Sakai Newsletter

March 20, 2008

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1. From the Executive Director

I'm excited to announce that Sakai, in cooperation with the IMS, has been accepted to the Google Summer of Code. The project and application were developed by Chuck Severance, who will also serve as the primary mentor for the project. This is certainly exciting news.

To make the program successful we need students to participate in the program. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please forward the following links along to them:

Google's Sakai Announcement http://code.google.com/soc/2008/sakai/about.html

Google SOC Page: http://code.google.com/soc/2008/

Sakai Ideas Page: http://www.sakaiproject.org/soc2008/

And feel free to contact me (mkorcuska@sakaifoundation.org) or Dr. Chuck (http://www.dr-chuck.com) if you have any questions. Thanks, Chuck, for taking the lead on this exciting project!

I'm very pleased to announce that the University of Dayton (from my home state of Ohio) has recently made public their decision to adopt Sakai! They are replacing WebCT, which has been used as the primary system since 2003. A panel of faculty and staff evaluated a number of choices and the panel unanimously recommended Sakai. They will be transitioning to Sakai between the summer of 2008 and the fall of 2009. You can see their official campus announcement at http://learn.udayton.edu/sakai/index.jsp.

You may have met Fernando Smith at the Sakai conference in Newport Beach. I'm sure that we'll be seeing and hearing more from Fernando and the rest of the team at the University of Dayton over the coming months. Please join me in welcoming the University of Dayton to the Sakai community!

Michael Korcuska
Executive Director, Sakai Foundation
mkorcuska@sakaifoundation.org
mobile: +1 510-599-2586 // phone: +1 510-931-6559
skype: mkorcuska

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2. Paris Conference Call for Proposals Deadline: 31 March, 2008

Don't forget that the Call for Proposals is scheduled to close on March 31. If you have not yet submitted a proposal, please do so at your earliest convenience. Registration is also open at this time. The conference hotel will be the Marriott Rive Gauche. We are in the final stage of negotiations for hotel rooms but expect to have a link for registration very quickly. I will send another announcement when that is in place.

The link for submitting a proposal or to register for the conference is:
https://sakai.educonference.com/paris/index.php.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Paris...

Mary Miles
mmiles@umich.edus
Sakai Foundation Administrative Coordinator
Phone: 734-764-3614   Fax: 734-763-7829   Cell: 734-395- 2650

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3. Teaching with Sakai Innovation Award, Sponsored by IBM

Attention faculty: Are you excited about new ways in which you have been able to engage your students using Sakai? If you believe that your course transforms the learning experience, we want to hear from you. We are looking for teachers whose courses best exemplify excellent teaching practices combined with innovative solutions. Please share your story with us and with other faculty around the world by applying for the Teaching with Sakai Innovation Award.

If you are the winner, you will be awarded a trip to Paris to participate in the 9th Sakai Conference, July 1 - 3. (http://bugs.sakaiproject.org/confluence/display/CONF09/Home). There you will be recognized at an award ceremony and invited to showcase your course. If you are the winner and unable to travel to Paris, a modest honorarium will be awarded and we will work with you to provide an electronic presence at the conference. Check out our self-scoring today rubric to see how your course stacks up.

For more information and application go to: http://openedpractices.org/twsia
The application process opens March 19th and the deadline is April 14, midnight GMT. The winner will be announced in mid May.

A panel of judges who are well known for their work on enhancing learning through the appropriate use of technology will evaluate the courses and participate in web conferences with the finalists to select the winner. The judges are Karen Swan, Professor at the Research Center for Educational Technology at Kent State University, Ohio; Paul Elsner, director of the National Center for the Future of the Community College and former Chancellor of the Maricopa Community College District; and Ken Bain, Professor at Montclair State University, and author of "What the Best College Teachers Do."

Janet de Vry
janet@udel.edu

4. Portlet Development Training: 1-3 May 2008, St. Paul, Minnesota

Unicon is tentatively planning a Portlet Development Training class in St. Paul, Minnesota for three days (Thursday, 1 May 2008 through Saturday, 3 May 2008) following the JA-SIG Conference.

This class serves as an introduction and guide to developing JSR 168 standards-compliant Java portlets. Lecture and hands-on exercises range from the building and deployment of portlets to techniques for organizing code in a clean, architecturally-sound way. Topics include:

- JSR 168 Portlet specification overview
- JSR 168 Portlet API
- Obtaining 3rd-party portlets
- Portlet installation and development
- Development Environment
- Advanced portlet applications
- Portlet security and more

The cost for the class is $2,250 per person.

If you are interested in attending this class, please register here:
http://www.unicon.net/node/975

If there is enough interest, we will confirm the class and announce the exact times and location by Monday, 24 March 2008.

