Beginner’s Guide to I-Learn

PURPOSE
“Beginner’s Guide to I-Learn” has been designed to give a basic introduction to the I-Learn Learning Management System (LMS). The appropriate use of LMS technology permits us to provide more students quality learning experiences than ever before.

DESCRIPTION
Learning Management System (LMS)
I-Learn is a dynamic LMS. As it matures, it will track the student’s learning life-cycle and experience beginning with their pre-matriculation experiences until their final graduation. At any point, an advisor, teacher, or the student will be able to see what has already been accomplished and what remains to be accomplished. This leads to goal-driven learning for the student and not just course completion.

The figure below shows the components currently integrated into the I-Learn LMS.

Under the LMS umbrella, our current Course Management System (CMS) is Blackboard, although we intend to transition to a more modular LMS over time. The more modular system will blend various commercial, open source, and custom built tools to increase the quality of the system and increase the rate of innovation.

Student-centered Learning
I-Learn puts the individual student at the center of the learning process, providing tools and efficiencies that would otherwise be difficult or impossible. I-Learn allows for individual support for alternative learning styles and customized learning paths for individuals or groups. I-Learn also helps integrate student learning with all other aspects of student life. Used properly, I-Learn improves learning, retention, collaboration, and student engagement.

Anytime, anywhere access
Today’s students may take classes while off-track, while on an internship, or while working fulltime. I-Learn provides the flexibility to bring course materials online and then provide access to them anywhere, from any Internet-enabled device.

Instructor efficiency
Teachers’ most time-consuming tasks can be streamlined by I-Learn. Announcements, e-mail, tracking the performance of individual students, managing A/V for presentations and some grading, can either be automated or greatly simplified.

Assessment
Assessment capabilities give instructors tools to evaluate student learning. Instructors can deliver online, automatically-scored exams, quizzes, and surveys. They can create assessments from scratch or draw upon personal, institutional, or commercially available “test banks” of questions.

Access to high-quality content
Instructors can incorporate a wide world of learning materials into their course. They can make any type of document, such as Word, Excel spreadsheets, PDF-pages, photos, videos, podcasts, etc. available to students for review or as an assignment. These learning objects can either be stored in the individual courses/sections or streamed from a campus media server. Standards-based learning materials created by content companies and educators at other schools may also be used.

Assignments
Instructors are able to create assignment items wherein students can submit their responses directly into the Grade Center for easy management and tracking. Feedback tools are also helpful.

Collaboration
Communication capabilities allow students and faculty to discuss issues online, to schedule
collaborative sessions, and to form groups that enable teamwork across geographic and chronological boundaries. Several tools make the “Teach One Another” part of the Learning Model easier to implement online.

**Tracking and reporting**
The Grade Center stores student performance results, including support for custom grading scales, grade weighting, item analysis, and multiple Grade Center views. Instructors can save time grading tests and keeping students up-to-date.

**EXAMPLE**
I-Learn’s tools have been designed to assist faculty in implementing the Learning Model. I-Learn can be used in all areas of class preparation, organization, and assessment. Below are examples how the various tools can be implemented.

**Organization**
I-Learn provides instructors with the ability to plan, create, and monitor the workload of the course. Items can be organized to encourage use of the Learning Model, build upon themselves, and build upon other material taught in class.

**Pre-Class preparation and post-class evaluation**
I-Learn provides tools that allow an instructor to help students better prepare for and comprehend information discussed in class. Through individual assignment, blogs, and quizzes, as well as group wikis, discussion boards, and peer-to-peer review, students can deepen their learning as they participate in all parts of the Learning Model.

**In-Class Participation**
Encourage students to participate in the Learning Model through in-class projects, comprehension quizzes, and assignments. Use I-Learn as a way to monitor and track group work, including individual contributions to a group. The anonymous survey function allows students to voice their ideas and questions without embarrassment.

**Examples of some of the most-used tools:**
- **The Discussion Board** enables threaded, asynchronous discussions. Instructors can use multiple forums around different topics and embed these into appropriate content areas.

- **Group Projects** support peer collaboration. Instructors can use this tool to form multiple groups of students. Each group can be given its own file exchange area, Discussion Board, Virtual Classroom and a group e-mail tool to send messages to all group members.

- **The Blog tool** is a feature that provides an online forum, diary, or journal for. An entire class or selected individuals can access entries, add new entries and make comments as they record and reflect on their learning.

- **The Wiki tool** creates a website that is collaboratively authored by a group of users. An entire class or groups can add text, graphics, files and links to build the content of the site.

- **The Podcast tool** offers a way for individuals to selectively subscribe to audio or video content made available by the instructor of the course. The content that an individual subscribes to can then be automatically downloaded for viewing on a computer or a mobile device.

- **Using Announcements** teachers can keep their students up-to-date on current assignments and changes in syllabi or course calendars.

**TIPS**
- **Find Helpful tutorials** that cover many aspects of I-Learn that will aid you in your experience here.

- **Use the Faculty Technology Center** They are dedicated to helping faculty members learn and implement the I-Learn system.

- **Talk to other faculty.** Talking with other faculty can help you get a feel for the system and create new ideas for your courses.

**PITFALLS**
- Too many tools. Don’t get overwhelmed or choose too many different tools. Call for assistance from the Faculty Technology Center.

**OTHER RESOURCES**
- **I-Learn Tutorials**

http://www.byui.edu/learning-and-teaching/instructional-tools