



# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

<b>Section 5:</b>	Course Instruction and Delivery	
<b>Title:</b>	Learning Management System Administration Guidelines	
<b>Number (Current Format)</b>	<b>Number (Prior Format)</b>	<b>Date Last Revised</b>
5.6	XVIII – E	09/2020
<b>Reference:</b>	<a href="#">BOR Policy 3:5</a> – Confidentiality of Student Records <a href="#">BOR Policy 3:22</a> – Public Access to Student Directory Information <a href="#">BOR Policy 7:6</a> – Technology Purchases <a href="#">AAC Guideline 5.1</a> – Class Visitor and Audit Guidelines	
<b>Related Form(s):</b>		

## 1. Policy Overview

**1.1.** This document serves as an omnibus of various guidelines governing the administration and use of the BOR Learning Management System (LMS), Desire2Learn (D2L).

In August of 2006, a thirty-one member LMS task force was assembled with student, faculty, and staff representation from across the South Dakota Board of Regents’ system. As a result of the LMS selection process a comprehensive Request for Proposal (RFP) document was created with professional consultation from WICHE/WCET staff. This process led to the recommendation that Desire2Learn be accepted as the system’s Learning Management System.

Per D2L’s RFP response, “[D2L’s] learning platform is the result of seven years of intense R&D and close work with our institutional and academic clients, including the University of Wisconsin System, University of Guelph (Ontario’s largest Distance Education program), Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, Florida Distance Learning Consortium, and hundreds of additional schools, colleges and universities. The result is an exceptional platform with an easy-to-use and learner-centric interface and a minimal learning curve, allowing you to get started quickly and grow with ease toward your stated future objectives of increasing eLearning capabilities and positioning the University system to further evolve as a learning organization.”

## 2. LMS Background and General Policies

**2.1.** The primary purpose for a system LMS is to provide a method for the common delivery of course content and tools delivering content and tools that are used to enhance the teaching and learning environment. Because the Student Information System (SIS) and course enrollment procedures employed throughout the system allow students to be enrolled for courses delivered by multiple institutions in a given semester a common LMS is utilized. The LMS maintained by the South Dakota Board of Regents is only for the use of system employees and/or contractors who are teaching approved courses.

### **2.1.1. LMS Utilization**

**2.1.1.1.** The use of the LMS is primarily for, but not limited to:

**2.1.1.1.1.** Instructors teaching credit or non-credit bearing courses that lead to degrees offered by one of the Regental institutions

**2.1.1.1.2.** Master Teachers instructing high school courses for the Center for Statewide E-learning (CSEL)

**2.1.1.1.3.** Employees providing training courses to Regental system employees and/or enrolled students

**2.1.1.1.4.** Extension services offered through Regental institutions

**2.1.1.2.** Students are eligible to take courses using the LMS if they are officially enrolled in the course. or are auditing the course per [AAC Guideline 5.1](#). Non-students are eligible to take courses using the LMS through the Class Visitor Program per [AAC Guideline 5.1](#).

### **2.1.2. Training and Consultation**

**2.1.2.1.** Instructors, contractors or employees using the system LMS must complete training provided by their primary campus.

**2.1.2.2.** Each Regental institution offers a series of classes and/or workshops on the use of the system LMS. The schedule of classes and/or workshops can be obtained by contacting the primary campus.

**2.1.2.3.** Course sites can be activated by any instructors, contractors or employees who have completed the required training at which time the course can be developed to include LMS features that support the learning objectives of the course.

**2.1.2.4.** While using the system LMS instructors should recognize and prepare for occasional technical problems (i.e., server and network downtime).

**2.1.3. Copyright and Intellectual Property:** System and institutional polices pertaining to copyright of intellectual property, software and instructional materials govern ownership of course content on the LMS. All copyright regulations will be observed.

**2.1.4. Hardware & Software Management:** The LMS vendor owns the hardware and holds the software licenses required to manage the material on the course sites.

## **3. D2L Management Committee**

**3.1.** The D2L Management Committee was established shortly after the adoption of D2L, in 2007, to manage various aspects of the central LMS. This included providing both academic and technical guidance as D2L was implemented, as well as developing recommendations as to the proper academic and technical management of the system. To that end, each institution is allowed to appoint one academic representative and one technical representative.<sup>1</sup> When voting, each institution has one vote.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/aac/Documents/5\\_G\\_AAC0614.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/aac/Documents/5_G_AAC0614.pdf)

The committee is led by a staff member of RIS and the BOR office, with RIS taking the more active leadership role in the day-to-day activities of the committee.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. Use of Other LMS Tools**

**4.1.** D2L is the official LMS of the BOR. Any use of an LMS beyond July 1, 2008 should be with D2L (per Agenda Item O, June 28-29, 2007 Board of Regents meeting).

The BOR's position is that it has made a significant investment into D2L (i.e., licensing, support, instructional design, QA, etc.) making it the LMS designated for online course delivery. If an institution is interested in using an alternative to D2L other than BOR-approved products (e.g. Pearson's My Labs Plus, etc.), then that discussion needs to be worked through the appropriate councils, and must abide by existing policies (e.g., BOR Policy 3:5, BOR Policy 3:22, BOR Policy 7:6), as it may impact a number of these areas.

