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## **July 14 Sunday, Un-Conference**

I presented on driving the class from a single news item, using links

There were presentations on php script for polls, and other fairly technical D2L items

## **July 15 Monday**

### **Birds of a feather, Session 1**

Birds of a feather is a time for folks with similar roles at different schools to get together and share info.

The first session I attended was on ADA related accessible files. I discussed Camtasia and its built in speech to text feature, and the ability to generate transcripts.

We also discussed pdf files being accessible if they were generated from an electronic document, rather than being scanned. It is important to use Word headings where possible, and to try and lay the document out in a linear fashion that reading software can easily navigate. Tables can also be a problem.

The group also discussed making ADA compliance a mandatory training session, much like TC's FERPA and Sexual Harassment sessions are.

It was noted that the new PowerPoints can save as a pdf that is a viewable show, and the need to make printable versions, and take advantage of the notes page.

### **Birds of a feather, Session 2**

Birds of a feather is a time for folks with similar roles at different schools to get together and share info.

The second session I attended was on D2L Gems that members wished to share. A lot of the discussion was on creating Widgets. A widget is a little box that can be added to D2L to display information, such as from a Tweet.

Replace strings were also discussed... a replace string is a symbol inserted into a D2L document that when viewed passes user specific information, such as Hello {FirstName} would display as Hello Tony to Tony, and Hello Daniel to Daniel.

{OrgName} would display Temple College here

{FirstName} displays the user's first name, as shown in the system

{LastName} displays the user's last name, as shown in the system

{OrgUnitStartDate} displays the beginning of the semester

{OrgUnitEndDate} displays the end of the semester

{InitiatingUserFirstName} displays your first name, as shown in the system

{InitiatingLastFirstName} displays your last name, as shown in the system

{LoginPath} shows the path to <https://templejc.desire2learn.com>

### **Birds of a feather, Session 3**

Birds of a feather is a time for folks with similar roles at different schools to get together and share info.

The last session I attended was on Hot Topics in K-12 online.

I attended this session to glean how feeder schools to colleges are using the system, to better appreciate what entering students might be accustomed to, weaknesses that eLearning can fix, and issues that are magnified by eLearning..

I came away with a better appreciation of handwriting, the need to use this in online when possible, and reinforce my high opinion of open ended questions.

**Opening Session**

John Baker, head of D2L began by talking about some limits of Face to face education... such the rigidity; as the need for everyone to do the same activity in class, which is more of a one-size-fits-all method. He pointed out that online classes, hybrids, and on demand learning allows a more adaptive approach, a more informed approach, and even a predictive approach to personalizing education... the word he focused on was perceptive.

D2L is trying to move from content delivery to being an integrated learning platform... with tools to better deal with the limits of geography, disability, and pace.

This was followed by a round table with Microsoft, McGraw Hill, and D2L folks fleshing out how this can go forward.

**Keynote**

Michael B Horn, one of the authors of "Disrupting Class."

mhorn@christenseninstitute.org

He started with the notion of disruptive innovation as a method of making education "Student Centric."

To this end, he discussed what Disruptive Innovation was, and why successful organizations fail. The premise is that big organizations are in sustaining mode, while often startups are in disruptive mode.

A classic example is the personal computer. Prior to its introduction, mainframes and minicomputers were the prevailing products in the computing industry. At a minimum, they were priced around \$200,000 and required engineering experience to operate. Apple, one of the pioneers in personal computing, began selling its model IIe in the 1980s—but as a toy for children. At that point, the product wasn't good enough to compete with the minicomputers, but little by little the disruption improved. Within a few years, the smaller, more affordable personal computers surpassed the capability of the minicomputers, creating a huge new market and eliminating the existing industry. - See more at:

<http://www.christenseninstitute.org/key-concepts/disruptive-innovation-2/?gclid=CPmExtPh5LkCFcZj7AodGisABw#sthash.J6kkQ1jc.dpuf>

GM was beat by the upstart Toyota, which is now being beaten by the upstart Hyundai.

Is it disruptive? is the target an underserved market? Can you get by with something not a good to start? (There are folks getting No education, this can be improved for THEM by something less robust that American schools, to begin with.) Will existing users be motivated to ignore it for the time being?

Can it be made simpler? That is the foot in the door. The kicker, Can technology carry it upward, upmarket, and make it sustainable? <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/education/>

So how can education be disruptive? Can fixed time on a topic in a classroom be replaced by variable learning options that include time to master a topic before moving on? Can we become competency based?

eLearning can add value in some opportunities:

personalization vs. factory method

use of data and feedback

improve teacher effectiveness

begin to add more cost control

... to address some of the holes in learning today.

### Workshop: Semester Start Planning

Tanya Chisholm, Desire2Learn Program Manager, Services

This workshop was primarily for D2L admin, and focused on behind the scenes improvements and plans to make a school's semester start go smoother. Too many institutions begin in Firefighting mode, help desk volume is skyrocketing, and some actions lead to poor system performance, which impacts faculty and students. The workshop was on how to avoid first day overload.

Part 1 was D2L fortifications to hosted institutions (not clients running their own servers) to reduce support tickets and increase stability. Better timing of service packs to avoid peak school times was one solution. Better use of data to estimate growth of institutions to scale infrastructure in advance of the first day was another.

Change control is being implemented to reduce the number of big changes on multiple systems at key dates... a chill is followed by a freeze, then back to a chill state, then back to normal to avoid first day hammering, etc.

A semester start tool kit was made available, including checklists, webinars, free student orientation videos, and FAQ.

Communications are to be improved, with new groups to support readiness, such as a Major Incident, and new problem management software. A new technical response team is in place, a new phone system to handle increased volume, etc.

They are also trying to collect key dates from institutions, to better plan updates, student enrollment, etc.

### Workshop: Fostering Creativity

Oliver Dreon, Millersville University, Marie Firestone, Millersville University

The workshop was for faculty and was on fostering student creativity, and began by discussing divergent thinking... to improve *fluency*, add *flexibility* (to include new points of view), *originality* to generate new ideas, and *elaboration* to organize and build upon ideas. The question was, how can you help this occur online?

The use of "Insert" stuff to add videos, etc. to discussions. (Insert stuff lets you add YouTube, Flickr, etc.)



Use of blog tools, such as wordpress.com (See Appendix, the last two pages, for list of Web 2.0 tools)

It was stress that pedagogy comes first... then see what technology could be used, have a rubric to assess the activity objectively, and finally, model creativity for students.

