# DEVELOPING A SHARED VISION FOR LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Context

Learning technology is increasingly seen as a key enabler for teaching and learning innovation and enhancement. At UBC, our Flexible Learning Initiative has defined a forward-looking approach to enhancing undergraduate, continuing and professional education, underpinned by technology-enhanced and blended learning. Like many other institutions, the LMS is the largest and most-used centrally supported learning technology platform, with widespread uptake from faculty. However, poor performance and stability of the system at the start of the 2013/14 academic session eroded faculty and student trust and cast a long shadow over perceptions of stability and performance. Data from the 2014 ECAR survey of faculty and technology demonstrated widespread dissatisfaction with the system, in terms of availability, response time and ease of use. A wide-ranging consultation with faculty further confirmed this dissatisfaction, together with the view there was a lack of clear understanding of the vision for the evolution of the learning technology tools and systems, a perception of insufficient agility in decision making and governance and a desire for more prominent academic leadership of learning technology.
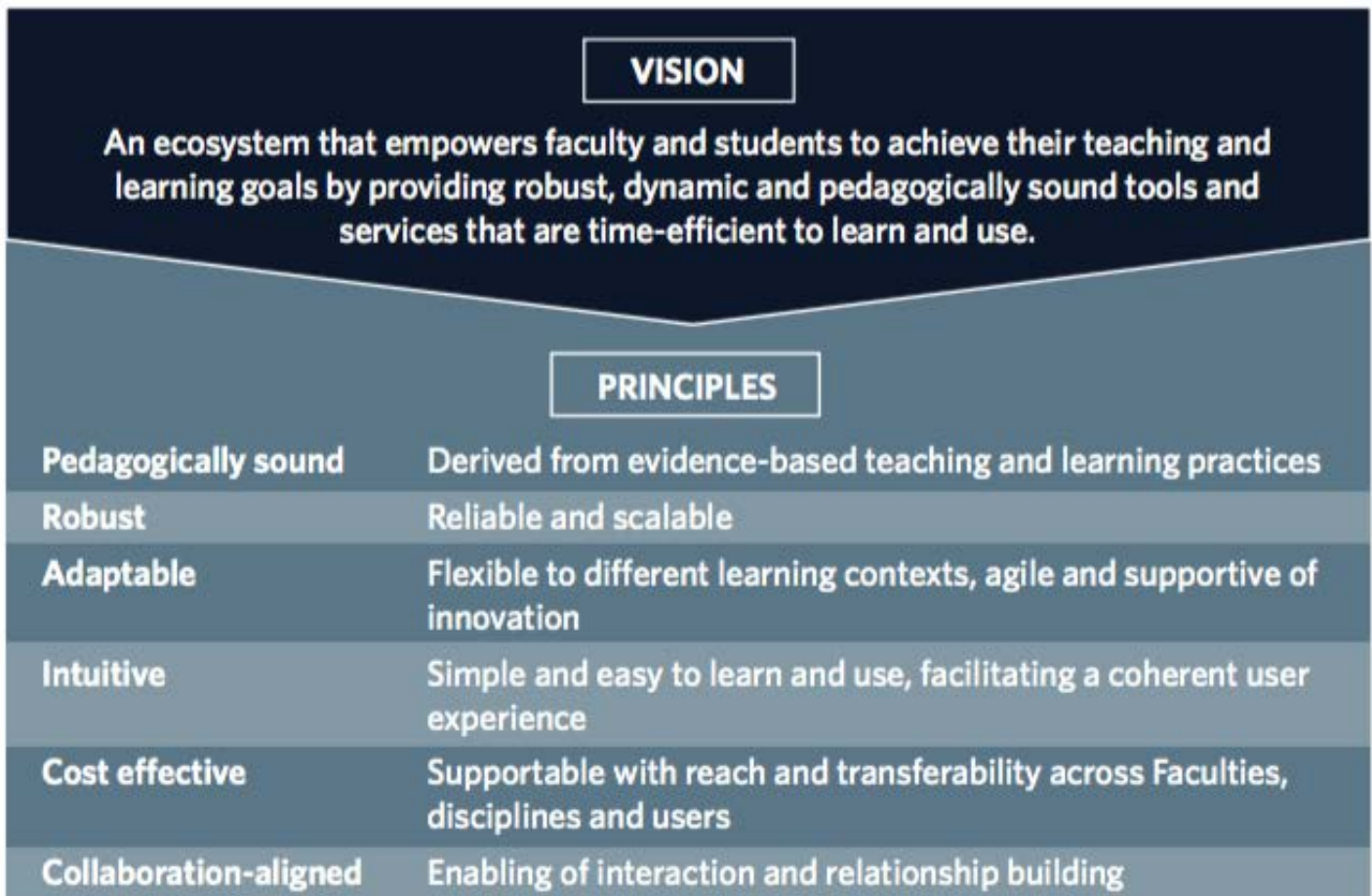
Project Approach

