

Week 5

Reflection of non LMS build

This project started with me researching assessment web tools that could then be added into an ongoing Wiki of etools. These sites were then to be used to build a course outside of a LMS. I did research on an eportfolio tool called DoYouBuzz and a grade book site called JumpRope. I created a brief summary of what these tools could be used for and the pros and cons of each. Once the information was compiled, I then added it to the OLTD 504 non LMS Wiki page. After my contribution, I then created a chart using Microsoft Word to chart all the different web tools that I could use in a non LMS build. Incorporating information from the Wiki, my own personal experiences from teaching in the classroom and tools that I had learnt about and used in the previous OLTD classes, I created a chart that broke down the necessary tools into four different categories: community, content, assessment and collaboration. Once I had selected the web tools that could perform similar tasks as that of an LMS like Moodle, I then created quick summary as to how I could use the etool and why I chose it. The list of web tools quickly grew so as to cover the aspects or communication, collaboration, assessment and content could be achieved.

I learnt several new skills from this task. While creating the non LMS Wiki, I was surprised to see the numerous different choices that were available to create the same goal. It was interesting to read the peer reviews and then to click on the link to try the different sites. As I tried to make my contributions, I found that many of the top sites had already been taken from the previous cohorts so I had to dig a little deeper and try different approaches to my searches. Once the Wiki entries were made, the next learning opportunity came from compiling the different tools into one long list. This taught me that many tools were needed and that there was a lot of overlap for some of the categories. Of all the tools, I found those on the Google site to be the most useful. These tools could be used both by the instructor and the students at creating content, collaboration and submitting work. The number of etools needed to run and maintain an online course is large and each one requires a set of skills to learn and then implement into a class.

This assignment is important to my development as an online facilitator because it causes me to reflect on the choice between investing time in learning a single LMS or to delve into many tools to cover the same options. At the onset of this project,

I was content to go through the numerous tools that were needed to replicate those found inside of Moodle; however, as I look at the list, I find that it might be more complicated and time consuming to use etools. It's amazing the choices and vastness of options on the internet of the different categories of web applications from collaboration to assessment. It takes time and practice to become familiar with all of them and linking from the dashboard on a website might make your course's homepage complicated and distracting. Another issue with always linking outside of the main website is that over time, links can become broken or the amount of advertising in many of these free sites can increase and options might decrease in time. A feature that I did like inside of Moodle was that tasks like the calendar and the assignments inside of the grade book were linked to each other while lessons were created. I can see this feature reducing the number of steps required to upkeep an online course. Once weighing the pros and cons of the two choices, I think in the long run, if I were to teach all of my classes online, I would invest the time in learning the ins and outs of a single LMS and then selectively chose a few etools when needed.