Colorado Online @ Open Forum Questions

April 21, 2022

**Answered**

(in the chat or verbally)

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| **Question** | **Answer** | |
| How will a student registered in multiple online courses select or see all of their courses? | In the single LMS, when a student logs in to the D2L home page for their home college, they will see all their courses across institutions (including CCCOnline sections).  . | |
| Which tools populate the info in the “work” widget on the course homepage? Does that include all tasks, including discussions, assignment, and quizzes? | The Work To-Do widget populates from tools inside of D2L – anywhere we can set a due date). Discussions, assignments, and quizzes will pull directly into the widget. Access to third party applications will not pull directly into the widget because they are stored on the vendor platform. You can use release conditions and due dates inside your content to add those items to Work To-Do. | |
| Will there be a course home page | Yes, there is a course homepage that’s still included as part of MyCourses, and there’s an announcement feed. | |
| Once the single instance is “turned on” will staff members at all the colleges have access to the course in D2L to check participation for their students? | The plan is to have the access you need to continue processes as we’ve done in the past. Staff members will have access to their home college courses, but they will not necessarily have access to courses taught by other colleges. | |
| For instructors who teach at multiple colleges: Are they able to copy their own courses from one college to another? | Instructors can copy content between their course shells. They should be able to copy from one college to another because they have one instructor role for the single LMS instance, with the same permissions across all colleges. | |
| Can we create widgets? I can’t right now? / We can’t have widget that go to our outside software? / We can’t have a different homepage then? | With the idea of consistency being our driver for the common course framework, the homepage is set with particular widgets. Instructors will not be able to create custom widgets for home pages on their own; however, you can work with your college LMS administrator if there is a business case for why you need a specific widget for your class (such as a link to a publisher site) or other customization. | |
| Can faculty add modules in content, like OER material, etc.? this would be for a fully online situation. I’m wondering about how much flexibility faculty/instructors will have? | We’re looking for some consistencies among the common content tool structure, but we’re also looking to you as faculty experts in your courses to make the decisions that are important drivers for your courses. And so you may have a situation like you were describing, where you’re needing to send students, maybe at the beginning of the semester, to your OER based materials. That may become a module inside your class or part of a module. As you work through the content for your class, we’re asking folks to use the guidelines for organizing the content. That means using either a weekly or unit-based format that includes dates, as well as the topics, as part of the module titles. This approach helps keep students on track. | |
| Will instructors be able to customize their gradebook view? | The framework does not include the grade book. That’s still up to the instructor and how they want to customize it. | |
| Will instructors be able to remove tools they don’t use in specific classes? (e.g. discussion in an in-person section) | Thank you for that question. Underneath the More Tools area, we talked a little bit about the medium usage tools that are on by default. Underneath the More Tools, we saw a set of tools that was turned on by default. These were identified as medium-use tools when we researched tool usage for the system.  If you use a tool that is not on by default in the common framework, you can still have access to that tool by turning it on under Course Admin, under the More Tools section. Seating charts are a good example of a tool you may have adopted as part of COVID pandemic strategies at your college. You can still have access to that tool by turning it on under Course Admin and under the More Tools section. | |
| How was this framework design decided? Was student feedback taken into account? | We conducted a general student survey regarding online learning in Spring 2021. Students identified need for a consistent way of finding things from course to course.  The specific framework design was decided upon based on feedback from many levels. We started our process by looking at how colleges are organized inside of their current D2L environment. What we found is that, although everybody was doing very similar things, they were in different places and looked slightly different from each other. All colleges are using most of the main tools in the main navigation bar, but some colleges are organized differently. For instance, Front Range uses navigational groupings. We followed the same process to look at how colleges were organized and what types of things they were including on their course home pages. Again, everybody was doing very similar things, organized in slightly different ways. We took a visual look at what was happening across the system, and at information from D2L. We designed our framework around the most commonly used tools across the system. Content, discussion, and assignments were clearly high use tools.  