



Sakai Newsletter

August 10, 2006

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1. The Sakai Community Prepares to Release 2.2.1

The first maintenance release for 2.2.0 is scheduled for public release August 15. This release marks a refinement in the methodology for release management. Please view and comment on the proposal at:

<http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/SCP/Sakai+Releases>

With roughly one week away until the 2.2.1 release, QA resources are still needed. In particular, the team at Stanford has been very busy fixing bugs -- let's give support by assisting in testing. Please contact Megan May (mmmay@indiana.edu) if you are able to assist at all.

2. Cerritos College Expands rSmart Sakai CLE Implementation

rSmart, the leading open source application software company serving education, today announced that Cerritos College is expanding the use of the rSmart Sakai CLE after completing a successful summer pilot. The rSmart Sakai CLE was carefully chosen over proprietary course management products such as Blackboard and WebCT.

Cerritos College is a two-year institution located in Norwalk, California. The college offers degrees and certificates in 87 areas of study in nine divisions. With 1,200 students successfully completing their course of studies each year at Cerritos, ML Bettino, Dean, Technology Training, Staff Development & Distance Ed., believes that implementing the rSmart Sakai CLE is “a strong step in the right direction towards enhancing and growing our eLearning offerings and capabilities.” Over the next 12 months Cerritos expects at least 150 faculty members and over 6,000 students to use the rSmart Sakai CLE.

“It is an honor for us to work with a college that has an ongoing commitment to technological innovation and a devotion to assisting faculty and students with the use of technology for teaching and learning”, said Dan Barber, VP of Sales at The rSmart Group. “The rSmart Sakai CLE will provide Cerritos College with a collaboration and learning environment that supports online educational activities for teaching, learning, research projects, portfolios, and more.”

Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs and Southgate. Cerritos College offers degrees and certificates in more than 180 areas of study in nine divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete their course of studies, and enrollment currently surpasses 20,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at [**www.cerritos.edu**](http://www.cerritos.edu).

3. UC Merced Launches Sakai 2.1.2 for Fall 2006 Production

Over the August 4, 2006, weekend University of California-Merced worked to take its Sakai 2.0.1 production environment to 2.1.2.

At UC Merced we have a campus portal based on uPortal. Our philosophy is to drive all traffic through our portal and integrate our applications into it.

Due to our use of CAS we are able to have Sakai in an IFrame and make it an almost seamless part of our portal.

For Fall 2006, we will have over 300 course site and 100 project sites available to our campus community. We have faculty that are using a majority of the tools, including Samigo. At UC Merced our students only know Sakai; they have not had to use any other course management system and for most of them this has been a good and useful tool.

While implementing 2.1.2 mostly went without a hitch, the community came through for us when we needed them on resolving our Samigo issue. This is the strength of community driven development. We appreciate all the assistance we have received and the amount of work that has gone into developing, testing, and supporting Sakai.

Faust Gorham
fgorham@ucmerced.edu
Chief Information Architect, UC Merced

4. 6th Sakai Conference in Atlanta, December 5-8, 2006, Updates

Call for Proposals

The call for proposals will open on August 15. The deadline for proposal submissions will be September 30, 2006. Presenters will be notified by October 15 if their proposal has been accepted.

Conference Logo Contest

We need the Sakai Community's help in coming up with a conference theme and conference logo for the next Sakai conference, December 5-8, 2006, in Atlanta, Georgia. If your idea is chosen, we'll send you a shirt or hat from the upcoming Atlanta conference.

Start working on your theme and logo ideas now. Next week we will post a submission form for you to use to send in your ideas. You can submit as many ideas as you like before the deadline of August 20th.

You can find a set of high-quality Sakai logos to work with at

http://sakaiproject.org/sakai_logos.zip

Not into graphics? Then plan on submitting a conference theme or two, e.g., "Sakai on my Mind."

Some basic Georgia State info: State nickname -- Empire State of the South, Peach State; State motto -- "Wisdom, Justice, and Moderation"; State song -- Georgia on My Mind

We held a similar contest for Sakai's 2005 "Deep in the Heart of Sakai" in Austin, Texas. You can see the results of that contest at

http://www.sakaiproject.org/conferenceDec_05/theme_entry.php.

We look forward to seeing all your ideas!

-- Susan Hardin

Conference Registration

Conference Registration will open in early September.

