Brightspace Virtual Classroom Feature

Project Plan

Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

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Clear Vision, Effective Communication, Strong Teamwork

Brightspace Virtual Classroom Feature

Feature Overview

Brightspace Virtual Classroom feature is an integrated web conferencing and video assessment solution that enables experiential learning and soft skill development at scale. When learners demonstrate skills and apply their knowledge on video, evaluators get an authentic representation of what they can do.

This feature provides a seamless way to connect face-to-face with multiple parties for instruction, assessment, and feedback. Schedule live discussions, office hours, video-based training, and more. Video sessions can be automatically recorded and seamlessly embedded directly into a course alongside other learning materials.

This feature is offered in partnership with Bongo (YouseeU) company and integrated into Brightspace for free. There is also a premium option with extended features and capabilities.

https://www.d2l.com/products/virtual-classrooms-video-assignments-premium/

https://www.d2l.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/D2L-Virtual-Classrooms-One-Pager-Final.pdf

Educational Need

Online learning provides learners with a learning option that adapts to their busy schedule by taking the learning experience out of the traditional classroom. Online learning is flexible and convenient without geographical and time constraints. Online learning relies on the Internet for access to learning materials as well as interaction with instructors and learners through virtual ways using a variety of technology tools.

Context: Institution, tool and stakeholders

In order to put the new feature in context, several things must be taken into account:

Institution. Over the next two years, the vice-provost (teaching and learning) will be seeking Educational Leaders in Residence to lead in priority areas such as online and blended learning. UCalgary will be soon launching an online courses initiative, that in addition to the educational leaders, requires the appropriate tools to support the

development and adoption of online courses. The selected tool should provide the best experience for learners and instructors.

Tech Tool. Have other tools or approaches been used in the past, is there a current tool for doing that? Is the new tool providing advantages over the current one? (more affordable, ease of use, better accessibility), Is there a need to develop a transition plan from an existing technology?

Stakeholders

-Identify. Who are they? -Students, Instructors, Associate Deans, Teaching & Learning Specialists, in-faculty IT, in-faculty D2L Brightspace course Administrators, Learning Coordinators, etc. Same for Institutes, Units.

-Needs and level of commitment. What are their needs, what was learned from them in the past using other tools/tech approaches? Where do they currently stand in terms of support/resistance to the new tool? What level of support can be expected from them?

-Reasons for resistance. Identify and anticipate reasons to understand the nature of the resistance and develop a tool adoption strategy.

Proposal

The activation of the Virtual classroom feature offered through the Bongo Company (https://www.bongolearn.com/) in partnership with Brightspace will be a key tool in the development and implementation of online courses. As there is another current solution integrated within D2L Brightspace. (https://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html), in addition to other options implemented at faculty level (https://zoom.us/), it is important to evaluate and research this new feature to understand where it stands compared to the current used ones. The above-mentioned process will require:

-**Data analysis**: IT tickets regarding virtual sessions using the current institutionally supported tool -Adobe connect-, that would also include users and faculties. Data that individual faculties can provide on the use of other tools like "Zoom".

-**Approach stakeholders** to gather data from them and communicate the change. Aim to different types of users, with emphasis on super users and tech reluctant users. Gather information in the form of survey/individual/focus groups.

Super users: Identify what drawbacks present the actual option (Adobe Connect, Zoom) and which work-arounds offer the new solution.

Reluctant users: what keeps them away and what would make them change their mind to try virtual web conferencing.

The Data analysis will help to identify needs, stakeholders, visualise the advantages of the new tool over the existent ones and build a **strategic project plan** for *activation, implementation, transitioning, support and adoption*.

Project Goal

Execute a successful transition to a new web conferencing tool for online courses within Brightspace.

Implementation Team

Project Lead: Learning Technologies Administrator (Reports to Manager Learning Technologies at TI)

Project Team:

Taylor Institute (TI)-Business owner and Lead, Decision Making-Communication-

Online learning Lead (1), Learning Tech Specialist (1), Instructional Design Specialist (1), Communications and Marketing (1)

Information Technologies (IT) – Integration Support & Security –

IT Partner (1), IT Teaching and Learning Applications (1), IT Organizational Change Management Lead, IT Trainer (1)

Information Technologies Support Centre (ITSC)-Helpdesk-

Technical Support Specialist - D2L Brightspace area. (2)

Support and Facilitation

The following support will be needed for the feature launch and sustainability:

- **Technical**: Activation, configuration and maintenance of software feature and associated updates/upgrades due to Brightspace version updates, etc. (IT/TI)
- **Functional**: Responsible for functional configuration and changes, process expertise for the application, incident reporting and resolution with end users,

manage release testing and communication, execute system access and removal requests, etc. (ITSC/TI)

- **Pedagogical**: Support end users with the use of the tool, create and deliver workshops, develop support materials, documentation and tutorials, trouble shoot with end users. (TI: LTDT Team with collaboration from ITSC members, IT Trainer)

Resources, Documentation, Tutorials

The following resources and materials will need to be developed and maintained.

Documentation on the eLearn website: TI (Learning Tech Specialist, Online Learning Lead) in collaboration with IT trainer.

ITSC Knowledge Base articles: ITSC (Technical Support specialists).

Workshops, drop-in sessions, information sessions: Learning Tech Specialist, Online Learning Lead and Instructional Design Specialist in collaboration with IT Trainer.

Policies

Identify institutional policies that apply to the project.

Suggested policies to consider:

https://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright

https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-electronic-resources-and-information-policy.pdf

http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/institutionally-supported-and-approved-online-learning-technologies/

See the full list at: https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/forms/title

Timeline

A tool will be selected in order to organize the project, make sure that good, transparent and effective communication happens within the team, set roles and responsibilities, distribute tasks, anticipate loads and create a timeline for the project stages.

[JIRA](#) is proposed as a tool for this project, it is a free tool up to 10 users. JIRA software is an agile project management tool that supports any agile methodology. It is important to understand that every team member needs to feel comfortable with the use of the tool and majority of the team members need to agree on the tool that is going to be used.

Sprints with a number of tasks will be set and will belong to different stages of the project, e.g. researching, setup, test, documentation, communication, pilot, launch, and evaluation of the project.

Example: lauperi.atlassian.net

Approval Process

Project approval process will be discussed with the Learning Technologies manager and LTDT Lead.

Communication & Institutional Announcement

Communication of the rollout/adoption plan of the new feature will be delivered in a phase approach, which will allow users to adjust to the new interface and avoid feeling overwhelmed. User (*specially in-faculty D2L Admins/Learning Coordinators)* onboarding and training will be done before the official launch. Strategic Operations Team (Communications and Marketing) at the TI will be consulted and involved in order to explore and find the best channels to communicate with users (emails, UToday articles, internal social networks, paper documents, information sessions).

Evaluation

The Project will be evaluated trough collected data. Data analysis for the new feature will be compared to the previous tool historical data in order to understand the transition, needs, find trends and develop strategies.

Success will be measured as:

- Increased number of users.
- Good feedback towards the tool.
- Participation in training offered by the Taylor Institute and other training within faculties.
- Bigger number of online courses and broad adoption of the tool.

A document with all the data analysis and key learnings during the process will be produced and shared.