In the fall we took the initial prototype of the framework out to faculty, instructors, and staff across the system for feedback. You may remember being asked to provide some feedback on the common course framework via video, as well as being able to login and navigate around, providing feedback on a quick survey. From that feedback we refined what we included in the common course framework. One of the things we heard as part of that feedback, for example, is folks said that we’re missing course home, where is course home, my students use this a lot, I use this a lot, I would like to see it as part of the common course navigation bar – so we added it. Other comments were around arrangement of widgets on the home pages. Faculty also identified announcements as really critical for interaction with students – could that be moved up. We made modifications based on that feedback and shared the revised framework with a variety of different stakeholder groups, including the Online Faculty and Instructor Advisory Committee.  Opportunities for student feedback after the initial survey included student representatives on the project team, as well as faculty and staff who work directly with students. The Technology team also reached out to SSAC for feedback on determining whether to use internal or external messaging in D2L. | |
| Will instructors create their own course syllabus? | Yes, instructors will still create their syllabi within the requirements of their home college. | |
| You’ve emphasized that the structure rather than the content of our class is being determined at the system level, however, I have seen a draft of a “Healthy Course Checklist” and supplemental checklists that appear to create CCCS level control of many aspects of content including textbooks, assessment used, language used, etc. within online classes. How exactly are these checklists going to be used? | The Healthy Course Checklist (HCC) is created around base design standards (QM+) for online courses delivered within Colorado Online @. The HCC is a checklist tool that is developed with a growth mindset. The Academic Affairs subcommittee is discussing how the HCC can be used as a tool to support faculty. Specifics for how the HCC will be used will be implemented at the college level. | |
| Is there any new information regarding CCCOnline instructors who teach only for CCCOnline, and what they will need to do in order to continue teaching exclusively online? | The presidents have expressed commitment to consider CCCOnline instructors in their hiring process. Unfortunately, not every college, and even within the college, not necessarily every department has exactly the same hiring process. But whatever that process is, the presidents have said we have good CCCOnline instructors that, in many cases, have been teaching for a long time, who are very good at teaching online. Why wouldn’t we want to tap them to teach the additional courses that we’re going to have to pick up at the colleges to absorb the capacity from CCCOnline? So that is the commitment. | |
| How does registration work for these courses?  How will drop for no-show work?  How will the differing semester starts be handled to not confuse students? | In the April meeting with all the presidents, the primary conversation was around standardization needed to support registration – what do we actually need to have standard in our system, not necessarily on day one, but what do we need to work towards as a system. There was agreement that we need to move to a common start date as a system. Now what that start date is, I can’t tell you. Along with that, what you would have is common registration dates, common census dates, and probably common drop for non-payment/drop for no show dates. I do want to assuage any concerns about all of the other things that are in an academic calendar. What we are talking about is a common start date and a few of these other dates like census and registration dates. We are not talking about common spring breaks or fall breaks or other sorts of things, we are just talking about the start of the semester. | |
| Can you explain how academic concerns will be managed with this new model? | Think about the current model when there’s an academic concern, whether it’s a performance-related issue with the instructor or there’s a student performance, or behavioral, or accommodation issues. The subcommittees have started to talk about how we share that information across the system. | |
| Do the chairs of each department then communicate with the system office with how many sections we can provide? | In the current environment, there are 14 entities that independently schedule classes. In the new environment we want to have some sort of coordinated or centralized effort related to course scheduling so that there aren’t too many sections offered, nor are there too few offered, system-wide. We want to ensure that there’s the right number of accelerated courses and other parts of term that are still available system-wide to students, so there has to be some sort of coordinated effort for scheduling. The Steering Committee made the decision that there would be some centralized functions for scheduling of online courses. What I do want to clarify with this particulate piece is that, really where this kind of stops and ends, if you think about the central component of it, is that we’re looking at both historical data – what has been offered, what has been demanded across the system, by the college at the system, at CCCOnline, and we’re looking at colleges who desire to do more. For instance, I’ve talked to folks at Community College of Aurora, that haven’t historically offered very many courses, but are very interested in participating in the new consortial model. So we don’t want to simply rely on historical data, we want to use historical data to help understand how many sections do we actually need system-wide for a given course, but we also want to take into consideration colleges who historically haven’t been a big player in the online space but have a desire to do so – I know some rural colleges have expressed that as well. So one aspect of the centralized piece is looking at data. The second part of it would be determining, ultimately, how many sections we need and what is the allocation to the colleges.  