Common Collaboration & Learning Environment:
Planning and Discussion Document

University of California, Los Angeles

Contributors: Jim Davis, Patricia Keating, Patricia O’Brien, Ruth Sabean, Judi Smith, Gary Strong

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Executive Summary

Ten years ago, UCLA became a leader in technology support for undergraduate education through an innovative initiative to provide a web site for every course. To regain a leadership role in educational technology, UCLA must move beyond course web sites to a rich infrastructure for learning and research collaboration. The Common Collaboration and Learning Environment (CCLE) initiative will provide that infrastructure.

The CCLE will involve more than a technology change, it will also represent an innovative organizational infrastructure for IT collaboration at UCLA. This new structure can become a model for developing, managing, supporting, and facilitating use of a shared system. The CCLE will also position UCLA to participate in shared development, integration, and support across the entire higher education community.

The CCLE initiative represents the culmination of several years of campus analysis and assessment. The planning process has moved UCLA into a new arena of collaborative analysis, planning, and design, involving faculty and staff from many different campus units. Over a period of four years, the Faculty Committee on Educational Technology (FCET) led the campus to embrace a vision of a common environment to support teaching and learning. The Educational Technology Leadership Group (ETLG), as Executive Sponsors of the CCLE, have contributed staff and resources to fund the planning process, and the Information Technology Planning Board (ITPB) has endorsed “the work plan to select a shared framework for UCLA” and “enthusiastically support[s] the work of the FCET”.

Based on this broad support, the CCLE initiative is ready to move into implementation planning. Immediate start-up funding is needed to ensure detailed implementation planning, system deployment and testing and service provisioning for a fall 2007 service availability. Transition funding is needed for 2007/08 and 2008/09 to encourage transition by academic units and to allow planning for a long-term funding model.

Resource Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>$2.1 Million</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>$2.1 Million</td>
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</table>
Ten years ago, UCLA became a leader in technology support for undergraduate education through an innovative initiative to provide a web site for every course. To regain a leadership role in educational technology, UCLA must move beyond course web sites to a rich infrastructure for learning and research collaboration. The Common Collaboration and Learning Environment (CCLE) initiative will provide that infrastructure.

The CCLE can make a significant impact on the academic experience at UCLA for both students and faculty, by creating a consistent IT solution to support teaching, learning, and research collaboration that is fully integrated into the UCLA IT environment. This common solution will break down silos of practice and unleash creativity and innovation in instruction and collaboration. As with other transformative technologies such as ubiquitous campus networking, the full value of the CCLE will be demonstrated by the creativity of the faculty and students who work with it. The CCLE will

- Facilitate inter-disciplinary teaching and collaboration across academic unit boundaries at UCLA and with partners at other universities.

- Give students and faculty a single workspace that integrates information, resources, and outputs across courses and research projects.

- Model the faculty practice of integrating research and instruction, allowing the easy exchange of materials, information, and discussion between research teams and students in a class.

- Position UCLA to be more agile in deploying innovations campus-wide, taking more rapid advantage of IT innovations in instruction and collaboration both here at UCLA and throughout the higher education community.

The CCLE will involve more than a technology change, it will also represent an innovative organizational infrastructure for IT collaboration at UCLA. This new structure can become a model for developing, managing, supporting, and facilitating use of a shared system. The CCLE will be a community-governed common service with tiered support, both shared and local, in which UCLA IT staff work together as a community to build and share expertise, tool development, and user support. This shared model will enable and encourage local support, individual innovation, and customization while delivering a common solution at UCLA. The CCLE will also position UCLA to participate in shared development, integration, and support across the entire higher education community.
The CCLE initiative represents the culmination of several years of campus analysis and assessment. The planning process has moved UCLA into a new arena of collaborative analysis, planning, and design, involving faculty and staff from many different campus units. Over a period of four years, the Faculty Committee on Educational Technology (FCET) led the campus to embrace a vision of a common environment to support teaching and learning. They worked with cross-campus groups to define needs, evaluate possible approaches, pilot Sakai as part of the vision building and endorsement process, and assess the potential system platforms and open-source communities. The Educational Technology Leadership Group (ETLG), as Executive Sponsors of the CCLE, have contributed staff and resources to fund the planning process, and the Information Technology Planning Board (ITPB) has endorsed “the work plan to select a shared framework for UCLA” and “enthusiastically support[s] the work of the FCET”.