### Product Spotlight

D2L has added more than 100 enhancements in the last year.

There is a Product Ideas Exchange in the D2L Community. (<https://community.desire2learn.com/>)

Content: available templates, drag and drop, content view Content map, create an activity from Content, completion tracking and summary.

Discussion: you can now click the User Profile Card to find out more about who posted

ePortfolio now has a Quick Create; Analytics Essentials to track class progress, new Dash board

Dropbox now supports bulk download, available iPad Assignment grader, the ability to annotate submissions

Gradebook has milestone grade options

You can now leave video notes

Video Capture Central improvements, Insights adds predictive analytics, plus a Degree Compass to track degree plans

## Product Spotlight, continued

## Looking Forward

Improvements to Role switch, mini-bar

Save/Cancel always visible

Capture hardware improvements CS500

ePortfolio reflections can be added from LMS

native iPhone app for ePortfolio

Group Collaboration with the acquisition of Wiggio

Wiggio is the easiest <sup>free</sup> way to work in groups.

[Start a Group](#)

Over 100,000 groups are using Wiggio to:

- Host virtual meetings and conference calls [check out meetings ▶](#)
- Create to-do lists and assign tasks [check out to-do lists ▶](#)
- Send email, text and voice messages [check out messages ▶](#)
- Manage events with a shared calendar [check out events ▶](#)
- Poll your group in real time [check out polls ▶](#)
- Upload and manage files in a shared folder [check out files ▶](#)

[Feedback](#) [How-To ?](#)

More 'Game-ification' with the availability of badges.

More MOOC support (Massively Open Online Course)

<http://www.desire2learn.com/newsletters/Horizon/Issue30/articles/?id=4>
Solution Showcase: D2L and partner solutions, <http://solutionsshowcase.desire2learn.com/>

Binder, app to allow students to purchase/rent and download books for classes, use as a reader, self publish

<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/mobile/binder/>
**Social Event: Jillian's**

Networking opportunities near Fenway Park

## July 16 Tuesday

### **Workshop: Support and TAM overview**

Steve Moran, Michael Flewwelling, Desire2Learn

This workshop was more geared for D2L administrators.

They focused on what has changed since the outage that affected some D2L schools. To insure they were on the right path, they surveyed many, many admins. They created new intermediate positions and hired many more techs and beefed up the Knowledge management tools they were using to record, troubleshoot, and reports root causes, not just temporary solutions with. This included new directors with more experience managing large organizations (Microsoft and RIM alum are at the top). They purchased a new phone system that could better manage the scale of the business. They added more Self Service tools to walk folks through know issues... all of this to improve resolution time.

For a cost, they also offer 24/7 branded help desk service for institutions that need help managing user issues, such as passwords, etc. And very large organizations can invest in Premier Account Services, as well.

### **Focus Group: Lesson planning and Curriculum Development**

Nadeem Sheikh, Desire2Learn LMS program manager

I was invited to share with Desire2Learn how faculty actually plan lessons and develop curriculum. They were surprised by the variety of what is provided to faculty, the vagueness of some state requirements, and the lack of educational background that some college faculty start with. I think they now better understand that sometimes a new hire is simply told that they will teach this class starting tomorrow, and we have no notes or handouts for you. Good luck. They also understand the other side of the coin, with fully scripted courses, as well as the middle ground where academic freedom allows faculty to craft the class to meet state requirements. We discussed tool design that could better help someone in a time crunch, as well as tools for the deep dive to really develop curricula based on outcomes, the use of rubrics, etc., if given the time.

I like where they are heading.

### **Poster Session: Reach Them Teach Them Before They Log In**

I presented the Temple College method of using workshops, providing the eLearning portal on our web site, and the eLearning tour BEFORE students start class, to provide instruction and later reinforcement on the use of D2L for students; to reduce the amount of support calls, and to improve first day readiness for students. I mention my use of step by step tutorials, as well as the use of YouTube videos that are available before a student even registers for a class, so they can become accustomed to the system before they even log in.

### **D2L Going Forward, Excellence Award, Sharing resources**

John Baker, Terri-Lynn Brown, Barry Dahl, Desire2Learn

Some partnerships were announced, and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Ed (STLHE) joined up to offer an Innovation Award in teaching and learning.

Of the many ideas that were recognized, some of my favorites include:

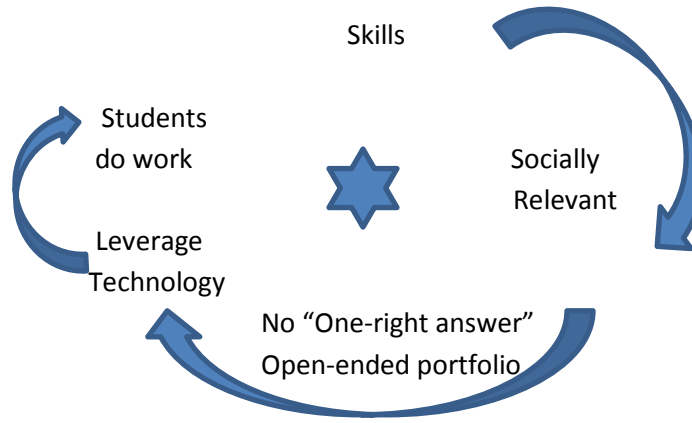
an open Orientation/Sample Course in D2L that any student can access anytime

Creating a YouTube playlist that can be shared with students

**Keynote**

Karen Cantor, former Director of the Office of Education Technology, US Dept of Ed, 2009-2013

She discussed the National Education Technology Plan, which is competency base/time variable... it was all about personalization.



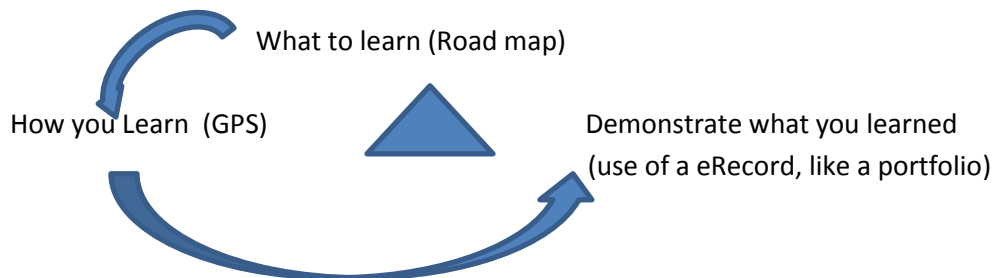
Students need the right mindset, they need grit, they need to manage goals and be challenged. But they also need support: explain with animation, simulation, visual aids... and it has to be assessable.

