



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Instructional Management System Advisory Council MEETING NOTES

February 11, 2008

10:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.

World Trade Room, Wells Fargo Place, St. Paul

NEXT MEETING: **Date:** March 10, 2008
Time: 10:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.
Location: Room 3306, Wells Fargo Place, St. Paul

ATTENDEES: Lesley Blicker, David Bouchard, Penny Dickhudt, Todd Digby, Alfred Essa, Zala Fashant, Gary Langer, Karen LaPlant, Louise Mengelkoch, Chuck Morris, John Rohleder and Kim Preiner

Via WebEx: Mike Condon, Paul Cusick, James Falkofske, Rhonda Ficek, Jared Grove, Sara Hoffman, Carol Lacey, Dawn Leech, Michal Moskow, Ali Serrioz and Sherry Steinke

1. **Announcements – D. Bouchard:**

- We have scheduled meetings for March 10th and April 14th. At the March meeting, we will discuss further meetings.
- David Bouchard volunteered to remain Council Chair this year. Karen LaPlant has volunteered to be Chair next year.
- A general survey is starting to take shape among this Council and its taskforces. This will be a topic for next month. We will need to develop a single survey rather than bombarding users with individual surveys.
- Review of 1/18/08 Minutes: Chuck Morris recommended three changes which will be made. Karen LaPlant made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. John Rohleder seconded the motion. Motion is passed.

2. **Membership Issues – D. Bouchard:**

We will be contacting the groups who provided us with members and request that they assign new members to replace those who have not been attending meetings regularly. There was no opposition to this from the Council.

3. **Motion re D2L Version 8.2/8.3 Implementation – Al. Essa:**

We are currently building a project plan for the 8.2/8.3 project plan. There are likely to be some major risks associated with this upgrade. The worst case scenario is a potential meltdown this coming Fall if we go ahead with the upgrade. This is because the 8.2/8.3 upgrade contains significant .net code. The architecture for the previous version is based on the previous generation of Microsoft technology. This upgrade will cause a major underlying system environment change.

- If we go ahead with this upgrade, we will be the guinea pig once again as the largest site doing real time bug fixes during Fall start-up.
- Purge/Archive: This tool is supposed to appear with the upgrade. There is a partial purge tool that has become available, but some users have reported bugs and are not very happy with it.
 - Option 1: We go ahead with the upgrade and accept the risks
 - Option 2: We do not do the upgrade this Summer. But then when will we do it? And what will we do with the data that we are building up? We could build a one-time purge/archive capability in 8.1. We could work with D2L on this.
 - Option 3: Stay on 8.1 for the major system but consider a parallel effort with some schools to go with 8.2/8.3. At this point, we would possibly consider breaking up the database. This is a radical option.

- Authentication and integration would vary from site to site. The sites could be synched but not tied together. Supporting up to 32 sites and databases would be a huge challenge. One way to do this would be with virtual machines. We could create a single image for each site within a virtual machine. When an upgrade is applied to an image, it could be replicated out to all of the sites.
- The other big project we have going on right now is the conversion of our database for ISRS and the Data Warehouse from RDB to Oracle. This is scheduled to happen at the end of June. When major systemic changes take place simultaneously the opportunity for a major meltdown introduces itself, particularly when the outcomes of the changes are unclear.
- Karen Wenz pointed out that there are also risks involved with not upgrading at all. We don't want to get too far behind in upgrades.

Two paths we could take:

1. We will not take the upgrade in May, but we will do it in December. At the same time, we will work with D2L in cleaning up the database within 8.1. During the months in between, we will work with D2L on a purge/archive capability.
 2. We do not make the decision to split up the database, but we conduct a careful and systematic exploration of the alternatives. We would gather data and identify issues and options.
- It is clear that we need more data in order to make a decision on this upgrade.

4. Updates re Motion re Moodle Pilot – R. Ficek:

We are working on the logistics and timeline for the Moodle pilot. Moodle Room is a vendor that hosts Moodle for colleges and universities. They will charge us \$250.00 for about 500 users for 6 months. We will have to discuss project coordination and evaluation. Rhonda is suggesting that 2 community colleges, 2 technical colleges and 2 four year universities participate in this pilot. In total, there will be about 12 courses for the pilot. For support, we can buy a certain number of tickets from Moodle Room. Rhonda will look at pricing for tickets. Participants will be asked to sign an agreement in order to take part in the pilot. We will select faculty who are proficient in D2L so they will be better prepared for the new platform. We will also pick courses with only 20 to 30 students so that we do not have major enrollment problems with ISRS.

- David Bouchard recommended that we also involve some less technically experienced people in this pilot.
- James Falkofske recommended including some team-taught courses where one instructor may be more technically experienced than the other.
- For training, we will request that each participant completes Moodle 101 which costs \$200/participant. This should be adequate training for pilot participation.
- We will also do an assessment of both Faculty and Students to determine their satisfaction with the Moodle learning environment.

