Moodle Development Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

MEETING CALLED BY

Randall Hall

TYPE OF MEETING

Fall MDAC Meeting

ATTENDEES

Members
Randall Hall, Suzanne Stauffer, Thomas Rodgers, Bill Wischusen, Liz Swoope, Kari Walters, Jim Stoner, Robert Doolos

ITS Representatives
Dee Childs, Pam Nicolle, Robert Russo, Philip Cali, Adam Zapletal, Sheri Thompson, Shannon Wall, Buddy Ethridge, Mallory Logan

Guest
Chris Higgins - University of Maryland

Agenda topics

DISCUSSION

Thanks to you that were able to attend our first meeting of the Fall 2011 semester. It was an informative and interesting meeting. We opened the meeting discussing our current development path for the upgrade to Moodle 2, still on track for Summer 2012. We are currently in our alpha test phase, which should run through the Fall semester. We will be running a beta test phase in the Spring semester, with the hopes that many (or all) of the MDAC members will participate. We will also be looking for other instructors that are willing to participate, so if you have any suggestions, please let me know.

We introduced the new look for Moodle 2 and it was well received overall. For those that could not attend (or for those that would like another look), I will be posting some screen captures in the MDAC course on Moodle in the coming days. The standard layout is very similar to our current environment, but it is much more customizable on an individual level, allowing the docking of blocks on the side of the screen. This provides enhanced flexibility and different navigation choices for each user.

We also talked about several upcoming possibilities. These including dividing active and inactive courses into separate blocks on instructor’s pages which would allow the inactive courses to be collapsed or docked out of the way. We also hope to include a "label" for students showing courses in which they are enrolled but that are not active in Moodle. This should help eliminate some of the support calls that ITS receives every semester from students wondering why they cannot see a few of their courses.

We briefly discussed some of the new pedagogical features, but those will be covered in more detail at a later date. Now that the new theme is in place, we will begin working on updating or writing GROK articles to reflect the upcoming changes.

We discussed what will change with the Course Preferences System. For the most part, the system will function similar to the way it currently does, with the notable exception of the Team-Teach feature. Currently Team-Teaching allows for one instructor to extend and invitation to another instructor in order to combine one section with another, creating a new course shell and enrolling the two sections of the respective instructors therein. The new CPS will expand upon this, allowing the inclusion of multiple sections and multiple instructors (more than two). We discussed how to name these courses without the name becoming overly long. It was determined that we will follow this model:

2011 Fall Team AAAA 1100 / BB 1001 / CCC 2101 (discretionary text).

The instructors’ names will be included in the course description that will be shown on the main page (see upcoming screen captures on the MDAC page for an example).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Development Queue:</th>
<th>Approved for Moodle 2.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add LSU dates to the Moodle calendar</td>
<td>It does not require any development, as the Moodle administrator will manually enter the dates as Site dates on the calendar. Thomas Rodgers, our SGA representative, will be providing student input on which dates should be included.</td>
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<tr>
<td>One click grade assignment</td>
<td>This feature will give instructors the ability to assign the same grade for an assignment or grade item to everyone in a course instead of doing so individually.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Add section number to participants list</td>
<td>This will add the student section number to the participants list. This will be a sortable field, allowing instructors to view the list in section groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add editable “reply to” field in Quickmail</td>
<td>This will give instructor-level roles the ability to send a message via Quickmail and specify a &quot;reply to&quot; address different from their LSU email address. The message will still originate from the LSU email address (for spam control purposes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>MyPortal integration</td>
<td>This integration will push various pieces of information from Moodle out to the MyPortal interface. Specifics are still being worked out as the MyPortal project continues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration with McGraw Hill Campus</td>
<td>Request denied. McGraw Hill Campus is only one of many e-book and supplemental material companies that provide APIs for integrating with Moodle. However, faculty can already access the McGraw-Hill e-book catalog outside of Moodle, and providing this integration for faculty in Moodle does not also provide access to the actual e-materials for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Notepad block</td>
<td>Pending decision. The suggestion is for an integrated course-specific notepad block. The feature could be used as a to-do list, quick course notes, etc. Discussion about the usefulness was lively and it was determined that more discussion is needed before a decision can be reached. This will not be included with the initial rollout of Moodle 2, but might be a future integration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gradebook Templates</td>
<td>At the request of several faculty members, we are revisiting the concept of Moodle gradebook templates. Exactly how these would be implemented is still under investigation. This lead to a very engaged discussion among the group. Time ran out before we could conclude discussion, so this topic will need to be reopened at our next meeting.</td>
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This concluded our meeting. We will most likely need to schedule another meeting sometime in November to sort out details of the beta phase and to discuss other issues with Moodle 2.

Thanks to Mallory Logan for taking notes during the meeting.