

# LMS SKILLS

## PART 1: D2L Demonstrate Mastery of LMS Tools

In week #5 assignment we have to demonstrate a mastery of the tools by using the following tools:

1. Customized Homepage
2. New Tool
3. Widgets
4. NavBar
5. Audio Message

### CUSTOMIZED HOMEPAGE and NEW TOOL

The advantage in D2L is that the course homepage is set up as a default. We have to start by clicking *Course Admin* and click *Homepages*. In the *Homepage* select copy.

P1 Image

We now have to activate the *Homepage* by clicking *apply*. We have to change the *Homepage* properties by clicking on *Custom* and rename the Homepage. The layout has to be changed as well.

P2

*Widgets* have to be added by clicking *Add Widgets* and click *add*. Click *save* and *close*.

P3.P4

We will create the *START HERE FOLDER* by clicking *on content* and *add module*. This folder should be at the top under *Table of Contents*. We *drag* the folder and place it under *Table of Contents*.

SH1

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We will create an *Executive Summary HTML Page* by clicking *Content* and selecting *new document*. Rename it as *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*.

SH2

The next step is to add a *link* to information in news widget. This is done by clicking *Home*, scroll down and select *New News Item*. Rename the headline as *START HERE*. We will then add a short message to the Executive Board and also insert a hyperlink which will direct them to the Final LMS and Quality Matters Recommendations.

EB1

L002

### CUSTOMIZING NAVBAR

There are tools in the navigation bar which will not be used. We have to select these tools and set them as *inactive*. We will select *Seating chart* and *Self-assessments* so that these tools will be *deleted* from the navigation bar.

Image 0001,0002

### CREATING NEW WIDGET WITH CONTACT INFORMATION

We have to create a new widget for the contact information. This is very important especially for online courses whereby students will need to contact their instructor. The steps are not so difficult. Click on *Course Admin* then click on *Homepages*. Select *Create Widget* and rename it as *Faculty Contact Information*. Here you should include the *name, email address, office telephone number, office number* and the *times* which the instructor is available in the office. A photo of the instructor will be upload so that students know their instructor.

### POSTING AUDIO MESSAGE IN NEWS TOOL

It is a good way to welcome students to your course by posting *an audio message* in news tool. This will create a good *first impression* about the course. To post the audio message click *Home* and in the *News Tool* click the down arrow and select the green plus *New News Item*. Name the file as *AUDIO WELCOME*. Make sure to have

an updated Adobe Flash player. Start recording your voice. Once done, click *add* then click *publish*. You are done.

## QUALITY CHECK

As an instructor, it is always better to do a *Quality Check* by logging as a *Demo Student*. In this way, it assures you that all the content added can be viewed by the students.

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### Strength

- D2L provides a package of HTML templates which makes easier for instructors to create professional HTML content files.
- It is possible to add special accessibility for a group of students with disability that might require more time in discussion group.

### Weakness

- Modifying the homepage in D2L requires some skills and doing the graphics is even more challenging for some instructors.
  - There is no introduction tool for students to introduce themselves in the course.
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I had to do the same process I did in D2L to see how the tools work. I have used the Canvas Guides to get the instructions on how to do it step by step. Here are some of the steps I have followed.

### POST AUDIO MESSAGE IN NEW TOOL

#### Strength

- The video tutorial on creating a homepage indicates clearly the QM standards for creating the homepage
- It has many features of allowing a You Tube embedded video to be used as a welcome message.
- Embedding a You Tube video is easier in Canvas compared to D2L.

#### Weakness

- Whatever the instructor posts in Canvas, it will be viewed as insecure unless it is linked to the University secure webpage.
- The photo of the instructor is very small. This problem also exists in D2L. You are restricted to the image size.

### LMS TOOLS COMPARISON AND QUALITY MATTERS COMPARISON

In my view, both management systems tools are similar. Whichever management system an instructor will be using, it should provide the same results. I have managed to create drop box release conditions, Quiz release conditions, You Tube with CC and HTML Template. I found it difficult to get video tutorials in Canvas for HTML template. All the tutorial were about CSS used for graphics and animations supported with Java.

Referring to the quality matters standards #2, both the management system qualify for the standard. As for Standard #8, there is room for improvements in using Canvas.

## **LMS SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

In view of the two management systems by practicing the tools, I conclude by recommending D2L as the management system. I have been using it for quite some time now and I am happy with it. D2L can be used perfectly whether in blended classrooms or online classes. It can save a lot of time to the instructor. Instead of students emailing their assignments, they can now be easily uploaded to the system. In drop box folder, you can create individual folders, each dedicated to different assignments. The grading tool is very useful for grading multiple choice questions, matching questions, and filling the blanks.

### **QM Summary and recommendations**

It is my recommendation that the University should adopt the Quality Matters Standards in the courses offered. As a startup, I am going to make a decision that all online courses must follow the Quality Matters Standards. Once this is accomplished, we will move on to the blended courses. There are challenges ahead but with time we will overcome these challenges. I assure you that once we follow these standards, all complaints from our distance education students will be reduced and soon there will be no complains. Students will be assured that we provide quality education based on research done by our instructors.

### **Strength and Weakness**

This week's assignment was much better. I was very comfortable in using the tools. I have been using the different tools for 5 weeks. Challenges are always there. I was not able to change the setting when I tried to do an audio recording. I found that I had to have a microphone to change those settings. The other challenge I faced is when I completed adding the Faculty Contact Information. The information was not displayed in the homepage. The setting was showing Course Home Page. I changed the setting to Course Home Page Copy and it worked. In conclusion, I have learned a lot from the starting of the course. Though it was my first time to learn about the QM Standards, I now feel very familiar with these standards.