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The Transition to the New DLE Continues: A New Cohort Launches and 20 Campuses Go Live for Summer Pilots

Cohort 2 Launch and Training/Template News

On May 11, representatives from the eight campuses that comprise Cohort 2 came together to participate in a virtual kick-off meeting, beginning their transition to SUNY's new digital learning environment (DLE). Welcome to the following campuses:

- Broome Community College
- SUNY Buffalo State
- SUNY Cortland
- Dutchess Community College
- SUNY Maritime
- SUNY Oneonta
- SUNY Plattsburgh
- Rockland Community College

It bears repeating that this transition includes adoption of a new Learning Management System or LMS called *Brightspace*, from the company D2L, as well as adoption of a common set of associated tools, migration of content, and training for faculty, staff and students.

"Transitions like this one are challenging but necessary, as we continuously work to ensure that SUNY has the most effective, efficient, and accessible teaching and learning environment and related tools," said Kim Scalzo, Interim Executive Director of Academic Technologies & Information Services.

Cohort 2 will generally run from May 2022 to April 2023, with each campus moving through a multi-month process that involves academic and technical planning, training, testing, and piloting before all of its courses/activities are live in the production environment. The process anticipates that campuses will move at slightly different speeds based on their specific needs.

Defining the New DLE

Kim Scalzo credited the ongoing work of the broader SUNY DLE project teams and lessons learned from the Cohort 1 campuses for allowing her to share a more detailed picture of the new environment in practice with this incoming cohort. For example, she explained at the kick-off meeting that each campus will be in the *shared* environment, but also have *individual campus areas*:

- A campus-specific webpage will provide a customizable/branded landing page where campus instructions, messages, and prompts for students can be posted. That page will link to the System-wide web address of mylearning.suny.edu for accessing the shared environment.
- With a priority on security, access to the new environment will be by way of Federated Authentication, where students and faculty will use their Campus Assigned Username / Password (i.e. SUNY Global ID) to login. SUNY Campuses that have multi-factor authentication implemented offer students and faculty an additional layer of security protection.

- Once in mylearning.suny.edu, users will have access to critical third-party tools, now identified in the categories of: core, system-wide, and unique. The full list of tools is still being prepared; however, there were some new details shared:
 - A three-year System-wide contract is in place for Ally that campuses can opt to buy into via a Participating Institution Agreement (PIA) with SUNY System.
 - A new System-wide contract is in process for the video tool Ensemble-Panopto that campuses can opt to buy into via a Participating Institution Agreement (PIA) with SUNY System.
 - A free trial of Turnitin has been arranged for Cohort 1 campuses as SUNY System works to request an exception request from the Office of the State Comptroller. Additional details will be shared as available.

Kim Scalzo also shared procedural improvements that will guide support of Cohort 2 campuses including: more group sessions up front to prepare teams for discovery sessions with D2L; a more active role of SUNY System team members; and more deliberate outreach on technical implementation issues.

The SUNY System team highlighted the technology components required of campuses prior to pilot launch, including integration between the DLE and each campus's Student Information System (SIS) and compliance with SUNY security requirements.

Training

Cohort 2 campuses were also briefed on available training options. Broad training, facilitated by the SUNY Center for Professional Development (CPD), is available and organized by individual comfort level with technological change—users complete a survey that guides them to the most appropriate training level.

Registration for synchronous remote training remains open for Cohort 1 and now Cohort 2 Campuses. Scaled webinar registration is open to ALL campuses, regardless of cohort. Advanced Brightspace topics will be covered during the July 18-22, 2022 OTTER Institute and throughout the 2022-2023 AY. Details and information on how to register, additional training opportunities, and recordings of synchronous remote and scaled webinars, are available on the DLE website at this link:

<https://dle.suny.edu/training/>.

In addition, SUNY CPD is hosting monthly “fireside chats” on general topics of interest. A sampling of titles includes: *Moodle and Blackboard to Brightspace Migration Strategies, Training Overview, Brightspace Engagement & Faculty Time Savers; Video Chat; Course Builder; Personalization*, and more. View a recorded session or register for upcoming chats at this link: <https://dle.suny.edu/fireside-chats/>.

