

Options for IUP Faculty Using Moodle Beginning Fall, 2013

8/2/2012

Background

Concerns have been raised by faculty and administrators regarding the PASSHE decision requiring D2L as the standard online distance learning platform. Internally, IUP had decided to use WebCT and then, after considerable discussion among faculty and administrators, chose to use Moodle as our platform. The requirements set by the Office of the Chancellor and recent changes in the Moodle product have caused IUP to develop a transition plan that will move us in the expected direction with minimal negative impact on our students and faculty and also be affordable, given the state of our budget.

Representatives of the IUP administration and faculty leadership worked together during early Summer, 2012 and developed two options for IUP faculty currently using Moodle for the time after version 1.9 (IUP's current version) is discontinued at the conclusion of Summer II, 2013.

The options are intended to balance the various desires and needs of IUP faculty while also recognizing PASSHE's requirement that D2L be our supported LMS – all the while considering technical, fiscal and staffing limitations.

Transition Option 1: New Moodle-to-D2L Support Services

The IT Support Center is introducing a "Moodle Version 1.9-to-D2L migration support service" beginning September 10, 2012 and running through Summer, 2013. This service will provide faculty members 1-on-1 instructional design and 'learning D2L' assistance. This 'hyper support' level will expand upon the former WebCT-to-Moodle support model in an effort to minimize faculty time commitments. The Support Center will provide faculty with as much flexibility as possible in the timing of scheduling these sessions given staff availability limitations.

The IT Support Center staff person and the faculty member will review the pros and cons of storing 'learning objects' locally as opposed to the D2L server.

Instructions for using this service will be announced soon.

Transition Option 2: Moodle 2.3 Upgrade

The IT Support Center will contact faculty currently using version 1.9 during the Fall, 2012 semester to identify faculty possibly interested in upgrading to version 2.3. The IT Support Center will work with the Online Learning Committee (OLC) to schedule those interested into a 'form and functionality' demonstration in early 2013. Faculty still interested following the demonstration will have a transition plan constructed based upon their Summer, 2013 teaching schedule and their availability to test the version 2.3 with their own content.

IUP stakeholders will monitor PASSHE's LMS plans beginning with the 2013-14 academic year as the D2L contract is currently set to expire in 2015. IUP's future use of both D2L and Moodle would be determined accordingly.

Faculty choosing this option will need to consider that the ability of D2L's migration utility to work with Version 2.3 content is not certain. Updates on this issue will be provided once migration tests with 2.3 are performed.

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