Discussed using books in the public domain.

A big deal was personalization based on data, and she discussed the "My Data Initiative."

<http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/technology/mydata/>

It's like a GPS to keep students pointed toward their goal.



BUT...

there is an access gap (lack of broad band prevents some from getting access)  
there is a participation gap (even those with broadband access aren't using it)  
there is a USE gap (if it is being used, it may not be fully used)

SO...

there needs to be more access to devices and infrastructure  
Data is key, that data has to be generated and provided  
This will require advanced research, better evaluation  
The system must be compelling and engaging  
to close the Digital Learning Gap

**Lightening Round: 10 Tips and strategies to Engage**

Marni Dunnin, Minnesota State University, Mankato

<http://link.mnsu.edu/fusion13>

1. Organized Content: weekly modules that include checklists followed with readings, lectures, and activities that need to be completed that week. Make actions & due dates clear! (Download our QM Template!)
2. Helpful Resources: Use Widgets
  - a. add a Course Instructor widget
  - b. add a Student Resources widget
  - c. add a Countdown Timer widget (Site)
3. Learner Response Systems: Gauge Learners understanding, conduct assessments, take attendance (Strategies) (Chimein)
4. Modify Content with Ease: Put Syllabus (and other documents) on Google Drive for automatic updates
  - a. HTML code: `<iframe width="1024" height="768" src="published file embed code"></iframe>`
5. Screencasts: 'How to navigate around your online course' and/or feedback to students through the dropbox on assignments
  - a. Jing
  - b. Screencast-o-matic
6. Lecture Captures: Narrate your PPTs and/or Record your lectures (Strategies)
  - a. iSpring Free
  - b. Screencast-o-matic
7. Introductions/Participation: videos shared through discussions
  - a. Animoto
  - b. FlixPress
8. Assessments:
  - a. Create a quiz with unlimited attempts to practice for mid/final exam
  - b. Create questions using graphics, audio, or video
  - c. Use submission view to show students how they did
9. Interactive/Self Paced Lessons: Create multiple html pages and have them link together creating an eLearning experience like Softchalk (Strategies)
10. Discussions: Meaningful discussion, Student Lounge, and a Q/A area (Strategies)

Tom Tu, University of Wisconsin, Superior

Enhance Course Navigation, open a Course Preview the week before

When creating Modules and Topics, reduce lists of links to one page of HTML links that open in a new window

Include file format and file size for links

Work for consistency

Personalize navigation with HTML

Awaken your Course Home

Inspire with web 2.0 tools

Personalize with widgets

Focus on organization

Amanda Williamson, Georgia Virtual Learning

Check out (Google) toondoo, smore, podlet, flaming text, pictochart, image chef, flipsnack, fodey, Go! Animate, JibJab, Vocaroo, Voli, Audio pal, Thinklink; (See Appendix, the last two pages, for list of other Web 2.0 tools)

Idea: put video in News, like commercials



## Workshop: New Opportunities and Challenges

Kathy Wullstein, University of Oklahoma

In Content, you can add a Course Overview, which can include graphics

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for a course titled "FA2013-IMED-1316 - Web Page Design I - Collins - INT". The user is logged in as "collinsr058" on "9/25/2013". The course navigation bar includes links for My Home, Email, Locker, Calendar, TC Web Mail, and TConnect. The course content area shows a search bar and a list of course items: Course Overview (circled in red with the text "Add a description..."), Bookmarks, Upcoming Events (4), Table of Contents (102), ReadMe First (4), and Course Files (98). There is also an "Add a module..." button at the bottom.

Each module you can add a description to the module, including a graphic

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for the same course, but now viewing the "ReadMe First" module. The user is logged in as "collinsr058" on "9/25/2013". The course navigation bar is the same. The module content area shows a search bar and a list of course items: Course Overview, Bookmarks, Upcoming Events (4), Table of Contents (102), and ReadMe First (4). The "Add a description..." button is circled in red. There is also an "Add restrictions..." button and a "New" button. The "Add Activities" button is also visible.

You can now add items like Dropbox in Content

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for the same course, but now viewing the "Week 13+ images/video links" module. The user is logged in as "collinsr058" on "9/25/2013". The course navigation bar is the same. The module content area shows a search bar and a list of course items: Course Overview, Bookmarks, Upcoming Events (4), Table of Contents (102), ReadMe First (4), Course Files (98), Week 1, Read all of these! (19), and Week 2 images/video links (9). The "Add a description..." button is circled in red. There is also an "Add restrictions..." button and a "New" button. The "Add Activities" button is also visible. The "Add Activities" dropdown menu is open, showing options: Upload Files, Create a File, Create a Link, Add from Manage Files, New Discussion, New Dropbox, and New Quiz.

Don't forget you can leave instructions about the dropbox, in the dropbox; You can keep students from reading discussions until they have posted; In the dropbox you can now set start date, due date, and end date.

**Workshop: What's New in D2L since last Summer (10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4)**

Saibal Chakraborty, Desire2Learn

Spring 2012 10.0

Fall 2012 10.1

Spring 2013 10.2

Fall 2014 10.3

Ability to make a Booklist widget

New equation editor

New in Dropbox, Start date, Due Date, End Date

Bulk Download in Dropbox

Dropbox has new content viewer

Floating Save button

Discussions: topic view, thread (more like facebook)

Notification for dropbox

User Profile Card, hover over username to see profile info

Add discussions in Content

Admin can now restore deleted discussions and Grades

Content: Descriptions

Content Tracking Summary

Templates available in Content

Create activities within content

Grades: Milestone grade option

Email, cc/bcc changes

More universal drag and drop, more in-line editing

Better event logs

Better checklists

New Tool: Class Progress

**Social Event: John F Kennedy Library**

Networking opportunity

## July 17 Wednesday

### **Workshop: Instructor Training**

Karla Farrell, University of Wisconsin Colleges

Patricia Fellows, University of Wisconsin Colleges

This school now offers a FULLY online AA degree, and to get more faculty involved uses a combination of Camtasia created screencasts and boot camps. The training itself is a hybrid, 40-60, and is REQUIRED training if faculty wishes to teach online courses.

To support the online initiative, the legislature funded \$250,000 for faculty development.

Goals, to maintain quality.

The training and required training aspects are supported by faculty governance, department chairs, the provost, deans, etc.