#### **5. Template Standards for Current Version of D2L**

**5.1.** Due to the desire to have a consistent navigation experience for all users, regardless of home institution, the D2L Management Committee established a common course template that must be used by all institutions. While this template contains branding specific to each institution, all other elements of the template are standard:

**5.1.1. Layout:** Please see Appendix IV for examples on current layout requirements for course templates.

**5.1.2. Widgets:** Please see Appendix IV for examples on current requirements for widgets.

**5.1.3. Navigation:** Please see Appendix III for examples on current requirements for D2L Navigation.

#### **6. Course Access Guidelines**

**6.1.** The official start and end dates of courses facilitated via D2L follow the academic dates for courses as reflected in Banner Self Service. That said, access to courses before the official start date, and after the official end date, have been modified to accommodate a variety of scenarios and to accommodate learners.

##### **6.1.1. Start Dates**

**6.1.1.1.** Instructors may opt—and are encouraged—to allow students to access their courses in D2L thirty (30) days before the official start date, as reflected in Banner Self Service, starting in the 2014FA Term. This is done to ensure students can identify any technical or access issues, and so that they can become familiar with the course's requirements prior to the start of the semester.

**6.1.1.2.** Instructors should not make any assignments prior to the first day of the term. This should be clearly communicated by institutions to their instructors.

**6.1.1.3.** Regardless of this expanded start date, instructors ultimately govern student access to their courses by activating the courses: inactive courses are always inaccessible to students, regardless of the date. Any questions from students regarding early access to a course should be directed to the instructor.

## **6.1.2. End Dates**

**6.1.2.1.** Students are able to access their courses in D2L thirty (30) days after the official end of the course, as reflected in Banner Self Service.

**6.1.2.2.** Instructors must leave their courses activated during this timeframe.

## **7. Add-Ons & Third-Party Integrations**

**7.1.** Like other LMSes, D2L provides a number of add-on products for its core LMS, and has the ability to integrate with a variety of third-party solutions. Should an institution want to investigate a D2L add-on product, or have a third-party tool integrated into D2L, it must follow the process outlined below.

### **7.1.1. Approval Process for Add-ons and Third-Party Integrations**

**7.1.1.1.** Requests to review or utilize any D2L add-on, or integrate third-party tools into D2L, must first be vetted through the D2L Management Committee. Part of this requirement is to determine if other institutions are also interested in integrating the tool.

**7.1.1.2.** The committee will discuss merits of the add-on or third-party tool – as well as any ramifications the tool might have with respect to student privacy, data use and protection, compliance with BOR policies (e.g., BOR Policy 3:5, BOR Policy 3:22, BOR Policy 7:6) – and then vote whether to approve moving forward with the evaluation of the add-on or integration of the third-party tool. The committee leadership (RIS and BOR representatives) will then determine how to best proceed.

**7.1.1.3.** If there is a cost involved with the add-on or third-party tool, institutions making the request will be expected to secure funding for any one-time and on-going cost. With respect to the latter, such integrations may require additional approval from one or more of the BOR standing councils (AAC, BAC, or TAC).

## **8. Purging Procedures**

**8.1.** LMS course sites and materials are retained centrally for a period of time to allow instructors and students the ability to access valuable course information within a limited timeframe after a course has ended. Purging is a process of permanently removing course sites and content from the LMS. Routine purging of inactive course sites is necessary to increase disk space, further enhance performance, and ease system recovery for active courses.

### **8.1.1. Scope of Purging Procedures**

**8.1.1.1.** This policy covers course sites and materials stored on disk space managed by the system LMS.

**8.1.1.2.** This policy does not cover materials stored in an individual's home directory, personal web space, institutionally supported services, school-based media servers, or departmental/school-based file storage space.

**8.1.1.3.** Purging an inactive course site permanently removes it from the LMS. When a course site is deleted it is also automatically removed from a user's course

list. Instructors may restore purged materials by archiving items and then entering them into newly created courses at a later time.

**8.1.1.4.** All materials stored in the course site are deleted. This includes all files, grades, assignments, quizzes, surveys, links, and anything else associated with the course site that is stored in the LMS database and file system areas.

**8.1.1.5.** Content stored outside of the system LMS and linked from within the course web site is not deleted. Rather, the links are deleted and would need to be re-established by the instructor. Instructors are required to develop their own procedures for long-term storage of their LMS materials, which are detailed further in section 9.1 of these guidelines.

**8.1.1.6.** Unused courses (i.e. inactive and have not been used, no content, no activities, etc.) will be purged in October each year.

### **8.1.2. Purging Timeline**

**8.1.2.1.** Beginning with the Fall 2010 semester all course sites will be retained for up to two years and then purged in compliance with other system and institutional policies related to course material retention.

**8.1.2.2.** Automatic deletions will occur once a year in October and will affect those courses that are more than two years old.

