



## Sakai Newsletter

July 13, 2006

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### 1. Sakai for Social Change

The University of Michigan is launching a two-year pilot effort that will explore the use of OSP tools for achieving leadership, social change, community development and social-justice goals throughout the University. To date, the initial 15 pilot sites include a wide range of schools and colleges at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as several co-curricular and administrative units on campus. In this pilot, ePortfolios will be used to:

- Increase patient safety (decrease medical errors) at the University Hospital by facilitating medical residents in reflecting on and learning from their practices
- Build curricula that will aid graduate professional schools (i.e., in the fields of Social Work, Education, and Information) in developing students' leadership capacities and enhancing their ability to work toward social-justice goals

- Identify specific types of ePortfolio-related pedagogies that best facilitate students' learning within and across schools, departments, and disciplines
- Produce (and document) practice-based knowledge that is generated by students, faculty, and staff engaging in social-change efforts in numerous institutions, organizations, and communities throughout the state of Michigan
- Identify the intellectual and professional gains that result from undergraduates engaging in research and community development programs

This interdisciplinary effort seeks to demonstrate how the educational, research, and social change efforts of students, faculty, and staff, (as well as schools and colleges) can be achieved and enhanced through the use of Sakai tools.

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## 2. University of California Invests \$1M in Kuali Financial System (KFS) and Joins as Kuali Foundation Partner

The University of California (UC) announced July 8th that it has joined the Kuali Foundation as an investing partner in the development of the community source Kuali Financial System (KFS). Three UC campuses, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, and the Office of the President are investing resources as part of this partnership. "The Kuali community is delighted with UC's considerable investment and expertise in steering our collective software future," said Dr. Brad Wheeler, CIO at Indiana University and Chair of the Kuali Foundation Board of Directors.

J. Michael Allred, Associate Vice Chancellor, Finance/Controller, UC Davis, who will represent his UC colleagues as the Kuali Board representative, said that the Kuali Financial System represents an opportunity to leverage UC Davis' significant investment in an earlier version of the system and offers a path to delivering new financial system capabilities to the campus. Kristine Hafner, Associate Vice President, Information Resources and Communications, UC Office of the President, noted that the University of California campuses have a strong interest in collaborating to gain greater efficiencies. Also, by joining Kuali, UC strengthens its commitment to community source development as a means to address critical business and administrative needs.

The full text of the announcement is available at the Kuali website:

<http://kuali.org/UCKualiAnnouncement.pdf>

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### 3. Invitation to the 1st European Sakai Day

The oncampus-team of the Luebeck University of Applied Sciences in Germany invites you to the 1st European Sakai Day, September 6-7, 2006. The focus of this meeting is to provide comprehensive guidelines on the development and usage of Sakai in the European context.

Please visit the website for the 1st European Sakai Day: <http://www.oncampus.de/sakai>

To register, please use the registration form at [www.oncampus.de/sakai](http://www.oncampus.de/sakai)

For further information, please contact:

Andreas Wittke (+49451300-5436 or [wittke@oncampus.de](mailto:wittke@oncampus.de))

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We hope to see you here in our beautiful city near the Baltic Sea in Northern Germany.

- The oncampus-team

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### 4. Article on Market Wire: IBM Donates E-Learning Software Code and Expertise to Sakai

From the article:

SCORM-Compliant Code to Accelerate Open-Source Movement in Higher Education

ARMONK, NY -- (MARKET WIRE) -- July 11, 2006 -- IBM today announced it has donated e-learning software code to the Sakai Project, a group of learning institutions creating and deploying open-source course management, collaboration and online research support tools for higher education. The donation is part of IBM's overall support of open computing in education. Last year, the company announced that it will allow royalty-free access to its patent portfolio for the development and implementation of selected open software standards for Web services, electronic forms and open document formats in education.

To see the full article, please go to:

[http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release\\_html\\_b1?release\\_id=143063](http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release_html_b1?release_id=143063)

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## 5. Status Report: Sakai 2.2 Testing

QA testing for the 2.2 release is wrapping up as we prepare for the release on the 14th. However, we still need participation from the community!

