LMS Evaluation Rubric
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Précis of Our group's Scenario

Our team at BCcampus, a publicly funded organization, has been requisitioned to develop an evaluation rubric to help the leadership of all B.C. post-

secondary institutions assess which LMS (learning management system) is best for their needs given their recent decision to reduce IT staff by half.

Currently, there are two LMSs in place: an open-source LMS and a vendor licensed LMS expiring in two years. Our team recommends BC Campus'

leadership use the below evaluation rubric to ensure B.C. remains a leader in online learning and education province-wide.

Functional Requirements

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Ease of Use for Teachers	LMS is difficult to use. LMS requires an extensive investment of time to develop user proficiency.	LMS is moderately intuitive with some encouragement of instructor independence. LMS requires a reasonable investment of time to develop user proficiency.	LMS is inherently intuitive and encourage high instructor independence. LMS requires a limited investment of time to develop user proficiency.
Ease of Use for Students	LMS is difficult to use. LMS varies greatly from users' intuition and past experiences with technology. LMS requires an extensive investment of time to develop user proficiency.	LMS is moderately easy to use. LMS is somewhat intuitive and similar to users past experiences with technology. LMS requires a reasonable investment of time to develop user proficiency.	LMS is easy to use LMS is intuitive and reflective of users past experiences with technology. LMS requires a limited investment of time to develop user proficiency.
Design, Organization and Navigation	LMS has a complex and/or counterintuitive layout that requires extensive training to navigate. The appearance is boring or distracting.	LMS has a good functional layout that can be navigated easily by users with limited training. The appearance is appealing.	LMS has a simple and intuitive layout with little to no training needed to get started. The appearance is inviting.
Accessibility to Resources	Offers accessibility to very few resources within the LMS environment.	Offers accessibility to select resources within the LMS environment.	Offers flexibility and accessibility to many resources within the LMS environment.

Functional Requirements

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Adaptability for Students with Special Needs	Compatible with zero or one of: screen readers, integrated translations and page readers.	Compatible with two of: screen readers, integrated translations and page readers.	Compatible with screen readers, integrated translations and page readers.
Communication Tools	Provides secure access to the email addresses of individuals enrolled in the class. Class discussion threads are difficult to navigate and/or slow to load.	Provides secure access to the email addresses of individuals enrolled in the class. Provides an option for chat or instant messaging. Class discussion threads are easy to navigate and load quickly and consistently.	Provides flexibility for the use of secure email for individual and groups of students enrolled in the class. Provides tools for instant messaging. Students can subscribe to class discussions and have the option to be notified when new posts are available.
Assessment Tools	Offers limited tools for creating assessments. It may include a simple test generator with the ability to add multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions.	Offers a variety of tools for creating assessments including a simple test generator with the ability to add multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions. Attachments can be uploaded from the student to the instructor.	Offers a wide variety of tools for creating assessments including but not limited to interactive tools and multimedia. Has the capability to provide immediate feedback. Attachments can be uploaded from the student to the instructor.
Student Learning	The evidence demonstrates that students using this LMS are not able to achieve most learning objectives set by their instructors or program.	There is evidence to demonstrate that students using this LMS are overall able to achieve most learning objectives set by their instructors and program.	There is evidence to demonstrate that students using this LMS show higher success rates related to learning objectives set by their instructors and program than students using other LMSs.

Functional Requirements

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Training Materials	Limited printed or online training materials are available. Training modules are not provided within the LMS.	Printed training materials along with some basic online and/or face-to-face training sessions are available. Training modules are included with the LMS.	Extensive printed materials along with multiple opportunities for online and face-to-face training sessions are available.
Support of Instructional Goals for individual Teachers	LMS meets most instructional goals of teachers, however is prohibitive in longevity.	LMS provides basic tools to meet today's expectations and instructional goals of individual teachers.	LMS supports and encourages creativity and innovation among individual teachers whilst supporting their specific instructional goals.
Support of Program Instructional Goals	LMS cannot be differentiated for individual program goals or departments.	LMS is compatible and adaptive for the majority of individual program goals, ie. engineering, computer science, history, biology; providing some individualization for specific requirements.	LMS is compatible and adaptive for all individual program goals and departments providing individualization for specific requirements.