John Lewis
jlewis@unicon.net

5. You are Invited to Attend Kuali Days VI!

Kuali Days VI is scheduled for May 13 and 14, 2008 at the Westin Chicago Northwest. We will have a full agenda of content on Kuali Financial System (multiple tracks), Kuali Research Administration, Kuali Student System, and Kuali Rice (infrastructure and services like workflow). By popular request, we will also have a half-day seminar in advance of the conference on Kuali Financial System basics.

Please join with your colleagues to discover the promise of the Kuali applications. With release 2.0 completed, the Kuali Financial System is a full-featured Higher Ed Financials application that is ready to be considered for implementation. Kuali Research Administration will show the basics of their first release, Proposal Development (including Grants.gov). Kuali Student will be working on the functionality that must be

included in a modern, service-oriented student application. Kuali Rice will show the benefits of a shared infrastructure for core business applications.

Kuali Days V in November was sold out. We have chosen a larger venue to allow more participation during this conference. You can review the Kuali plans at www.kuali.org. Hotel registration is available now; conference registration will be available on Wednesday, March 12. We hope to see you there.

WHEN -- May 13-14, 2008
WHERE -- Chicago, Illinois

See www.Kuali.org for more details and to register for Kuali Days.

Michael Korcuska
Executive Director, Sakai Foundation
mkorcuska@sakaifoundation.org

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6. What's Coming Up? Mneme - Test Center 1.1

On Friday, March 21, ETUDES upgraded their production to Mneme - Test Center 1.1-Beta. (ETUDES has been running Mneme 1.0 in production since December 28, 2007).

An official, public release of Mneme - Test Center 1.1 is expected to be released to the international higher education community on Friday, March 28.

Highlights of new features and functionality since Mneme 1.0 include:

- Add support for surveys. Any question type can now be a survey - not just likert scale.
- Add "Summary of Data" (statistics) for all assessments.
- Add ability to return attachments back to students with ANY question.
- Ability to upload images and media from your desktop to your questions through the editor.
- Add ability to annotate student's submissions directly in their answer.
- Break down "review" options further to show answer key, scores, etc.
- Add superscript, subscript, indent, and out-indent icons in toolbar of editor
- And a new full-screen button in Editor (opens editor in full screen window).
- Add image, link, and html icons in editor in student view (when responding to essays).

- Add ability to set special access permissions for a student from grading
- Ensure all user entered html links in questions open in a new window.
- Add column for "Accept Until Dates" on Assessments list. Convenient for setting all dates.

and much more.

For a list of new features, enhancements, and fixes since Mneme 1.0, see:
http://etudesproject.org/mneme/releases/tc-upgrade1.1.htm

Beyond TC 1.1, the Mneme team will working on the following for June, 2008:

- Import admin tool to migrate Assignments to TC
- Download all assessments in zip format
- Import / export pools in .xml (support QTI formats, such as Respondus)
- Add new assessment type - 'skill practice'
- Download summary of submissions in Excel
- Show 'partial' score on student side / delivery
- Email score / review (optionally) to students

Many thanks to technical lead, Glenn Golden, from University of Michigan for his super work, team work, and commitment to making Mneme the best assessment engine possible.

Vivie Sinou
Dean, Learning Technology
ETUDES Project
Foothill College
http://etudesproject.org/

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7. Program Published for "Higher Education Solutions: The Community Source Way!"

We are pleased to let you know that the JA-SIG Spring 2008 program schedule is posted at the conference site: http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/08spring/index.html. (Click the "Program" link at the top of the page.)

- Conference events run Sunday, April 27 through Wednesday, April 30.
- Supplementary seminars are scheduled before and after the conference.
- A BarCamp and a UCamp are scheduled on Wednesday afternoon (See site descriptions for these unique events)
- Presentations, Panel discussions, Poster sessions, BOF's, Case Studies, How-to's.
- Keynotes by Ira H. Fuchs, Kaye Howe, and a panel of Community Source leaders

- CAS, DSpace, Fedora, Fluid, Internet2, Kuali, Sakai, uPortal

Join us for the most comprehensive gathering of the higher education open source community in 2008!

When making your travel arrangements, don't forget the supplemental seminars and post-conference activities. Plus, the Barcamp and UCamp are free events that offer excellent opportunities to network with others.

Early registration discounts are available through March 23, 2008.

Register now at http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/08spring/registration.html .

Don't forget to make your hotel reservations! You can make your reservations at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul - Riverfront by visiting

http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/08spring/accom-travel.html

and following the instructions for booking online or calling the number provided on the page.

Subscribe to the conference blog, The Community Source Way http://jasig2008.blogspot.com, for news and updates about the event.

