Why integrate?
Service expectations in an online University world.

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Abstract: Empirical work has shown us that the integration of communication tools, administrative University systems and on-line learning environments is a critical part of providing coherent services to students. The shift in support from campus or time-bound constraints to 24x7 and 365 day services provides not only technological challenge, it critically requires a re-appraisal of service requirements.

In one example from a large new University in the UK, some of the most negative experiences of on-line learners were linked back with initial inaccuracies in the transfer of student information between different systems.

This paper will examine practice from the USA, Canada, Europe and elsewhere around the world, using practical feedback given by some of the 1500 users of WebCT, the 1200 SCT clients and 600 Campus Pipeline sites. It is intended as a practical look at issues, approaches being adopted and opportunities that are being created.

The paper will provide specific examples from a number of centres of excellence around the world and will aim to be objective in respect to the technology, avoiding product references and focusing on the underlying generic issues. The paper will be developed through collaboration with European Institutions and supported by input from strategists at WebCT, SCT and Campus Pipeline.