Sakai Newsletter

August 23, 2007

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1. From the Executive Director: Campus Visits and Tool Promotions

I just finished my first campus visits, to Berkeley and Michigan, two of the founding institutions of Sakai. Both visits were incredibly energizing and educational. The variety of talents that go into making bSpace and CTools successful on their respective campuses is impressive. The fact that both institutions have so many thousands of faculty, students, classes and projects using Sakai as part of the fabric of their daily lives is fantastic, and makes it abundantly clear of the responsibility and great opportunity we all have. The icing on the cake of the Michigan visit was a trip to beautiful Comerica Park to watch my long-time favorite Cleveland Indians play the Detroit Tigers. The cherry on top was the Cleveland victory!

While I was at Michigan I attended the 2.5 Tool Promotion and Retirement meeting. I'm pleased two announce that two tools, OSP and Tests & Quizzes (Samigo), have been

promoted to Core for 2.5. The tools themselves are large and important components of Sakai and, especially in the case of Tests & Quizzes, often come under special scrutiny on campus. Graded tests justifiably make students and instructors especially attentive, and we want to ensure their confidence in Sakai is high. Since a number of institutions are running the 2.4 version of Tests & Quizzes in production for the first time during this term, we'll be looking at their experiences as the term progresses to identify any items that could benefit from additional attention. I would also ask for a strong community support in assisting with Quality Assurance for 2.5 (especially from those groups who expressed support for the promotion of Tests & Quizzes and OSP). We need your help to ensure that these new core Sakai tools are as dependable as possible.

Assessment and Portfolio functionality are critically important to users of Sakai. Please join me in offering congratulations to the teams that have worked so hard and well on these projects over the years. Thank you! Your efforts are much appreciated.

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2. 8th Sakai Conference in Newport Beach, California: Call for Proposals is Open!

The call for proposals for the 8th Sakai Conference in Newport Beach, California, is now open. To submit a proposal, go to www.sakaiproject.org and follow the link for the conference. **The deadline for submissions is September 15**.

Registration for attending the conference will open on September 4.

Mary Miles
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3. Sabanci University Launches Sakai in Production!

Dear Sakai Community,

After an eight-month-long pilot project, we are so pleased to announce our official production at Sabanci University. Based on a year-long evaluation of Sabanci University's needs, we have decided to take advantages of more flexible and efficient projects instead of WebCT. So, at this point Sabanci University has decided to adopt as
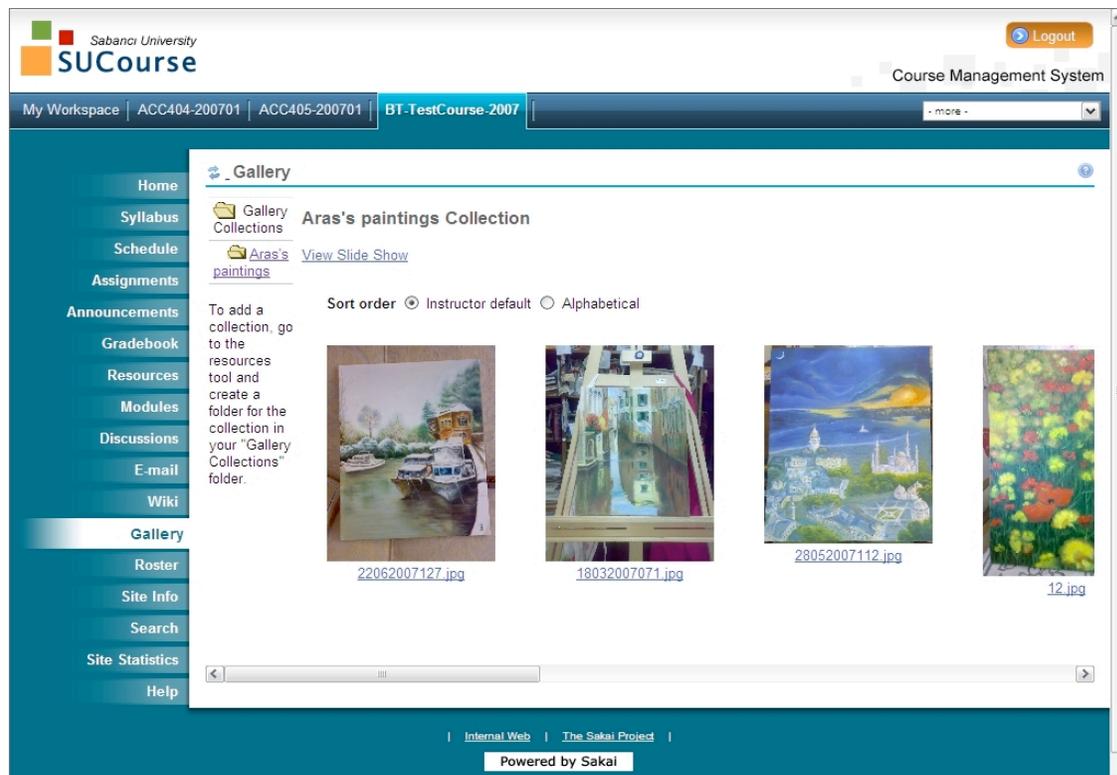
our new course management system Sakai, which has wide array of features to replace current system.