### **8.1.3. Purging Notification**

**8.1.3.1.** RIS personnel will generate a list of courses with instructors slated for deletion according to the guidelines specified in section 8.1.2. These lists will be distributed to campus personnel who are then responsible for communicating with faculty using the notification requirements detailed below.

**8.1.3.2.** An email reminder will be sent to instructors with courses slated for deletion two months prior to the October deletion date.

**8.1.3.3.** A second email reminder will be sent to instructors with courses slated for deletion one week prior to the October deletion date.

**8.1.3.4.** A final email reminder will be sent to instructors with courses slated for deletion on day prior to the October deletion date.

### **8.1.4. Course Retention Exceptions**

**8.1.4.1.** Instructors who wish to use items or interactions from their archived courses in professional research, publications, or accreditation portfolios (or for any other professional purpose) should make arrangements with a system administrator to restore and maintain the most appropriate access to those materials in the system LMS.

**8.1.4.2.** Sandbox courses or course sites employed for orientation/training and faculty experimentation will be exempt from the purging policy.

**8.1.4.3.** Accreditation exceptions must be presented to the D2L Committee for justification and approval.

**8.1.4.4.** Instructors may contact an institutional LMS administrator to assist in this process.

**8.1.4.5.** Faculty may also request that their course sites and materials be deleted earlier than this policy describes, by contacting the institutional LMS administrator.

## **9. Archiving Procedures**

### **9.1. Archived Records**

**9.1.1.** Archived course material will include items from the following LMS tools:

- Checklist
- Competency
- Conditions
- Content
- Custom Forms (i.e., attendance, self-registration, etc.)
- Discussions
- Dropbox
- Files
- Grade items and Settings (not student grades; see section 4 below)
- Group Types
- Homepage
- Navigation Bars
- News
- Quizzes/Surveys
- Schedule

**9.1.2.** Faculty can archive the items specified above from the system LMS making them available for future use in active course sites. It is the responsibility of the instructor to restore any archived items as needed.

**9.1.2.1.** Instructors can archive or export a course using features available in the system LMS and save a copy to any desired backup location (i.e., local PC, flash drive, CD/DVD, etc.). Course data saved to a local hard drive should be included in the regular backup procedures for that computer.

**9.1.2.2.** Instructors can also store files in other university systems when available.

**9.1.3.** When a new course is created in the future it is the responsibility of the instructor to move archived items into the new course. Instructors can use materials from older courses in newer courses.

**9.1.4.** The course export tool in D2L exports course content only, and no student data (grades, submissions, postings). There are other ways to archive student data, including the export grades to CSV files in Grades, downloading Dropbox folder submissions, and generating quiz reports (including student answers).

**9.1.5.** Non-Archived Records.

**9.1.5.1.** The system LMS does not serve as the archival record for certain types of course materials. There are other university systems which serve as the archival record of course, and the following course materials/content will not be backed up during the archival process:

- Enrollments
- Attendance
- Web links
- HTML documents

#### **9.1.6. Student Material**

**9.1.6.1.** In the event that student portfolio materials are available in the system LMS, the files will be stored in their entirety for two calendar years following the last date of attendance.

**9.1.6.2.** Students are required to retain their portfolio or course materials, and the system or institution is not responsible for archiving materials prior to the deletion date.

**9.1.6.3.** For accreditation purposes only, exceptions have been made for courses in specific disciplines. Beginning with Fall 2007, the following courses will be available for 7 years:

- College of Education
- College of Nursing

## **10. Impersonation of Users**

**10.1.** As a necessary function of providing end-user support, certain roles within D2L have the ability to impersonate users (students and instructors) in order to better assist with troubleshooting. The first seven roles (Central Admin through Help Desk Pro Staff) outlined in Appendix IV have this ability.

**10.2.** The Univ. Instructor role originally had the ability to impersonate students, in order to check grade releases, view the course as the student, etc.; however, this was not restricted to just the instructor's course, so an instructor could first impersonate a student in their course, and then, as that student, navigate to any other course in which the student was enrolled, which is a FERPA violation. Because of this, and D2L's inability to localize student impersonation to an instructor's course, this feature was disabled for instructor role.

**10.2.1.** The exception to this is that the Univ. Instructor role can impersonate the K12 Student role. This was done so that Center for Statewide E-learning (CSEL) instructors could provide a similar level of support to K12 students that the admin roles provide to university students.

RIS/AAC staff verified that the such impersonate is limited to courses in which a student was enrolled in a course with the K12 Student role, and not to any course in which they are enrolled as a Univ. Student. In other words, if a K12 student were enrolled in both a CSEL course and dual-credit university course, the CSEL instructor

would only be able to see the student's CSEL course, and would not be able to enter into the student's dual-credit university course.

**SOURCE:**

AAC October 2016; May 2017 (Clerical); AAC January 2018; October 2018 (Clerical). AAC September 2020.