Topics include

What is blended

Communications

Discussions

the LMS

Web 2.0 ;

They use PowToons (See Appendix, the last two pages, for list of other Web 2.0 tools)

The program asks deans for participants, 12-15

They start with a face to face pre-workshop, and D2L

Then they model online teaching with an online, 12 week course that uses homework, dropbox, discussions, etc.

Final session via web conferencing. Faculty get a \$15000 stipend if they pass.

### **Workshop: Windows 8.1 and office 2013/365**

Edwin Guarin, Microsoft

Most of this information is included in my YouTube videos

New is a hands free mode, and better One Note collaboration.

### **Workshop: Getting Started with Intelligent Agents**

Elizabeth McMahon, Northland Community and Technical College

See Appendix

### **Keynote**

Dr. Alec Couros , MIT

Sadly, this keynote was mostly YouTube videos

### **Closing**

**Location of Next Fusion Desire2Learn User's conference: Nashville, TN**

**Intelligent Agents follows**

**Web 2.0 Tools follows**

**Tuesday 9:20****Workshop**

Engage your students with Checklists, Intelligent Agents, and Audio Feedback  
Ginger Dewey [gdewey@yorktech.edu](mailto:gdewey@yorktech.edu) / ([barry.dahl@desire23learn.com](mailto:barry.dahl@desire23learn.com))

## ***What's an Intelligent Agent?***

### **Definition:**

**Intelligent Agents can assist instructors, administrators, and students by providing a quick and automated notification when defined activity occurs in a course or when there is a lack of login or course entry.**

## *How Do They Work?*

- For each agent you need to determine:
  - what criteria it is looking for
  - how often it looks for those criteria
  - What the email should say and who should receive it when the criteria are met

## *Client Use Cases in T & L*

- Automatic reminders to students:
  - Not logging in to D2L
  - Not entering a specific course
- Message after poor performance:
  - Get their attention and encourage them to seek extra help
- Message after good performance

## *Advantages of Using Agents*

1. Increases communication between instructor and student
2. Personalized message, doesn't look like a canned response.
3. Send links to other resources, tutorials, tutoring center, etc.

## *Possible Disadvantages*

1. Need to manage the agents effectively to ensure effective communications.
2. If students receive too many of these messages they'll know they are automatically sent (not personal).
3. Something could break.

The screenshot shows a course management dashboard with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar contains the following sections and icons:

- Manage Files** (Folder icon)
- Learner Management**
  - Attendance (Calendar icon)
  - Locations (Map icon)
- Assessment**
  - Checklists (List icon)
  - Grades (Table icon)
  - Self Assessments (Person icon)
- Communication**
  - Chat (Speech bubbles icon)
  - News (Newspaper icon)

The main content area contains the following icons and labels:

- Classlist (List icon)
- Seating Chart (Grid icon)
- View User Progress (Person with progress bar icon)
- Competencies (Triangle icon)
- Quizzes (Document with question mark icon)
- Surveys (Document with bar chart icon)
- Dropbox (Cloud icon)
- Rubrics (Table icon)
- Intelligent Agents (Gear icon)

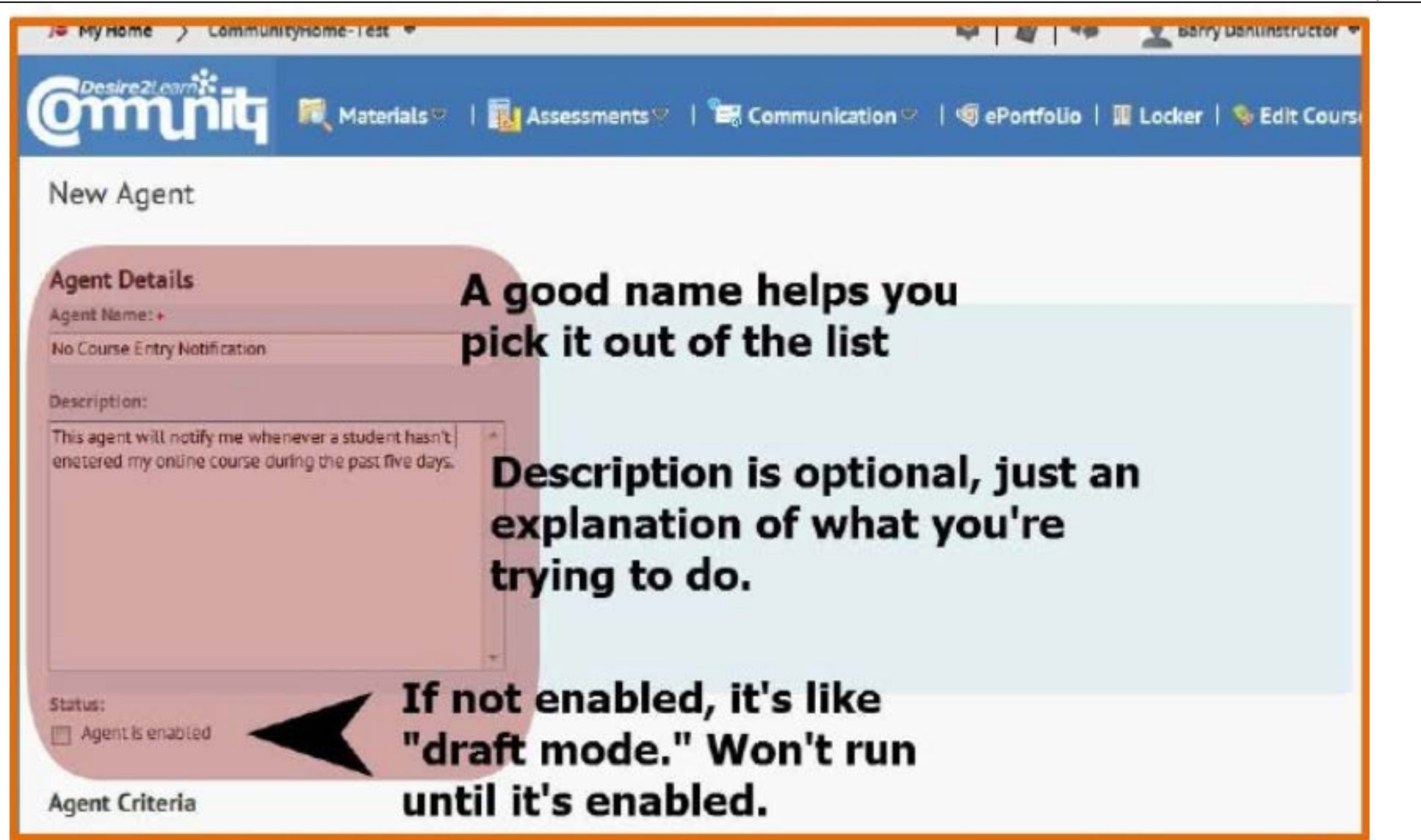
A large orange button in the top right corner reads "Go to Edit Course".

