

Project Name: Supporting Math and the Sciences

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Background:

We currently have two centrally supported web based quiz and course management tools at USC – Mallard and Blackboard. Blackboard has become the more general and widely used tool and Mallard the more content specific, limited use one – being used here primarily in the sciences and math because of its quiz generator which has better supported those fields until now. There are quiz data on Mallard that we have a significant time investment in.

Problem Statement:

Mallard as a software is “aging”. There is no active development on it at this time although the U. of Illinois continues to use it and support it for now. This has meant that other systems are improving while it is not and that it is not able to overcome its own limitations – for example, its dependence on an extended HTML language for problem development as opposed to a more graphical WYSIWIG approach that could better serve a broader constituency.

We need to replace Mallard with a math engine which is better suited for integration with existing systems such as Blackboard while meeting the needs of Math, Science, and other disciplines that have similar needs.

We will want to have existing quiz data migrated to a new system.

To leverage the potential greater integration, we will want to be able to have a shared problem database that can be drawn on by participating departments.

Constraints:

New system will need to integrate with Blackboard.

Desired Deliverables:

Recommendation for new math and science friendly quiz engine.
Recommendation for data migration to a new engine.
Recommendation on how to approach a shared problem repository.