OLTD 504
Reflection on Evidence of Learning 1: Non-LMS Toolkit

OLTD Program Learning Outcomes:

- Examine current research around best practices and emerging practices for both LMS and non-LMS environments.
- Demonstrate basic competency with design and implementation within a variety of LMS and non-LMS environments and tools.
- Create assessment and evaluation methods/tools most suitable to the strengths and challenges of LMS and non-LMS environments.
- Develop skills to optimize learning experiences through personalization based on characteristics, needs, stages of development, current personalized learning mandates, misconceptions etc.

Evidence to Support Outcomes:

I have chosen my non-LMS toolkit to stand as evidence of my achievement of the learning outcomes described above. In order to create this toolkit I researched a variety of tools for building community and inspiring discourse among the teacher and learners, providing content, organization and interactivity, and assessment for, as and of learning, then curated the list to include those tools that I felt best fit my own beliefs about teaching and learning.

In creating my non-LMS toolkit, I was able to clarify some of my own beliefs about how and why technology should be used. Technology that allows for flexibility, supports being responsive to the needs and interests of the learners, engages learners, encourages collaboration, and supports a constructivist approach to learning emerged as key aspects and guided my tool choices. Selecting tools that could integrate well with one another and that could provide a variety of options for students to access content through audio and visual means, going beyond the standard text based presentations was important for me as I believe this provides greater accessibility for the diverse range of learners that teachers find within our classrooms, virtual or bricks and mortar, and allows for more personalized learning.

For the past five years I have worked in a distance and blended environment in which the learning management system provides the framework for student learning. Researching and curating tools for this non-LMS toolkit, and the following up afterwards by reviewing the many other tools presented by my fellow cohort members in their toolkits, has led me to have a greater understanding of how various technological tools can be implemented to create an alternate framework for learning within my current teaching environment as well as within bricks and mortar classrooms where teachers often do not have access to an LMS, or the LMS as a whole is not the best tool to meet the needs of the teacher and students.

Creating this non-LMS toolkit also encouraged me to revisit the Canvas LMS and determine some of the ways in which the flexibility and variety that I was seeking out in the non-LMS tools could also be achieved within the LMS environment. When looking for an

alternate gradebook tool for my non-LMS, I was able to more clearly identify what I have previously been unhappy with when in comes to LMS gradebooks: the fact that the gradebook aspect of the LMS is percentage based and tied to the scores for the given assignments which I feel does not truly reflect student achievement towards the learning outcomes, particularly for those who work on alternate projects. This has allowed me to now consider alternate ways of utilizing the LMS gradebooks in my current work, such as describing project or task options as pages within a Canvas course, then creating the assignment that is actually the learning outcome targeted. This would then create a gradebook that simply lists the learning outcomes rather than specific tasks. Looking beyond the tool has allowed me to think more creatively about how this tool can be used as well.

Technology is constantly evolving. Continuing to examine best and emerging practices is essential for teachers as this helps to provide a lens through which to view the new tools and programs, as well as the old, and determine which ones will best support their teaching and their students' learning. It can take a significant amount of time to become proficient with a new tool. When teachers put in this time, they will then be able to identify potential benefits and challenges of the tool, formulate a plan for how they can use the tool, and be prepared for technological roadblocks that may pop up for their students. Careful curation of the tools will help to ensure that the technology supports the overall pedagogical approach and enhances learning. After creating this non-LMS toolkit, I feel better equipped to evaluate new technology tools that I am presented with and determine how or if they may be a good fit in my own professional practice.