## Agent List

New

No intelligent agents found.





The screenshot shows the 'New Agent' page in the Desire2Learn Community interface. The page has a blue header with the 'Community' logo and navigation links: Materials, Assessments, Communication, ePortfolio, Locker, and Edit Course. The user 'Barry Dantinstructor' is logged in. The main content area is titled 'New Agent' and contains a form with the following sections:

- Agent Details**
  - Agent Name: +
  - No Course Entry Notification
  - Description: This agent will notify me whenever a student hasn't entered my online course during the past five days.
  - Status: ☐ Agent is enabled
- Agent Criteria**

Three annotations are present on the right side of the form:

- A good name helps you pick it out of the list** (points to the Agent Name field)
- Description is optional, just an explanation of what you're trying to do.** (points to the Description text area)
- If not enabled, it's like "draft mode." Won't run until it's enabled.** (points to the 'Agent is enabled' checkbox)



☒ Agent is enabled

Determine Criteria

### Agent Criteria

#### Login Activity

☐ Take action when the following login criteria are satisfied:

##### Login Activity

☒ User has not logged in for at least  day(s)

☐ User has logged in during the past  day(s)

**Looks for login activity to the D2L site.**

#### Course Activity

☒ Take action when the following course activity criteria are satisfied:

##### Course Activity

☒ User has not accessed course for at least  day(s)

☐ User has accessed course during the past  day(s)

**Looks for login activity to an individual course.**

### Release Conditions

Attach Existing

Create and Attach

Remove All Conditions 

My Home > CommunityHome-Test

Agent Action

Action Repetition:

☐ Take action only the first time the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

☒ Take action every time the agent is evaluated and the agent's criteria are satisfied for a user

Which action repetition should I use?

Schedule:

☒ Use Schedule

No schedule defined

Next Run Date: No schedule defined

Update Schedule

What does an agent's action schedule determine?

Email Format:

☒ HTML

☐ Plain text

To: \*

Repeat? or not?

Run manually? or on a set schedule?

You can do both

The image shows a screenshot of a software interface with a background panel and a foreground dialog box.

**Background Panel (Agent Action):**

- Agent Action**
- Action Repetition:**
  - ☐ Take action only the first time the agent is evaluated
  - ☒ Take action every time the agent is evaluated
- Which action repetition should I use?*
- Schedule:**
  - ☒ Use Schedule
- No schedule defined
- Next Run Date: No schedule defined
- Update Schedule** (button)
- What does an agent's action schedule determine?*
- Email Format:**
  - ☒ HTML
  - ☐ Plain text
- To:** (text input field)
- Cc:** (text input field)

**Update Agent Schedule Dialog Box:**

- Repeats:**
  - Daily (dropdown menu)
- Repeats Every:**
  - 1 (text input) day(s)
- Schedule Dates:**
  - ☒ Has Start Date
    - 6/19/2012 (calendar icon)
    - Canada - Toronto
    - Now (button)
  - ☒ Has End Date
    - 7/5/2012 (calendar icon)
    - Canada - Toronto
    - Now (button)
- Update** (button) | **Cancel** (button)

**Text Overlays:**

- Determines how often to run it** (points to the Repeats and Repeats Every section)
- Set start and stop dates, or not.** (points to the Schedule Dates section)

☒ Use Schedule

Schedule: Evaluated every 1 day(s) starting Tuesday, June 19, 2012 until Thursday, July 5, 2012

Next Run Date: Wednesday, June 20, 2012

[Update Schedule](#)

*What does an agent's action schedule determine?*

Email Format:

☒ HTML

☐ Plain text

To: \*

barry.dahl@desire2learn.com

Cc:

Bcc:

*What special email addresses can I use?*

Email Subject: \*

No Course Entry Notification

*What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?*

**Email can be addressed to you  
(the instructor) or sent directly  
to the student, or both.**

**Subject line of the email  
that is automatically sent.**

## ***About Emailing Students***

- If you choose to have the agent send an email directly to a student, you should:
  - a) Include **your email** address as a CC
  - b) Add text to the email telling them to **“Reply All,”**
  - c) If they just reply to the agent, you will **not receive it.**



The screenshot shows an email configuration window. At the top, the 'Email Subject' field contains 'No Course Entry Notification'. Below it, a question asks 'What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?'. The 'Message' section has 'Basic' and 'Advanced' tabs, with 'Basic' selected. It features a rich text editor toolbar. The message body contains a placeholder example: '{InitiatingUserFirstName} {InitiatingUserLastName} has not accessed {OrgUnitName} in the past 5 days.' Below this, a text block states: 'The following are other replace strings you can use in the subject line and the message (email body).' This is followed by a bulleted list of replace strings and their meanings. A large, bold, black text overlay reads 'Customize the message by using "replace strings."' at the bottom of the red overlay. At the very bottom of the window are three buttons: 'Save and Close', 'Save', and 'Cancel'.

Email Subject: \*

No Course Entry Notification

What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?

Message:

Basic Advanced

(InitiatingUserFirstName) (InitiatingUserLastName) has not accessed {OrgUnitName} in the past 5 days.

The following are other replace strings you can use in the subject line and the message (email body).

- {OrgName} - The name of the organization.
- {OrgUnitCode} - The code for the org unit.
- {OrgUnitStartDate} - The start date specified for the org unit.
- {OrgUnitEndDate} - The end date specified for the org unit.
- {InitiatingUserUserName} - The username of the initiating user.
- {InitiatingUserOrgDefinedId} - The Org Defined ID of the initiating user.
- {LoginPath} - The address of the login path for the site.

