Sakai Newsletter

December 17, 2009

1. From the Executive Director

2. Call for Participation: 2010 Multi-Institutional Survey Initiative (MISI)

3. Forming the Sakai Maintenance Team

4. Invitation: Sakai Learning Capabilities Virtual Meeting

5. Longsight Welcomes Wellesley College to the Sakai Community

6. Register Now for Jasig Spring 2010

7. Sakai Mentioned in Committee for Economic Development Report

8. Recent Email Discussion Groups

9. Events

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1. From the Executive Director

The Sakai Board has recently discussed the idea of creating a larger structure that would include Sakai and other related projects. We've seen this happen with DuraSpace (Fedora and DSpace) recently, Kuali has had this structure from the beginning (with Student, Rice, Financials, Coeus and now OLE and Ready all being separate projects under the same umbrella), and Jasig has recently added Bedework to uPortal and CAS. Sakai did a similar thing with OSP although, unlike the previous examples, the OSP code and community were brought directly into the Sakai CLE project rather than being placed as separate projects under the same non-profit "umbrella." Of course it isn't surprising that our very own Brad Wheeler previewed this issue in his "Open Source 2010: Reflections on 2007" EDUCAUSE paper (http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ERM0712.pdf) where he said:

"… the software foundations--such as Sakai, Kuali, and others--will emerge as hubs of activity for coordinating institutional investments. They will grow in their competencies for managing all parts of the software life cycle and serving the needs of their members, and this will provide ready-made infrastructure for new projects… I believe that higher

education would likely benefit from about four foundations, which could be umbrella organizations for projects to distinct communities:

Teaching and Research: Sakai
Administrative Systems: Kuali
Infrastructure: Jasig
Scholarly Repositories/Libraries: ??"

I believe Brad would put DuraSpace into the question marks at this point in time. Of course it also begs the question of what other projects might be good candidates to work with Sakai. I'll leave it to others to offer suggestions. In any case, I'm launching this conversation on behalf of the Sakai Foundation Board to get your input on whether a strategy like this would make sense. There are a number of good reasons to consider this and a number of criteria we would want to evaluate before taking concrete steps with a particular project/organization. I've captured some of this thinking on a wiki page (http://confluence.sakaiproject.org//x/bxAAB) for your input.

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2. Call for Participation: 2010 Multi-Institutional Survey Initiative (MISI)

To All Sakai-Using Institutions:

The Sakai Community is once again joining together to conduct a multi-institutional survey of instructors and students in order to assess how Sakai is being used, what activities and tools users value, and how best to inform development of Sakai for the future.

In 2009, fourteen institutions participated in this initiative, surveying over 10,000 instructors and students. We hope to expand this effort to include even more participating institutions in 2010.

To indicate your interest, please add your information on this Confluence page: http://confluence.sakaiproject.org//x/ew8AB (If you are having problems with Confluence, please contact the administrators.)

Here's is a quick Q & A about MISI:

Q: Who Can Participate in MISI? A: Any institution running Sakai 2.4 or higher in pilot or production. All levels, languages, and locations are invited to participate.

Q: Who Conducts the Survey? A: Your institution will run its own online survey. In the past, institutions have used commercial applications (e.g., SurveyMonkey), homegrown systems, and self-coded surveys.

Q: Who Decides What Items Are On the Survey? A: The collective group of participating institutions will decide on the items via email, conference calls, and the Confluence wiki. Ultimately, each institution can decide to opt in/out of each "core" survey item, but are strongly encouraged to participate in order to maximize data collection.

Q: When Will Meetings Begin? A: In mid-January 2010

Q: How is Survey Data Shared? A: Anonymized data (not aggregated) is uploaded to a shared Sakai site. The University of Michigan has volunteered to combine the data into one big spreadsheet and run an initial summary. Each participating institution may use the combined dataset to run their own analyses.

Q: When Should the Survey Be Administered? A: In order to minimize variability, each participating institution is asked to administer their survey for 2-4 weeks in March, April, or May 2010.

Q: Where Can I Find Information About the 2009 MISI? A: On this Confluence page: http://confluence.sakaiproject.org//x/NxDtAw

Please let us know if you have any other questions / comments.

Thank you,

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3. Forming the Sakai Maintenance Team

A number of Sakai Community members are participating in the formation of a Sakai maintenance team in order to better address issues in the Sakai code base, as well as provide a mechanism by which institutions can reclaim a portion of their development resources after the delivery of production-ready code. Insitutional contributions involve pledging a named contributor or a set of hours for a specified period of time. For instance, the University of Capetown has contributed a portion of David Horwitz's work week to the team, while the University of Michigan plans to contribute up to .5 FTE/week spread across several developers.

