

**Interim Reporting Template**

<b>Project Name</b>	Constructing2Learn (Oxford University)
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<b>With contributions from</b>	Liz Masterman and Judy McAuliffe (Finance)
<b>Reporting period</b>	First interim report. May 2006 to October 2006
<b>Section One: Summary</b>	
<p>During this first phase of the project we have focussed on planning, software development, initial testing, and dissemination.</p> <p>Our plans are the result of several meetings with our two Oxford University faculty collaborators (see, for example, <a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/10_May_2006_Meeting">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/10_May_2006_Meeting</a>), several internal meetings, and a good deal of background reading (see <a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Articles_and_books">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Articles_and_books</a>).</p> <p>The software being developed consists of three components: the BehaviourComposer (<a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Constructing2Learn#The_Software:_BehaviourComposer_Prototype">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Constructing2Learn#The_Software:_BehaviourComposer_Prototype</a>), the set of micro-behaviours (<a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Browse_MicroBehaviours">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Browse_MicroBehaviours</a>), and the LAMS tool. The BehaviourComposer and micro-behaviours, while still early prototypes, have been used by two alpha testers. The BehaviourComposer is complete enough to support the construction of a published model by our zoology collaborator <a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Browse_MicroBehaviours#Effective_leadership_and_decision-making_in_animal_groups_on_the_move">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Browse_MicroBehaviours#Effective_leadership_and_decision-making_in_animal_groups_on_the_move</a>). The integration with LAMS is proceeding well and a partial tool has been implemented and integrated into LAMS (see posts by Ken Kahn at <a href="http://lamscommunity.org/dotlrn/clubs/technicalcommunity/forums/forum-view?forum%5fid=4930">http://lamscommunity.org/dotlrn/clubs/technicalcommunity/forums/forum-view?forum%5fid=4930</a>).</p> <p>Three seminars and a workshop presentation have already been given describing the project and two more are scheduled (see <a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Constructing2Learn#Project_Presentations">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Constructing2Learn#Project_Presentations</a>). These have led to an awareness of the project in Oxford and the London Knowledge Lab and may lead to new collaborations.</p>	
<b>Section Two: Activities and Progress</b>	
<p>Work package 1 (University Curriculum Fit) has proceeded very well. We have established connections with faculty members at Oxford University in zoology, sociology, economics, and business. Our collaborator from the sociology department has recently left to join the faculty at the University of Leicester. He has indicated he is still keen to collaborate. We plan to continue to work with him as well as find another faculty member in the social sciences.</p> <p>Work package 2 (Simulation Construction Learning Designs) has resulted in one large LAMS design consisting of about 20 activities. Additional designs will be implemented once the LAMS tool integration is complete.</p> <p>Work package 3 (Simulation Construction Kit Prototype) has become functional earlier than expected and is now in testing.</p> <p>Work package 4 (Open Workshop I) has been postponed until early 2007. We think the workshop will be more productive after we have made progress on other aspects of the project.</p> <p>Work package 5 (Simulation Construction Kit Field Testing) is proceeding well at a small scale and we plan to soon expand the number of testers to approximately ten. We see this as critical for our interactive design plans.</p>	
<b>Section Three: Outputs, Outcomes and Deliverables</b>	
<p>A beta version of the simulation construction kit has been made available at <a href="http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Beta_testing">http://dfl.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Beta_testing</a>.</p>	
<b>Section Four: Dissemination</b>	

4 July Ken Kahn presented the project and gave a demo to about 40 people at the LAMS Version 2 workshop hosted at the London Knowledge Lab.

18 July Ken Kahn presented the project and gave a demo to the Learning Technology Group of the Oxford University Computing Services.

29 September Ken Kahn presented the BehaviourComposer software to the workshop on the Pedagogic Issues in Multi-Agent Programming as part of the European Conference on Complex Systems.

12 October Ken Kahn gave a seminar about the project in the Animal Behaviour Seminar Series at the Department of Zoology at the University of Oxford. The slides are available from <http://df1.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Image:Slides.zip>.

25 October Ken Kahn will give a Digital Project talk at OUCS.

28 November Ken Kahn is scheduled to give a seminar to the Oxford University Complex System Seminar series.

### **Section Five: Evaluation**

No key evaluation “events” were envisaged during the reporting period. However, useful feedback on usability has been provided in alpha testing. In addition to the formal alpha tester, we were joined for a day by a secondary-school student undergoing work experience at OUCS. With no knowledge of either programming or modelling, but with experience of playing computer games, he quickly became productive in the BehaviourComposer after minimal tuition from Ken and built a number of simple models, some with a game-playing element (<http://df1.cetis.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Euan>). This has proved fruitful for the team in opening up a number of pedagogical issues for investigation with the target audience of university students.

We expect to be in a position to carry out usability tests with a cohort of students before Christmas (ahead of schedule); however, recruitment of teaching staff for the interviews and usability walkthroughs scheduled in November and December remains at an early stage.

### **Section Six: Issues and Challenges**

The major problem we are facing is a consequence of the departure from Oxford University of the sociology instructor that was collaborating with us. We plan to continue collaborating with him at the University of Leicester and are also actively seeking someone from the social sciences at Oxford to fill his role.

We are proud of the fact that our simulation construction kit is already capable of constructing the equivalent of the model that our zoology collaborator published last year. Our version is much more modular and pedagogically suitable and can be assembled in less than half an hour using our BehaviourComposer.

### **Section Seven: Support**

We have been very pleased with the support from Cetis for hosting of our web site. This site contains all the project documents as well as all the micro behaviours used by our software. The LAMS team has provided excellent (and needed) support to build and install a new tool for LAMS version 2. We have received helpful advice from our advisory board members and other researchers at the London Knowledge Lab.