Pilot Project Goals:

- Explore concept of parallel deployment of course management systems within MnSCU
- Explore potential/issues of implementing Open Source products for enterprise level functionality
- Explore alternative applications that are interoperable and compatible with other vendor products, publisher content and third party products.
- Explore accessibility and usability of alternative products (for both instructors and students)

Rhonda and Lesley Blicher have volunteered as pilot coordinators. Zala Fashant and James Falkofske also volunteered to help.

- Al Essa asked about our ability to get data out of Moodle when we shut down the pilot.
- In Moodle, courses can be backed up to the hard drive. Quizzes are exportable in format and can be downloaded with student data or without.

David Bouchard expressed concern regarding Moodle's intellectual property policy.

- Moodle clearly states that intellectual property belongs to the course designer.

Rhonda requested that several people look at the Moodle contract before we agree to anything.

Finding Participants: This Council will recommend participants for the pilot. We will then put out a general call for participants to all 32 institutions.

eCollege - Gary Langer

Working with eCollege at St. Cloud State went very well in terms of importing courses, training and user satisfaction. It is being expanded by a couple of more courses this spring. The pilot costs nothing and gives us a chance to see how a totally hosted system works. The next step would be to try out eCollege at another institution. Gary will contact our eCollege representative about a second pilot.

Rhonda asked the group if they believe that having more IMS choices is a positive thing:

- The group generally agrees that multiple platforms as well as multiple configurations are a good idea. Some things to consider are costs and student point of view.
- Graeme Allen suggested that it would be easier on students and faculty if pilot projects were spread out among different campuses. Having more than a couple of different platforms/configurations on one campus could get confusing. James Falkofske asked if there is data that could back this up and if it could be compiled. There is not much data like this available. This Spring and summer, we are going to implement the STAR ID. This will be a system-wide ID that will be portable across the system which should make it easier for students who will be taking courses on more than one platform.

5. D2L System Status, Performance Issues, Risk Issues, Tools Status etc. – C. Morris:

The problems that occurred January 7th – 11th all happened when we generally had very little activity. This goes to show that our problems are not always load-related. There are other issues at hand.

- Denial of Service attack at Winona State: An email report was sent out shortly after this happened. The problem was a Bot (a hacked desktop under robotic control). One was at Winona and one was off-site and they were fighting for control. We can't definitively say that there was an affect on D2L, but everything the D2L team tried to do to solve the problem did not have an impact until the attack was shut down.
- There are millions of desktop computers on the internet that have already been hijacked by a Bot and users have no idea. There is an underground Bot economy where people can buy access to machines. This is what happened in Winona. There was a computer that had been compromised. When it woke up, it got into a battle with an off-site computer which brought down the core router at Winona. This is what caused the shut down. It had nothing to do with D2L. We have state funding from Homeland Security to do scanning of our campus networks to identify which machine servers are vulnerable. All campus CIOs will have access to this data. They will then have to determine how to fix any vulnerability.
- Simultaneously to this router/network problem, D2L began to have problems. We traced the problems to 3 or 4 of our application servers. We were not able to determine the cause of the application server problems. Whether or not the two problems were related is inconclusive. But when the Bot problem was solved, the application server problem went away. We will look at this issue again at the next meeting.

6. Status re Respondus Motions, Media Server, Content Manager – P. Dickhudt, K. Wenz, K. LaPlant:

Karen Wenz posted the Respondus information on a D2L site for the Campus Site Admins. a couple of weeks ago. It can now be distributed to Faculty.

The Office of the Chancellor will be reimbursing the campuses who had already paid for Respondus on their own.

Media Servers and Content Management – Alfred Essa: Rather than deciding upon one product, we would conduct at least a couple of pilots. The two that we are currently considering are ShareStream and Video Furnace. These pilots must be hosted since we do not have the bandwidth for them. This

is not a video streaming pilot. It is a basic infrastructure that would allow for media management. This system needs to integrate well with our IMS system so that the experience of the end user is very smooth.

Rhonda Ficek asked if the media server would manage content other than multi-media.

-The server will primarily manage media content. There will be links from D2L to these files. We want to go to a more generalized environment where faculty in a research setting can upload content into their personal area and set permissions regarding which applications can have access to which data.

7. D2L Excellence Plan Update – A. Essa:

We are targeting mid-February for the initial launch of the website. This page will replace the existing D2L status page. It will include the status of D2L, IMS AC meeting information, minutes etc...

Al Essa suggested that we start using filtered RSS feeds. We will look into this.

Incident Management - Ticketing System: We have come up with gradations within our ticketing systems. We now have 6 breakdowns. The D2L team is now in the process of filling in priority when answering tickets. We will be publishing reports of all open tickets on a weekly basis.

