

Blended Learning Strategy Implementation Plan Stage One – Winter Term

Introduction

On Monday 20 July 2009 the Review of Online and Blended Learning Report was endorsed by Academic Board at its meeting.

Excerpt from Report on the Review of Online and Blended Learning June 2009

Goals for the Blended Learning Strategy

(Refer Appendix A for expanded goals)

- i. To systematically embed blended learning approaches in the teaching and learning activities of all programs by 2012
- ii. To develop a campus environment capable of supporting blended learning
- iii. To nurture and extend staff capabilities in the applications of blended learning
- iv. To extend the University's quality assurance framework to support blended learning approaches (Reference Strategic Planning and Quality Improvement for Learning and Teaching at the University of Canberra, November 2004)

As well, in response to Step 17 of the Strategic Plan, the University is introducing a new Academic Calendar and Principal Dates in 2010. In essence, a 7 week Winter Term (WT) will be offered between Semesters 1 and 2, thus having a formal 13-7-13 teaching pattern from 2010. One of the drivers for this model is to increase flexibility for students. It is important to note that the annual full time load will remain at 24cp (with no enforced upper limit) and study in WT will not be compulsory for students.

A website is up and running for students, staff and other interested parties to view <http://www.canberra.edu.au/events-dates/2010-academic-calendar> ; and

Following is Stage One of the Implementation Plan for the Blended Learning Strategy which focuses on the Winter Term (WT) as the *catalyst for change*. Without the WT there would be no significant driver for staff to change their approaches to the design and delivery of courses at UC. The aim is that changes in the WT will flow on to other semesters and lead to more comprehensive change in the design and delivery of all courses.

Appendix A: Expanded Goals

(Excerpt from Report on the Review of Online and Blended Learning June 2009)

	STEP FROM 39 STEPS	BLS INITIATIVE	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
1	17, 18	<p>University-wide capability building TLC will be reinstating its informal get-togethers which had proven success in supporting the implementation of Moodle in the second half of 2008. These "Learning and Teaching Teas" or LaTTes will be informal gatherings with a pedagogical rather than technical focus, and will support two key areas of capability building amongst UC teaching staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning strategies and practices to equip teaching staff for a successful implementation of the Winter Term, such as flexible delivery of pre-readings, acquiring early and ongoing feedback, and strategies for rapid student engagement in intensive courses. • Emerging and topical issues in innovative teaching and learning, such as e-portfolios, mobile learning, blended learning strategies, quality assessment, and emerging best practice. <p>LaTTes will initially be organised to provide staff with considerable advance notice via a number of communications channels (including the Teaching email group, Yammer, and UC-Me), but will gather staff details via an opt-in list that will also allow attendees to be alerted via SMS for more spontaneous meet-ups to pursue "<i>hot topics</i>". It is anticipated that this "<i>flash mob</i>" approach will eventually provide a more flexible means of engaging members of this innovative community of practice.</p> <p>TLC will also increase the number of workshops to help staff with Moodle. These workshops will consider both pedagogy and technology and include workshops on discussion forums, use of audio, use of RSS feeds, wikis and more.</p>	By July 2009	Learning Environments Program Leader, TLC and Staff IT Trainer	<p>An initial LaTTe was held in Bruschetta's 17 June entitled: Feedback, Feedforward, Separating Feedstuff from Assessment. Yammer posts are reviewed fortnightly for topics</p> <p>Further Moodle workshops have been advertised and an International Moodle Symposium is being held at the University of Canberra on the 7 September.</p>
2		<p>Audit of Moodle sites The Teaching and Learning Centre is developing a rubric for critiquing e-Learning sites.</p>	By November 2009	Learning Environments Program Leader in TLC and ADEs	This is being trialed initially with Carmel Richardson and will be used as a basis for auditing all Moodle unit sites in Semester 2, 2009. A report from this will go to UEC.
3		<p>Development of Unit Outlines database in Equella The Unit Outline Project is intended to be a focal point for promoting tangible improvements in assessment practice across the University of Canberra. The Project will have the following outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of a UC Unit Outline database as the single, authoritative source of unit outlines 2. Document systems and processes and associated workflows for the Unit Outline database 3. Development of a program of staff development activities in conjunction with the Associate Deans Education to promote the use of the Unit Outline database 4. Develop resources to support the use of the Unit Outline database 	By WT 2010	Project Officer TLC and ADEs	<p>Project Officer to be appointed.</p> <p>Funding for software development in Equella to be sourced (quote available)</p>
4		<p>TLC to compile a searchable toolbox of blended approaches to facilitate adoption by other staff</p>	By WT 2010	Director TLC and LEAG	

