Making the most of collaboration tools in Blackboard

Traditionally, a Learning Management System (LMS) like Blackboard has been used as a repository for lecture notes. With the implementation of collaboration tools like discussion boards and chat tools the LMS also facilitated communication between students and staff. Recently, there has been a shift to more collaborative approach to learning which has changed the way we engage learners to use these tools.

In our institution many of our academics rely heavily on group work for their assessment pieces. They are using Blackboard as a way to facilitate group work among the students. As such the institution has purchased the Learning Objects Blog and Wiki tools to add functionality to Blackboard. We have also developed a new Group Join building block to add another dimension to Blackboard’s native Group tool. This paper will highlight some best practice examples of how academics are using these tools to create true collaborative online environments for their students.

Keywords: collaboration, group work, Blackboard