## Appendix I: D2L Course Template Layout

**NOTE: This appendix has been retained for historical and documentation reasons, but is no longer relevant. Please refer to Appendix V: Daylight Template.**

The template layout for D2L, prior to v10, consisted of three columns, as illustrated below:

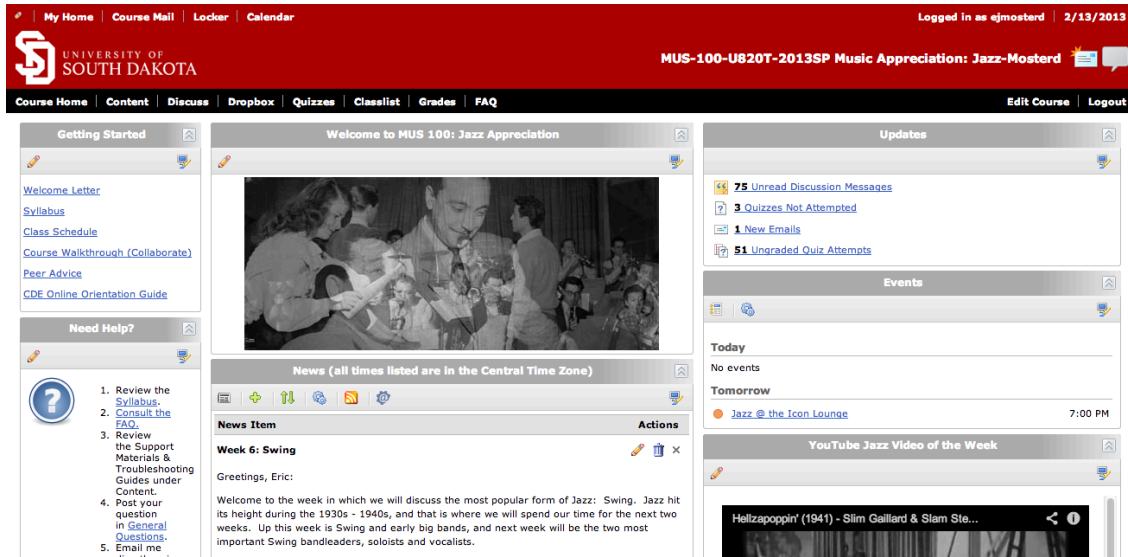


Figure 1: D2L v9 Template

The content filled the entire screen of the browser, so this worked well; however, in v10, D2L placed vertical bars on either side of the content area, shrinking the horizontal real estate:

