

Learning Management Systems / Course Management Systems

The two terms mean the same thing!

LMS / CMS

Lesson objectives

By the time you complete this study unit you will be able to:

- Describe the basic functionality of LMS/CMS.
- Utilize self-help tutorials for learning LMS/CMS.
- Create a LMS/CMS practice course site.
- Upload a syllabus in .html format to your practice course site.

LMS / CMS - Technology that enables e-learning

- Software that automates the administration of training events.
- Functionality:
 - Manages the log-in of registered users (security)
 - Manages course catalogs
 - Records data from learners
 - Provides reports to management

Examples:

- Blackboard
- WebCT
- Learning Space

Focus for this course

- Blackboard
- WebCT

Who are the instructional designers?

- Faculty!
 - Some larger schools employ instructional designers or technology trainers to assist faculty.
 - Smaller schools need to train faculty to become proficient in both the technology and the instructional design skills for online learning.

Two components

- Faculty need to learn to use the LMS available to them.
- Faculty need to learn instructional design skills for online learning.

Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? The technology skills or the instructional design skills?

Both are critical for **online** course design

- Technical skills are useless without the design skills.
- Design skills are useless without the technology skills.

A little technology first....

- It would be difficult, if not impossible, to design the best strategies for delivering online learning without understanding what is possible.
- By learning the basics of the technology first, good design concepts can be focused on the best tactics to take advantage of the technology.

Which LMS should I learn?

- Become proficient with the LMS available to you on your campus

WebCT

Several levels exist, from Campus edition to Vista.

- Campus: basic course management system
- Vista: robust, high level and expensive

For this course, focus on Campus edition for managing course content & the version available on your campus.

Blackboard

Several levels exist, from Basic to Enterprise.

- Basic: course management system
- Enterprise: robust, high level and expensive

For this course, focus on the Basic level for managing course content, and the version available to you on your campus.

How to learn?

- Make an training appointment with someone on your campus who is proficient with the LMS.
- Self-Study: Via the online material available from the LMS vendor.
- Learn by doing.

Tutorials:

- Click on the External Links button in the course site
- Click on Blackboard Links or WebCT Links folder

Learn the technology!

Plan to spend the first two weeks of this course getting comfortable with how to:

- Create a course site
- Upload content
- Create interactive quizzes
- Access and manipulate the online grade book
- Create links
- Create learning units
- Enroll users

What if my campus does not have a LMS?

- You can create a free Blackboard course at:
<http://blackboard.com/courses/index.htm>

Preview samples

- Ask colleagues to show you course sites they have created with WebCT or Blackboard.
- Ask them to show you tips and tricks they used to create their sites.
- Don't assume all the samples you preview are examples of good instructional design –for now just focus on the technology.

Uploading content as HTML

- The fastest and easiest way to convert a Microsoft Word document to HTML, is to open the document in Microsoft Word, then:
 - Click File
 - Save as
 - Webpage

Looking ahead..

- Get a jump start on unit 2 and unit 3 now!
- In addition to learning more about working with WebCT or Blackboard, you will be learning:
 - Unit 2 –Acrobat and SoftChalk LessonBuilder
 - Unit 3 –Impatica, Sound Forge Studio and Winzip