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E-learning in technical university – Moodle environment

Moodle is an open source Course Management System (CMS) that universities, community colleges, K–12 schools, businesses, and even individual instructors use to add web technology to their courses. More than 30,000 educational organizations around the world currently use Moodle to deliver online courses and to supplement traditional face-to-face courses. Moodle is available for free on the Web, so anyone can download and install it.

The word Moodle was originally an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, which is mostly useful to programmers and education theorists. It's also a verb that describes the process of lazily meandering through something, doing things as it occurs to you to do them, an enjoyable tinkering that often leads to insight and creativity. As such it applies both to the way Moodle was developed, and to the way a student or teacher might approach studying or teaching an online course. [2]

Moodle was created by Martin Dougiamas, a computer scientist and educator who spent time supporting a CMS at a university in Perth, Australia. He grew frustrated with the system and learned that engineers, not educators, had built it. Martin realized that a system built by someone who started with the educational process, rather than an engineering process, would be infinitely better than what he had to work with. He put his postgraduate degrees in Education and Computer Science to work and started developing Moodle as an alternative. Martin now works on Moodle full-time. A community of dedicated open source developers from around the world works with him in a collaborative effort to make Moodle the best CMS available. Martin lives in Australia with his wife, daughter, and son.

What makes a web-based learning environment different from a web site? How is a web learning environment different from Amazon or Wikipedia? The answer is: learning goals and feedback.

Learning environments have very specific goals for students. Most other web environments are there for users to achieve their own goals. They provide information, a way to buy things, or a way to connect with other people. People come to these environments of their own volition and can participate at whatever level they choose.

Learning environments are unique because they provide goals for students to achieve, goals they are currently unable to meet on their own. Course objectives define a set of goals for students, goals they would not normally set for themselves. These goals define how students will interact with the material, other students, and teacher.

For example, if a professor is teaching a large survey course, the course goal will be to introduce the main concepts of the field to students. In an advanced theory course, he will want students to demonstrate the ability to reason critically about advanced topics, and possibly synthesize their own ideas. These goals should be just beyond what students can achieve right now. They may not even know what goals to set for themselves, so you need to at least suggest goals and performance levels for them.

The second defining feature of learning environments is feedback. Feedback is critical for students to monitor their progress as they pursue the course goals. Goal-oriented feedback is one of the critical defining aspects of a learning environment. If a student doesn't receive feedback, he has no way of knowing if he is closer to achieving the goals of the class or not. Other types of information environments can't provide feedback to their users because the users, not the environment, define their own goals. The only exception is an online game, which defines external goals and measures the player's progress toward them.

Feedback in a learning environment can take many forms. Tests and quizzes are frequently used tools for measuring student progress. They can provide feedback to students in the form of right and wrong answers or a percentage score. Homework can also provide feedback to students about their understanding of the materials. Less formal feedback might include interaction with students in class, conversations with experts, or applying new knowledge in a work setting. The key is to structure the feedback in useful ways so students can measure themselves against the course goals.

These two features make learning environments unique. Moodle provides teachers with tools to implement these ideas in unique ways. Moodle's educational philosophy guides how those tools are designed and can influence how you structure your learning environment. [1, c. 211]

Since the end of 2000 until 2011 years, all worked on the platform – WebCT, then changed it to Moodle platform. Currently, integration of e-learning in the educational process is successful. In plans develop virtual version of the all coerces in TPU. Particularly for 1–2 courses has developed virtual course "Foreign Language".

I have come to the conclusion – Education using e-learning is an essential part of learning at the university. Contributes to the development of information and useful thinking skills.

References

1. by Jason Cole and Helen Foster. Using Moodle, 2nd Edition, 211 page.
2. https://www.unicon.net/opensource/moodle (дата обращения 16.04.2015).

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