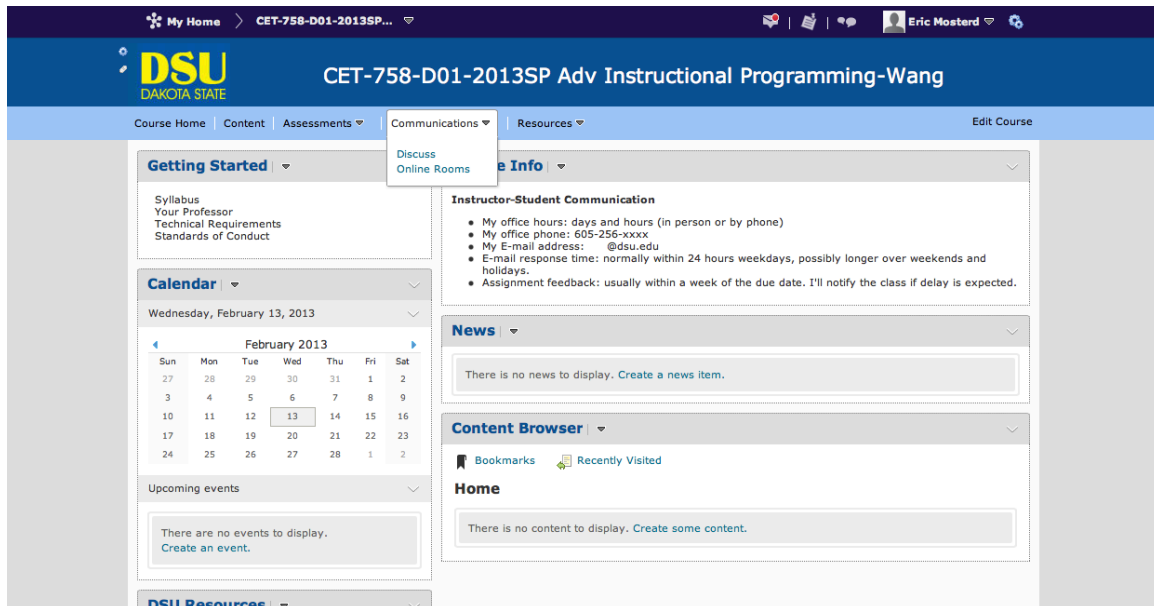


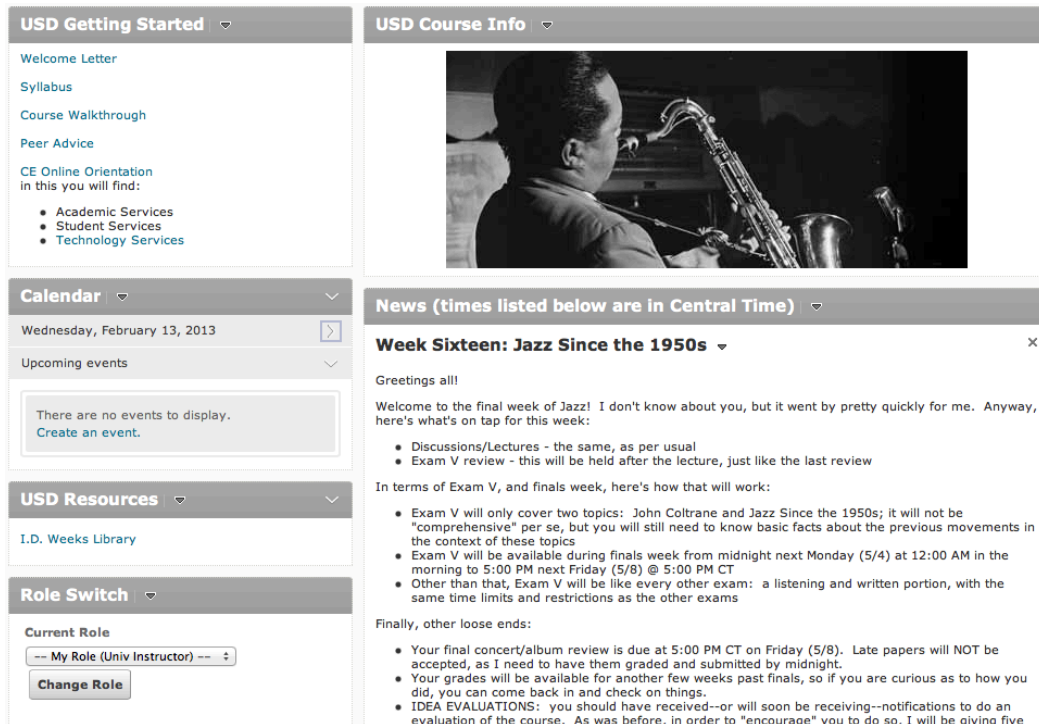
Figure 2: D2L v10 Template

With these new restrictions—ostensibly part of making the overall interface more mobile friendly—the three-column layout from our previous template was too compressed. To that end, the subcommittee developed a two-column layout that was more suitable to v10, as illustrated above.

## Appendix II: Widgets

**NOTE: This appendix has been retained for historical and documentation reasons, but is no longer relevant. Please refer to Appendix V: Daylight Template.**

Because of the elimination of one column of content, it was necessary rearrange the current widgets. Fortunately, new features of D2L v10 replaced some of the old widgets' functionality; namely, the Updates widget. To that end, many of the widgets that were previously in the right-hand column were simply been moved to the bottom of the left-hand column:



The screenshot displays a two-column layout of D2L v10 widgets. The left column contains: 'USD Getting Started' with links for Welcome Letter, Syllabus, Course Walkthrough, Peer Advice, and CE Online Orientation; 'Calendar' showing Wednesday, February 13, 2013, and a message that there are no events to display; 'USD Resources' with a link to I.D. Weeks Library; and 'Role Switch' with a dropdown menu set to 'My Role (Univ Instructor)' and a 'Change Role' button. The right column contains: 'USD Course Info' with a photo of a man playing a saxophone; 'News (times listed below are in Central Time)' with a title 'Week Sixteen: Jazz Since the 1950s' and a detailed announcement about the final week of Jazz, including exam V details and final concert information.

Figure 3: D2L v10 Required Widget Layout

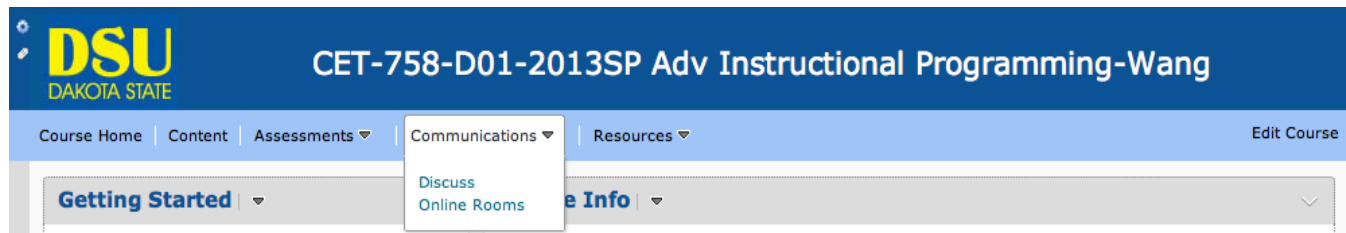
Not shown above are the Teacher and Student Guides widgets, which are below the Role Switch widget.

This layout preserved the same basic functionality of the previous template, but accommodated changes in the D2L interface for v10. As was previously the case, instructors can add additional widgets below these stock widgets, but can neither remove nor rearrange the widgets, thus ensuring consistency from course to course, institution to institution.

## Appendix III: Navigation

(rev. 1/2018)

D2L v10 introduced a feature called link groups. Link groups allow for a group of subordinate links to appear under headers in the navigation bar, as illustrated below:



*Figure 4: D2L v10 Link Groups*

Three of the items in the navigation bar are link groups: Assessments, Communications, and Resources. When a user clicks on one of these, a submenu appears, which in the case above, lists communication tools. This allows for both the preservation of space and flexibility.

