

TRANSITIONING TO SMARTSITE: AN OVERVIEW

In Fall 2007, SmartSite will be officially launched as UC Davis's new set of online course management and collaboration tools. SmartSite will replace the more limited set of course management tools in the MyUCDavis portal, followed by the shutdown of the MyUCDavis course tools in 2008-09. A comprehensive training, support and communication program has been developed in preparation for the fall roll-out.

BACKGROUND

- June 2005: The CCFIT Working Group on Course Management released a report recommending that UC Davis implement the Sakai community source platform as the campus' primary learning information system. The report cited the need for UC Davis' enterprise-level learning information system to keep pace with the ever-increasing demands and expectations of students and instructors, to quickly adapt to the rapidly changing technology environment, and to be the most cost-effective solution possible. The group's recommendation was endorsed by the CCFIT.
- January 2006: IET launches the SmartSite pilot with interested faculty, staff and students.
- Fall 2006: The School of Veterinary Medicine launches its version of SmartSite, called CERE ("Collaborative Educational Research Environment"), for all its courses.
- 2006-07: IET performs technical and functional evaluations throughout the pilot phase. New trainers are hired, and a comprehensive training program is developed.

ABOUT SMARTSITE

By adopting SmartSite, UC Davis is introducing a rich, sophisticated, easy-to-use, and extensible set of online course management and collaboration tools. These tools are designed to make it easier for instructors to teach, for researchers to work together, for staff to simplify and enhance communication within their departments and teams, and for students to tap the benefits of online collaboration.

SmartSite offers two basic types of sites:

- Class sites, to organize classes and offer new ways for students to work together; and
- Project sites, which can be used to organize work by individuals, departments, clubs, researchers, administrative committees, research groups, and other campus organizations not directly connected to a campus class.

SmartSite makes possible a broad range of uses:

- Posting a reading list to collaborating on an assignment, tracking the sound of a flute in a recorded symphony concert, archiving chat-room discussions, making various types of material securely available online, etc. -- to as many people as the user wants.
- Collaborations: research groups, lab groups, book project planning, dissertations
- Distance learning courses (family nurse practitioners/physician assistants)
- Integration of other technologies (e.g., Breeze, Almagest)

SITE APPLICATION STATISTICS FROM THE PILOT PHASE (5/15/07)

Course Sites*	455
Project Sites	728
Total Sites Created	1183
Number of User Workspaces	>8,000

*Does not include multiple/cross listed sections of the same course.

OVERVIEW OF TRANSITION PROCESS

- Inform the campus community of SmartSite's general release date.
- Explain SmartSite – program; features; transition strategy; support, training, and help resources; case studies & profiles illustrating SmartSite's potential; etc.
- Communicate proposed timeframe for retiring MyUCDavis' course management tools.
- Engage key campus constituencies and users for feedback on SmartSite.
- Perform technical and functional evaluations throughout the 2007-08 transition year.
- Retire the course management features of MyUCDavis in the 2008-09 academic year.

MAJOR UPCOMING COMMUNICATIONS

- Heads-up to TIF (04/25) and TSP (05/03)
- Overview to deans and vice chancellors, senior advisors (early May)
- Notifications to campus community, key groups (early May)
- Presentation to CCFIT (05/14)
- Articles and publications: IT Times (early June), Aggie (June), Dateline (June)
- Special events (May-June, summer)

SUPPORT RESOURCES

Pedagogical assistance:

- **Faculty Mentoring Faculty Program--** provides faculty an opportunity to mentor and to learn from other faculty interested in instructional technology and innovative teaching. Andy Jones, aojones@ucdavis.edu, 752-3408.
- **Handouts** – using modules, chat, wiki, discussion forums, tests & quizzes, etc.

Technical support:

- **Campus technology support staff** — Faculty can add any staff member as a full editor on any SmartSite simply by adding him or her to the participant list in the Site Info tool. Optionally, some support staff (e.g., trainers and IT Express) have the ability to "Switch User" and see SmartSite from that user's perspective. We are exploring ways to do this on a departmental or other basis which would be less expansive.
- **In-classroom support** — Through classroom technology support team.
- **IT Express** — Help setting up a SmartSite account, answers to questions about using SmartSite tools. (530) 754-HELP (754-4357), smartsite-help@ucdavis.edu
- **ET Partners** — Student technology advisors specially trained in all of the tools in SmartSite; available for ad hoc one-on-one consultation, in the faculty member's office. (530) 754-2115; etpartners@ucdavis.edu; <http://etpartners.ucdavis.edu>
- **Technical tips, handouts, FAQ, and video demos** — Getting started; SmartSite dos and don'ts; global permissions; tool-specific materials (chat room; drop box; gradebook; tests & quizzes; podcasting; wiki; blogging; jsMath; etc.) — <http://smartsite.ucdavis.edu>

Requesting a new class or project site:

- An application form needs to be filled out and returned to smartsite-request@ucdavis.edu. See "Request a Class or Project Site" at <http://smartsite.ucdavis.edu>. Note: By Fall 2007, a new Web-based user site creation mechanism will be in place.

Training:

- A comprehensive training program is available for all interested faculty, staff and students. See <http://trc.ucdavis.edu/trc/calendar/index.html>
- Presentations and workshops can be provided to interested departments.

QUESTIONS FOR TIF

1. What type of training would be helpful to campus technology support staff?
2. What additional resources would be helpful to campus technology support staff?
3. Is existing "proxy" capability sufficient?

SMARTSITE'S CURRENT TOOL SET*

Announcements	For posting current, time-critical information.
Assignments	For posting, submitting and grading assignment(s) online.
Chat Room	For real-time conversations in written form.
Drop Box	For private file sharing between instructor and student.
Email Archive	For viewing email sent to the site.
Gradebook**	For storing and computing assessment grades from Tests & Quizzes or that are manually entered. Submit Grades to the Registrar.
Message Center	For using the message forums or private mail for a site.
Migration Tools	Tools to export Web sites, tests and question pools from MyUCDavis.
Modules	For creating and organizing learning sequences.
News	For viewing RSS content from online sources.
Resources	For posting documents, URLs to other websites, etc. Includes WebDAV for migrating content from MyUCDavis.
Roster	For viewing the site participants list.
Schedule	For posting and viewing deadlines, events, etc.
Section Info	For managing sections within a site.
Site Info	For showing worksite information and site participants
Syllabus	For posting a summary outline and/or requirements for a site.
Tests & Quizzes	For creating and taking online tests and quizzes.
Web Content	For accessing an external Web site within the site.
Wiki	For collaborative editing of pages and content

* Additional "provisional" tools like "podcasts" are available but not completely documented/supported at this time.

** SmartSite's Gradebook does not currently support "Categories" and "Weighting."

NEXT STEPS FOR SMARTSITE'S TOOL SET

- Web-based user site creation by fall 2007.
- Upgrade current tools to Sakai version 2.4 by fall 2007.
- Upgrade "Gradebook" to include "Categories" and "Weighting" by spring 2008.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- **SmartSite support team working documents** — See "UC Davis Sakai Collaborative" at <http://confluence.ucdavis.edu/> — All workshop materials, pedagogical handouts, feature guide (what's coming and when), all system upgrade information/schedules, communication schedule, test plans (etc.)
- **Comments and suggestions** -- We welcome your feedback. Please email Kirk Alexander, SmartSite program manager, at kdalex@ucdavis.edu with your questions and comments.