But it pretty much stops there. At that point, the colleges take it, they assign the instructor. The instructor, as was explained by Stephanie, determines if they are going to use a ready-to-teach course or if they are going to do their own design, what materials, what assessments, what assignments. All of that stuff still happens at the college. What we will simply say is, Front Range you get 10 sections of English 121, 8 of which are home college sections, 2 of which are consortial sections, take it from there. And so that’s really the extent we’re looking at, I don’t want it to feel like this overly burdensome process but there does need to be this coordination and section determination that would then be passed off to the colleges for assignment.  I can also see a scenario where a college says, you know what, I don’t have a faculty member. I know you’re giving me two home college sections, but I don’t have anyone to teach those sections, I want to give those back to the consortium. We could then say Front Range, now you’re doing 12 instead of 10, you know. So there will be some kind of trading that goes on once those assignments are made, but I want to explain that that piece is also going to be part of the consortium. Not all details are nailed down related to that, but you get the general idea that there will be some coordination and centralization of the section determination, but then the colleges take it from there.   **The Design Build Team**  There needs to be a team that pulls this together quickly so that we can actually build it technologically and attach a financial model to do it. So there’s a group that we’re just calling, for a lack of a better term, the Design/Build team, which is meeting over the next couple of months. They just met earlier today for the first time. One of the questions that came up was will every college be able to teach the allotment of courses that they’re given, and the only way to know whether that’s possible is to communicate with the college itself. Some colleges do have a chair structure. Some of the smaller ones might not have a chair structure, so it might be a Dean. In some cases, it might be talking to a VP. It just depends on the college, but the point is, we would be talking with the colleges to understand whether you can even offer the courses that you’re being allotted or not. Because if you can’t, we’d have to pull those sections into the overall and have someone else provide them. So yes, we would be communicating with chairs, where colleges that have that model, or Deans or VPs, but someone at the college to better understand section capacity and instructional capacity. | |
| Can colleges override the default prerequisites? | This is an assumption, not me knowing for sure, but I believe the answer is yes, because you can override them now, that there would be a way to override the pre-reqs. | |
| Will students have the discretion to be able to see the instructor and course materials for the home college section? | Yes, students will be able to see the instructor and course materials for the home college sections. | |
| Will students be able to select OER sections specifically for consortial sections as well? | We need to list course materials and cost so the OER info will be available. We are hoping to be able to filter so students can sort on OER courses. | |
| Can one instructor teach for multiple colleges? For example, an instructor is from Otero and there is an opportunity to teach a BIO course for PCC and Chemistry for Lamar. Is that possible? | Absolutely. They do now. We would obviously encourage that in the future consortium as well. There is still a system-wide cap of 21 credits that a person can teach in a given semester, so there’s that limitation. | |
| Will (CTE) credentials – specifically vocational ones issued by CCCOnline – be honored at the other colleges? | The CTE credentials do transfer between the colleges. | |
| Can the chairs (or whoever does this) reach out to other colleges for new online instructors instead of relinquishing online courses? | I hope that’s what happens as opposed to giving them up. I do think there will be some cases where a college might say, you know what, it just doesn’t work this semester, so I will give this one back to the consortium. But what I would hope is that whoever is doing the hiring and staffing of the sections allotted that they, of course, look internally, but also look at CCCOnline instructors, contact other colleges. So yeah, the goal is not for you to give up your sections, your goal is to find an instructor to teach the sections that you’re allotted. | |
| Are the online classes still going to be charged at a higher tuition rate? | There still has not been a decision on online tuition rate. However, there are two things that have happened. One is that, for the last two years, and likely, although the board hasn’t approved it for this year, is that there has been no increase in tuition for online. So where we might have increased the on-campus rate, we have not increased the online rate we are holding it flat. So that’s not bringing it down, but we’re also not raising it.  And then the other piece, and this isn’t approved yet by the Board, so this is more so in the plans, is that we are looking at, for concurrent enrollment only, setting a concurrent enrollment rate of tuition that would be the same for online as on campus courses. Currently, if you teach online concurrent enrollment, or the high school has an online concurrent enrollment class, it’s at the higher rate, and that has limited access and expansion in the online space and has caused some of our district partners to go elsewhere, and so we’re looking at evening those two out in the concurrent enrollment side. But as far as non-concurrent enrollment, there isn’t any movement yet in that space, largely because of how much the online differential actually brings in system-wide and whether or not colleges will be able to give up that amount of money in order to lower the tuition. | |