As illustrated in the image above, the template consists of five, standard navigation bar items:

- **Course Home:** takes the user to the course’s front (home) page
- **Content:** takes the user to the course’s content page quality
- **Assessments:** lists general assessment-related tools, like the Dropbox, Grades, Quizzes, etc.
- **Communications:** lists general communication-related tools, like Discuss, Collaborate, etc.
- **Resources:** lists other general tools, like Class list, FAQ, etc.

For the migration to D2L’s Daylight interface (see Appendix V: Daylight Template for additional details), an additional link group was added to the navbar:

- **Help:** lists system resources—such as D2L documentation—as well any resources an institution deems necessary (e.g. a link to the Help Desk, institutional library resources, etc.) [see also Figure 5 below]

As was previously the case, instructors can add additional links after these standard navigation items, but can neither remove nor rearrange these items, thus ensuring consistency from course to course, institution to institution. That said, due to the flexibility these link groups provide, institutions are allowed to determine the default content of the link groups themselves, in order to meet the unique needs of each institution; however, whatever tools are selected to be the default for an institution must be categorized as follows, for the sake of navigation consistency:

ASSESSMENTS	COMMUNICATIONS	RESOURCES
Attendance	Blog	Calendar
Awards	Chat	Classlist
Checklist	Collaborate	Clicker Registration
Class Progress	Course Mail	Clickers
Competencies	Discuss	ePortfolio
Dropbox	Groups	Glossary
Grades	Journal	FAQ
Quizzes	Pager	Links
Rubrics	Virtual Classroom	Locker

Self Assessment	Starfish
Surveys	
Video Assignments	

*Table 1: Tool Navigation Organization*  
(rev. 1/2018)

Institutions are also allowed to order these alphabetically, or by priority.

Instructors can add/remove items from these link groups, but must also adhere to the categorization above. Note: an instructor cannot change the templates, so in order to change the link groups, the instructor needs to create his/her own, and then add them to the template. For this reason, the committee suggested that institutions populate the link groups with the most commonly/frequently used tools to avoid the need to do this

**Appendix IV: User Roles**  
(rev. 10/2017)

ROLE NAME	DESCRIPTION	CASCADING <sup>2</sup>
<b>Central Admin</b>	Overall system administrator at the topmost Org level.	TRUE
<b>Temp DOME (casc)</b>	DOME access setup for Univ Admins during the BCC process. Temp DOME (non-casc) at the ORG level, Temp DOME (casc) at the University level.	TRUE
<b>Temp DOME (non-casc)</b>	Same as Temp DOME (casc) EXCEPT non-cascading. Enroll as Temp DOME (non-casc) at the Org level and Temp DOME (casc) at the University level.	FALSE
<b>Univ Admin(non-casc)</b>	Non-cascading role for Org level enrollment of University Admins. Large Management permissions. Enroll as Univ Admin(non-casc) at Org level & Univ Admin(casc) at the University level.	FALSE
<b>Univ Admin(cascade)</b>	Cascading role for Univ Admins. Overall admin privileges for all courses under their university. Enroll as Univ Admin(non-casc) at the Org level & Univ Admin(cascade) at the University level.	TRUE
<b>Help Desk Manager</b>	Cascading role. Inquiry access to help in analyzing issues. Enroll as Univ Admin(non-casc) at Org level & Help Desk Manager at Univ level.	TRUE
<b>Help Desk Pro Staff</b>	Read only casc access for help in analyzing issues related to supporting faculty. Limited access to student info. Enroll as Univ Admin(non-casc) at Org level & Help Desk Pro Staff at Univ level.	TRUE
<b>Dept Head</b>	Instructor with increased privileges that cascade down over the specific dept. Enrolled as Univ Instr at Org level & Dept Head at Dept Org Unit level.	TRUE
<b>Univ Instructor</b>	Users that are instructing courses in a higher education institution. Enrolled as Univ Instructor at Org level & Univ Instructor for specific courses.	FALSE
<b>Univ Tchg Asst</b>	Similar to Instructor EXCEPT the TA can not change content. Enroll as Univ Instructor at Org level & Teaching Assistant in specific courses.	FALSE
<b>Univ Student</b>	Users that are taking courses at a higher education institution. Enrolled as Univ Student at the Org level & Univ Student at the specific course level.	FALSE
<b>Tech Fellow (non-ca)</b>	Student employees providing technical academic support. Enrolled either in courses, dept or univ & cascaded down. Enroll as Univ Student at Org level.	FALSE

<sup>2</sup> A cascading role in D2L means that a user enrolled with this role at a given place in the D2L organizational hierarchy has access to everything below that place (children) as that role. For example, a user with the role Univ Admin (cascade) enrolled at the BHSU org level would have admin access to all of BHSU's courses.