**Customize the message by using "replace strings."**

Save and Close Save Cancel

{OrgName} The name of the organization

{OrgUnitCode} The code for the org unit

{OrgUnitStartDate} The start date of the specified org unit

{OrgUnitEndDate} The end date of the specified org unit

{initiatingUserFirstName} The first name of the initiating user (the student)

{initiatingUserLastName} The last name of the initiating user (the student)

{LoginPath} The address of the login path for the site

For News items you can use: {FirstName} {LastName}

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Agent List". In the top left corner, there is a blue button labeled "New". Below this, a red rounded rectangle highlights a specific agent entry. An arrow points from the text "Agent is now listed." to the top of this red box. Another arrow points from the text "You can manually run the agent at any time, even if you set a scheduled time." to the "Run Now" button within the red box. The agent entry itself shows a dropdown menu with the selected option "No Course Entry Notification". Below this, it says "This agent will notify me whe" and "online course during the past five days." The "Run Now" button is accompanied by a trash icon and the label "Delete". In the top right corner, there is a "View:" dropdown menu set to "All ag" and a "Last" label.

Agent List

New

**Agent is now listed.**

View: All ag

Agent ▲

No Course Entry Notification ▼

This agent will notify me whe

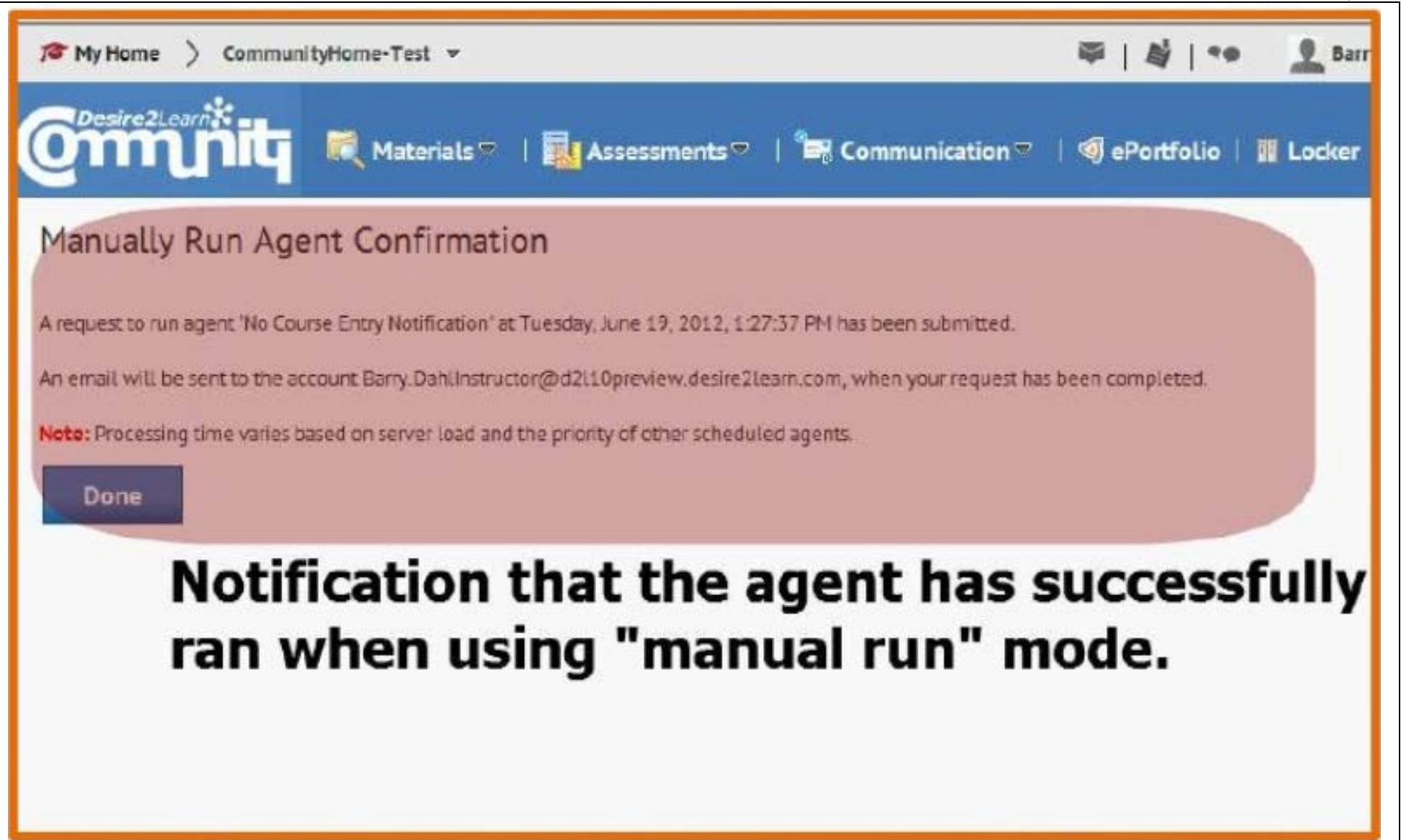
Run Now

Delete

online course during the past five days.

**You can manually run the agent at any time, even if you set a scheduled time.**

Last



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Desire2Learn Community interface. The 'My Home' link is active, and the user is logged in as 'Barr'. The main navigation bar includes links for 'Materials', 'Assessments', 'Communication', 'ePortfolio', and 'Locker'. A large, light red confirmation message is displayed in the center of the page.

**Manually Run Agent Confirmation**

A request to run agent 'No Course Entry Notification' at Tuesday, June 19, 2012, 1:27:37 PM has been submitted.

An email will be sent to the account Barry.DahlInstructor@d2l10preview.desire2learn.com, when your request has been completed.

**Note:** Processing time varies based on server load and the priority of other scheduled agents.

[Done](#)

**Notification that the agent has successfully ran when using "manual run" mode.**



h Inbox (Ctrl+E)

ge By: Date | Newest on top

oday

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

vu.helpdesk@d2l10preview...  
No Course Entry Notification

12:14 PM

12:11 PM

challenge...

11:50 AM

p and t...

11:41 AM

nd... 📧

11:38 AM

p and t...

11:07 AM

021 cre...

11:05 AM

### No Course Entry Notification

lvu.helpdesk@d2l10preview.desire2learn.com

Sent: Tue 6/19/2012 12:29 PM

To: Barry Dahl

Cat Walton has not accessed CommunityHome-Test in the past 5 days.

**Replace strings were used  
in these two places.**

**This email was only  
sent to the instructor**

My Home > CommunityHome-Test

Desire2Learn  
**Community**

Materials | Assessments | Communication | ePortfolio | Locker

## New Agent

### Agent Details

Agent Name: \*

Way to Go - Good Score!

Description:

This agent will send an email to a student if s/he scores a 90% or better on a quiz or exam (whatever assessment I choose to apply it to).