	STEP FROM 39 STEPS	BLS INITIATIVE	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
5		TLC to examine programs offered by the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies and the Siemens medical diagnostics project, with a view to documenting those aspects of their programs and teaching approach that might be applicable more broadly across the University	By WT 2010	Director TLC and LEAG	
6		Faculty-based presentations run by TLC to workshop 'Blended Learning Strategies for the Winter Term' Presentations will cover the following topics: - Thinking about WT - Designing for WT - Modes / organisation of teaching in the WIT - Preparing for WT - Evaluating your unit	By September 2009	Presentations to be targeted at Discipline Heads in negotiation with Deans and ADEs	FAD Workshop 29 June 2009
7		Educational Design Team to be identified for each Faculty	By July 2009	FEDD Project Program Leader from TLC	Refer 2009-10 Faculty Design Teams in Table 1.
8		Faculties review/reassess their current FEDD Projects in light of the Winter Term (WT)	By July 2009	FEDD Project Program Leader from TLC to renegotiate projects with Deans, ADEs and Project owners, in light of the renewed emphasis on the WIT	A preliminary analysis reveals that all current FEDD Projects could be re-envisioned in light of the WT.
9		Discipline-based meetings with staff identified as unit convenors for WT units: Aim to organise FEDD Projects around WT units and associated staff development activities	By September 2009	FEDD Project Program Leader and Academic Staff Development Program Leader from TLC	60 units reported by Karyn Ward at Academic Board 20 July 2009

Table 1: 2009-10 TLC Faculty Contacts

Faculty	TLC General Contact	Winter Term Contact
Applied Science	ARNOLD, Alan	LOW, Leonard
Arts & Design	MUNNERLEY, Danny	BACON, Matthew
Business & Government	NUSSLER, Shane	HUSSANEE, Shad
Health	MCCORMACK, Coralie	MUNNERLEY, Danny
Education	MCCORMACK, Coralie	LOW, Leonard
Information Sciences & Engineering	ARNOLD, Alan	NUSSLER, Shane
Law	CARTER, Helen	HUSSANEE, Shad

Appendix A: Expanded Goals

(Excerpt from Report on the Review of Online and Blended Learning June 2009)

Goal i. To systematically embed blended learning approaches in the teaching and learning activities of all programs by 2012

- Academic staff and relevant support staff to have an informed understanding of the conceptual and pedagogical implications of the application of blended learning in curricula
- Academic staff to be competent in documenting and explaining the rationale and applications of blended learning in course and program design, including expectations for, and impact on, the student learning experience and outcomes
- Curriculum documents make explicit statements on the means by which the strategic priorities of teaching-research linkages, work-integrated learning and internationalisation of the student experience are enhanced by blended learning approaches
- Program plans to have clearly articulated statements on strategies for embedding blended learning approaches

Goal ii. To develop a campus environment capable of supporting blended learning

- Provide both physical and virtual environments for collaborative and individual blended learning activities
- Further develop and maintain a flexible and responsive learning management system
- Ensure that access to a rich array of learning and information resources is seamlessly integrated within the learning and teaching environment
- Ensure that all students have access to skills training in information management and the use of ICTs within their disciplinary and program contexts
- Provide cost effective technical infrastructure to support blended learning approaches, including unit outlines in a CMS and video streaming
- Develop the capability for the local production and reuse of learning resources
- Further develop and maintain high quality blended learning tools and services
- Integrate social networking tools into the blended learning environment

Goal iii. To nurture opportunities and extend staff capabilities in the use of blended learning

- Develop a virtual and physical Teaching Commons to promote the discussion and scholarly exchange of innovative strategies and to provide feedback on best practice in the use of blended learning approaches. This includes development and dissemination of professional development resources on pedagogical and technical implications of blended learning approaches
- Further develop an institution-wide system for rewarding innovation and good practice in the use of blended learning
- Develop and embed opportunities at all levels in the university for research into student-focused blended learning
- Ensure educational design support from TLC with ADEs for academic staff in being able to incorporate blended learning approaches into curriculum design, development, delivery and evaluation.
- Foster collaboration with other universities and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in order to extend the knowledge and understanding of good practice in blended learning approaches