As we stated before, there were some reasons for making these decisions. With the evolution and trends of online course management systems in higher education, and also valuable feedback and survey results from campus users about the current CMS application, we needed to reevaluate our current situation to continue with a suitable and stable online learning environment.

Due to following advantages,

- Flexibility (Open Source) and fast improvement
- Easy to use
- Prevalence in higher education
- Rich features and modular infrastructure
- High performance
- Integration capabilities (uPortal, Pluto, etc.)
- Accordance with e-learning standards,

using Sakai Project became necessary. So, we planned this migration process within a convenient migration program in approximately eight months, with volunteer teachers of the university.

As a result of successful migration, we thank the community so much for its outstanding support.

I think we can say that the efficiency of Sakai Community Source is getting more powerful than ever and much better. And we are the first university implementing Sakai Project as Course Management System in Turkey and we are proud of it.

Thanks a lot again,

Yasasin Sakai Projesi !!

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4. August 10, 2007: UC Berkeley Launches 2.4.x and Retires Blackboard

Dear Colleagues -- UC Berkeley officially launched its new release of bSpace for the Fall 2007. Moving from 2.1.2 to 2.4.x will be a huge improvement for users, and we have many of you to thank for this. After this point we intend to be as aligned with the .x branch as possible.

In addition to the features included in the 2.4.x branch we are including Indiana University's Forum tool, Boston University's Mailtool, and the University of Capetown's Poll tool. We also now have a fresh face, with a vastly improved skin, which not only looks good, but greatly assists users navigating Sakai.

As of July 31, we no longer host or support courses in either Blackboard or WebCT, making Sakai the sole enterprise LMS on the Berkeley campus. To prove it, just go ahead and visit blackboard.berkeley.edu and see what you get!

Again -- thanks to all of you for your outstanding dedication and work on Sakai. I can say with absolute confidence that the power of community source has been realized.

Cheers!

Mara Hancock
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5. Questions & Answers Tool to be Developed by UNISA and UCT

UNISA (University of South Africa) and UCT (University of Cape Town) would like to share our plans to develop a new tool for Sakai, Q&A (Questions and Answers).

Q&A enables students to ask questions anonymously, which can be answered by other students or lecturers/tutors (instructors/TAs). Questions are ranked by the popularity of their answers, and can also be organized into categories, tagged and searched.

Q&A builds on experiences from UNISA and UCT with two complementary legacy tools, viz. UNISA's FAQ tool (http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/QNA/About+FAQ) and UCT's DFAQ tool (http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/QNA/About+DFAQ).

FAQ is heavily used at UNISA to enable lecturers to respond to similar questions asked by large numbers of students. DFAQ is used for a range of purposes at UCT, including to provide formative diagnostic feedback to lecturers and course convenors about difficult areas of the course curriculum or content, supporting exam revision by students, and improving governance.

More information and planning documents for Q&A will be on the project's Confluence page at: http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/QNA/Home

UNISA is leading the project, and will be providing project management and contracting a South African IT company to undertake the majority of the coding for phase 1 (as one of the project's goals is to build local IT industry capacity in developing for Sakai). UCT

will be contributing to tool design, technical oversight and QA. Both institutions will support the tool in the long term. The tool will use RSF and probably Hibernate as technologies.

The project is planned to complete phase 1 of the tool for deployment by Jan/Feb 2008, and if ready, proposed as a Sakai provisional tool for 2.6 or 2.7.

UNISA and UCT welcome feedback and involvement from anyone interested in the tool or planning similar work.

Regards,

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6. Article by Alan Berg in Free Software Magazine: "Create Your Online Project Site, Start to Finish, with Sakai"

You can read this article at:
http://www.freesoftwaremagazine.com/articles/create_your_online_project_site_with_sakai

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7. Using Sakai as Your Only LMS?

I posed this question on the 22nd August, 2007, to the Sakai Community to gather information about which institutions were using, or planning to use, Sakai as their only Learning Management System (LMS). I received a number of responses and have collated them below. This is obviously not the final number since there are dozens of installations with entries on the Sakai Map.

The Question:

Hi all,

Just wondering which institutions out there have implemented Sakai as their only LMS, i.e., not running it alongside WebCT/Blackboard etc. If you are only running Sakai, could

you let me know?

Cheers,
Steve

Summary of findings:

Currently using Sakai as only LMS:

Cambridge University, UK
University of South Africa (Unisa)
University of Michigan, USA
Indiana University, USA
University of California Berkeley, USA

Planning to use Sakai as only LMS:

University of Cape Town, South Africa
North-West University, South Africa
Georgia Tech, USA
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Charles Sturt University, Australia
University of California Davis (UCDavis), USA

The results are available in various formats at these URLs:

PDF:
http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/download/attachments/39846/using+sakai+as+your+only+lms.pdf

ODT:
http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/download/attachments/39846/using+sakai+as+your+only+lms.odt

DOC:
http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/download/attachments/39846/using+sakai+as+your+only+lms.doc

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8. FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Selects CampusEAI to Host and Support Sakai CLE

When the faculty and students of the FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising asked its e-Learning Supervisor to deliver the Sakai Collaboration and Learning Environment for Education (CLE), it selected the CEAI Hosted Solution for Sakai to deliver it. CEAI, a global not-for-profit information technology services and consulting provider, was chosen for its ability to rapidly deliver a custom, cost-effective collaboration and learning environment (CLE).