Status:

# Example of using an Agent in a positive way

**Create a New Release Condition**

Release this item when the following condition is met:

Condition Type

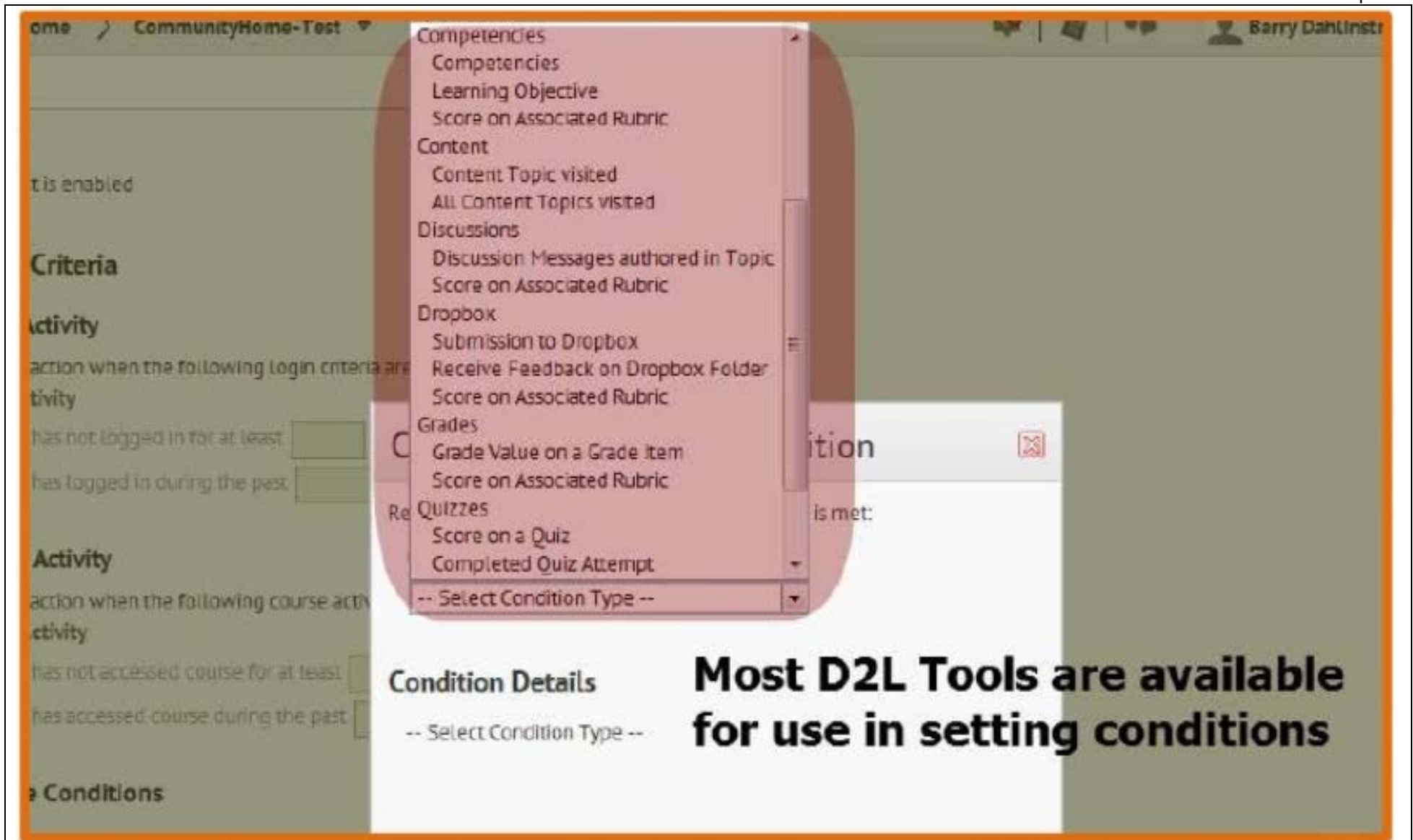
-- Select Condition Type --

**Condition Details**

-- Select Condition Type --

**A release condition is used when looking for student action or performance.**

Create Cancel



The screenshot displays the D2L LMS interface with a dropdown menu open, listing various condition types. The background shows a 'Criteria' section with fields for 'has not logged in for at least' and 'has logged in during the past'. A 'Condition Details' dialog box is also visible, showing a 'Select Condition Type' dropdown.

**Condition Types:**

- Competencies
  - Competencies
  - Learning Objective
  - Score on Associated Rubric
- Content
  - Content Topic visited
  - All Content Topics visited
- Discussions
  - Discussion Messages authored in Topic
  - Score on Associated Rubric
- Dropbox
  - Submission to Dropbox
  - Receive Feedback on Dropbox Folder
  - Score on Associated Rubric
- Grades
  - Grade Value on a Grade Item
  - Score on Associated Rubric
- Quizzes
  - Score on a Quiz
  - Completed Quiz Attempt
- Select Condition Type --

**Condition Details**

-- Select Condition Type --

**Most D2L Tools are available for use in setting conditions**

**Create a New Release Condition**

Release this item when the following condition is met:

**Condition Type**  
Score on a Quiz

**Condition Details**  
Quiz  
College Math Refresher

**Criteria:**  
>=

**Grade**  
90 %

**Pick the item**

**Determine the performance level that triggers the agent**

**Create** **Cancel**

**New Agent**

**Agent Details**

Agent Name:

Way to Go - Good Score

Description:

This agent will send an email to a student if s/ better on a quiz or exam (whatever assessment to).

Status:

☒ Agent is enabled

**Agent Criteria**

Login Activity



The screenshot shows an email composition interface. The 'To:' field contains '{InitiatingUser}'. The 'Cc:' field contains 'Barry.Dahl@Desire2Learn.com'. The 'Bcc:' field is empty. The 'Email Subject:' field contains 'Nice Score on College Math Refresher Quiz'. The 'Message:' section has a 'Basic' tab selected and a rich text editor with a toolbar. The message body contains a personal greeting, a congratulatory message about a quiz score, and a signature. Annotations in colored boxes highlight specific parts of the form: a pink box for the header fields with the text 'This one is being sent to the student, with CC to instructor'; a blue box for the message body with the text 'Personal greeting, using first name'; and a blue box for the signature with the text 'Make sure the course name is included somewhere'.