<b>K12Student</b>	Decreased privileges for underage students attending K-12 programs at universities. Enroll as Univ Student at the Org level & K-12 Student at the specific course level.	FALSE
<b>Univ Student - Incom</b>	Used for students that have a course offering that runs beyond the semester dates. Enroll as Univ Student at Org level & Univ Student - Incom in the specific course.	FALSE
<b>Course Mapping</b>	Same permissions as Univ Admin (non-cascade) EXCEPT the addition of SIS Interface. Enroll as Course Mapping at Org level & Univ Admin (casc) at the University level.	FALSE
<b>Guest Observer</b>	Limited access. No communication, only observation. Enroll as Univ Student at Org level & Guest Observer at specific course offering. Decreased student-like rights.	FALSE
<b>Guest Participant</b>	Invited lecturers or class speakers enrolled for limited time. Read only instructor rights as of 10/14/08. Enroll as Univ Instructor at Org level & Guest Participant in specific course offering.	FALSE
<b>QA Reviewer (casc)</b>	Invited guest to establish level of quality being accomplished in a course or series of courses. Enroll as Univ Instr at Org level and QA Reviewed in specific org units being reviewed.	TRUE
<b>Course Mapping ONLY</b>	Access ONLY to SIS Holding Tank/Integration. Enrolled as Univ Admin (non-casc) at Org level & Course Mapping Only at the university level, typically	FALSE
<b>E-Mentor</b>	Same permissions as TA EXCEPT no grade updating	FALSE
<b>CSEL Tchg Asst</b>	Teaching Assistant role used by CSEL - has more access than the Univ Tchg Asst role. Combines Univ TA & TF functionality into one for HS level.	FALSE
<b>Univ Student-Privacy</b>	Same as the Univ Student role. Used along with an alias for students that request privacy in D2L classes.	FALSE
<b>D2LMonitor</b>	Used by D2L to monitor this site - DO NOT DELETE	FALSE
<b>SSO Admin</b>	Administers the SSO and API service account for connectivity between the Portal and D2L	FALSE
<b>Starfish Admin</b>	This role is used by Starfish to complete the API calls for the Starfish D2L grade integration	FALSE

## Appendix V: Daylight Template

(rev. 10//2017)

In the summer of 2016, D2L released an update to their interface called Daylight, the purpose of which was primarily to provide a better experience on mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.) using responsive design (a web-development term for a website that “responds” to the screen size of the user’s device). The Daylight interface also addresses a number of accessibility issues inherent to the current D2L interface.

D2L clients were not required to switch to Daylight immediately—D2L viewed the initial release as something of a work in progress and made numerous updates in the following months—but in the summer of 2017, D2L announced that [all clients would automatically be switched to Daylight at the end of August, 2018](#).

In an effort to dictate our own timeline for the rollout of Daylight, the LMS Management Committee established a subcommittee to research the specific requirements of Daylight and develop a proposal for a new Daylight template.

One early problem the subcommittee discovered was that the existing template, while functional in the Daylight interface, did not work as well on mobile devices as it did on desktops and laptops. It quickly established that the system would need to develop a new template.

Because of this, the subcommittee used the opportunity to address some shortcomings of the current template; specifically, limitations of widgets. Per Appendix II, a number of widgets on the template are used for system and institution content. The problem with using widgets for this purpose is that their content is copied each time an instructor sets up a course, so they cannot be managed from the template itself. For example, if the system wanted to update links to D2L user guides for students, this link would need to be updated in every single course manually.

Because of this, the subcommittee proposed the removal of a number of widgets:

- Student Guides (left column)
- Instructor Guides (left column)
- Institutional Resources (left column)
- Role Switch (left column)
- Tech Support (right column)

With the exception of the role switch—which can be done elsewhere in the interface—this content would be housed under a new menu item called Help (see Figure 5 below). The benefit of using a menu item is that, for the most part, menus can be managed centrally, so when content needs to be updated, it is changed for every course using that menu, which greatly eases management. It also gives some of this content more visibility, as it is moved to the top of the page.



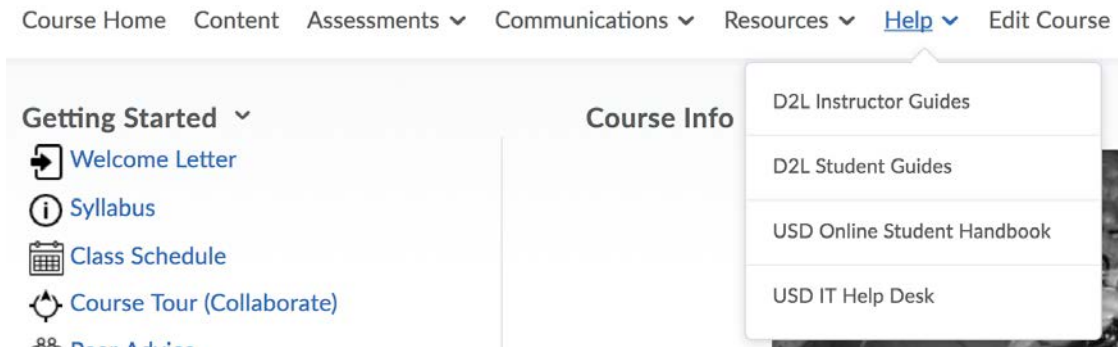


Figure 5: Daylight Help Menu

With this design philosophy in mind, the subcommittee developed four template proposals that were evaluated by the full committee, which approved the revised navbar and selected the following template:

