

## Benchmark Institutions

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The purpose of this document is to provide information on other institutions and campus strategic initiatives for evaluating a learning management system (LMS) or migrating to another LMS.

Some ancillary, but very revealing information is what the institutions consider essential to the LMS. For example, the first institution cited (California State University, Chico) has a "Best Fit Rubric" that considers teaching and learning, academic program assessment, and support and sustainability with strong consideration of how each of these areas serve the faculty and students in the online learning environment. It is followed by instructionally peripheral (though important) areas of consideration such as the enterprise integration and institutional partnership. CSU Chico's "Strategic Review" places "Teaching and Learning" as a top priority.

### 1. California State University, Chico

- a. From the Executive Summary of the Final Committee Report:  
*An LMS II Strategic Review Committee was formed to examine options for a new enterprise Learning Management System (LMS) to carry CSU, Chico into the future. The solutions considered were Blackboard, Desire2Learn, WebCT Campus Edition, and WebCT Vista, as well as leading open source options Moodle and Sakai. All but Blackboard and WebCT Vista were demonstrated to be deficient during the preliminary investigation and were disqualified from further consideration.*
  - b. CSU, Chico investigated enterprise level "learning management systems" in planning for their future. This Web site is documentation of their "charge" and objectives, their process, and the rubric tools they developed to complete their investigation. It is being shared publicly for those who may find value in the process (see <http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/LMS2/>).
- Included:
- Committee - Committee charge from the CIO, and members of the committee
  - Literature - Reference materials and resources
  - Vendors - Links to vendors considered
  - Meeting Minutes/Rubrics - All official committee minutes, and links to rubrics developed
  - Final Committee Report (PDF format)
  - Press Release: Chico Chooses Its Next-Generation Learning Management System
  - Evaluation Questions used (PDF format)
  - WebCT Impact Users Conference presentation, July 2006 (PowerPoint Presentation)
- c. CSU, Chico evaluation questions (see [http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/LMS2/LMS%20II%20All\\_Questions.pdf](http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/LMS2/LMS%20II%20All_Questions.pdf) ).
  - d. Results of the evaluation process: CSU Chico chose Blackboard.

## 2. Idaho State University

- a. The ISU learning management systems Focus Group Report evaluated feedback by Idaho State University (ISU) faculty members, students, support staff, and assessment officer review of WebCT 6.0, Sakai 2.0, and Moodle 1.5 LMS software packages."
- b. The ISU campus community utilized WebCT 4.0, which would no longer be supported (a consideration for UNC when the support for version 7.3 of Blackboard discontinues) after July of 2007, to deliver course materials and activities via the Internet. A typical upgrade path would be to upgrade to WebCT 6.0, but that process was identified as a larger shift in support and resources than previously required for WebCT version upgrades. The goal of this study was to determine if better LMS alternatives exist that can demonstrate increased pedagogical value, support financial concerns, address support issues, meet appropriate assessment criteria for accreditation, integrate with the information technology services on campus, and offer dependable long-term solutions (see [http://www.isu.edu/itrc/resources/LMS\\_Focus\\_Group\\_Report.pdf](http://www.isu.edu/itrc/resources/LMS_Focus_Group_Report.pdf)).
- c. Idaho State chose Moodle.

## 3. University of Iowa

- a. The University was searching for an LMS application that was "easy to use and intuitive, encouraging faculty adoption despite busy schedules," but also possessed "full-featured enterprise architecture, allowing efficient implementation of complex tasks, supporting advanced systems integration and distance and nontraditional initiatives."
- b. The institution's evaluation includes the following (found at [http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/elearning/cms\\_selection/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/elearning/cms_selection/)):
  - Project Process
  - Project Scope
  - Project Process
  - Open Source Considerations
  - Evaluation Strategy
  - LMS Selection Advisory Committee Members
- c. The results of the institution's "tactical" recommendations are found at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/elearning/assessment/index.shtml#tactical>.
- d. The University of Iowa chose Desire2Learn.

#### 4. University of California, Los Angeles

- a. In 2007 UCLA decided to adopt the free, open source-based Moodle LMS as the single open source platform for its common collaboration and learning environment (CCLE). More information from its Department of Information Technology and the CCLE initiative can be found at <http://www.oit.ucla.edu/ccle/>.
- b. The 2001 report, “UCLA Information Technology Vision,” interviewed 70 academic and administrative leaders, hosting focus groups and ad hoc committees. The procedure of the report is still relevant and is located at [http://www.oit.ucla.edu/CommonDocuments/ITPB\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.oit.ucla.edu/CommonDocuments/ITPB_Brochure.pdf).

#### 5. Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- a. MIT made available online a study it commissioned in 2006 comparing course LMS practices and costs, as well as life cycle of course materials, at top universities. Results are found at <http://web.mit.edu/emcc/www/MIT-WCET-C-LMS-Final-Report-07-19-06.pdf>.
- b. While its “peer” institutions surveyed - MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Stanford, Columbia, Berkeley, Harvard, the University of Chicago, Middlebury, University of Texas at Austin, Princeton, and Yale – differ significantly from those of UNC’s, it should be noted that it utilized and contracted with **WCET’s Edutools** which may serve as an instrument of evaluation for UNC’s purposes.
- c. Note: MIT uses a self-developed LMS.

#### 6. Humboldt State University

- a. HSU was determining if it should migrate from Blackboard to the open source Moodle LMS. The report, collaboration between instructional technologist and a faculty member, is found at <http://www.humboldt.edu/~jdv1/moodle/all.htm>.
- b. HSU chose Moodle.

#### 7. University of Maryland University College

- a. UMUC is highly dependent upon its LMS, taking the lead in online policies, such as its H1N1 procedures for academic continuity. An attachment is included, “LMS New Feature Deployment Options (Issues/Concerns for Large Institutions),” which, in a single-page document, sums up areas of concern:
  - Support issues
  - Training issues
  - Technical issues
  - Communications issues
  - Enrollment management
  - Options
- b. UMUC uses an internally developed program called “WebTycho”.

## 8. University of Texas

- a. As UNC is likely considering an upgrade to an advanced version, keeping with its current LMS, Blackboard, the University of Texas which has recently adopted version 9, serves as an institutional model, despite its size, mission, and support resources which differ from UNC.

(<https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/bbsupport/Home+Page>)

Its portal into the support of the LMS was the prototype for UNC's new instructional/technical marriage to better serve the faculty and students in our growing online courses (see <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/blackboard/staff.html>).

## 9. The Colorado Community College System

- a. The CCCS consists of 13 two-year institutions (does not include Aims Community College) which function as a consortium for its learning management system. It recently migrated from Blackboard to Desire2Learn. The migration to a new LMS by a consortium is complex and CCCS is making available to institutions reports on the resources and process. Included in this report is a simple migration schedule and timeline that might prove useful should UNC opt for an alternative to Blackboard.

Recommended contacts for the LMS best practices and evaluation include members of the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (WCET) LMS Selection Common Interest Group:

- Ritchie Boyd, Instructional Technology Project Director, Montana State University
- John Howard, Director of Distance Education, South Dakota State University
- Lisa Cheney-Steen, Co-Executive Director, Colorado Community College Online
- Steve Gance, Virtual Learning Environment Designer/Analyst, Portland State University
- Phil Hill, Executive Vice President, Delta Initiative
- Hae Okimoto, Director, Academic Technologies, University of Hawaii System
- Loyce Pailen, Associate Provost, University of Maryland University College
- Don Carter, Director, e-Learning Center, Northern Arizona University