Join the Conference networking site at http://ja-sigspring08.crowdvine.com/.

We hope to see you there!

The JA-SIG Spring 2008 Program Committee

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8. Sharing Sakai End-user Support Resources: Whether you are ready to share a link or just take a look, join us!

As discussed at a BOF in Newport Beach in December 2007, there are many of us involved in Sakai End-user Support who would like to share resources with each other. We discussed posting our material or links to our materials on Sakai's Confluence site, and a few of us have started the process. But we need your help. Please feel free to make use of what's there and then post at least one link to your help documents, training material, or information site. We all will be the richer for it.

For those who are not familiar with Confluence or have limited experience using a wiki, we have included instructions on how to get started. It won't take long. Come join us, whether you represent a large or small part of the community: http://tinyurl.com/2ee6bw

For those who are more experienced with Confluence, take a look and post your own resources: http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/confluence/x/C0E

Rita Pavolka, Indiana University
On behalf of the newly energized Sakai End-User Support (DG: User)
pavolka@indiana.edu

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9. Tour a McGraw-Hill Online Course in ETUDES

As a result of the alliance between ETUDES and McGraw-Hill Learning Solutions, we are now able to offer faculty another solution for online curriculum as a supplement to a traditional course, or as a lecture supplement for hybrid and completely online courses.

Now available is a live McGraw-Hill course, Introduction to Psychology, within the ETUDES (our Sakai brand) platform.

To learn more or tour the course, go to:

http://etudesproject.org/cgi-bin/news/news.cgi?news=2&num=8

Vivie Sinou
Dean, Learning Technology
ETUDES Project
Foothill College
http://etudesproject.org/

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10. ITC 2007 Distance Education Survey Results: Tracking the Impact of e-Learning at Community Colleges

Student demand for distance education courses at community colleges continues to grow. It is no surprise that 70 percent of respondents in this ITC (Instructional Technology Council) survey reported that student demand exceeds current class offerings. The percentages for enrollment growth and student demand have remained consistent during the four years of survey data. Offering students online services and technology support is a priority on most campuses – it is most likely an effort to meet accreditation expectations of "equivalency." Many campuses have already completed this transformation and the 2007 survey data confirms they have made additional progress.

Administrators have consistently identified obtaining "support staff needed for training and technical assistance" as the greatest challenge confronting their distance education program during the four years of the survey. Administrators have consistently identified

"workload" issues as their greatest challenge related to faculty. Administrators had consistently identified "orientation/preparation for taking distance education classes" as their greatest challenge related to students during the first three years of the survey, but this year, the completion of student evaluations emerged as the new primary concern.

Administrators are not as concerned about faculty "buy-in" as they may have been in the past before this ITC survey got underway. Notably, obtaining student acceptance, recruitment, and interest in distance education have never been a concern or challenge. ITC created this annual survey in response to the growing need for national data related to distance education program creation and development, and for key issues related to faculty and students. Respondents completed 154 surveys out of the initial distribution of slightly more than 500, a 30 percent response rate.

To see the full report, go to: http://www.itcnetwork.org/

by Fred Lokken, Truckee Meadows Community College, Christine Mullins, Instructional Technology Council and Lynda Womer, St. Petersburg College

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11. Unicon Selects Greg Baker to Accelerate the Growth of its Higher Ed Professional Services

Unicon, Inc. has announced that Gregory Baker has joined the company to accelerate the growth of its Higher Education Professional Services division. Unicon selected Mr. Baker as its vice president for higher education based on his strong background and track record for delivering innovative technological solutions with an emphasis on exemplary service and support. Since 1999, Unicon's consulting group has provided over 150 academic institutions with uPortal and Sakai services and support for their online campus deployments.

Prior to joining Unicon, Baker held positions as vice president of product management, product development, business operations, and business development for Blackboard, Inc., a leading provider of enterprise software applications and related services to the education industry. He also served as the president and general manager for the Special Teams Division of College Enterprises, Inc., before it was acquired by Blackboard in 2000.   While serving in various capacities over the years, Baker visited over two hundred colleges and universities and participated directly in over seventy-five technology implementations, migrations and upgrades.

"Unicon is fortunate and pleased to have found such a qualified candidate who has served so many colleges and universities through the years," said John C. Blakley, CEO of Unicon, Inc. "Greg is also a great cultural fit for Unicon as his dedication to client success fits well with our core company values; open communications, honesty, and integrity."

"I'm very excited to be part of a nimble company so focused on client satisfaction and success. It is my sincere hope to help Unicon continue to grow while maintaining such a strong reputation with the Higher Education community," said Greg Baker, Vice President - Higher Education at Unicon, Inc.

