear that there are a number of large research universities using Sakai in both a hosted and locally-supported environment. There is also a strong integration of third-party systems. Most of the concern related to support and whether the UO had the local resources needed to manage and take advantage of an OS system. Others commented that the UI was very similar to what we have now (although it can be easily customized). Is it worth a migration if the end product is very similar?

Desire to Learn (D2L)

People liked the clean interface, and were satisfied that D2L can manage a large migration effectively. The presenters also stressed D2L's accessibility. Other positive comments referred to the ePortfolio product, the analytical tools, and the fact that D2L supported two versions back, so faculty did not have to be on the latest version. Concerns related to the discussion board feature (seemed intimidating), the fact that this is another proprietary system, and reliability (D2L experienced a three-day unscheduled outage recently).

Canvas/Instructure

Positive comments focused on the clean, intuitive interface. As an open source system, e.g. the code is available, the system can be customized. Canvas seems to be gaining market share quickly, which may speak to the strength of the product. Other positive features included the grade book (in-line grading) the discussion board, the integration of social media, and the communication system. The importance of LTI & API were stressed (although that capability is also available with other products). Concerns were expressed about the migration process, support (there is only one service provider: Instructure), and the fact that the product may be too "techy."

Oba

Strengths included openness (Moodle - based on PHP), flexibility, a cadre of local developers, LTI, and the fact that it is learner-based and not course-based. Oba incorporates other OS features such as Mahara ePortfolio system. The concerns expressed centered on support (although Moodle/PHP are widely used), the required learning curve, and uncertainty regarding scalability. Half of the responders indicated that the product was not viable as an enterprise system. There was also a question regarding assessment. Oba is not currently integrated with Banner. Several people expressed an interest in seeing a straight Moodle demonstration.