8. I.T. Governance Proposal – A. Essa:

We are very close to finalizing the I.T. Governance. We have one more set of feedback that we need to incorporate from the CIOs. One thing that is likely to change is that the IMS AC would warp into the Academic Systems Council and take on all academic systems (any tool or technology related to instruction, research and/or collaboration.) If we move forward with this, the scope of the group would change substantially to include much more than the IMS. The Academic Systems Council would be driven by the academic side. Faculty would have a dominant voice. It would essentially be this group (the current IMS AC) taking on this role. This system is being considered in the interest of simplification. It would be a single committee with workgroups or sub-committee that would focus on specific issues such as IMS.

The group generally expressed concern regarding lumping other enterprise-level applications in with IMS. Examples of applications that would be managed by this council would be WebEx and whether or not we should consider alternatives. Synchronous and web conferencing tools, Enterprise Wikis and Second Life are examples of academic applications.

9. Workgroup Reports – J. Rohleder (Metrics and Standards):

Chuck, Mike, Kim and John met via WebEx a week ago. John developed a proposal regarding archiving and purging. He will have the rest of the Metrics team proof it and then get it out to the Council this week for their review.

3 Items the Metrics Group is looking at:

1. What kind of retention schedule should be proposed to the campuses?
2. Metrics piece: We need to start looking into this.
3. Standards piece: What are the ways people should be using this tool?

D2L's Bulk Export Tool: Would allow us to choose a set of courses to perform batch exporting on. We have a matrix that shows what things are exportable and what things are not. The export tool does not export as much as is capable of being copied from courses. This allows us to export the majority of intellectual property to a different location. This will help in beginning the purge/archive process. Chuck and Mike will find out the cost of this tool from D2L.

10. Help Desk Update – L. Blicher:

Plans for Faculty notification – Lesley spoke with Bill Dowden from Riverland College. They have a resource that can help us get a database together. But who do we have available for maintenance issues? We may need an additional resource.

Paul Cusick drafted a motion that would grant the Statewide D2L Helpdesk the following functions:
- The *Manage Users* role at each campus (which would include)

- Edit User info
- Ability to View User Progress
- Ability to email log-in information to users
- User Tracking

Motion is passed.

11. Report on Rubrics/Competencies Tool – L. Blicker, S. Steinke

Six faculty members and Sherry participated in this pilot.

Pilot Group of 7 volunteer Disciplines: Marketing, Building Inspection, Technology, Academic Development, Music, Speech, Art, Instructional Design. Overall, it was a very diverse, yet small group.

Goal 1: Read the manual and begin familiarizing with the tool. Deadline: Friday, September 7, 2007.

Goal 2: Create first Competency and Rubric tool. Participate in the discussion inside the Wiki to share thoughts and concerns or ask questions. Deadline: Friday, September 28, 2007

Goal 3: Discussion and sharing of created competency/rubric. Deadline: Discussion begins at the deadline of completion, September 28. Begin posting your rubrics/competencies to a New Page and join us in the discussion area. Deadline: October 15. Quick turn around on this project.

Final Survey: Users were asked to rate the ease of the tool. They were given a manual and access to the tool but no training. Some faculty felt that the manual was too lengthy and difficult to work through so a training video was created. The initial set-up was somewhat tedious. They did however like that the tool was fairly easy to navigate. Overall, users were very pleased with the Competencies and Rubrics tool. The most important thing that came out of this is that we need to have good examples of faculty who are related to their discipline. This makes it much easier to incorporate the tool. Lesley pointed out that this is a teaching issue, not a D2L issue. It is about understanding how to transfer a course from a traditional assessment method to an outcomes-based method. CTL has put on seminars on Rubrics and Competencies that have been recorded. It may be time for another one of these sessions. A sense of the body was called to move forward on a resolution to ask CTL to work on this.

12. Other Items:

- **Committee Website:** We are in favor of updating the Council website. Smitha will coordinate this.
- The focus of the March meeting will be the upgrade and configuration issues.

13. Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM

Meeting notes submitted by Smitha Pennepalli smitha.pennepalli@csu.mnscu.edu

IMS Workgroups:

- User Support Models/Best Practices: James Falkofske, Lesley Blicker, Carol Lacey and Zala Frashant
- Current Standards/Performance Metrics (crosses over several categories): John Rohleder
- Risk Analysis/ etc... and Enterprise Data Management: David Bouchard, Mike Condon, Kim Priener and John Rohleder,
- Future Directions: Rhonda Ficek, Nima Salehi, Lesley Blicker, James Falkofske, Sally Johnstone, David Bouchard, John Rohleder and Zala Frashant
- Legal Issues: David Bouchard, Anne-Marie Ryan-Guest, James Falkofske and Karen LaPlant

IMS Executive Committee:

David Bouchard, Alfred Essa, Rhonda Ficek, Karen LaPlant and Gary Langer.