

# DRAFT TEMPLATE **SOLID Report** DRAFT TEMPLATE **RFI For Online Learning Management Systems**

## **Review**

The Strategic Online Learning Infrastructure Development (SOLID) project is funded by a state aid grant from the UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology Collaborative. S.O.L.I.D.'s task is to develop a UNC-wide resource that can facilitate decision-making and the selection of tools and resources associated with the deployment and use of online course management systems and course content development tools. Results will be posted on the UNC TLT portal in order to provide an ongoing service for UNC campuses, decision-makers, and support services.

One important component of this project has been to develop a list of those vendors in the marketplace whose have a primary focus on the management of online learning environments. Many UNC campuses are either in the process of, or else requesting guidance associated with, the selection of learning management systems. There are clear advantages to be gained from collaborative efforts in this process:

- Consistent learning environments between similar academic programs throughout UNC facilitates cooperation in the area of e-learning and distance education, and in sharing course content and course activities.
- Partnerships between learning management systems vendors and course content publishers means that the value of different learning management systems may vary by discipline.
- Support for training and help desk services can be more effectively leveraged if UNC develops consistent approaches to these applications.
- Hosting and technical support opportunities.
- It is critical that learning management systems are a part of overall strategic systems on our campuses and are fully integrated with other strategic systems on each campus.

UNC is currently developing a contract with a consulting agency to review campus readiness for e-learning initiatives, and to recommend an effective implementation strategy for e-learning. This report is intended to serve this effort as follows:

- Provide a summary of the SOLID RFI that gave LMS vendors the opportunity to provide UNC with material concerning their current products and to respond to targeted questions associated with strategic direction, functionality and integration.
- Provide a snapshot of current implementations of learning management systems on UNC campuses.

- Suggest a team to work with the consultants with regard to UNC decision processes associated with the selection of strategic partnerships in this area.
- Provide a reserved set of UNC videoconference slots for use by the consultants throughout the spring of 2001 for vendor presentations and other UNC-wide discussion.
- Provide a UNC-wide portal to support information-sharing and common access to tools and services.

## **RFI Summary**

The Request for Information (See Appendix) was posted on DATE with a response date of DATE. The following responses were received:

BlackBoard  
 WebCT  
 Oracle iLearning  
 Empower Solutions/Intralearn Software Corp.: Intralearn  
 SAP: mySAP Learning Solution  
 Ucompass: Educator  
 Eduprise  
 WebAssign  
 Convene - Izio

These responses were reviewed by the SOLID team in order to determine to what extent the responses met the RFI criteria, and (since this was an RFI and not an RFP process) to identify responses that did not meet these criteria but appeared worthy of further consideration as having potential to provide of targeted services to UNC campuses under collaborative, cost-sharing models.

The attached spreadsheet provides details of this review process. The following vendors appeared to meet the RFI criteria most effectively:

### **LIST WITH COMMENTS**

The following were identified as being of interest or worthy of followup, either because: (a) the submitted materials did not meet all criteria but did appear promising; or (b) the submitted materials suggested a service that might not meet UNC requirements for a learning management system, but did suggest a service that could meet common tarethed needs within this space.

### **LIST WITH COMMENTS**

Current Implementations of LMS throughout UNC

The following list provides a snapshot of current deployment of LMS throughout UNC with the caveat that many campuses are not fully committed at this time and recognize (a) the volatility of this application environment; (b) the importance of integration with administrative systems on each campus; (c) the value of considering LMS within e-learning and other UNC initiatives.

LIST

## **Schedule of UNC Videoconferences**

To facilitate ongoing discussions during the spring of 2001, that may include targeted vendors to discuss their products and services in greater detail, the following times have been reserved on the NC-REN network:

## **TLT Portal**

The UNC TLT Portal provides a common knowledge resource for UNC campuses in areas associated with teaching and learning with technology and support for online learning. The portal is currently in pilot stage but the following categories have been defined to facilitate submission and search of learning environments and materials specifically associated with the SOLID effort:

Keywords: e-learning learning management course online solid rfi

Types: Reports and publications,

Projects: SOLID

Materials can be searched by campus, as well UNC-wide and globally.

As a part of the SOLID effort, the following materials associated with this RFI can be found on the TLT Portal:

- Links to vendors who responded to the rfi (Search by and keyword solid
- Links to the attachments and reports generated by the SOLID project (search by Publications and Reports and keyword solid
- Link to the SOLID project site (search by Projects and keyword solid)
- Links to other materials developed by the SOLID group (search on keyword solid for a complete list, or else by Type and keyword solid for specific types of material)

## **Review Team Recommendations**

The SOLID group recommends that the following communities will need to be closely involved with the work of the consulting service assessment in order to ensure an effective decision process with regard to implementation strategies:

UNC Alliance for Shared Services

UNC TLT Board

UNC e-Learning Task Force  
UNC representatives of academic programs and Continuing Education  
UNC University Schools Programs  
UNC Teaching and Learning Centers and TLT services  
UNC Libraries  
UNC TV

The SOLID group recommends that an initial discussion with the TLT Board and Alliance Board, along with a representative from UNC University Schools Programs, and the e-Learning Task Force will help to ensure effective communications and a good initial context.

### **Appendices/Attachments**

RFI  
Summary of Responses  
Location of Vendor Submissions