

# UAS Strategic Direction for Web Course Management

Revised: March 8, 2012



## BACKGROUND:

With a focus on continuous improvement in UAS teaching and learning, Chancellor Pugh and the Provost Council have established a goal of delivering all UAS course websites via the *Blackboard Learn* server beginning in Fall 2012. This summary document outlines key steps and milestones to achieve that result.

This move will maintain the UAS Online single portal for accessing online services even as *Blackboard* becomes the foundation for all UAS online courses. UAS Information Technology (IT) will manage this server and provide needed support. The UAS region-wide Teaching and Learning Technology Roundtable (TLTR), made up of faculty and staff at all three campuses, will provide recommendations to Faculty Senate and Provost's Council during this transition.

Since the 1990s, UAS has recognized the importance of the web in supporting and delivering classes, and in supporting institutional initiatives. In support of these requirements, UAS has used a "hybrid" strategy since 1999 that combines commercial tools with custom software to deliver an integrated, brand-neutral system. The result is that UAS is far ahead of national norms for technology adoption and effective use of technology.

That said, in recent years commercial course management technologies have matured and become more robust. Students across the UA system have come to seek greater consistency and alignment in accessing learning management systems. This new reality contributes to the decision to offer all UAS course websites on the Blackboard Learn server housed here at UAS.

## MAINTAINING EXISTING UAS WEB COURSE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES:

The UAS Provost and Faculty Senate have expressed the goal of maintaining established policies and strategies concerning web course management, to the greatest extent possible. These currently include:

- An active course site is created for every UAS course section as soon as the course schedule is published.
- While access to some content and activities may be restricted to class participants, the UAS course sites are visible to the public.
- Course sites are retained indefinitely.
- Design of the system should maximize student interactivity and program and faculty control.
- A course syllabus must be posted either by faculty or their department.
- Course sites are used to deliver formal student course ratings at the end of each semester.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE TRANSITION OF WEB COURSE MANAGEMENT:

- UAS Instructional Design staff will develop a formal professional development plan for initial and ongoing faculty professional development.
- When additional tools outside of Blackboard are required, these should be integrated into the Blackboard generated course site.
- When directing students to their courses, links will be branded as "Blackboard" to be consistent with the other UA campuses.
- Semesters prior to Fall 2012 will continue to be supported using the existing system.
- Faculty will be provided tools for migrating content from the old system to the new.
- The Blackboard system will be integrated into the existing UAS web portal to support web single-sign-on, continued access to prior semester courses and course sites at the other UA campuses, and access to tools and applications outside of course web sites.

## Project Timeline:

<p><b>October 2011</b></p>	<p>ITS: Create Spring 2012 course sites in current system to coincide with the publication of the course schedule. Provost / TLTR: Clarify the project scope and timeline. <b>MILESTONE: Project launched</b></p>
<p><b>November 2011</b></p>	<p>ITS: Install/configure second Blackboard Learn server. TLTR: Identify key policy issues; review UA standard Blackboard modules. Instructional Designers: Draft professional development plan.</p>
<p><b>December 2011</b></p>	<p>ITS: Configure server for web sign-on, set up test semester for faculty evaluation. ITS / TLTR / ID staff: Collaborate on test system configuration. Instructional Designers: Initial coordination / delivery of training <b>MILESTONE: Test system available for review / experimentation</b></p>
<p><b>January 2012</b></p>	<p>TLTR: Presentation of recommendations to the Provost &amp; Faculty Senate. ITS / TLTR / ID staff: Continue collaboration of test system configuration. Instructional Designers: Continued faculty development ITS: Provide initial content migration tools.</p>
<p><b>February 2012</b></p>	<p>ITS: Continued tuning of the system based on campus feedback of test system and TLTR recommendations. Instructional Designers: Continued faculty development</p>
<p><b>March 2012</b></p>	<p>ITS: Create Summer 2012 course sites in current system ITS: Create Fall 2012 course sites in the new system Instructional Designers: Continued faculty development; assist faculty with configuration of their course sites. <b>MILESTONE: New course site strategy in production.</b></p>
<p><b>April to August 2012</b></p>	<p>ITS: Troubleshoot system; remediate issues not identified during test/development phase. Instructional Designers: Continued faculty development; assist faculty with configuration of their course sites. Modification of web site links to reference UAS Blackboard and UAS Online Web Portal as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>September to December 2012</b></p>	<p>Instructional Designers: Ongoing professional development / faculty support TLTR: Ongoing review of UAS tools and strategies for teaching and learning with technology. ITS: Ongoing system support and enhancement based on stakeholder input; creation of Spring 2013 course sites in new system to coincide with course schedule; cease ongoing support for legacy system as Summer classes end. <b>MILESTONE: All UAS credit classes migrated</b></p>
<p><b>January to March 2013</b></p>	<p>Testing of Moodle content export tools for Sitka courses hosted in Moodle (CEU courses)</p>
<p><b>April / May 2013</b></p>	<p>Migration of all course sites from Moodle to UAS Blackboard course sites</p>
<p><b>June 2013</b></p>	<p><b>MILESTONE: Project complete</b></p>