UAS Regional TLTR Meeting

4/26/2012, 9:30 AM
Mourant Conference room, UAS Juneau campus

In attendance: Hildegard Sellner, Michael Ciri, Maren Haavig, Jennifer Ward, Tony Martin, Colleen McKenna, Kim Schulte, Maureen O'Halloran, Jill Hanson, Joelle Courtright, Mark Thompson, Emily Wall, Wendy Miles, Marnie Chapman, Colleen Ianuzzi, Megan Buzby. Guest: Jason Amundson (next year's Natural Science rep)

Draft minutes from April 5 are approved.

Blackboard Update
- Transition is going well and is on target. Some issues have come up now – good to get them worked out prior to the start of the fall semester
- IT has submitted its first few work tickets to BB. They are finding it to be a somewhat painful process, but are using these opportunities to learn how to escalate problems.
- UAF and UAA CIOs are interested in adopting the single sign-on that UAS IT created for UASOnline portal. This would make it possible for them to list all UA courses that a student is taking, as is currently done in the UASOnline portal.
- Blackboard sells/owns a lot of different products (Angel, Vista, a swipe card app, etc.). The product we are using is called "Blackboard Learn". They continue to acquire their competitors.

Blackboard Training
- Maureen's BB training Web site is setup and ready for visitors: http://uas.alaska.edu/idc
- She will be in Juneau in May for iTeach, and will have two drop-in sessions in the Glacier View room:
    - May 15th: 10:30-noon: Intro to BB, how to add, edit, organize content
    - May 17th: 10:30 to noon: Focused on testing, assessment, and grade books
- No current plans to travel for training in the summer, but she will work on online training
- Attendance at last week's Ketchikan/Juneau training sessions wasn't stellar.
- She says there are still some people who haven't attended a session.
- She had a lot of requests for gradebook training. She will create training materials that describe the most basic gradebook setup, along with some navigation tricks that simplify the grading process
- Convocation might be "crunch time" for some people, so it will be important to incorporate training options that will be available to all who still need it

Blackboard Testing Checklist
- Michael suggests waiting on a checklist until the current system is stable and tests of Service Pack 8 are underway – likely in fall 2012. Then come up with a formalized testing process
- Proper testing is conducted by focus groups with faculty/students, etc.
- Jill asks if it would be possible to do focus groups now – Michael says timing would be difficult with faculty and students leaving soon.
- If someone finds a "glitch", report it to the help desk. Often, the glitch is a bug that has not yet been fixed by BB.
- UAF has a "known issues" page, where they list bugs, provide updated status reports, and potential workarounds. Michael plans to do the same for UAS.
- It is technically possible for UAS to modify BB code to fix bugs, it's not efficient. BB might opt not to support the modified system, upgrades could overwrite the changes, and all fixes would need to be thoroughly documented. Modifying BB code will be avoided whenever possible, unless the change is vitally important to functionality.

- Maureen suggests that testing should be done over the summer from the student perspective (Ex. take a test, upload an assignment, etc.). Most testing so far has been from faculty perspective.

Course Site Consistency
- Michael sent out a list of the items that should be consistently included in navigation (syllabus, class list, resources)
- We might want to consider creating "themes" in the future. Different types of courses require different organization schemes. Ex. one layout could work well for local classes, another for short classes, another for module-based, etc.
- Consistency should be an ongoing discussion in TLTR including topics such as:
    - What should be in the default course menu (gradebook, resources? class list?)
    - Should faculty be allowed to remove certain items from the menu
    - Should the gradebook be included in the default
    - From a student perspective, what items should be consistently included?
    - What should be included in course navigation vs. the portal?
- Marnie suggests renaming the "Resources" link – the word "Resources" is too generic.
- For now, the established consistent elements (syllabus, classlist, library/resources) elements will remain consistent.

Action Item: Michael will work with Maureen for other names that could be used for "Resources"

Virtual Desktop Project (VDI)
- VDI project is moving out of the testing phase – successful so far
- End user experience has been better than the mobile labs - faster boot times and access to applications
- Desktop experience looks the same: Windows 7, same programs
- Won't be able to use optical drives unless they are USB drives
- From IT perspective, maintenance and management will be much easier
- Currently a Juneau project. Ketchikan and Sitka have different setups. Rob Billideau says they are working on VDI for the Sitka campus computers.
- This type of setup can help keep laptops around for longer periods
- Software vendors are trying to figure out how to keep making money in a virtual desktop environment – licensing is changing
- Adobe licensing is particularly challenging – best to keep an eye out for alternatives.

Other Items:
- Megan reports that Natural Sciences faculty members do not want to receive emails when students drop courses. They prefer having a message appear in the UASOnline portal.
- Megan confirmed with Michael that there's a spot in the Edit Profile section where students can enter their academic goals. This helps to ensure tracking ability for faculty/university accountability of our students' academic goals and their "success" or "failure" at achieving those goals.

Action Item: All TLTR members should forward names for next year's committee to Tony.