Total Rating Score for Functional Requirements _____

Maximum Achievable Score = 22

Technical Requirements

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Server Requirements	Server requirements and specifications, including data storage, security, and active real-time backups are not fully compatible with existing network systems and technology; and are predicted to exceed all forecasts for a minimum of four years.	Server requirements and specifications, including data storage, security, and active real-time backups are both compatible with existing network systems and technology, and are predicted to exceed all forecasts for a minimum of seven years.	Server requirements and specifications, including data storage, security, and active real-time backups are both compatible with existing network, systems, and technology; and are predicted to exceed all forecasts for a minimum of ten years.
Multi Platform Compatibility (PC, Mac, tablets, phones)	LMS is compatible with PC and Mac, but certain mobile devices are not yet supported.	LMS is compatible with all currently available devices, including PC, Mac, tablets, phones, and mobile devices; however there are some compatibility issues or limitations amongst certain devices.	LMS is fully compatible with all currently available and projected devices, including PC, Mac, tablets, phones, and mobile devices.
Interface Compatibility with Other Web Applications/Software	LMS interface is compatible with most currently available OS's for both PC, Mac or mobile devices, as well as some internet browsing options.	LMS interface is compatible with all currently available OS's for both PC/Mac and mobile devices, as well as most internet browsing options.	LMS interface is compatible with all currently available and projected OS's for both PC/Mac and mobile devices, as well as all major internet browsing options.
Design Capabilities and Options	LMS has several built-in pre-designed templates with few customization options. Some updates are made available. Users are confined by the LMS's pre-defined parameters.	LMS has numerous built-in pre-designed templates and customization options. Updates are made available. Users are confined by the LMS's pre-defined parameters.	LMS has numerous built-in pre-designed templates and customization options, Updates are regularly available. Users are not confined by pre-defined parameters.

Technical Requirements

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Sustainability	The distributor has no contingency plans for future changes in technology outlined. The distributor has provided no guarantee that the LMS will be compatible with new browsers and platforms as they are released.	The distributor has a contingency plan for future changes in technology outlined. The distributer has articulated plans to update the LMS as necessary to remain compatible with the most popular browsers and platforms.	The distributor has a detailed contingency plan outlined for future changes in technology. The distributer guarantees continued compatibility with new browsers and platforms as they are released.

Total Rating Score for Technical Requirements _____

Maximum Achievable Score = 10

Costs and Operations

Criteria	Unacceptable (rating of 0)	Acceptable (rating of 1)	Recommended (rating of 2)
Initial Investment to Purchase	The purchase price is costly relative to the service provided. The initial purchase price exceeds the university's allotted budget.	The purchase price is appropriate to the service provided. The initial purchase price is manageable within the university's allotted budget.	The purchase price is free or low cost relative to service provided. The initial purchase price is below the university's allotted budget.
Cost to Students	Students are required to pay additional fees beyond their tuition to obtain a user licence for the LMS.	Students licences for use of the LMS are covered in their existing tuition costs.	There are no fees to end users of the LMS and the university incurs no cost on their behalf.
Ongoing Maintenance Costs	The LMS has costly continuous maintenance costs that exceed the university's projected budget.	The LMS has affordable maintenance costs that fit within the university's projected budget.	The LMS maintenance costs are included with the initial investment.
Developer Provided Tech Support	Tech support is available via email. Response time is unknown.	Tech support is available via email, phone and live chat during business hours.	Tech support is available via email, phone and live chat during extended hours.
Required Internal Tech Support Staff	Technical support is not available in a timely way under new proposed staffing levels.	Basic technical support coverage is available within a reasonable time frame under new proposed staffing levels.	Comprehensive technical support coverage is available as needed under new proposed staffing levels.

Total Rating Score for Costs and Operations _____

Maximum Achievable Score = 10

Total Comprehensive Score for All Categories _____

Maximum Achievable Score = 42

Panettieri (2007) reported approximately 24 percent of educational institutions have buyers' remorse after purchasing a new LMS, which estimates place at $224,000 for 10,000 students. Consequently, deciding which LMS to use is not to be taken lightly. Given that a full needs-assessment with focus groups and stakeholder meetings is not within the scope of this project, our group began by estimating, based on our professional expertise, what needs may be appropriate to this learning scenario. After reviewing Bates and Poole's ACTIONS and SECTIONS model's and Foreman's article on LMS assessment we have established a thorough rubric to assess our specific situation. These questions are grouped into broad categories based on Bates and Poole's and Foreman's ideas, and subsequently refined into subheadings to be equally weighted and valued. Within each category we delineated different criteria for each level with an assigned scoring mechanism to facilitate quantifiable numbers. Our analysis will provide quantifiable justification to support the final decision making (which we are aware from experience with government organizations is critical when demonstrating appropriate stewardship of public funds). We believe employing this rubric and subsequent analysis will ensure British Columbia avoids selecting an incompatible LMS, and then are required to "force all forms of teaching into that one technology" (Bates & Poole, 2003; p. 97).

References

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Foreman, Steve. (2013, June, 5). *Five Steps to Evaluate and Select an LMS: Proven Practices*. Retrieved from http://www.learningsolutionsmag.com/articles/1181/five-steps-to-evaluate-and-select-an-lms-proven-practices

Panettieri, J. (2007). Addition by subtraction. *University Business*, August 58-62. Retrieved from http://www.universitybusiness.com/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=845