This broad support reflects the growing importance of educational technology to UCLA’s academic mission, and the need to better position the campus to move forward. One UCLA accreditation theme is “Using educational technology to enhance the student academic experience,” signaling our intention to explore innovative changes in how technology is used to support student learning, and to learn from the experience of peer institutions. Several of those peer institutions recommended during a 2005 network review that UCLA converge on a common solution for learning and collaboration to position the campus for the future.

The CCLE will be based on Moodle, an open source platform supported by a robust international community of higher education institutions. The open source paradigm reflects the values and practice of IT development in higher education, particularly of academic systems – faculty-driven design, shared costs through collaboration with peers, contribution to the community, and support for local innovation.
Key Challenges

1. Transition

Existing local systems at UCLA offer faculty and students a wide range of functionality, from minimal features to highly customized suites of functions and extensive archives of class data. Transitioning from the current to the new will take place at different rates, and require significant assistance across several years.

a. How do we encourage and facilitate adoption of the new system?

b. How do we migrate both data and functionality into the new system?

c. How do we meet an enormous pent-up demand for core and advanced services?

2. Faculty Support

The CCLE is a campus-wide system whose effective implementation ultimately rests on the commitment and expertise of individual faculty. Success depends on the right combination of enterprise level resources combined with strong local support, innovation and customizations.

a. How do we maintain or increase the strength of local support, while delivering a common solution?

b. How do we enhance the campus resources available to faculty and teaching assistants for advice and assistance in teaching, integrating library resources, and managing copyright issues in the digital world?

3. Organization

To effectively manage a shared system, with collaborations both within and without UCLA, will require new organization models. Communication, governance, accountability, and decision making will all require new processes.

a. How do we build local trust in common services?

b. How do we position the community to define and oversee implementation?

c. How do we create an ongoing community governance structure?
4. Funding

Over the last decade, the campus invested millions of dollars in staffing and resources at the academic unit level, to support faculty and student use of course management systems and to provide support services from Student Services, MyUCLA, OID and the Library. This funding strategy initially propelled UCLA into a position of national leadership. It also, however, created service silos that created barriers for students and faculty, hindered the sharing of innovation across academic boundaries, and hampered UCLA’s ability to form strategic partnerships and respond to funding opportunities. UCLA now needs to make another significant investment to position UCLA as a leader in technology support for learning and collaboration. Wide-spread campus adoption of the CCLE is a key success factor, so the funding model should encourage wide adoption.

a. How do we fund core expenses immediately, regardless of the level of adoption?

b. How do we leverage existing funding most effectively?

c. How do we increase funding for local units that currently have limited resources to support the use of technology in instruction?

d. How do we craft a funding model that reflects the two different adoption scenarios: course-based instruction that will be adopted unit by unit and collaboration groups, which can be adopted by individuals?

e. How do we fund the transition period, when bridge funds are needed to build the new while maintaining the old?

5. Continued Growth in Educational Technology

To achieve UCLA’s vision for educational technology will require more than the implementation of the CCLE. UCLA needs strong executive leadership and a commitment to keep up with emerging technologies.

a. How do we enhance the executive leadership in educational technology?

b. How do we build the capacity to respond to new challenges and opportunities?
**Strategies**

1. **Build the community**
   a. Define the role of OIT/ATS as the host of the campus-governed CCLE service.
   b. Appoint a Project Oversight Group (POG) to define and oversee Moodle testing and implementation requirements. See Appendix A for POG membership.
   c. Solicit campus community participation in project planning.
   d. Appoint POG subgroups to address systems operations, integration with campus data and services, functional gaps for the early adopter, migration services, support services, and technology advice.
   e. Bring early adopters into the community, for ongoing planning and support.
   f. Develop an ongoing CCLE governance model that integrates a formal role for the community in collaboration with the CCLE staff and the CCLE host organization.
   g. Establish a broad advisory structure for the CCLE.