**To:**  
{InitiatingUser}

**Cc:**  
Barry.Dahl@Desire2Learn.com

**Bcc:**

*What special email addresses can I use?*

**Email Subject:**  
Nice Score on College Math Refresher Quiz

*What replace strings can I use in the subject and message?*

**Message:**

**Basic** **Advanced**

Hi {InitiatingUserFirstName},

I see that you did very well on the College Math Refresher Quiz. You're off to a good start in the class. Keep in mind that it's a long haul until the final exam, but if you keep up the good work you should have no problem making it to the finish line.

Sincerely, Barry Dahl  
Instructor, {OrgUnitName}

**This one is being sent to the student, with CC to instructor**

**Personal greeting, using first name**

**Make sure the course name is included somewhere**

**Don't forget to Enable the Intelligent Agent, and Test**

Also, if you use Audio Feedback, start and end with positive

Also, Use Checklist

Also, Use Attendance



## Web 2.0 tools to inject creativity in your CMS

Lesley Colabucci, PhD Millersville University  
Oliver Dreon, PhD Millersville University  
Marie Firestone, M.Ed. Millersville University

### Animoto

EAST  
★

Animoto ([www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com)) is an easy way to make music videos. Upload pictures, text and music and in a few short moments you have a professional looking music video. And best of all, the site is free if you want to create a 30 second video. Animoto offers free unlimited accounts for educators and their students. Check it out at: [animoto.com/education](http://animoto.com/education)

### AnswerGarden

★

Need feedback from a large group of students? Try using AnswerGarden ([www.answergarden.com](http://www.answergarden.com))! AnswerGarden is a creative and interactive way to get many answers to your one question. Simply type your question into your AnswerGarden watch it "grow" as students provide their short answers. It can used to assess previous knowledge, get opinions, or just break the ice!

### Gliffy

★ ★

Flowcharts, sitemaps, wireframes! Oh my! Gliffy ([www.gliffy.com](http://www.gliffy.com)) allows you to make diagrams that can be used for any presentation. Students and teachers alike can use this free site to enhance projects or present information.

### Glogster

★ ★

Want to tap into students' creative spirit? Check out Glogster ([edu.glogster.com](http://edu.glogster.com)). Using Glogster, students can create online posters called "glogs" where video, audio and text can be incorporated. Glogster is a great tool for a portfolio project, as a creative replacement for a paper or as an "about me" project for the start of a class. Note: Glogster also offers an EDU portion of its site. This version is better for use with K-12 classrooms, though.

### Jing

★ ★

Jing ([www.jingproject.com](http://www.jingproject.com)) is a free screencasting tool that allows users to record the actions on a computer screen. Jing is great for recording Powerpoint presentations to be shared online, either by instructors or by students.

★ Screencastomatic ([www.screencast-o-matic.com](http://www.screencast-o-matic.com)) also performs many of the same tasks as Jing.

### MyBrainShark

★ ★ ★

Want students to give presentations in an online class? Try out MyBrainShark ([www.brainshark.com](http://www.brainshark.com))! Students simply upload their PowerPoint slides and record their voices over each slide. The final product can be shared with their online classmates for discussion.

### Pearltrees

★

20 min

With so much media and information being offered through the Internet, it can be easy to forget where we found everything. Pearltrees ([www.pearltrees.com](http://www.pearltrees.com)) is a free site that allows you to save and organize the sites that interest you all in one place that can be accessed at any time.

### Piktochart

★ ★ ★

Infographics are a new trend in media presentation that allows presenters to use shapes, colors, fonts, and backgrounds to enhance content. Piktochart ([www.piktochart.com](http://www.piktochart.com)) is a FREE website that not only shows you how to make great infographics, but also gives you a multitude of options to choose from when creating an infographic.



## Pixton ★ → ★★ ★

Comic books are great even from an educational point of view. A comic book attends to the visual and textual delivery of information. Pixton ([www.pixton.com](http://www.pixton.com)) puts students in the role of a comic book artist and allows them to select settings and characters and to write the text. Used as an alternative assessment tool, Pixton could be a great way of having students role play a situation or even construct a debate.

## PowToon ★ ★ ★

PowToon ([www.powtoon.com](http://www.powtoon.com)) is a brand new, do-it-yourself animated presentation tool that can supercharge presentations and videos! It's free and easy to use and can help students present their research in a creative way.

## Prezi ★ (★)

Prezi ([www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com)) is basically, an interactive PowerPoint presentation. The creator can choose multiple themes and fonts, even add videos and pictures but with a cool twist – Prezi zips across one area to the next, zooming in on information in the order that the presenter chooses. What makes this difficult for most users is adjusting to using the format of a "blank slate," but Prezi makes the transition easy, providing pre-set backgrounds and layouts.

## SpicyNodes ★

SpicyNodes ([www.spicynodes.org](http://www.spicynodes.org)) is another presentation device that organizes information in a web. The interactive design of this format gives any presentation a visual "kick." While this site is mostly free, in order to integrate a SpicyNodes into a website or use different styles, fonts, or backgrounds, there is a membership fee.

## Stupeflix ★

Stupeflix ([www.stupeflix.com](http://www.stupeflix.com)) is a free site that allows you to make 30 second videos using your pictures, background music, and text. Although there are limitations to the layout of the videos, how long a free video can be, and what music can be chosen, students will have the opportunity to be visually entranced by others' works and easily able to create unique presentations.

## Voki ↵

Want to make oral presentations and tests fun? Use Voki ([www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com))! Voki allows teachers and students alike to make animated avatars and record their voices for up to one minute with the free version. This can be used for students to take oral tests while providing a learning and fun experience. A "Voki Classroom" option is available for a set price each year, but it allows for no student registration and 90 second videos. Both versions provide support for teacher's with tutorials and sample lessons.

## yodio ★

Some people want to start podcasting their classroom content but are a little intimidated by the software. Check out yodio ([www.yodio.com](http://www.yodio.com)). It's a free and easy way to create professional sounding podcasts with a microphone or even a telephone. You can even add background music and edit your recording without downloading a thing.

## xtranormal ★ ★ ↵

Using xtranormal ([www.xtranormal.com](http://www.xtranormal.com)) students can plan out a movie with two animated characters and have complete control over camera angles, dialogue, facial expressions and actions. The best part of xtranormal is that the site mostly free. It has recently started charging for more advanced options such as changing characters, settings, or voices but the basic options are still free. **GoAnimate** ([goanimate.com](http://goanimate.com)) performs some of the same options and some students find it more intuitive to use.

Need some help or some other ideas?  
Check out my blog at: [the8blog.wordpress.com](http://the8blog.wordpress.com)