Hotel Information

Atlanta Marriott Marquis 265 Peachtree Center Ave. Atlanta, GA 30303

The room block is already set up. To reserve a room, call and ask for the Sakai Group at 1-800-MARRIOTT, 1-888-855-5701, or 404-521-0000. The room rate is \$134/night for a single/double/triple/quad. And we will get a discounted sleeping room rate of \$7.95 per day for in room internet connectivity

5. Oracle and Unicon, Inc. Unveil Plans to Create Next-Generation Academic Enterprise Environment

Oracle announced that it has entered into a strategic alliance with Unicon, Inc., a provider of enterprise portal, collaboration, learning, and integration technology for higher education institutions, in connection with the delivery and support of a next-generation academic enterprise environment for the higher education and K-12 markets worldwide. This new solution -- which will create a comprehensive environment by leveraging the Sakai open source code and integrating with Oracle's market leading solutions for the education industry -- will extend support for learning performance management, competency-based outcome initiatives, curriculum management, accreditation processes, research collaboration and other requirements that support the academic enterprise.

"The education and research industry is at an inflection point with course management systems and the collaboration tools that support teaching and research today," said Curtiss Barnes, education industry lead for product strategy at Oracle. "Regulatory mandates for student outcomes, elusive metrics on pedagogical impact and a growing need for full-cycle curriculum and enrollment management indicate that the time has come for a new management platform for academia. As industry leaders, Oracle and

Unicon plan to work together to provide a stable delivery mechanism to support the Sakai open source community."

The new platform will facilitate the integration of Oracle's student administration, grade management, and e-portfolio applications, as well as its analytics solutions, with a course management system based on open source Sakai software. Oracle and Unicon will build, test and support optimized integrations from Oracle products -- such as Oracle Collaboration Suite, Oracle Personal Portfolio, Oracle's PeopleSoft Enterprise Campus Solutions and PeopleSoft Enterprise Gradebook -- to Sakai. The platform and integration will meet industry-accepted IMS specifications, an important component of Oracle's standards-based strategy for all its applications.

Over time, Oracle plans to further investigate the potential of this platform to serve research organizations in academia and elsewhere as an integrated environment for primary investigators and their collaborators.

Moving Forward with Commitment to the Sakai Community

"Collaboration between Oracle, Sakai and Unicon heralds the start of an exciting era for the education community -- an era that will extend the potential of information technology to improve the effectiveness of the educational experience as well as further streamline administrative processes," said John Blakley, CEO of Unicon, Inc. "We are excited to help Oracle bring the benefits of community-developed collaboration and learning software to its clients through a supported, low-risk, predictable cost model. Our collective vision for a next-generation academic management environment will harness the strength of Oracle's application and technology development with Unicon's expertise in open source systems and services for a solution that meets the industry's increasingly complex requirements."

Oracle plans to assist in the development of Sakai code, including soliciting requirements and design concepts from the thousands of institutions using Oracle technology and application products. Oracle also expects to provide products and services that can integrate with the open source Sakai software. In addition, Oracle intends to join key discussion groups and, in the spirit of the open source community, participate in the planning process for Sakai's future product roadmaps.

6. Unicon Wins Campus Technology Magazine's 2006 Innovator Award and Recognized for "User Centric Campus Infrastructure" Work at University of California-Merced

Unicon Inc., the leading independent provider of enterprise portal, collaboration, learning, and integration technology for higher education institutions, has been selected as one of Campus Technology magazine's 2006 Innovators to be featured in the August

issue. The magazine selected 16 winners in several diverse categories, and after thoroughly reviewing and deliberating some 480 proposals, editors recognized and awarded Unicon in the "User Centric Campus Infrastructure" category for their technology partnership work at the University of California-Merced.

"We are very pleased with the results of our expanded online campus portal that was implemented in conjunction with Unicon," stated Rich Kogut, associate vice chancellor and chief information officer, University of California-Merced. "The project was completed on time and within our budget. Unicon's technology expertise was top notch and they worked closely with us to understand and meet our goals."

"Unicon is extremely honored to receive this award and recognition from the editors of Campus Technology magazine," stated John C. Blakely, CEO of Unicon Inc. "I want to personally congratulate our employees because this award is a direct result of their world-class technology expertise, deep understanding of higher education organizations, and industry-leading customer support."

7. The Technical University of Valencia has Developed a Web Mirror in Spanish of sakaiproject.org

The Technical University of Valencia, which will start the production phase of Sakai on its whole campus (38.000 students and 2600 teachers), has published the sakaiproject.org web mirror in Spanish at the following URL:

<http://www.proyectosakai.org>

Through this new website, the Technical University of Valencia wants to disseminate the Sakai project results among all Spanish speaking countries in order to offer them the possibility of knowing and profit the advantages that the project can contribute.

The mirror in Spanish will be updated twice a week to keep the Spanish speaking community completely informed on the new developments, news and events that are announced on the official Sakai website, sakaiproject.org.