Areas that particularly need attention:

1) Blockers and Items recently merged in (listed below)

SAK-4442: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-4442>

SAK-4969: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-4969>

SAK-5018: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5018>

SAK-5127: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5127>

SAK-5132: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5132>

SAK-5271: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5271>

SAK-5401: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5401>

SAK-5420: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5420>

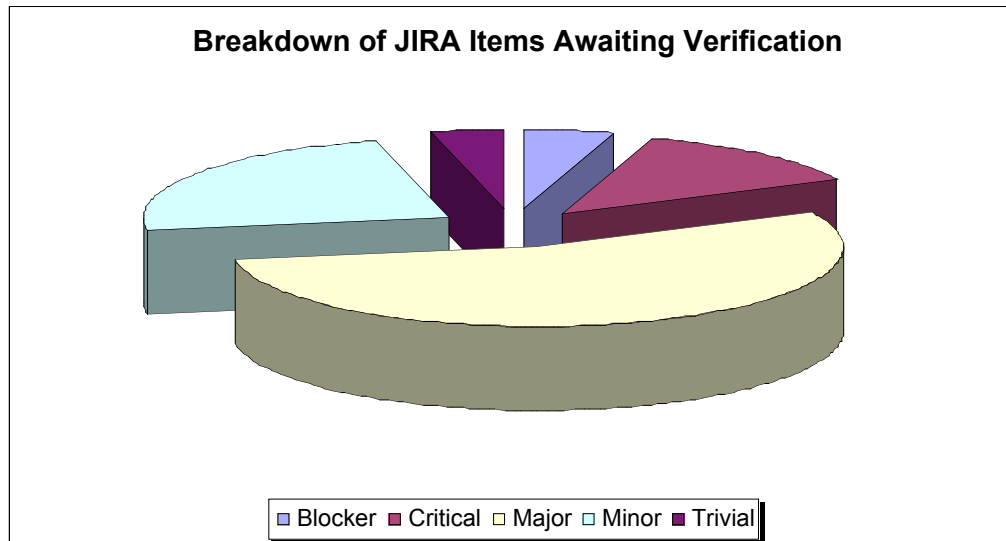
SAK-5456: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5456>

SAK-5447: <http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/jira/browse/SAK-5447>

2) Resources -- thorough regression testing

3) Deployment testing and Documentation review - We need deployment testers Thursday evening and Friday morning to test that Sakai 2.2 can be installed from the distribution files according to the release notes. We need people to try and install Sakai 2.2 from scratch on a variety of different systems - at least Linux, Solaris, Windows, with mysql, and Oracle. These can be found at <http://source.sakaiproject.org/release/2.2.0/>

Currently, we have verified 360 JIRA issues, but we have 153 to go! If everyone does a couple, we can boost our % up past our current 70%. The remaining issues are broken down by severity in the chart below:



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## 6. Accessibility Testing: Looking for more volunteers

Accessibility Working Group members have been faithfully volunteering to evaluate Sakai, but we can always use more help! Choose a tool to evaluate and check out our protocol on Confluence:

<http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/2ACC/2.2+Accessibility+Testing+and+Recommendations>

Thanks!

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## 7. Summary of the Vancouver Conference Attendee Survey Results

Approximately 180 people completed the Vancouver Conference Participant Online Survey. The following is a summary of the results.

The first question on the survey asked what participants thought were the best parts of the conference. Responses to this covered a broad range of topics. Of them all, meeting people and talking face-to-face were mentioned the most: "Having the opportunity to meet and talk with Sakai users from around the world," "Being able to hear from others who are interested in using and developing Sakai," "Updates on others' progress with Sakai," "Networking with counterparts at other institutions."

Other topics in the "Best Parts" section ranged from general, such as the overall enthusiasm displayed by the Sakai community, the quality and variety of the sessions, and learning what the Sakai community is all about; to the more specific, including (but by no means limited to) the birds of a feature sessions (BOFs), Chuck Severance's speech, Mitchell Baker's talk (which one participant said was "Very relevant to our world of Sakai development"), Rob Abel's presentation, the OKI-OSID session, the Programmer's Café, tools overviews, and the transition from project to open source foundation. Special mention goes to the food and location, which were noted often.

For areas where participants saw potential for improvement, the need for more emphasis on educational uses of Sakai was listed very often: "I would have liked (as an instructional designer) even more of a teaching and learning focus." In addition, having fewer overlapping related sessions came up a lot: "I would have liked to attend more than one of the concurrent sessions in a time slot." Other comments in this section included the need for more sessions on what Sakai can do for an institution and how to get started with Sakai. Better wireless was mentioned, too.

Question #4, which asked participants to submit "stories" about Sakai, was interpreted many ways. Some examples from the survey include:

"We're trying to launch Sakai with little added resources, absorbing the labor, research, and piloting efforts. It is a grass-roots effort at a small university. We, like Texas State, are seeking voluntary adoption (a fairly tough sell with a 6-year solid Blackboard history)."

"I piloted Sakai this past semester and asked students to write a short essay comparing their experience in Sakai to online learning experiences they had had in our WebCT system. The results were mixed (e.g., some students liked Sakai better, other students liked WebCT). So the outcomes that are founded on anecdotal evidence are ambiguous. However, in the end-of-semester course evaluations, which were administered to all online courses and which are quantitative in nature, the Sakai course was ranked by students above average in all categories--all the other online courses at Weber were taught in WebCT. The positive rankings may be attributable to different pedagogical approaches rather than anything inherent in the functionality of the respective LMSs. But if nothing else, the quantitative evidence suggests that one can teach as effectively in Sakai as in WebCT."