Against this backdrop, we undertook a short, focused project to create a vision for the future of learning technology at UBC. The aims of this Learning Technology Ecosystem Project ("LTEP") were to provide clarity on the current state of tools and services, to envision what a future state three years ahead might look like, and to outline a roadmap to move from current to future state. Driven largely by the activities of a faculty, staff and student working group over a series of collaborative workshop sessions, with steering committee oversight from Deans and institutional leaders, the project reported in May 2015. Additional input was sought from structured conversations with LT leaders at selected peer institutions.
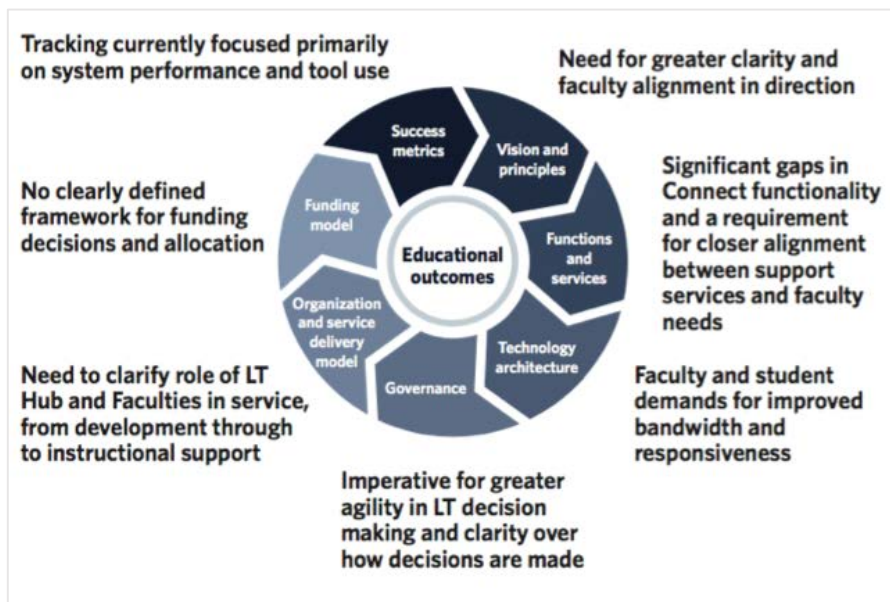
The process framework that we followed in the project is illustrated on the left, along with an assessment of current state (start of project) in each of these focus areas. Successive workshops with faculty, staff and student groups addressed each of these topic areas, in some cases developing new materials (e.g., vision and principles), structures (e.g., governance) and in other areas identifying and prioritizing perceived gaps (e.g., in functions and services).

Simon Bates Senior Advisor, Teaching & Learning | Academic Director simon.bates@ubc.ca
Marianne Schroeder Associate Director, Course & Learning Technologies marianne.schroeder@ubc.ca
Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology

UBC
a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Example output – vision and principles

VISION

An ecosystem that empowers faculty and students to achieve their teaching and learning goals by providing robust, dynamic and pedagogically sound tools and services that are time-efficient to learn and use.

PRINCIPLES

Pedagogically sound	Derived from evidence-based teaching and learning practices
Robust	Reliable and scalable
Adaptable	Flexible to different learning contexts, agile and supportive of innovation
Intuitive	Simple and easy to learn and use, facilitating a coherent user experience
Cost effective	Supportable with reach and transferability across Faculties, disciplines and users
Collaboration-aligned	Enabling of interaction and relationship building

Outlook and moving forwards

Similar to many other institutions, we observe that the functional footprint from a single, monolithic learning management system has been decreasing over time, with an increasing number of tools that provide additional capability (doing new things) or flexibility (choice over how to do things), that meet the needs of individual instructors and disciplinary signature pedagogical approaches. Our thinking now is in terms of an ecosystem of learning technology tools and support structures and services, with a focus on the dynamic and changing nature of the space. There are dependencies in this ecosystem; between technologies, between technologies and services but also between users, technologies and services. Integration and interoperability are no longer 'nice-to-haves' but essential for the function of the ecosystem for faculty and students.

A more complete summary and full report on the rationale, process and outputs from the project can be found online at http://ctlt.ubc.ca/UBCLTES

UBC

a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Simon Bates Senior Advisor, Teaching & Learning | Academic Director simon.bates@ubc.ca
Marianne Schroeder Associate Director, Course & Learning Technologies marianne.schroeder@ubc.ca
Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology