Introduction to D2L
September 21-23, 2010
Henry Wise Wood High School

Topics covered

- Introduction to the D2L user interface
- The most frequently used, basic features
- How D2L increases access, communication, and responsibility for students
- How to effectively plan your use of D2L
- How to request a D2L shell
- Next steps

Introduction to the D2L user interface

1. My Home = listing of all of your courses (Teacher DL, Student, etc.), updates from D2L, Request a new shell, etc.
2. Tutorials section in My Home
3. Inside a course: Course Navigation Bar
   a. Most-used tools: Course Home, Content, Dropbox, Classlist, Discussions, My Home, Locker

How D2L increases access, communication, and responsibility for students

1. Students learn to collaborate with each other through discussion boards, chats, and other online tools in a safe environment.
2. Students check D2L for due dates and extra assignment outlines.
3. It improves communication between me and my students.
4. Students spend a lot of time online and understand the online environment.
5. Students have the flexibility to access D2L anytime, anywhere.
6. Students submit projects to the dropbox with or without a due date that I set.
7. D2L provides me with tools to keep track of how often my students log on and what they do.
8. Students can check for themselves whether they have submitted an assignment.
9. I control what my students have access to and when they have access to it.
10. Students can complete practice quizzes, pre- or post-tests, and self-assessments online to check their own progress. I can use the instant results to understand learning gaps while students can practice for major exams and monitor their own understanding.
11. Students can complete pre-class assignments, readings, or activities, and come to class to tackle the tough skills, concepts, and knowledge in a face-to-face environment.
How to plan your use of D2L

The following are useful questions to tackle before beginning to design your D2L shell:

- What student learning gaps would you like to address? You may be able to address some of these gaps through the use of D2L.
- Are there specific tools in D2L that you would like to try with your students?
- The Content and Course Home features of D2L are the most-used tools in many blended environments. What do you think you could use these features for?
- One of the most important issues to think about is the organization of your course. Your course Content is like a “table of contents” in a book and has a major influence on how your students access it and how you construct it.
  - Some possible styles of organization could be: unit, theme, topic, module, activity, type of resource.
  - Besides the obvious ways of organizing your shell, there are some optional sections that you may wish to include such as: welcome/course information, course expectations, where to begin, resources for a particular unit or project, employability skills.

How to request a D2L shell

1. Go to https://d2l.cbe.ab.ca/ and log in to D2L (use the same username and password as you do to log on to your computer).
2. Click on Request a new shell on the right side of the screen.
3. Log in again using your computer log-in username and password and complete the form.
4. Repeat for as many shells as you wish to request.
5. You will be notified by email (in 2-4 days) once your shell(s) have been created.

Next steps

Based on your comfort level, your understanding of your students’ needs, and your own experiences, you can lead your own learning about D2L.

Some options for getting to know D2L better:

- Ask colleagues how they have been using D2L, and what they find has benefitted students.
- Ask colleagues to enrol you in their shells as Students to get a feel for it.
- Ask Stephanie to enrol you in the HWW Distributed Learning Primer shell
- Ask students about their experiences with D2L and what has helped them to learn in the past.
- Request your own shell and try something in the Tutorials section (in the top left corner of the My Home page) and plan the organization of Content
- Suggest the next steps to Stephanie so that she can tailor her work to your needs
  - What worked for you in this session? What didn’t work for you in this session?
  - What would you like to know more about?
  - What would you like to learn next?
  - How would you like to learn it? (online, small group, drop-in, one tool at a time, lunch time, before, or after school, etc.)

Let’s keep things flexible as we learn together.