The maintenance team will focus its energies on addressing quality issues in existing code. The team will likely assume responsibility for specific projects no longer maintained by individual institutions and will consider taking on maintenance duties for new projects that are added to a Sakai release. The maintenance team will respect project boundaries and will seek prior permission before addressing issues involving projects with active and stable teams such as Portfolios (OSP) and Test & Quizzes (Samigo).

The maintenance team will use the sakai-dev@collab.sakaiproject.org list for communications among members. If you want to communicate with the maintenance team, please use the dev list.

In Jira, there now exists a default "Maintenance Team" account that can be assigned issues. In the coming days a number of Jira Sakai project component leads will be reassigned to the maintenance team.

Maintenance team membership need not be limited to developers but can (and should) include others who can contribute positively to team activities. For developers, Java experience together with a familiarity of supporting technologies such as Subversion and Apache Maven will be expected. Developers new to Sakai are also encouraged to participate although they should expect that their patches will receive careful review from their more experienced colleagues.

If you are interested in participating in maintenance team activities please contact me at arwhyte@sakaifoundation.org.

For a more complete outline of maintenance team goals, scope of activities and governance, please read the Maintenance Team Proposal:

http://docs.google.com/View?id=dhprnqfz_3dgffm9g6

Named contributors (to date):

Matthew Buckett, Oxford University (5 hrs/week)
Nuno Fernandes, University Fernando Pessoa (5 hrs/week)
David Horwitz, University of Cape Town (5 hrs/week)
Tony Stevenson, University of Cambridge (3-5 hrs/week)
Seth Theriault, Columbia University (3 hrs/week)
Steve Swinsburg, Australian National University (4 hrs/week)
Anthony Whyte, Sakai Foundation (5 hrs/week)
Aaron Zeckoski, University of Cambridge (5 hrs/week)

Other Contributors (to date):

University of Michigan, up to .5 FTE/week
Unicon Cooperative Support

We hope to begin addressing issues as a team within the next week or so.

Cheers,

Anthony Whyte
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4. Invitation: Sakai Learning Capabilities Virtual Meeting

As some of you may know, the Sakai Teaching and Learning Group (which now has strong representation from the UX and Portfolio groups as well), has been engaged in an "instructional visioning" exercise focused on Sakai 3 for the past several months. Much of our recent work has involved the generation of a Learning Capabilities Google spreadsheet, which now consists of over 150 rows of user-centric goals expressed in simple terms. Some of this work has already begun to be used by Clay Fenlason, Sakai Product Manager, in the current design work taking place for Sakai 3 (more on this at Clay's blog at http://sakaipm.wordpress.com/).

We have reach a point in this process where we feel we need have a sustained and focused effort in order to organize and refine this document and "take it to the next level". This work will involve determining "themes" under which we can group Learning Capabilities, as well as "activity workflows" that will describe how users might progress through the learning capabilities. We will also be looking to identify gaps in the already documented learning capabilities and will work to fill in those gaps.

Our plan is to convene a "virtual working session" sometime towards the end of January or early February in which we hope to get as many community members as we can to work over a two-day period on this effort. We also plan to have some "pre-event"

activities to provide background for those who have not been engaged to date to help prepare for the work. We are also hoping to make this a global effort so we are actively encouraging groups outside the USA to participate, and will work to accommodate time zones, etc., in our planning.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED
If you are interested (or just think you might be), please visit the Teaching and Learning Confluence page at http://confluence.sakaiproject.org/display/PED and follow the link from the notice at the top of the page to our Virtual Working Session Planning page. There you will find additional information and a place to sign up.

Thanks!

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5. Longsight Welcomes Wellesley College to the Sakai Community

The Longsight Group has announced that Wellesley College has selected Longsight to host and support Sakai for the College's collaboration and learning management system.

In announcing the selection of Sakai and Longsight to the campus, Wellesley's Vice President for Information Services and College Librarian, Micheline Jedrey, noted that Sakai "…has many plusses: a strong set of tools and a strong vendor."

Wellesley College staff consulted with the campus community throughout their investigation and selection process that included a Request for Information and Request for Proposals process. A variety of products and vendors were considered. Wellesley has been using Open Text's FirstClass suite.

Veronica Branstrader, the College's director of planning and communication, reports that "Wellesley is excited to roll out Sakai with Longsight's support, especially given the confidence and enthusiasm shown by their current clients, who voiced their eagerness to welcome us into the "Longsight family."