"We chose Sakai because it gives us a lot more freedom tailored to the faculty, plus we have a new breed of students who want to collaborate on research projects online. We needed help with implementing it, and another vendor recommended CEAI. Our CEAI project manager took the time to ask questions in order to understand our demands, and then he made sure we got the right solution for our needs," said David Melone, FIDM e-Learning Supervisor.

"FIDM has a large population of students earning a variety of Associates of Arts (AA) degrees, including the Professional Designation in Merchandise Marketing AA, who expect access to a CLE that fulfills their custom needs," said Melone. In addition, FIDM recently added a 4-year Bachelor of Science in Business Management (BSBM) degree program, with students and faculty that will benefit from the powerful Sakai tools.

According to Melone, FIDM had reviewed requests for proposals (RFPs) from a variety of vendors experienced with implementing Sakai on campus, but did not accept any of the submissions. Only CEAI, recommended by one of the RFP bidders, offered to tailor Sakai to suit FIDM, the needs of its varied student body and the changing instructor needs.

"We are thrilled to hear that FIDM, with help from CEAI, will be using Sakai," said Michael Korcuska, Executive Director of the Sakai Foundation. "The community developing and using Sakai becomes even stronger with the addition of new institutions, and the work of providers like CEAI are a crucial part of a healthy open source ecosystem."

By selecting the CEAI Hosted Solution for Sakai, institutions have the advantage of opting into any of the following services: project management, installation and configuration, course migration, technical training and end user training, 24/7 Tier-1 technical support and end user support, and advanced consulting.

"We're pleased to be chosen to deliver the CEAI Hosted Solution for Sakai to FIDM students and faculty," said Anjli Jain, CEAI Executive Director. "This renowned institution required a hosted Sakai solution without an intense investment in staff,

licensed software, hardware and other infrastructure. CEAI specializes in helping educational institutions concentrate on what they do best -- delivering quality education."

For more information on the CEAI Hosted Solution for Sakai, please send email to membership@campuseai.org.

About FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising: With campuses in Las Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Orange County, FIDM is a co-educational, specialized, private college dedicated to educating students for the Fashion, Graphics, Interior Design and Entertainment industries. It has 6,000 current students and more than 30,000 alumni. For more information, visit www.fidm.edu.

About CEAI: CEAI is a global not-for-profit information technology services and consulting provider focused on helping its members implement enterprise e-business solutions cost-effectively and in a timely manner. More than 200 members belong to CEAI, including Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the City of Cleveland, Portland Public Schools, McGill University, AmTrust Bank, The University of Exeter, Washington State University, the University of Montana, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Foothill-De Anza Community College District and The University of Melbourne. For more information, visit www.campuseai.org.

Joann Rasmussen
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9. Unicon Announces September uPortal Administration Training at California State University - Sacramento

Unicon, Inc. has announced it will hold a three-day uPortal administration training at the California State University - Sacramento Campus (www.csus.edu/) this September 25-27, 2007. The limited-space training course is designed for uPortal administrators and developers and will provide lectures and hands-on exercises that serve as an introduction and guide to portals, portlets, and uPortal. This course will encompass best practices for leveraging the open-source uPortal software and its community. For more information and to register for the course, go to this site:
http://www.unicon.net/training/uportal/admin

Unicon's uPortal Administration Training Course Overview
- uPortal Overview
- Authentication and Authorization
- Groups and Permissions Framework
- Aggregated and Template Layouts

- Administrative Channels
- Permissions Manager
- Accessing User Attributes and Information

Joe Waldygo
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10. Events

1st International Conference ONLINE EDUCA MOSCOW 2007
September 30 - October 3, 2007
President Hotel
Moscow, Russia
http://www.online-educa-moscow.com/index_eng.php

Defining the Scientific Evolution of Technology Enhanced Learning: The Kaleidoscope 2007 Symposium
Hotel Intercontinental, Berlin
November 26 - 27, 2007
Berlin, Germany
http://www.noe-kaleidoscope.org/group/symposium/

Online Educa Berlin
Hotel Intercontinental, Berlin
November 28 - 30, 2007
Berlin, Germany
http://www.online-educa.com/

8th Sakai Conference
Newport Beach Marriott
December 4-7, 2007
Newport Beach, California, USA
http://www.sakaiproject.org

e-Learning 2008
February 16-19, 2008
St. Petersburg, Florida, USA
http://www.itcnetwork.org/elearning2008.htm

Portal 2008 "Measurement & Assessment" Conference
Gettysburg College
June 3-6, 2008
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, USA
https://biz.gettysburg.edu/it/portal08/index.cfm