

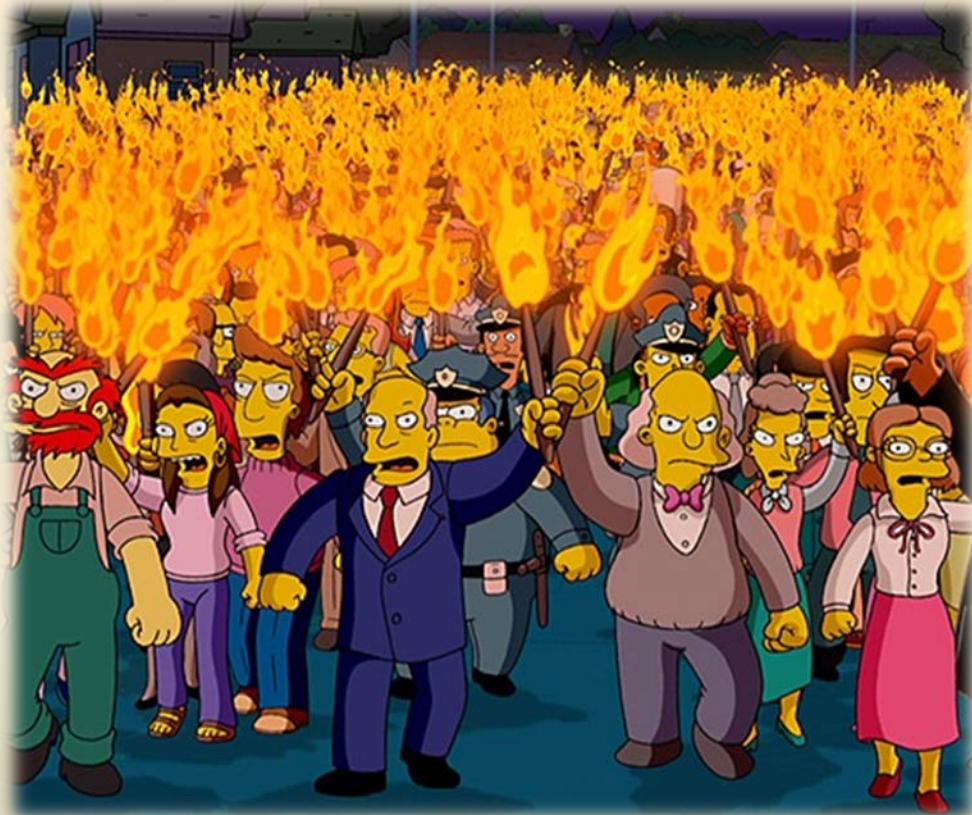
DEVELOPING A LMS INDEPENDENT ONLINE COURSE



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“Let’s Change the University LMS”



Objectives

- Discuss Why LMS Changes are *Likely* to Occur
- What Obstacles are imposed by Change
- Describe an LMS Independent Course Architecture
 - ▣ Provide Recommendations & Best Practices
- Show & Tell

Why Would We Consider a Change?

- This is likely inevitable
 - ▣ LMS Buy Outs
 - ▣ Keeping up with Web Technologies
 - ▣ Escalating Costs
 - ▣ Changes at your Institution
 - ▣ Changes to Policies and/or Politics
 - ▣ *Something better actually comes along...*
- Institutions may treat LMS Technology like Internet Providers (for example)

The Problem with Change

- You have become very dependent on your current LMS
 - ▣ **Investment of time, training, and course development**
 - ▣ Transfer of existing materials
 - Many course materials are LMS Tool Specific
 - Migrations are not so smooth
 - ▣ Loss of features from system to system

How to Switch with less Pain

- Consider the Common Features of most LMS systems
 - ▣ Assignments
 - ▣ Assessments
 - ▣ Links
 - ▣ Web Pages
 - ▣ Files/Documents
 - ▣ Discussions
 - ▣ Gradebook
- How can you leverage common features?

Independent Course Architecture

- Make Syllabus and Lesson Plans that are separate from the LMS
 - ▣ Create these as either Word Docs (PDFs) or Google Docs (recommended)
 - PDFs are WYSIWYG on ALL Platforms
 - Google Docs easily accessed and modified on ALL devices and platforms
 - Link these files into the LMS
 - ▣ Do not use the built-in LMS editors to create files or content

Centralize Instructions & Details

- Segment the Course into Modules
 - ▣ By Week, Chapter, Lesson, other
- Create a Lesson Plan Document for Each Module
- Each Lesson Plan should spell out
 - ▣ Objectives & Goals for the module
 - ▣ Detailed instructions for each assignment, assessment, discussion board, etc.
 - ▣ Include general announcements or expectations

Linking in Lesson Plans

- Avoid using the “Link” tool in the LMS
 - ▣ Create a single document with links (HTML, PDF, or Google Doc)
- Create a standalone document or page for Lesson Plans in a “Lessons” area (or folder)
 - ▣ Drop list of links to Resources on this single document or in the associated folder
 - ▣ Don’t mingle other LMS tools in this area

Decouple LMS Tools from Instructions

- Do not integrate content with LMS tools (i.e. avoid Learning Modules)
 - ▣ Students can refer to the Lesson Plans
 - ▣ Link lesson plans within tools
- Tools should each have their own area
 - ▣ Provide a main menu link to each tool used
- Try using only one tool per assignment and vice versa
 - ▣ If you must, break down assignments into parts based on the tools they use

To Hide or Not to Hide?

- Most LMS systems allow limiting access to areas based on time, grades, or completion
- Hiding materials should be related to your teaching style
- Use this to maintain focus on the tasks at hand
- Help keep the course manageable
 - ▣ Students won't ask you about Week 8 during Week 1 if they can't see too far into the future
- **Keep it simple so it will be easy to transfer elsewhere**

Tips & Tricks

- Use Relative Dates – less updating for later
- Avoid Page Numbers – what if the text edition changes?
- Limit number of files housed in the LMS
 - ▣ Host large files elsewhere, and link to them
- Limit tool availability to those used
 - ▣ If your course does not use Wikis, why make that tool available?

Show & Tell



So Why Bother with an LMS?

- Administratively much easier to manage
 - ▣ Accounts, Courses, & Enrollments can be linked to SIS and automated
- Built-in Security Features
- Sets a standard for your institution for online learning environment
- Students & Instructors work on a unified platform

Questions?



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