| Who will be responsible for reporting course outcomes and administering course evaluations for the consortia courses? | Those are college responsibilities. You do those now, you would do those with these additional sections. And I say that, knowing full well that that means additional workload, administrative workload, at the colleges, but it is part of the responsibility of an accredited college to handle assessment, evaluation, etc. So the college would take that on in whatever structure they currently have in place. That’s the expectation of HLC and that’s what we’re going with. | |
| I am currently at the top tier for compensation at CCCOnline. Will I have to start over at the lowest tier when I begin teaching at another college in the CCCS system? | No. there is a system procedure that says when colleges hire instructors, they need to honor the highest tier that they earned at a previous college. Now if you’re coming from outside the system, whole different deal, but if you’re coming from within the system, and that includes CCCOnline, there is a policy essentially that the hiring college honor the highest tier. Now, I will say this, not every college has three tiers. Some colleges have four, some college have one. So, we don’t have a standard tier system at all 13 colleges. Nonetheless, the policy is still to honor the highest tier that was earned. So if you were in a school that had three tiers and you’re at tier three, or you’re at CCCOnline and you go to Red Rocks and Red Rocks as three tiers, then Red Rocks would need to bring you in at tier three. | |
| Will the issue of the SP not applying to home college faculty – as opposed to instructors – be straightened out before courses start rolling? We have not seen faculty come in at the same tiers because the SP specifies part-time instructor status and not full-time faculty. | I’d love to hear more details about that, to see if we can address that in policy and get some consistency and how that works so it is equitable. I’d want to understand that a little bit more, what exactly might be causing that and what actually might be a solution for us to implement a policy. | |
| What will be the cap on online courses? | What [the presidents] have talked about is that there should be an average course size across the system. The specific size has yet to be determined, but there will be, at some point, an average class size that we are striving for. Now, average class size is different than cap. There’s been no discussion of a common cap, but there has been discussion of an average size, and the average size, more so, is to be able to ensure that there’s enough students in a section to be financially sustainable for the consortium. | |
| Will students suspended at one college be suspended at other colleges through Colorado Online? I know, at this time, we’re moving away from students being suspended at all colleges. | Currently, in the hold space, a hold at any college, for any reason, holds a student at another college as well. So if you have an orientation at Arapahoe, that blocks the student from registering at CCD. So we are talking about decoupling and having some holds that would apply system-wide, like financial holds, for instance, and some holds that don’t, but what those holds that don’t are is not determined. I think we’d want to talk about – there is a holds group that has met, this includes a registrar, advising director, finance, IT, I don’t remember everyone else on the group, but that group will talk about which holds would apply system-wide and which ones wouldn’t. At the moment, it is a suspension that applies everywhere, but in the future, depending on the conversation of this holds working group, it may not, or it may, we just haven’t decided yet. | |
| Does it look like CCCOnline instructors who get hired by one of the colleges will be required to teach face-to-face courses as well as online? | There’s no system policy here or system requirement. When the instructors become employees of the college, they’re bound to whatever the college requirements are. And so, if a college does require online instructors to also teach on campus, that may be the case. I think we’d want to make sure that those policies are transparent at the time of hire, so that a person applying can make the decision on whether they want that or not. I don’t know if colleges have that, or how many colleges have that, but that would ultimately be a college decision. | |
| Where will external tool widgets like McGraw Hill be located? | | Work with your local LMS administrator to determine the best placement for your course. |
| Could each college add resources under the resource tab? | | Colleges can add links to college-specific resources under the resource tab on the home page. |
| Would there be an opportunity to connect student support in Navigate so that any faculty could refer a student to their home college for support? | | The Student Support Services subcommittee is discussing these options. |
| Will navigate instructors [have] the ability to see who the counselor is at that school – and be able to send text messages, etc., to students and give alerts? | | The Student Support Services subcommittee is discussing these options. |
| Regarding evaluations and course outcomes: currently, I don’t believe the individual colleges can view students who are not from the institution (in Banner). If the consortia section is assigned to an individual institution, will we be able to see all students who register for the course, even if they're not from our institution? | | Currently individual colleges cannot view students who are not from their institution (in Banner). IT is considering options. Currently CCCOnline has developed middleware that displays all students in a CCCOnline class section, even though they are from different colleges. |