

Blackboard Advisory Group Minutes: 10-24-2002

Perkins Library, Room 226, 4-5:00 p.m.

Attending:

Amy Campbell, Emily Jackson Sanborn (for Tom Wall), Paula Meacombs, Steven Sopp, Dan Graham, Wayne Miller, Adrienne Moore, Elizabeth Baker, Samantha Earp, Dallas Smith (for Fred Westbrook), Ben Donnelly, Renan Levine, Marcie Ellis (for Stacey McCorison), Peter Goldberg

1. Introductions

- Srihari Gopal – new member, student in the Clinical Research Training Program (CRTP), distance learning student at NIH.

2. Announcements of coming changes, Spring 2003

- Support mechanisms: begin using <http://www.dunk.duke.edu/submit/submit.htm> in place of emailing blackboard@duke.edu for Blackboard support, beginning immediately (email address totally phased out by January 2003). Some reasons for this change: parallels overall OIT change away from email to web form submittal, form connects to supported Remedy system for user help requests (faster user response on queries), better tracking of types/frequency of requests coming in.
- User roles: in the next few weeks, will have Blackboard “role” assigned to each Blackboard. These currently can be “guest” (used for the “guest” login), “faculty” (used for anyone having non-student access to any current-term course), or “student” (anyone else). Our adding these roles should be transparent to the users. Roles will be updated each semester to reflect new assignments. In January 2003, will begin using these assigned roles as a means to provide role-targeted information on the My Blackboard page. Pages may, then, look somewhat different at the start of the term, but users will be able to customize their own views of their role-targeted information. Those with faculty role will have access to all information provided to students, as well as information specifically for faculty.
- ED as source of user data: current plan is to begin using the campus Enterprise Directory as the source of “people” data (name, email, net ID, privacy settings) in Blackboard by January 2003. Along with this will come a change in how users may interact with their personal information as displayed in Blackboard. Currently, users can change their email address in Blackboard; with the ED feed in place, they will not be able to do this, but will need to update their personal information as required by the ED instead. Information about how to do this will be posted on the My Blackboard page, linked to the Blackboard support web site (<http://blackboard.duke.edu>). This may most significantly impact users who prefer to receive email at non-Duke email addresses: with this change only duke.edu addresses will be placed in Blackboard. Users who wish to use non-Duke addresses to receive Duke-related (course-related) mail will need to forward their Duke mail to their preferred non-Duke address (information about Duke email aliases is at <http://www.oit.duke.edu/helpdesk/alias-faq.html>, information about forwarding mail from Duke NetID addresses is at <http://www.oit.duke.edu/docs/email/4-email-3.html#forward>).
- A question arose about non-Duke students who enroll in Duke courses through ACES, and whether these students must fill out a form to receive a Duke NetID, or whether these students should automatically (as a result of enrolling) be assigned a Duke NetID. My current understanding is that these students should automatically receive a Duke NetID and, therefore, a Blackboard account.

3. Mid-term Blackboard survey - help distributing?

- Reviewed paper copies of a draft survey about Blackboard-related communications, support and training options. Received feedback about possible methods for distributing the survey and format of survey questions (special thanks to Renan L. for detailed suggestions). I investigated the possibility of using the Trinity College Assessment Office to create this as a web-based survey, but this type of survey seems to be outside the scope of that office. At this time, email seems to be the most simple and quick method to send out and receive survey responses. I will send the text of the email survey separately, and ask for responses by next Friday Nov 1, 2002. **If you feel comfortable distributing this via email to colleagues and any faculty/Blackboard support staff, please do so.** Instructions for completing and returning the survey are included with the survey questions. My hope is to get a quick, rough sense of feedback about how we’re doing with various aspects of Blackboard support.

4. Course management system planning - some thought questions:

- What role(s) do you see course management systems such as Blackboard playing in your teaching or for your faculty in the next 2 - 3 years?
- Generally, what about current CMS systems (not necessarily Blackboard in particular) works and what doesn't in your teaching or for your faculty?
- What do you see as the potential of CMS's?
- What do you see as the major avenues of development for Blackboard and other CMS's to better support your teaching or your faculty?

Responses, with some paraphrasing. If I've misspoken or missed any major point, please let me know (CMS = course management system):

Wayne M. - CMS give students and faculty a place to keep track of the different courses they're in, and course components. Still missing is the easy sharing of materials across courses. Important to have a system that's open to other systems. Integration to Enterprise Directory, other web spaces controlled by content management systems. CMS should be extensible, developed to a shared open standard.

Pete G. - would like to see something open in architecture

Dan G. - believes Duke about to sign onto the Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI, see <http://www.oki.org>), and Bb is also part of OKI. OKI's idea is to design the standards, and have CMS systems that work within those standards.

Samantha E. - need a policy and licensing model that accommodates the way courses are really taught (sharing materials between institutions).

Amy C. - current Blackboard license wouldn't allow faculty/courses at other institutions to login and use Duke Blackboard resources as part of their course materials (having their students with Duke Bb accounts, e.g.)

Renan L. - would like to be able to open courses to other people more easily (Blackboard doesn't officially support linking directly into course sites, e.g.)

Amy C. - would like to know what the BbAG and faculty see as the "next steps" in CMS evolution at Duke.

Samantha E. - for faculty focused on using the current system, it's hard to see what the next steps might be. Features like modularity and manipulability are very important.

Renan L. - ways that innovation in instructional technology use can happen: faculty can be handed the tools and experiment to discover what to do with them, or faculty generate cool ideas internally and need to try to figure out the ways to implement them.

Dan G. - faculty would have fabulous ideas, if they knew what was possible, and software developers not in touch with this facet of faculty need. Programmers have a different point of view than faculty. Faculty who aren't really into IT use don't have an idea of what's possible. Need to show examples. His fantasy - click on this month's "ten best ideas" of using technology in the classroom, mini-profiles.

Wayne M. - something like what CIT does with the grants, profile little pieces of how people use Bb. Discussion board, integrating ppt, etc.

Amy C. - there are multiple building blocks available now for Blackboard, from free to extensive. Would like BbAG advice on how to make decisions about extending Blackboard, in terms of most desired functionality.

Wayne M. - have Amy suggest favorites for consideration by the Group. Then the Group would need to commit to trying/testing those that do get piloted or tried here at Duke.

Amy C. - **Action: will provide link to list of currently-available Blackboard building blocks, along with what seem like favorites.** Interested in Group's response to the functionality available. Note that whether to proceed with a pilot is dependent on a number of factors, including building block technical specifications, feature it addresses, cost of building block, support required from us for a particular building block, functionality of the building block with Blackboard 6.