

SAKAI TEACHING AND LEARNING GROUP MEETING NOTES

MONTHLY MEETING

AUGUST 2010

The team agreed to meet monthly as a full teaching and learning group. We also agreed to hold the first community-wide quarterly meeting on Thursday, September 9.

Action Items

Kim Thanos communicate the opportunities to engage in these initiatives and the general meeting calendar.

Kim Thanos capture and distribute notes for this meeting.

We need to find an etherpad option that allows for more than 16 users.

DISTANCE LEARNING

UPDATE PROVIDED BY: KATE ELLIS

We are considering the question, "How well does Sakai 2 support fully online courses?"

Our group is hoping to share best practices and faculty development tools. To this end, we really need a discussion forum that allows us to discuss best practices and needs. We need a repository that allows us to add materials and then allow others in need of those items to easily find them. We need a common set of tags. Ann Jenson from Texas State is setting up a page that captures what kinds of things we want to see in a repository and what we want to share.

We have discussed that perhaps in the future we could create a shared Sakai course site for faculty development.

Open Ed Practices

Randy Thornton and Nate Angell have set-up a Drupal demo site to experiment with the forums tools. We did in fact do our homework, completing the brainstorming page and identifying the added functionality we would like to see.

With Open Ed Practices, there are user interface and usability issues. We need to be able to search and find what is needed.

Comments

At Marist we are getting very involved in Quality Matters, as are other Sakai. I believe that instead of re-inventing the wheel we might be able to use the Quality Matters framework and understand how we are approaching that using Sakai.

Action Items

Kim Thanos will put together a plan to create the needed functionality in Open Ed Practices, and facilitate the process to define an on-going support plan for the site.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

UPDATE PROVIDED BY: ROGER HENRY

We are considering beginning this initiative with a design project around a theoretical iPad or mobile application for Sakai. We would create a design project that can be laid out as a class project for students to complete during the Spring semester. We are envisioning three phases to the project:

- Phase one - Students would gather requirements
- Phase two – Students would design the interface
- Phase three – Students would create some type of mock-up

We have discussed the idea with Lance Speelman. The IU Kelley School of Business completed a similar project. We hope to scavenge some of the procedural set-up.

Our focus right now is one of procedure. We struggled to create an approach for this, but feel comfortable that we are starting to make progress.

The goal is to have this project in the Spring semester. I am working toward creating a timeline and milestones.

Questions and Answers

Could this become a project for students to do the development?

Students could use the student-designed projects as a starting point and build from there.

Our initial goal is not to create a solid polished product, but to begin to give students an understanding of the community and process, and to learn from that. We imagine that students might attend the conference to present their work or perhaps present remotely.

Should this focus on Sakai 3?

It must take Sakai 3 into account at this point. The projects should look at and consider both Sakai 2 and Sakai 3.

Is this the right time to begin approaching faculty about having students participate in the project?

We would love to have them. We will create an information page that provides an overview and solicits involvement.

Action Items

Please contact Roger if you have faculty members that might be interested in using this as a class project in Spring semester.

TEACHING WITH SAKAI INNOVATION AWARD

UPDATE PROVIDED BY: ROB COYLE

Proposed Definition on Innovation

The TWSIA committee defines innovation as an educational method, practice or strategy that results in a transformative educational experience for students.

Innovation occurs by design often beyond the use of a new tool or technology, through techniques that engage and challenge students, in ways that transform both the teaching and the learning experience.

It is the use of "innovation" that leads to greater student engagement and interest, a deeper level of understanding and a lasting change in perception of an issue or topic. The innovative method, practice or strategy may not be new in the world, but may be new to you (to the instructor, instructional designer, etc)."

*Note that eligibility for the TWSIA requires use of the Sakai CLE in some form and other items as outlined in the TWSIA Rubric.

Feedback about the Definition

All good education is a transformative experience. Perhaps it should be called, "transformational." Transformation does emphasize newness. Maybe we should mull it over for a couple of weeks.

Teaching innovation could be a combination of teaching and excellence. Years ago we had an award described as innovation, but the rubric we are evaluating against is not really innovation. You really want a title that is more reflective of metrics for evaluating, or you change the definition.

Innovation means doing something new or novel. If innovation is the foremost priority, it's hard to judge because it may just be new to you. Innovation does not connote quality. In the actual definition of innovation all it means is new – neither better nor worse.

Perhaps we could simply add the word novel before transformative. Novel and transformative brings in new, but continues to focus on transformation and deeper learning. Newness can be using technology in new ways. It may be a well-understood pedagogical approach implemented with new technology, or a new pedagogical approach.

It may be useful to have a few people look at the definition from a communications perspective. We want it to speak to faculty and new people who are considering Sakai. Kim can help. Michael Feldstein could also provide useful feedback. We're down to somewhat of a semantic argument where the terms innovation, pedagogy and transformation are all very loaded, but in the end it will be about how they are received.

Innovation is particularly important to IBM as a sponsor of the award. We have branded the award a bit. We would take a bit of a hit if we changed the names.

This innovation does not have to be a new technique. It has to be new to the person teaching this class; they have tried something new and because they did the student experience was exponentially better. This is worded very well to make that point.

As this is worded I would not encourage any of my faculty to apply for the award. They're not doing anything innovative.

These are awards for exceptional work. It is not an award for making sure that good learning continues to take place. These awards are for excellence.

Action Item

Based on the feedback, the TWSIA committee will refine and finalize the definition.

DESIGN LENSES
UPDATE PROVIDED BY: LYNN WARD

We have been working with Clay Fenlason and others in the Sakai 3 project to understand how the lenses can influence the development of Sakai 3. Clay facilitated a discussion about mini-spec's, which are very short descriptions of learning capabilities and user requirements that can then guide development work.

There is an effort underway to apply the lenses in the context of mini-spec's. This is helpful us better understand the design work for Sakai 3. There is now significant work underway to organize the functional teams. They are beginning to task us with certain tasks that map directly into the Sakai 3 project.