2. **Prepare to provide value**
   a. Implement a test version of Moodle.
   b. Talk with large institutions that use Moodle and with UCLA current departmental users of Moodle and other course management systems to gain from their experience and solicit their assistance.
   c. Develop detailed project plan for alpha, beta, and phase 1 production services for the first year of operation.
   d. Establish contact with the Moodle open source community.
   e. Work with the Moodle community to solve UCLA’s immediate functional requirements, by using existing Moodle tools and by developing/adapting tools as needed.
   f. Integrate Moodle with core campus services.
   g. Create documentation and training, along with a common CCLE helpdesk.
   h. Expand the UCLA Knowledge Base to include solutions to the most common user problems.

3. **Encourage adoption**
   a. Hold Information sessions for faculty, students, and academic IT staff, to raise awareness and surface issues.
b. Encourage faculty, staff and students to use the system immediately for collaboration sites.

c. Invite faculty who are successful early adopters to share experiences with their colleagues.

d. Provide decision-support advice to help a unit evaluate when to migrate course support, including the critical differences between the CCLE and the current service, the volume of existing data that must migrate, and the ease of implementation.

4. Tap early adopters for quick wins

   a. Monitor early use of collaboration sites for successful and innovative uses.

   b. Identify early adopters of the CCLE for learning support, based on readiness for success. Based on feedback so far, demand for early use of the CCLE could easily reach 800 courses, 100 projects, 200 faculty, 250 teaching assistants and 7,000 students in Fall 2007.

   c. Work closely with early adopters to ensure successful migrations.

5. Grow migration expertise

   a. Appoint a Migration Team to assist academic units to migrate successfully.

   b. Provide migration support, working with CCLE staff and the academic unit local IT staff.

   c. Debrief each migration for lessons learned.

6. Support continuing leadership and innovation

   a. Consider a new Assistant Vice Chancellor for Educational Technology as part of the WASC discussions

   b. Create a unit to respond to funding opportunities, develop strategic partnerships, and work with the higher education community to experiment with emerging educational technology.

7. Implement immediate and long-term funding strategies

   a. Fund $1.1M of CCLE start-up costs immediately to ensure Fall 2007 or Winter 2008 production service availability.

   b. Allocate $2.1M/year for 07-08 and 08-09 service provision to encourage the transition by academic units to the CCLE.

   c. Select a funding model for long-term service provision to a critical mass of faculty and students.
Resource Needs for Implementation (next 2.5 years)

Summary

The total campus investment in technology support for learning and collaboration is substantial, and continuing. Academic units that are currently supporting faculty and student use of course management systems, as well as support units such as Student Services, MyUCLA, OID, and the Library that supply data, content and services in support of learning, devote millions of dollars in staffing and resources every year. The funding request outlined below represents “seed funds” that will permit the campus to begin a migration to a common learning environment. The request for startup funds is directly to the Chancellor and represents the cost to support the CCLE service, including investments in faculty support. It also establishes a vision for keeping UCLA in a leadership position in educational technology in the future.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Function:</th>
<th>2006/07 Budget Spring Qtr</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
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<td>CCLE Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Faculty Support</td>
<td>$ 107,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL Seed Funding Request</td>
<td>$ 1,049,000</td>
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Budget Details

