COLLEGE TEACHING AND TECHNOLOGY PLANS
Centralizing Web-Enhanced Course Design in a Decentralized Environment

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COLLEGE TEACHING AND TECHNOLOGY PLANS
Centralizing Web-Enhanced Course Design in a Decentralized Environment

Presented jointly by:
Harvard University
Lesley University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Northeastern University
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Total students: 19,500
Undergraduates: 6,600
THE ISSUE (2000)

2 Harvard Schools with course platforms

Inconsistent services across the remaining schools

Instructional tools are not available to all Faculty

Students “Born Digital”, expectations high

Schools looking for solutions to support distance learning

Variation in depth and expertise to support instructional tech
A SOLUTION, iCommons

Provide shared software platforms, tools, and services to support on-campus and distance learning courses for Harvard schools that select to participate

Create a collaborative forum for information sharing and software development

Leverage investments by reducing the creation of multiple solutions to common problems

Participate in collaborative R&D
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**College Teaching and Technology Plans**

- **HGSD Courseware**
- **HLS – Blackboard**
- **HBS Coursertools**
- **HGSE, HDS & HSPH – iCommons/ICG platform**

**Usage Percentages**

- **FAS ICG Toolkit**: 55%
- **FAS**: 4%
- **HGSE**: 7%
- **HDS**: 7%
- **HSPH**: 6%
- **HLS**: 6%
- **HBS**: 5%
- **HGSD**: 5%
- **KSG**: 4%
- **HMS**: 5%
School vs. iCommons roles and responsibilities

- **Planning**
  - Opportunities
  - Issues
  - Program
  - Administration
  - Staffing

- **Content Development**
  - Intellectual Process
  - Program Design
  - Program Content
  - Instructional Process
  - Assessment

- **IT Infrastructure**
  - Course Presentation
  - Collaboration Tools
  - Network Operations
  - Security
  - Accessibility

- **Business Infrastructure**
  - Registration
  - Billing
  - Student Services
  - Sales & Marketing

*Elizabeth Cates Hess*
*Provost Office*
*Harvard University*
OUTCOME

• iCommons Course Website Toolkit (FAS)
• Discussion tool, Web Crossing
• Poll - survey module - basic (HBS)
• New slide carousel (FAS)
• PIN Authentication for Academic Tools
• myCommons - academic portal
• Video Presentation Tool (HBS)
• Authorization, Personalization layer
• Streaming media server
OUTCOME (continued)

• Faculty and TA training and user documentation
• 7X24 system monitoring and support
• Integration with school registrar and university-wide systems
• Participation in defining a stream of improvements and enhancements
RELEVANCE

• Collaboration across the University has made instructional tools available to all faculty and students quickly

• Tools can be used across the University

• Common R and D framework has created efficiencies in development and deployment
LESLEY UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

- 12,645 students with degree programs in 18 states
  - 3,422 undergraduate, 1,447 full time
  - 9,223 graduate, 2,219 full time
OVERVIEW (continued)

- Center for Academic Technology
  - Reports to University Technology with a dotted line report to the Provost (formerly under the direct purview of the Provost)
  - 2 full time staff, 2 student interns and one faculty fellow
  - Provides leadership and support on pedagogy and technology, best practices, and institutional technology planning and policy
OVERVIEW (continued)

- Blackboard course management system adopted in Spring 2000
  - 462 courses and/or communities active as of Feb. ‘03
  - Two online Master of Education Degrees available: Technology in Education and Science in Education.
  - Many courses have moved to included web-enhanced features
THE ISSUE

Lesley’s development of online and web-enhanced courses revealed the need for improved institutional technology planning and support.
THE ISSUE: Specific concerns

• Schools individually working on very similar efforts

• “Silos” of knowledge and expertise

• Duplication of efforts and purchasing

• Multiple support structures with little cross-communication

• Difficult to articulate University-wide priorities and needs
A SOLUTION

School-based technology planning introduced to help schools and the institution identify needs and better understand current projects.

Rebecca Peterson-Leary
Director
Center for Academic Technology
Lesley University
A SOLUTION (continued)

All schools use the same template to develop plans. Template sections include:

• Vision Statement

• Summary of Current Uses/Practices using technology

• Identified Needs and New Programs
A SOLUTION (continued)

• Goals and Implementation

✓ Objective(s)

✓ Resources needed

✓ Timeframe for implementation

✓ Measurable outcome (if appropriate)

✓ Contact person/group for implementation

Rebecca Peterson-Leary
Director
Center for Academic Technology
Lesley University
OUTCOME

All four schools had very similar requests and needs. They included:

- Better access to classroom technology
- More classrooms with Internet-ready ports
- A Technology Specialist position for each school
- Better purchasing process for institutional software
OUTCOME (continued)

- An expanded Center for Academic Technology to help the faculty with instructional design and course revisions.

- Rethinking faculty workload and its relationship to online learning.

- Improved student support resources
OUTCOME (continued)

Provost, Directors of University Technology and the Center for Academic Technology met to coordinate the requests and to prepare a response statement to the schools on institutional-wide changes in support and resources. *(Statement in development now)*
RELEVANCE

Online and web-enhanced course needs a catalyst for university-wide effort on better technology planning.