Sakai will be hosted in a highly-redundant, load-balanced and failover configuration at Longsight's two data centers in Ohio. Longsight's comprehensive support includes authentication and student information integration, a "five-nines" service level agreement (99.999% uptime) at the application level, proactive monthly support calls, customization, onsite and online training and 24x7 support.

Sakai is one component in Wellesley's Unified Communications (UC) Project, a highly integrated effort to enable all members of the College community to work productively now and in the future. Other elements of the UC Project include Zimbra for email and calendaring, AVST CallXpress for voice mail and messaging and Luminis for the campus portal.

About Wellesley College

Founded in 1870, Wellesley has a global reputation for providing an excellent liberal arts education for women. Within this traditional liberal arts framework, the Wellesley curriculum is dynamic and responsive to social change and new fields of study. One of the first liberal arts colleges to establish a separate computer science department and computer science major, Wellesley remains at the forefront of technological development.

About The Longsight Group

Longsight is a leading provider of hosting and support services for open source software. The company delivers exceptionally reliable hosting services and high quality, comprehensive support for Sakai (learning management), Drupal (portals and content management) and DSpace (institutional repositories). Longsight enjoys a national reputation for understanding the business of education based on decades of experience in higher education IT management. For more information, please visit http://longsight.com

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6. Register Now for Jasig Spring 2010: "Ten Years of Open Source Innovation"

When: March 8 - 10, 2010
Supplementary Seminars: March 7th and 10th
Developer Days: March 11 - 12
Town and Country Resort
500 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108 USA
Hotel Front Desk: +1-619-291-7131
Toll Free, Reservations only: 1-800-772-8527
http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/10spring/index.html

Help us celebrate Jasig's 10th anniversary in San Diego with outstanding speakers and special events! The focus is on innovation this year. We'll be highlighting new and

established work from higher education institutions: Projects you should know about; local projects in search of community; creative work by established communities of practice; projects that exist only as a gleam in the eye of a creative developer.

Come listen to...
Gregory A. Jackson, Vice President for Policy and Analysis at EDUCAUSE
Justin Erenkrantz, President of the Apache Software Foundation
Rod Johnson, Founder of the Spring Framework Project

See presentations and seminars on new technologies soon to impact higher education. You'll be hearing about Spring 3, Amazon EC2, Groovy, REST, mobile applications, etc. Spend seminar time implementing and upgrading uPortal, deploying CAS, and customizing Bedework; configure the new enterprise HelpDesk application; learn how to use uPortal's new mobile theme; build dynamic JavaScript user interfaces using the jQuery toolkit. Learn how to develop next generation portlets, lay the foundation for an enterprise identity management architecture; learn how to submit a project to the Jasig Incubator.

Attend sessions on Identity & Access Management, the Fluid Project, OpenRegistry, Kuali Workflow, Internet2 Middleware Solutions, OpenCast, OWASP, and much more... Register now! For more information, check out our website or Facebook Event.

See you in San Diego!

-The Jasig Spring 2010 Program Committee

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7. Sakai Mentioned in Committee for Economic Development Report

From the Committee for Economic Development (CED) report "Harnessing Openness to Improve Research, Teaching and Learning in Higher Education": "Institutions of higher education, particularly those with substantial expertise in information technology (whether via faculty, staff, or students) have led the way in creating open source "community-source software," such as Sakai's open-source course management system or Kuali's financial management systems. (Sakai's system has been successful enough that Blackboard, the leading proprietary course management system, as chosen to make its software interoperable with it.)"

Citing a July 15, 2008 Inside Higher Education article by Andy Guess "A Bridge Between Blackboard and Open Source?" the CED recommended "College and Universities should: Establish rules requiring, to the extent practicable, the procurement of software and hardware devices that comply with open standards and promote interoperability." The CED report continued: "Consider support for, or participation in,

the development of community-source software for institutional purposes where existing software does not meet critical needs or where there are substantial gains in cost and customer control that can be practically achieved."

This report was released November 5, 2009 and can be viewed on the Committee's website: http://www.ced.org/. CED is non-profit, non-partisan business led public policy organization. CED is dedicated to policy research on the major economic and social issues of our time and the implementation of its recommendations by the public and private sectors. Membership is made up of some 200 senior corporate executives and university leaders who lead CED's research and outreach efforts.