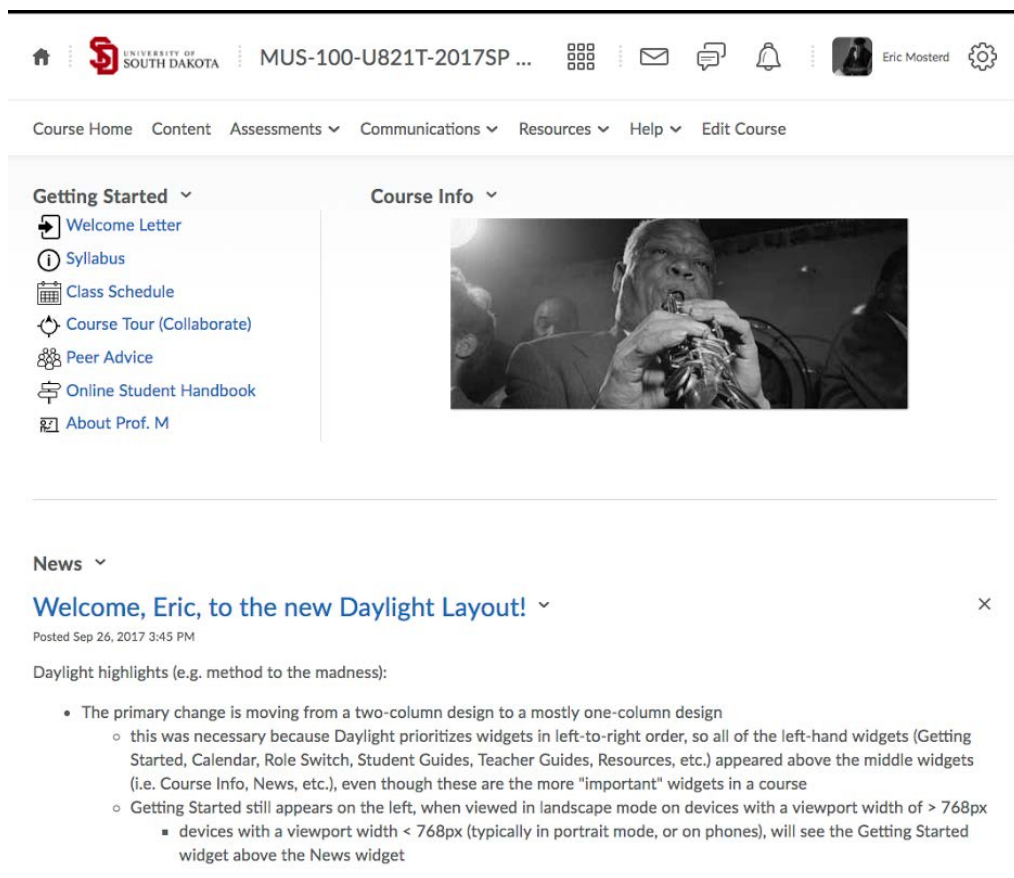


Figure 6: Daylight Template

Please refer to Appendix II, Figure 2 for a complete comparison, but the major difference in Daylight is that the system has far less control over branding—basically, just a small logo—and the interface is plainer in comparison. Without as many widgets, the interface is simpler, too, but maintains commonality with the current template in terms of the placement of the Getting Started



and Course Info widgets. In the Daylight template, the News widget now takes up the entire width of the page, giving instructors additional flexibility with respect to how much content, as well as the type of content, they can post.

When a user views the page on a mobile device—or any device with a viewable resolution (or viewport) of  $\leq 768\text{px}$ —the template “responds” by switching to a single-column layout:



Figure 7: Daylight Template on a Mobile Device

This layout eases navigation on mobile devices, such as phones and tablets.

Institutions also have the option of adding the Updates widget below the Getting Started widget on the template, as illustrated in the figure below:


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Course Home Content Assessments Communications Resources Help Edit Course

**Getting Started**

- Welcome Letter
- Syllabus
- Class Schedule
- Course Tour (Collaborate)
- Peer Advice
- Online Student Handbook
- About Prof. M

**Course Info**



**Updates**

- 1 Unread Discussion Posts
- 14 New Enrollments
- 1 Quizzes Not Attempted
- 66 New Emails

**News**

**Week 4: New Orleans & Jazz Origins**

Posted Nov 29, 2017 2:37 PM

Greetings, Eric:

Well, now that we've covered the basics, we get to finally start talking about Jazz--well, pre-Jazz that is. This week's lecture will focus on how Jazz came into being or at least our best guess as to how it did. We'll look at what is known as the traditional birthplace of jazz, New Orleans, and look at the early

*Figure 8: Daylight Template with Updates Widget*

This does create unusable white space below the Course Info widget, so institutions will need to take into consideration the amount of content in the Getting Started widget, as well as the types of updates visible in the Updates widget. The widget can be minimized, though, to reduce the amount of visible whitespace.