Federico Carvajal.
fcarvajal@abierta.upv.es

8. Sakai Québec Launches Their Website in French and English

You can view the website at this URL:

<http://www.sakaiquebec.org/>

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9. Report: Paul Courant on Open Source

In October of 2005, the Mellon and Hewlett Foundations convened a dozen university presidents and other leaders to discuss the future of open source collaborative software development by universities.

The meeting ended with a desire for a more in-depth analysis of the situation, opportunities, and challenges that open source presents. Dr. Paul Courant, Economist and former Provost at Michigan, led this extensive analysis. The report was recently posted at http://www.ithaka.org/strategic/OOSS_Report_FINAL.pdf. It is extremely well written, and offers many insights and interesting questions.

Please note that the report was finished prior to the recent commercial patent discussions. You are encouraged to read the document with care and thought, and you may wish to share it with others at your institution.

10. 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

11. Report from the MERLOT Conference

A number of the members of the Sakai community attended the MERLOT conference in Ottawa, Canada (<http://conference.merlot.org/2006/>). Charles Severance gave a tutorial on Sakai which was very well attended and well received. Jeff Kahn of OKI also demonstrated a MERLOT OSID working within Sakai. Mike Zackrisson of Unicon also gave a presentation and participated in the trade show associated with the Conference.

Chuck also met with the MERLOT leadership to find areas where Sakai and MERLOT could collaborate together going forward.

12. Sakaibrary Update

In March, librarians and technologists from project partner institutions (Northwestern, Yale, Stanford, UC Berkeley, Johns Hopkins) met in Ann Arbor to begin shaping the design and functionality of Sakaibrary. Usage scenarios were developed as a basis for defining requirements. (Scenario and requirements documentation is available on the Library DG site at collab.sakaiproject.org)

We are now in phase one implementation, which we plan to have complete for pilot testing at Indiana and Michigan in October. In the current design, communication with the federated search engines is accomplished via modules that conform to the Repository OSID interface, a public programming specification developed by the Open Knowledge Initiative. We will initially create two such modules (targeting Ex Libris' Metalib and Sirsi SingleSearch), but "plugging in" OSID-compliant modules to interact with other search systems should also be possible. On the user end, instructors will be able to create a citation list within the Sakai Resources tool. Upon completion of a search, instructors will select citations and save citations, providing students will OpenURL links to retrieve the full-text or physical location information. Students and instructors will also have the option to export citations to bibliographic programs such as RefWorks and EndNote. We plan to demonstrate phase one functionality and present pilot test results at the December Sakai conference.

If you have any questions or comments on Sakaibrary, please contact Jon Dunn jwd@indiana.edu or Susan Hollar shollar@umich.edu.

13. rSmart Seeks Individual for Tech Consultant Position

We are hoping that you can help us in our search for an exemplary individual to fill a much needed Tech Consultant position in our company. If you know of an individual who would make a good candidate, please ask them to send their resume to my email address: leah.mostrom@rsmart.com

Tech Consultant Job Description -- The Tech Consultant will be a member of a dynamic client services team committed to making rSmart an example for superior service and support in the education industry. The individual will work directly with clients responding to inquiries and resolving issues, as well as contributing to an implementation team that installs, configures, customizes, and integrates our software for colleges and universities.

Please visit our website <http://www.rsmart.com/about/jobs> to read more about this exciting job opportunity.

Thank you,

Leah Mostrom
Office Manager, Phoenix, Arizona
www.rsmart.com

14. Jira and Confluence Contact Information

The University of Arizona has been successfully hosting Sakai's Jira and Confluence systems for a few months now. (Thanks go to the University of Michigan crew for taking care of it previously.) If you have questions regarding Sakai's Jira and Confluence systems, such as where a working group's activities are located, problems with your user ID or password, how to use formatting macros, etc., then please direct your inquiries to:

Jira: sakai-jira-admins@umich.edu

Confluence: sakai-confluence-admins@umich.edu

Please use the above addresses, rather than directly contacting individual people, as you are more likely to receive a timely response given everyone's busy teaching and travel schedules.

15. Events

LinuxWorld Conference & Expo

August 14 – 17, 2006

Moscone Center

San Francisco, California <http://www.linuxworldexpo.com/live/12/>

1st European Sakai Day

September 6 – 7, 2006

Luebeck, Germany

<http://www.oncampus.de/sakai>

6th Sakai Conference

December 5 - 8, 2006

Atlanta Marriott Marquis

Atlanta, Georgia

LAMS Conference 2006
First International Learning Activity Management System (LAMS)
Conference December 6 – 8, 2006
Conservatorium of Music
University of Sydney
<http://lamsfoundation.org/lams2006/index.htm>