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8. Recent Email Group Discussions

[Building Sakai] FW: [Using Sakai] **Link between releasing GB item and including it in the course grade calculation**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-FW-Using-Sakai-Link-between-releasing-GB-item-and-including-it-in-the-course-grade-can-td4172025.html#a4176190

[Building Sakai] **QA10-us going down for upgrade 2.6.x-qa r69616**
http://n2.nabble.com/WG-Sakai-QA-QA10-us-going-down-for-upgrade-2-6-x-qa-r69616-td4176666.html#a4176666

[Building Sakai] **QA9-us going down for 2.6.x update**
http://n2.nabble.com/WG-Sakai-QA-QA9-us-going-down-for-2-6-x-update-td4176578.html#a4176578

[Building Sakai] **Unavailability of Oracle nightly and qa3-us on 12/29 and 12/30**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Unavailability-of-Oracle-nightly-and-qa3-us-on-12-29-and-12-30-td4176016.html#a4176016

[Building Sakai] **Concurrent Editing for Sakai 3**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Concurrent-Editing-for-Sakai-3-td4173842.htm

[Building Sakai] 2.6.1 **problem with EntityProviderAutoRegistrar**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-2-6-1-problem-with-EntityProviderAutoRegistrar-td4172110.html#a4172110

[Building Sakai] **Sakai email notifications**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Sakai-email-notifications-td4172006.html#a4172006

[Building Sakai] **How does Sakai respond to an overloaded database?**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-How-does-Sakai-respond-to-an-overloaded-database-td4141870.html#a4141870

[Building Sakai] **Trunk Builds Again**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Trunk-Builds-Again-td4169077.html#a4169077

[Building Sakai] **2.7.0: Profile2 v Profile**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-2-7-0-Profile2-v-Profile-td4154429.html#a4154429

[Building Sakai] **Feed Tool**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Feed-Tool-td4164474.html#a4164474

[Building Sakai] **Dutch translation for Mneme**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Dutch-translation-for-Mneme-td4163740.html#a4163740

[Building Sakai] **Issue with ScheduleInvocationManager**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Issue-with-ScheduleInvocationManager-td4162679.html#a4162679

[DG: Teaching & Learning] **Review of Learning Capabilities spreadsheet**
http://n2.nabble.com/Portfolio-Learning-Capabilities-spreadsheet-td4058612.html#a4058612

[DG: Teaching & Learning] **Call for Participation: 2010 Multi-Institutional Survey Initiative (MISI)**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Call-for-Participation-2010-Multi-Institutional-Survey-Initiative-MISI-td4151787.html#a4151787

[Using Sakai] Report Out > **Sakai Teaching and Learning Group Update**
http://n2.nabble.com/Report-Out-Sakai-Teaching-and-Learning-Group-Update-td4134345.html#a4134345

[Portfolio] **OSP 2.6.x: General Feedback invisible to CIG Participants**
http://n2.nabble.com/Portfolio-OSP-2-6-x-General-Feedback-invisible-to-CIG-Participants-td4174281.html#a4174281

[Portfolio] **SAK-17587 - Can't get past step 2 when creating a portfolio template**
http://n2.nabble.com/Portfolio-SAK-17587-Can-t-get-past-step-2-when-creating-a-portfolio-template-td4172008.html#a4172008

[Portfolio] **Sharing portfolios with the .anon role in a "public" Sakai site**
http://n2.nabble.com/Portfolio-Sharing-portfolios-with-the-anon-role-in-a-public-Sakai-

site-td4156740.html#a4164112

[Portfolio] **Sakai strategic directions**
http://n2.nabble.com/Sakai-Strategic-Directions-td4153085.html#a4153085

[Using Sakai] **Adding a Page to the Wiki**
http://n2.nabble.com/Using-Sakai-Adding-a-Page-to-the-Wiki-
td4177414.html#a4177414

[Building Sakai] **Sakai email notifications**
http://n2.nabble.com/Building-Sakai-Sakai-email-notifications-
td4172006.html#a4172006

[Using Sakai] **Releasing Student Grades individually**
http://n2.nabble.com/Using-Sakai-Releasing-Student-Grades-individually-
td4146846.html#a4146846
 [Using Sakai] **Mini tool icons**
 http://n2.nabble.com/Using-Sakai-Mini-tool-icons-td4146354.html#a4146354

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8. Events

Connexions Conference 2010
February 2, 2010
Houston, Texas
http://cnxconference.rice.edu/

Jasig 2010 Ten Years of Open Source Innovation
March 8-10, 2010
The Town and Country Resort
San Diego, California
http://www.ja-sig.org/conferences/10spring/index.html

11th Sakai Annual Conference
Date and Time:
Tuesday - Thursday, June 15-17, 2010
Pre-conference sessions: Monday, June 14, 2010
Hyatt Regency Tech Center
Denver, Colorado
http://sakaiproject.org/annual-conference