“We are an online community for public libraries. We are exploring replacing our LMS and overall site architecture. One option is using Sakai for online learning and possibly collaboration (and maybe more). We'd love to learn more about how others are thinking ‘outside of the box/higher ed’ in terms of implementing and using Sakai.”

“We run 2 of the largest WebCT vista 3.x installs (19 nodes each) and are planning on setting up a test install of Sakai (3 nodes) to see how Sakai works. We have extensive monitoring, statistics and some load testing on our WebCT clusters that we can use for comparison.”

*[Editor’s Note: We would love more stories about your experiences with Sakai at your institutions. We’d like to showcase these on [sakaiproject.org](http://sakaiproject.org). If you have suggestions, please send email to [mwagner@umich.edu](mailto:mwagner@umich.edu). Thanks!]*

Lastly, on the topic of sailing at the next conference (the final question on the survey), 6 said they would be interested in being a skipper, 60 would be crew members, and 75 would prefer to stay ashore.

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## 8. Unicon Hosts Sakai Pilot Projects for CLTNet Member Colleges

### National Science Foundation-Funded Organization Set to Evaluate Sakai Collaborative and Learning Environment

PHOENIX, AZ – July 12, 2006 -- Unicon, Inc., the leading independent provider of open source-based enterprise portal, collaboration, learning, and integration technology for higher education institutions, today announced that the Centers for Learning and Teaching Network (CLTNet [www.clnet.org](http://www.clnet.org)), an NSF-funded organization supporting the Centers for Learning and Teaching (CLTs) will be starting Pilot Sakai projects through Unicon for 10-20 professors of its member colleges this summer. The pilot projects are designed to provide CLTNet instructors with easy, low-cost training and hands-on experience to evaluate the Sakai Collaboration and Learning Environment course management tools.

“CLTNet is exploring the latest technologies, products, and services with its member institutions to understand what different technologies can provide.” Judi Fusco, Ph.D., CLTNet Staff. “The Pilot Sakai program from Unicon is an excellent fit for us because it allows us to create custom, real-life classrooms for the CLT members (instructors and future instructors) to evaluate. And best of all, the pilot program accomplishes all of this quickly, easily, and affordably.”

Unicon’s Academus Open Campus Web site ([www.academusopencampus.com](http://www.academusopencampus.com)) is a portal designed to allow administrators, faculty, and IT personnel to fully test and evaluate the latest open source technologies from Sakai, JA-SIG and others in a low cost

and risk free environment. As educational institutions face increasing costs of proprietary software licenses and maintenance fees, Unicon provides an increasingly attractive alternative with open-source and hosted solutions for cost-conscious, resource-constrained organizations for their online campuses and communities.

#### Pilot Sakai Program -- Features and Benefits

- Fully Functional: Educators and students can experience the functionality of Sakai's Collaboration and Learning Environment.
- Fast, Easy Deployment: ASP model enables pilot classroom launch in a matter of days.
- Low Cost: Zero hardware and software costs. Minimum development and maintenance fees.
- Accurate, Real-World Testing: Enables educators and administrators to fully evaluate solution capability and plan for scaled deployment to more classrooms, departments, and campus wide.

Growth of Open Source Technologies in Higher Education -- Open source technologies for online campuses and classrooms is gaining in popularity from higher education as recent vendor consolidation in the industry has given them few future purchase options and serious choices for the future. Open source solutions have been successfully implemented at many of the largest universities and colleges around the nation. Open source is attractive for many reasons including its dramatically lower purchase price and lower costs over time. Now higher education organizations can implement the most sophisticated technology solutions utilizing open-source technologies, reducing their spending budget significantly.

About CLTNet -- The NSF-funded Centers for Learning and Teaching (CLT) aim to enrich and diversify the national infrastructure for instruction in K-12, undergraduate, and graduate education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Each center focuses on a particular set of nationally significant issues related to STEM education, including curriculum development, assessment, informal education, urban/rural education, diversity, and technology-enhanced learning. CLTNet is the Network that supports the CLT Centers. More information about both the Centers and CLTNet is available at [www.cltnet.org](http://www.cltnet.org).

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## 9. Events

Campus Technology 2006 Conference

Sheraton Boston Hotel

Boston, MA

July 31 – August 3, 2006

<http://www.campus-technology.com/conferences/summer2005/>



1st European Sakai Day  
Luebeck, Germany  
September 6 – 7, 2006  
<http://www.oncampus.de/sakai>