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**MEMORANDUM**

Date: April 23, 2008

To: Provosts  
Campus Chief Information Officers

From: Keith Boyum, Associate Vice Chancellor  
David Ernst, Chief information Officer  
The California State University



Re: Learning Management System Contracts: Extensions of old, planning for new

The system-wide Learning Management System (LMS) RFP committee has identified vendors satisfying the CSU's LMS requirements for new Master Enabling Agreements (MEA). MEAs were awarded to two firms: 1) Angel Learning and 2) MoodleRooms. These MEAs will soon be available for campuses to utilize if they so choose.

Blackboard (including WebCT) did not qualify primarily due to accessibility issues. Desire2Learn's proposal of version 8.2 also has some accessibility issues and was under a court injunction at the time of our evaluation. Like Moodle, Sakai is open source software, however a qualifying hosting solution for that software has not been identified at this time. For more information about the results from the RFP process, please see the CSU web site: <http://dat.cdl.edu/>. In addition, your LMS Campus Coordinator has access to all CSU password protected content.

**What does this mean? Implications to the campuses?**

1. Campuses are not required to choose any particular vendor. Most campuses may need to continue with their current vendor beyond June 30, 2008 and must still consider making a decision about their LMS for the future.
2. Campuses can extend their current Blackboard contract (for two years or less) in their process of migrating to a new contract with Blackboard (should they become more accessible) or another vendor.

**CSU Campuses**  
Bakersfield  
Channel Islands  
Chico  
Dominguez Hills  
East Bay

Fresno  
Fullerton  
Humboldt  
Long Beach  
Los Angeles  
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay  
Northridge  
Pomona  
Sacramento  
San Bernardino  
San Diego

San Francisco  
San José  
San Luis Obispo  
San Marcos  
Sonoma  
Stanislaus

3. The CSU system-wide MEAs provide an option for a new contract without needing to do an RFP process on your own campus.
4. Campuses are not required to use the system-negotiated MEAs. However, we hope through the system-wide process or through campus collaborations, we can provide cost-efficient options. It remains a campus responsibility to evaluate products and negotiate new contracts if they choose not to use the CSU MEAs.
5. The system-wide RFP process has produced a wealth of information and market analysis of the current LMS products and vendors that your campus can readily utilize to inform your evaluation and decision processes.
6. Should campuses choose to migrate to another LMS, the process would most likely require approximately one and a half to two years from the point of decision to full implementation. This includes purchase, installation, testing, piloting and migrating faculty, students, and content to the new LMS.

#### **Near Term Actions by the Chancellor's Office to Help You**

1. Information from the CSU LMS RFP process is posted at the web site <http://dat.cdl.edu/>. New information will also be found at this web site as it becomes available. All CSU employees can have access to this information to further evaluate LMS products and vendors. LMS Campus Coordinators should already have access.
2. We are compiling pricing information by the first week in May to **extend our current Blackboard licenses for the last time**. We will provide you centralized negotiation services to aggregate CSU requirements and services to get the best deal for campuses. We will also manage all the paperwork for executing the extension of the *current* Blackboard contract.
3. We will be providing you the methodology and background on how LMS accessibility was evaluated. These methods have been mapped against accessibility standards and LMS functionality important to CSU faculty and students. We will provide you this information and tools by May 15, 2008.
4. By July 1, 2008, we will provide some initial guidance on how to accommodate students with disabilities using existing non-accessible LMS technologies. This will be an ongoing process and we will not have solutions to all accessibility problems. We will be looking to campus staff to collaborate with us on this effort.
5. There will be opportunities for campuses to collaborate on using LMS products and services across the CSU. Chancellor's Office staff will be providing coordination to help campuses identify and create these potentially cost-effective options as invited by the collaborators. Your appointed LMS Campus Coordinator will be the contact person for your campus' participation in these collaborative decisions.
6. We are planning another round of the LMS RFP process in about six months to allow vendors not satisfying the CSU requirements at this time to demonstrate their ability to do so later. We are debriefing the vendors on the first RFP evaluation process. This courtesy can provide vendors clear guidance on what remains to satisfy CSU's requirements in the future.

### **Recommended Near Term Actions for Campuses**

1. Each campus should review existing LMS usage and prepare documentation that can quickly and clearly list what Blackboard product licenses and services the campus plans to use July 1, 2008 thru June 2010. For those campuses whose LMS is hosted by Blackboard, this is the time to plan system maintenance, clean-up and backup annual archives in order to avoid additional charges that come with the growth of a system.
2. We encourage comprehensive consultation with your many campus constituents. Engaging your existing campus academic technology advisory process as well as providing open meetings can be an effective combination of consultation. You can use the RFP information already gathered by the CSU and any more recent information available on the LMS products and vendors. As the campus constituencies become clear on their priorities and plans for future LMS implementation and support, providing on-campus demonstrations of those products and services under consideration can be an effective means for giving and getting quality feedback.
3. Executing the extension of current contracts must be completed by June 30, 2008. This deadline has been communicated repeatedly over the last one and a half years. We understand that there will last minute processes performed on your campuses to get the work done.
4. We recognize that every campus has its unique planning, management, and decision-making processes. The Chancellor's Office will provide an "LMS Planning" Workshop and other opportunities in May and June for multi-campus collaboration, communication and planning.

To ensure that we achieve the best agreement with the vendors and to coordinate campus collaborations, there will be a single LMS negotiation team. Team members will include campus leaders and staff from the Chancellor's Office contracts, procurement, and academic technology units. We will rely upon your campus-appointed LMS Campus Coordinator to be the reliable and authoritative communication conduit between your campus' planning, management, and decision-making processes and the negotiation team. If you wish to revise your appointment to the LMS Campus Coordinator, please inform the Director of LMS System-wide Initiatives, Kathy Fernandes ASAP (530) 898-6294 or [kfernandes@csuchico.edu](mailto:kfernandes@csuchico.edu).

Thank you in advance for your leadership. We look forward to your continued advocacy for consultation and cooperation in the LMS decision and contract process.

cc: Charles B. Reed, Chancellor  
Gary W. Reichard, Executive Vice Chancellor/CAO  
Richard P. West, Executive Vice Chancellor/CFO  
CSU Presidents  
Campus Academic Senate Chairs  
Directors of Academic Technology  
Dr. Barry Pasternack, Chair, Academic Senate