Coordination between all schools is needed to create a more balanced and better resourced support network.

Joint leadership and support from the Provost and the Vice President of Online and Distance Learning essential in keeping the process going.
Process allowed for schools to articulate their specialized needs.

Provided a channel for faculty to express their interests, frustrations, and proposed solutions.

Influencing budget planning cycle for 2003-2004 for hardware, software, and staff.
Educational Technology Support at MIT: Pulling It All Together

Jean L. Foster
Team Leader
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MIT OVERVIEW

987 Faculty and instructional staff
- 4,178 Undergraduates
- 6,139 Graduate
- 27 Degree granting departments, programs, and divisions
OVERVIEW
The MIT Ed Tech Environment

The Players:

Information Systems Academic Computing (central IT support)

• Departmental IT support organizations or initiatives

• Libraries

Jean L. Foster
Team Lead
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
OVERVIEW
The MIT Ed Tech Environment (continued)

The Players:

• AMPS

• Grant funded ed tech projects

• Teaching and Learning Lab

Jean L. Foster
Team Lead
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
OVERVIEW
The MIT Ed Tech Environment (continued)

The Tools & Initiatives:

Learning Management Systems (LMS); Stellar, Sloan Space, Command

• Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI)

• Open CourseWare (OCW)

• Grant funded ed tech projects
THE ISSUE

• Customers don’t know who to go to for help

• Various groups competing for the same work

• Ed Tech support consultants don’t know who to go to for particular services

• Ed Tech support consultants don’t know how to refer customers for services they don’t offer themselves

Jean L. Foster
Team Leader
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
A SOLUTION

• Services Alignment
  • Operating Level Agreement
  • Clearly define services
  • Look for gaps
  • Avoid overlap
  • Define handoffs

• Educational Technology Partners

• Leverage existing ed tech support within departments

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Team Leader
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
OUTCOME

PHASE 1

• Agreement between ACST, AMPS, and WCS signed
• Ed Tech Partners off to a strong start
• Support for Stellar
• Collaboration between OCW and Stellar
OUTCOME

PHASE 2

• Expand Services Alignment work to other groups

• Ed Tech Partners off to a strong start

• Develop relationships with existing ed tech support within departments

Jean L. Foster
Team Leader
Academic Computing Support Team
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
RELEVANCE

• Find ways to work within the culture of the community

• Form strong collaborative bonds with other ed tech support groups on campus

• Work around organizational and political boundaries

• Work efficiently in response to today’s financial climate – find ways to eliminate duplication of efforts
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

Enrollments (2001-02)
13,757 full-time undergraduates
5,192 part-time undergraduates
2,079 full-time graduate students
1,571 part-time graduate students
567 law students

Faculty
Full-time: 774
part-time in day programs: 331
OVERVIEW (continued)

Course Management System:
Blackboard 6
When adopted: 2000

Prior CMS's:
WebCT, VistaCompass, Web Course In a Box

Number of Courses:
398 Blackboard course sites listed for winter 2003
OVERVIEW: DDL Reporting Structure

Provost

Division of Distributed Learning

EdTech Center
6 FTE, 4 Students

DL Center

International Prog.

NetWork NU
7 FTE

NU online
5 FTE
THE ISSUE

How can we maintain our momentum in a changing environment?
THE ISSUE (continued)

Ongoing Pressures

• Move NU to Top 100 research university status

• Help NU realize a return on Blackboard investment
New Pressures

• Create an online presence for all courses

• Improve faculty access to online communication

• Re-design multi-section introductory courses to reduce D/W/F rate

• Create summer term hybrid courses

• Develop distance courses for students on coop
A SOLUTION

Develop an Online Presence Initiative that responds to diverse goals

- Research and benchmark current use of technology
- Offer face-to-face, hybrid, & online workshops
- Offer customized training for targeted departments
- Offer Bb training to dept. support staff
- Establish EdTechies program
Launch a Marketing and Outreach program for the Online Presence Initiative

- NU Blackboard support information cards
- Visits to departments
- DDL semi-annual newsletter & web site
- Faculty Ideas Forums
- Annual Online Presence Progress reports
OUTCOME

Efficiencies in low end online presence mean more time for us to develop complex learning environments.
RELEVANCE

Plan informed by OKI and OCW initiatives: an online presence will become synonymous with an institution’s mission, goals and character.

Re-cast our goals to help create a continuum of online presence from basic syllabus to highly interactive online tools.
SUMMARY

What we have learned and how we are implementing it:

• Decentralization is common among all.

• Problems among large institutions are remarkably similar.

• Harvard and MIT are using homegrown CMS solutions.

• NU and Lesley supplement Blackboard CMS with homegrown tools.
SUMMARY (continued)

• All offer training, grants & support.

• Lesley & NU are developing College level plans.

• All are learning from each other about ways technology can be centralized.

• Support groups can work together but generic mandate must come from top.

• We will continue to meet to discuss problems & solutions. We’ll offer an update next year.
THANK YOU

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