More information about Unicon, Inc. is available at www.unicon.net.

Joe Waldygo
President, TopSpin Communications, Inc.
joe@topspincommunications.com

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12. Sakai System Email Addresses

Here are email addresses to contact if you encounter problems with various Sakai Community systems:

Collab -- collab-admins@umich.edu
Confluence -- confluence-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org
Jira -- jira-admins@collab.sakaiproject.org

Peter Knoop
knoop@umich.edu

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13. Recent Email Group Discussions

Here are some topics that have been discussed in the last couple of
weeks in Sakai email
groups. Most of these discussions can be found at these Nabble URLs:

- Sakai-dev - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Development-f18040.html (DEV)
- Sakai Portfolio - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Portfolio-f18155.html
(PORT)
- Sakai Pedagogy - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Pedagogy-f24248.html (PED)
- Sakai UI - http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---User-Interaction-f25634.html (UI)
- Sakai Migration -
http://www.nabble.com/Sakai-Migration-Group-f27621.html (MIG)
- Sakai Announcements -
http://www.nabble.com/Sakai---Announce-f28489.html (ANN)

To join an email group, go to http://www.collab.sakaiproject.org.
While you are in your workspace, click the "Membership" link in the left-hand menu and

then click the "Joinable Sites" link. Click "Join" next to any of the
groups.

Discussions:

- [VLES] e-Portfolios   PORT
- 2.4.x startup error   PORT
- AAC&U needs your rubrics   PED, PORT
- April 16: ePortfolios Online Workshop   PORT
- c3p0 mysql autocommit error   DEV
- D-Space and Sakai - Seeking Background Information   DEV
- Glossary Definitions   PED
- guidance on Site archive   DEV
- GWT Sakai Development   DEV
- has any one kicked around RESTful exposure of Authz / Realms?   DEV
- In Defense of Opened Practices rather than OpenEd Practices (was TWSIA Website
Live)   PED
- Introducing Blackboard Sync for Facebook   PORT
- MathML support   DEV
- Mneme, Melete, Jforum - Sakai 2.5.x   DEV
- Need your assistance testing release artifacts   DEV
- OMPL tree for PDA portal   DEV
- OSP Community Library > OpenEd Practices   PED, PORT
- OSP Table Creation 2.5.x ORACLE   DEV, PORT
- OSPDEV Branch Testing   PORT
- Problem with Sakai 2.5.x DbContentHostingService in Content-impl valildateUTF8Db
DEV
- running tool under different userId than current user   DEV
- Sakai 2.5.1   DEV
- Sakai 2.5.x runtime error   DEV
- sakai-2-5-x : c3p0 : warehouse   DEV, PORT
- Setting a users quota   DEV
- T&L Branding Ideas and Update...   PED
- Taggable moving out of assignments   DEV
- tricky delete sql syntax   DEV
- TWSIA application/rubric currency   PED
- Zimbra?   DEV

14. Events

Ja Sakai Conference 2008
March 26, 2008
Hosei University
Tokyo, Japan
http://www.ja-sakai.org/index-en.html

ePortfolio SIG
March 28, 2008
Eastern Connecticut State University
Willimantic, Connecticut
http://www.ctdlc.org/
Supported by the Davis
Educational Foundation

Rhode Island Sakai Conference
April 8-9, 2008
Newport, Rhode Island
www.ri.net/RINET/products/portfolio/sakaiconference.html

National ePortfolio Conference @ LaGuardia
April 11-12, 2008
LaGuardia Community College
Long Island City, N.Y.

JA-SIG Spring 2008 Conference
April 27 - 30, 2008
St. Paul, Minnesota
http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/08spring/index.html

Portlet Development Training
May 1 - 3, 2008
St. Paul, Minnesota
http://www.unicon.net/node/975

2nd Annual Pan-American and Francophone ePortfolio and Digital Identity
Conference May 5 -7, 2008
Montreal, Quebec Canada
http://events.eife-l.org/ilearn2008/conference

Kuali Days VI
May 13 -14, 2008

Westin Chicago Northwest
Chicago, Illinois
www.kuali.org

eLearning Africa 2008
May 28 - 30, 2008
Accra International Conference Centre Accra, Ghana
http://www.elearning-africa.com

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

CANHEIT 2008 Canadian Higher Education and Information Technology
Conference
June 15-18, 2008
Calgary, Alberta Canada
http://canheit.ucalgary.ca/

EUNIS 2008 European University Information Systems Organisation
June 24-27, 2008
Århus, Denmark
http://eunis.dk/

9th Sakai Conference
Université Pierre et Marie Curie
July 1 - 3, 2008
Paris, France
https://sakai.educonference.com/paris/index.php