

RSCCD Learning Management System Taskforce

Background

The Online Education Initiative (OEI) is a collaborative effort among California Community Colleges (CCCs) to ensure that significantly more students are able to complete their educational goals by increasing both access to and success in high-quality online courses.

The OEI is sponsored by the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, in partnership with the Butte-Glenn Community College District and its CCC Technology Center at Butte College as recipients of a \$56.9 million five-year grant disbursed by the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). The Online Education Initiative represents a comprehensive and collaborative program that leverages best practices and technology to significantly increase the opportunity for higher education degree attainment in California. ¹

The OEI has provided the CCCs with the following.

- OEI Course Design Rubric, Online Learner Readiness Tutorials and @ONE workshops
- Shared LMS resources and the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS)
- Online Tutoring platform (World Wide Whiteboard)
- Online Counseling platform
- Volume pricing for:
 - Online Tutoring
 - Plagiarism Detection Software
 - Online Test Proctoring

The OEI has committed to providing Canvas, by Instructure, to the CCC system for free through the 2018 school year. Going forward they have committed to paying approximately two-thirds of the cost of Canvas.

With the shared resources available within Canvas and the potential cost savings to RSCCD, a LMS Taskforce was created by the Technology Committees of both SAC and SCC to evaluate the Canvas LMS. This Taskforce was assigned to determine if Canvas would meet our needs as a LMS that could offer high-quality online classes and support our traditional on-campus classes. The Taskforce members were also asked to make a recommendation for which LMS RSCCD should select for the future.

Process

Membership

The LMS Taskforce is an RSCCD taskforce with the following membership. The Taskforce meetings were open for anyone to attend.

Co-Chair

Distance Education Coordinator, SCC

Distance Education Coordinator, SAC

Membership at Each College

(1) Instructional Administrator

(8) *Professors

(Up to 3) Students

(3) ITS (non-voting)

*Voting members will be chosen to best represent divisions, use of LMS for online classes, use of LMS for lecture classes.

Meetings

Several meetings were arranged for the following tasks.

- Initial meeting. Setting goals and general structure. April 30th, 2015 at SAC
- Canvas Demonstration (online) May 21st, 2015 at SCC
- Canvas Q&A (online) November 30th 2015
- Canvas and Blackboard Demonstration (online and in person) April 28th, 2016 at SAC
- Canvas Q&A with LMS Taskforce Members May 10th, 2016 at SAC
- Practical evaluation* of Canvas and Blackboard Ultra, Summer 2016
- Final meeting. This meeting was a Flex week meeting, open to all faculty. Canvas and Blackboard Demonstration. OEI presentation. Faculty Presentation from Practical evaluation. LMS final decision and recommendation. August 15th at SAC

*The practical evaluation had several faculty and students evaluate the Canvas and Blackboard Ultra LMSs. Faculty participating took their online summer class and converted 3 weeks of that class into Canvas and Blackboard Ultra. They gave their students extra credit to evaluate Canvas and Blackboard Ultra and to take an opinion survey about their experience. The faculty who converted their materials also took a survey about their experience and presented their findings and perceptions at the August 15th meeting.

Recommendation

The LMS Taskforce members voted unanimously to recommend that RSCCD adopt Canvas (19-0 in favor).

The Taskforce members noted the following primary reasons for their selection.

- Canvas is built upon a community of teachers. This community genuinely drives the direction of Canvas, based on the community's input. Canvas is very responsive to the communities input.
- Canvas offers some significant shared resources that will benefit our college and the CCC system in general
- Canvas is a high quality LMS that will meet our needs as a District, in offering high quality online classes and in supporting our on-campus lecture classes
- To be aligned with the OEI and their resources
- Canvas offers a high quality help desk
- Canvas has a consistent structure that will help students in orienting to each of their classes
- Canvas has innovative tools that are desirable

The Taskforce also recommends that the college create a LMS transition taskforce to discuss all of the details needed in order to convert to Canvas. The details will include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Resources for faculty and staff
- Instructional design support
- A plan for budgeting the cost savings
- A timeline for transition
- ITS support

1. OEI, <http://ccconlined.org/about-the-oei/>