



December, 2008

Dear UC Community,

After a thorough review of online learning technology options by members of the campus community, UC will be moving from WebCT to the ANGEL online learning platform for all Web-based classes.

In 2007 it became clear the version of WebCT the College was then using would soon no longer be supported. The new version of WebCT, then in development, was going to be significantly different from the existing version and so the College did not have the option to remain with a familiar system. The decision to choose ANGEL rather than renew our contract with WebCT was arrived at through the work of a special committee convened in spring of this year. Under the leadership of former Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, Steve Neun, the group studied more than 25 online course management systems, with substantial input from faculty, staff, and students.

On the basis of its extremely robust features and intuitive, user-friendly interface, the ANGEL system received near unanimous endorsement from those involved in the process as the platform best suited to support Web-based learning at Utica College in the years ahead. It offers a level of simplicity and a range of capabilities that make it an ideal choice for our rapidly-growing suite of online programs.

The College's implementation schedule provides for complete migration from WebCT to ANGEL by the end of May 2009, when UC's contract with WebCT expires. To manage this transition, a migration team has been assembled comprised of faculty from each academic school and staff members from Graduate and Extended Studies, IITS, and Marketing and Communications. Ample training opportunities and support throughout the spring and beyond will be in place to assist faculty who teach in the online environment as well as those who use this technology as a companion to their ground courses. Students will also be able to avail themselves of online tutorials and assistance through UC's 24/7 support services.

The key elements of our transition to ANGEL will be as follows:

- A faculty pilot group has been assembled and began training on December 1, 2008
- Pilot faculty will begin teaching 23 sections of courses with ANGEL in January 2009
- ANGEL instructor training will be made available to the rest of the faculty during the Spring 2009 semester on a systematic schedule
- ANGEL online tutorials and other materials will be provided to student users
- Beginning Summer Semester 2009, online instruction will be conducted entirely via ANGEL

The ANGEL migration team will establish an informational Web site at www.utica.edu/angelinfo that will include facts about ANGEL, transition updates, training schedules, frequently asked questions, and other useful information relating to the changeover. I encourage you to take advantage of these resources as they become available.

Thank you for your cooperation with this important initiative. The transition to ANGEL represents a significant step forward in our efforts to provide our students and faculty with a more intuitive and engaging online learning experience.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty