

# UAS Regional TLTR Meeting

4/5/2012, 9:30 AM

Chancellor's Conference room, UAS Juneau campus

**In attendance:** Hildegard Sellner, Michael Ciri, Lee Graham, Maren Haavig, Jennifer Ward, Tony Martin, Colleen McKenna, Kim Schulte, Maureen O'Halloran, Megan Buzby, Jill Hanson, Eric Keller, Rob Billideau, Joelle Courtright, Mark Thompson, Emily Wall, Wendy Miles, Marnie Chapman, Carol Hedlin, Dale Miller, Colleen Ianuzzi

Draft minutes from March 22 are approved with changes.

## Blackboard Service Pack

- Questions arose from Chris Beks' visit as to whether it would be best to start out with Service Pack 8 (SP8).
- We are currently running BlackBoard 9.1, SP7, hot fix 1. It's the most up to date BB prior to SP8. SP8 is very new and is likely to still have bugs.
- Neither UAF nor UAA have been able to get SP8 up and running, although both plan to migrate. UAF is planning for fall 2012; UAA is planning to wait a bit longer.
- Michael recommends waiting to upgrade to SP8 until a few rounds of bug fixes have been released. We will eventually make the switch, but need to focus on a smooth transition for the fall semester. Recommends moving the SP8 in summer 2013 for minimal disruption.
- BB versions move very quickly – SP8 is brand new, and they are already talking about SP9 and SP10. These are relatively major changes that could affect add-on functionality. If we were to upgrade every time they offer a new SP, we could end up with functionality issues.
- Sitka campus faculty wants consistency between the MAUs and BB versions. This would create continuity for students who take courses at multiple campuses. Also helpful for troubleshooting - all three would experience similar issues and could share knowledge.
- Lee says that the thought of going to a new version that hasn't been tested in any of the UA campuses is frightening. Stability is important.
- UAS is not in danger of "falling behind" on updates. At this point, our version of BB is the most up to date of all of the UA campuses. We went to SP6 in the fall, and UAF and UAA have not.
- Several faculty noted that it would be difficult to start working on our courses now and then have an upgrade to SP8 occur after we've prepared our courses for fall.

## Additional Blackboard Topics

- Fall class sites will be available in Blackboard next week.
- Illuminate is still having problems in BB. UAS has a work ticket in with BB to get this fixed.
- Web developers are working on ways to support mobile devices. It is more efficient to create Web pages that work for all devices than to create separate apps for each device.
- Content that used to show on the UASOnline splash page (the course description and instructor information) will now show by default in an initial course announcement.

## Defaults for course content

- Changes that we previously discussed have been implemented, i.e. anything within the "course content area" is locked down from guests.
- If an instructor creates their own content area, the default is that it will be locked to guests.
- Eric says that any consistency that can be built into the system would be helpful to students. Instructors tend to organize content in UASOnline in different ways - challenging for students.

## Student testers for Blackboard

- Chris said that asking for volunteers to test without a “checklist” can leave a lot of areas untested. He recommends a systematic method for testing that covers all of the features
- Michael says that general testing protocol calls for external testing groups rather than an IT group - IT group doesn't always understand how the system will be used.
- Maureen says that testing should be an IT function.
- Michael says that testing should be an instructional design function.
- Jill suggests that IT could develop the test tool and TLTR could distribute it.

**Action Item: Michael will talk to his staff to determine what would be reasonable for the IT group to tackle. However, he suggests that feature testing is better handled by those who will use the system.**

## Blackboard Training

- Maureen will be conducting training sessions in Ketchikan April 16-17 and Juneau April 18-20. Detailed announcements will go out this week.
- iTeach is scheduled for the week of May 14<sup>th</sup> in Juneau
- Maureen is working on developing online training opportunities.
- For students – Maureen will create some online materials describing basic tasks (how to turn in assignments, etc.).

## Training for UAS Help Desk Staff

- Help desk training is scheduled for Wednesday April 18<sup>th</sup>
- Maureen suggests that it might be helpful for UAS Help Desk staff to work with UAF/UAA help desk staff to learn about common problems, common solutions, etc.
- Sitka faculty have a concern that the help desk staff will not be prepared. They suggest sending the help desk staff to UAF for training.
- Michael says that help desk staff has been supporting BB for several years and that it would be difficult to lose all staff at one time for a training trip.
- UAS help desk already works closely with UAF (they have a constant connection via chat).

## Student email forwarding

- Banner team asked for a way to ask students for their preferred email route.
- CIOs suggested building this into ELMO. They mandated the change, but it failed because UAF/statewide would not provide access to Google.
- We have a system called EDIR that was intended to be a single location for current employee contact information but it doesn't work well. The UAS CMS directory provides more up-to-date information for UAS faculty and staff.
- CIOs are having an ongoing conversation about the multiple ways that UA stores student contact information and none of it is consistent, nor is it up to date.
- The change requested by DONUTS and supported by TLTR is simply an interface change to the way that the system prompts students for their email forwarding information. Rather than sending users to the crowded “Edit Profile” page, the idea is to zero in on that field in an empty “pop-up” style interface that the student will have to fill in to ensure that it isn't left at the default address.

**Action Item: Michael will change the interface, but cannot promise that he will be allowed to implement it.**

**Next Meeting: Thursday April 26, 9:30-11:00**