Templates

Instructions for accessing Course Templates were shared with Cohort 2 campuses, noting that campuses in the first cohort are currently piloting the accessible tools. All campuses can download and import the templates into their respective sandboxes from the DLE website at this link:

<https://dle.suny.edu/templates/>. Also on the website at the same link is an introductory webinar about the templates and their use.

Course templates do require campus customization, including the navigation bar and the additional of relevant campus links to information such as policies, etc. There is a template for asynchronous instruction, for new online course development and demo; one for migration, for courses being migrated, that already have associated course content; for face-to-face courses; synchronous, hybrid, and hybrid courses.

Heard From the Field

- “I know there is one single page with all recorded FIRESIDE CHATS. I have seen them all and love them!”
- “Thank you so much for the training this morning. It was excellent. I look forward to the recording so I can practice and be my best with Brightspace. I very much appreciate you putting up with my technology issues and questions.”
- “Thank you for creating the Brightspace templates. I just uploaded the asynchronous one into a summer class that I am teaching and it is beyond my expectations...You have truly made my job easier as I work with faculty to include the OSCQR rubric...You have also made the transition to Brightspace easier for our faculty.”

Multiple Cohort 1 Campuses “Go Live”

As of this writing, 20 campuses are “live” in a pilot process with all or some summer instruction now in the new Digital Learning Environment. Next, Cohort 1 campuses will progress through their launch readiness in preparation for fall launch. Administrators are working with the campuses and technical teams on LTI integrations and making good progress.

- 94% of Cohort 1 campuses opted in for Summer 2022 soft launch.
- 90% of Cohort 1 campuses have implemented Global ID.

Retention Solutions

Consistent with SUNY and state requirements, an ongoing focus of the DLE project was identification of tools to assist campuses in retaining historical records/data. The SUNY System team has made two options available to campuses:

- Blackboard + Anthology offers an option to archive Blackboard Learn SaaS content, to allow users to “see student data within a course as it was consumed/delivered” for things like grade appeals as well as mandatory retention policies. For those campuses that are not cloud-based, there will be a comparable solution to “migrate the existing systems to SaaS deployments.” There is a pricing incentive (an additional TB of storage) for those who sign by June 30, 2022.
- K16 Solutions offers an archiving solution called *Scaffold*, which “allows institutions to archive their course content and student data when migrating to a new LMS platform.” The historical content will reside in Scaffold but is integrated with the new LMS so that it is accessible in real-time.

Pricing information for both options has been shared with campuses and campuses will engage by signing a Participating Institution Agreement (PIA) prepared by SUNY System. Recordings of the K16 Solutions and Blackboard/Anthology demos are available here: <https://dle.suny.edu/implementation-resources/>.

Questions to DLE@suny.edu

In an effort to increase response time and also ensure that relevant questions and answers are posted to the FAQ section of the DLE website, your inquiries to DLE@suny.edu will now automatically forward

to the SUNY Online Help Desk and be ticketed through the Team Dynamix system. The Help Desk Team are working through D2L and Brightspace training and we are so grateful to have them as a resource now and they will continue to support campuses as they go live.

Engagements

We continue to work to ensure effective communication around this work with project leads giving numerous update presentations. Over 600 individuals attended DLE presentations during the months of April and May:

- April 1, FACT2 Council
- April 1, FCCC (Faculty Council of Community Colleges) Spring Plenary
- April 5, Blackboard Archive Demo Webinar
- April 7, UFS (University Faculty Senate) Spring Plenary
- April 12, Starfish Community of Practice
- April 14, CCIOs (Council of Chief Information Officers)
- April 15, Campuses SIS integration meeting
- April 27, LMS (Learning Management Systems) Administrators
- April 27, DOODLE (Directors of Online Distance Learning Environment)
- April 28, FACT2 Symposium on Assessment
- April 28, SUNY Chief Academic Officers
- April 29, UFS/FCCC Presidents
- May 5, Student Success Summit
- May 10, SUNY Online Teaching Community of Practice
- May 11, Community College Presidents
- May 19, CCIOs (Council of Chief Information Officers)
- May 20, COA (Computing Officers Association)
- May 25, DOODLE (Directors of Online Distance Learning Environment)
- May 27, UFS/FCCC Presidents
- May 31, SUNY Tech Strategy Forum

Thank you for reading and for your continued engagement in this important process!

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