A. Implementing a CCLE Service

The CCLE will have two basic uses: course-based instruction and ad hoc collaboration groups for education and research. Course-based instruction must be adopted at a unit level, to enable effective local IT UCLA students and faculty use technology pervasively in teaching, learning and collaboration. As usage increases and as technology evolves, the potential for significant impact on the academic experience continues to grow, particularly in inter-disciplinary programs and education. The cycle of innovation and change continues to surprise us and challenge how we use technology to position UCLA competitively in terms of research and the student experience. By creating a common environment to support teaching, learning and research collaboration, UCLA will be able to provide students and faculty with a consistent experience across organizational boundaries that will greatly simplify and encourage electronic collaboration and the sharing of data, tools, and support. IT support staff will have the opportunity to collaborate on the development of new tools to support innovation throughout the campus.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Function:</th>
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<td>o Director</td>
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<td>o Helpdesk Coordinator</td>
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<td>o Students -help desk</td>
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<td>o 4.5 FTE part-time</td>
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<td><strong>CCLE temporary transition staff</strong></td>
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<td>o 0.5 Coordinator</td>
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<td>o 3.5 FTE part-time position</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Students to help units with migration</td>
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<td><strong>S&amp;E</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CCLE Service TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$ 942,000</td>
<td>$1,527,000</td>
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**Notes:**

(1) The permanent staffing model includes 3 full-time dedicated CCLE staff – a director, a programmer, and a help desk coordinator. These positions may be hired from existing expertise within UCLA. Other staffing positions are part-time and may be combined into full-time positions, or be “bought out” on a part-time basis from UCLA academic units. Students will be employed to staff the help desk.

(2) It is critical that academic units selecting CCLE have a successful experience migrating to the new system. This will require the development and provision of customized help, including training and helping local IT staff, working with faculty, and converting data archives, course materials, and instructional tools to work with the CCLE.

(3) In collaboration with two OIT staff, seven members of the campus community are now serving as a “virtual organization” to define and consider the implementation specifics of the CCLE Service. Proceeding into an implementation-planning phase will involve a continued commitment in time. A $2000 per month buy-out is requested for each of these staff for January – June. Each will devote about 30% of their efforts to launching the CCLE. Also, $15,000 for an external consultant is included for winter and spring of 2007.

(4) Includes set-up costs of $8K for 11 permanent and 2 transition staff. Ongoing costs are budgeted for $10K for 13 FTE. Some of these costs will be reduced when transition staffing are no longer required. The current estimate is that transition staffing may be needed for 2 full years (2007–09). Also, set up ($10K each) and ongoing costs ($10K each) are included for three service offices as well as a CCLE training budget of $10k. No budget has been requested to acquire or refurbish space for staff offices or service centers.
B. Institutional Faculty Support

Over the past decade, the use of technology in instruction and research has moved from marginal to pervasive and online access to scholarly resources and content has become widespread, while the challenges of effective use of both technology and content have become more complex. Successful use of educational technology depends on the right combination of strong local support, innovation and customizations combined with institutional level resources. The CCLE implementation model will certainly need to address how to maintain or increase the strength of local support, while delivering a common solution.

The CCLE discussion also provides UCLA with a rare opportunity to leverage this moment of technology change to discuss pedagogical issues with faculty and teaching assistants. Furthermore, it is an opportunity to assist faculty in more easily incorporating electronic resources directly into their course and collaboration CCLE sites by building seamless links to content systems and by providing help in negotiating the use of copyrighted materials. This kind of institutional faculty support is capacity that will need to be built over time. The Library and OID are institutional units that have the needed expertise to provide the services but are lacking in the capacity.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Faculty Support TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 107,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 546,000</strong></td>
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Notes:

(1) OID will develop CCLE materials and provide training to faculty, teaching assistants and local IT staff in the use of the CCLE to support instruction. OID will also expand their TA training program to help graduate student instructors use the new system effectively.

(2) The Library will develop software to integrate digital library materials in the CCLE, and will develop training materials for faculty, teaching assistants and students in the use of library materials with the CCLE.

(3) The Library will provide direct support to faculty on protecting the copyright of their own instructional materials and on obtaining permissions to use materials to which others hold the copyright. The Library’s pilot “copyright advice line” for faculty showed a great demand for such a campus resource.
Appendix A: CCLE Project Oversight Group

Julie Austin, SEAS
Annelie Chapman, CDH
Mike Franks, SSC
Lisa Kemp Jones, CLICC
S. Kumar, Anderson
Michelle Lew, OID
Rose Rocchio, OIT
Ruth Sabean, College and OIT (chair)
Stephen Schwartz, Library