

An Incomplete Timeline of Course Web Course Tools at UAS

1988 through 1997

UAS deploys the PortaCOM communication tool with the objective of forming online communities and supporting course delivery. The PortaCOM system was highly successful, but minicomputer-based. The system became obsolete with the advent of “web technology” in the mid 1990s.

1996

UAS evaluates various web solutions for a replacement for PortaCOM.

Fall 1996

The UA Systemwide Academic Council proposes that UA adopt the POLIS system developed at the University of Arizona.

Spring 1997

UAS is selected as the pilot site for the POLIS system and is charged by the SAC to set up the system to serve all MAUs.

April-May 1997

POLIS is online. Training for faculty initiated.

August 1997

POLIS presented to faculty at UAS convocation.

September 1997

Caucus web-discussion system formally replaces PortaCOM.

Fall 1997

Approximately 40 UAS courses adopt POLIS/Caucus. Limited use by the other MAUs.

January 1998

UAS Education Program tests use of Convene.com as an outsourced solution for course management.

Fall 1997 – Spring 1999

Continued marketing of the POLIS/Caucus system by the Juneau Campus Teaching Learning & Technology Roundtable. The number of courses using POLIS grows to between 60 and 90 courses per semester. UAS IT Services continues to enhance the software to meet faculty needs.

Spring 1999

Faculty use of POLIS exceeds the capability of the system. UAS TLTR proposes “institutionalizing” web course support. TLTR and UAS Faculty Council endorse a plan

for a new system which will support all UAS courses automatically. Goal is set to have a course web site for every course section by Fall 1999.

Summer 1999

Stand-alone AK3 Messenger tool developed to support broadcast classes.

Summer 1999

UAS Faculty and IT staff collaborate on new course management system for UAS. IT Staff develop new software based on the POLIS model.

August 1999

UAS Online! replaces POLIS.

Fall 1999

915 UAS courses are supported in the Fall semester.

UAS Online! concept is presented to the SAC, generating considerable UA discussion.

February 2000

UA-Wide distance education meeting held in Juneau to investigate system-wide CMS technologies.

Summer-Fall 2000

Continuing UA discussions on courseware standards. UAS continues development of UAS Online solution.

- **Survey tool added**
- “JDHS Online” provided to the Juneau School District

Spring 2001

Version 1.4

- Import tool added
- **Classlist tool added**

Fall 2001

Version 1.8

- **Gradebook added**
- Support for multiple institutional behaviors
- “Contactlist” added (used by JDHS)
- Resource browser added
- APB added
- Locked resources
- Netmeeting support

Spring-2002

Version 2.0

- **“Live Messenger”** tool introduced in support of synchronous classes. This tool replaced the stand-alone “AK3 Messenger” tool developed in 1999.

Summer 2002

Basic license for Blackboard purchased for UAS.

Fall 2002 / Spring 2003

UAS tests Blackboard software to evaluate suitability of replacement for Caucus system. Software will work; however, limitations of “Basic” license prevent production rollout.

April – July 2003

UAS attempts to negotiate upgrade of basic license.

Summer 2003

Enterprise license for Blackboard purchased for UAS.

Fall 2003

Limited rollout of Blackboard discussion board.

Target goal of integrating Blackboard technologies into UAS Online! and replacing Caucus by summer 2004.

Spring 2004

- Pilot rollout of student course ratings

Summer 2004

- ELMO self-service password resets rolled out to students

Fall 2004

UAS Online Version 3.0

- Support for personalized user profiles / authentication
- Banner Synchronization
- Web single-sign on
- Official rollout of student course rating system
- Image upload / file attachments added

Spring 2005

- ePortfolio system rollout
- Weblogs added (via portfolio system)
- Guest account support

Fall 2005

- Support for importing IMS learning modules from Blackboard or other sources
- Support for multiple course site views. This feature was developed to support site archiving, custom “modules” based on week or course section, and many other applications.
- Dated (weblog style) assignment and announcements for courses
- Foux tool added

Fall 2006

- Webmeetings (Elluminate Live) added
- Resource categories
- Course podcasts
- Security enhancements – system wide protection against code injection, etc.

Spring 2007

- Added support for photo-galleries

Fall 2007

UAS Online Version 4

- New signin “portal” page (MyCourses, MyPortfolios, etc.)
- Drag and Drop support
- Webmeetings in portfolios
- Portfolio templates
- Redesigned class resources
- “Grader” role
- Conversion to UA Username – “enable” admin access tool
- Enhancements in support of the UAS Syllabus policy
- Many other enhancements

Spring 2008

- Text message alerts. This was developed at the request of students who wanted to be notified of class changes, but was rolled into a system to notify students of safety/closure alerts.
- Portfolio versioning

Fall 2008

- Support for program-specific course default settings. This was at the request of the school of management to allow different academic programs to have different system default settings.
- MediaWiki integration

Summer 2008

Started conversion to UAS Online version 5

With this change, the UAS Online architecture was redesigned to allow the various subsystems (portal, courses, portfolios, etc.) to be broken apart into separate but integrated applications.

Spring/Fall 2009

Continued conversion to version 5 architecture.

Fall 2010

- Launch of the UAS Online “portal”. With the shutdown of the MyUA project, UAS launched a portal to address the need for a flexible and personally

customizable web site. The portal replaced the traditional UAS Online login page and was a full-featured stand alone application.

- Migration to multiple load-balancing web servers

Spring 2011

- “Chatterbox” chat tool created

Fall 2011

UAS Online version 6

- UAS Online mobile Portal
- UAS Online mobile course sites
- Adding support for re-skinning UAS online course sites through CSS

October 2011

- Provost Summit decision to phase out “UAS Online” course shells in favor of a more “pure blackboard” approach.
- “UAS Strategic Direction for Web Course Management” formally distributed from provost rearticulating UAS strategies/policies and layout the requirements for future use of Blackboard, including project timelines.

Spring 2012

- New Blackboard strategy launched with most Fall 2012 courses hosted exclusively in Blackboard (CEU, continuing ed classes continued to use Moodle).
- Per “strategic direction” document, access to course web sites continued through UAS Web Portal.

Fall 2012

- “My UA Courses” Blackboard building block developed and provided to UAF and UAA to allow seamless access across UA to any UA course web site (unfortunately, neither campus enabled the feature by default for their students).

Spring 2013

- Sitka CEU, Continuing Ed classes moved to Blackboard.

March 2013

- Letter from CIO Management Team to SAC announcing project to identify Elluminate Live! replacement along with commitment to stay on current solution.
- Despite letter, UAA migrated to cloud solution in the summer and UAF migrated in Spring 2014.

Fall 2013

- “MyUAS” ribbon launched, allowing two-click access to course sites from any UAS web page.

Fall 2014

- Update to SAC announcing failure of coordinated elive replacement effort.

Fall 2015

- Separation of UAS Blackboard from UAS web portal. Support provided to the “MyBlackboard” interface.
- Students and faculty can continue to use portal, but may also connect via the “MyUAS” ribbon or by connection directly to Blackboard.
- Migration to cloud hosted Blackboard Collaborate for UAS Courses.