Apereo Newsletter
September/October 2015

From the Editor

Upcoming Events
1) Sakai Virtual Conference 2015
2) Opencast Community Meetings
3) VII Spanish Sakai Murcia '15
4) Unicon Webinar: Getting Started with Open Learning Analytics

Announcements
5) Apereo Funding and Resource Management (FARM) Interest Group
6) Sakai Mighty Project Site Interest Group

Project News & Releases
7) GradebookNG Available on Experimental Nightly Server
8) Apereo CAS v. 4.1.0 Release
9) Apereo Open Academic Environment Releases OAE Kingfisher (v. 12)

From the Editor:
There's a lot going on in Apereo project communities as a new semester gets underway. In addition to project news and releases, this month's newsletter is full of opportunities to get involved in our communities, whether at a conference or via webinar or discussion group.

A reminder, also, that we are looking for YOUR contributions to the newsletter. Examples might include (but are not limited to) articles, video clips, screencasts, graphics, or short announcements on:
-- How you're using software produced by an Apereo community at your institution
-- Major releases or minor tweaks
-- Ideas for new projects you'd like to get feedback on or gauge interest in
-- Important discussions of general educational technology issues that emerge on community email lists

Contributions of all lengths, from snippet to think pieces, are welcome. Send your submissions (and any questions!) to newsletter@apereo.org .

Deadline for items for the next newsletter is Monday, October 19.

-- Lucy Appert, Newsletter Editor

Upcoming Events

1) Sakai Virtual Conference 2015
Sakai Virtual Conference 2015

The Future of the Learning Management System is Open
November 4, 2015 - Online
http://virtconf.apereo.org/ **#SakaiVC15**

Register today for the Sakai Virtual Conference. Registration is $50 per person (or $500 for group registration), with all proceeds going toward Sakai feature development. The first 200 registrants will receive promo items courtesy of our sponsors.

The Sakai Virtual Conference will take place entirely online on Wednesday, November 4, 2015. You'll attend presentations in concurrent session webinar rooms, ask the presenters live questions, and get the conference experience without the expense of travel. There will be opportunities for networking and informal discussions, as well as a chance to win prizes donated by our sponsors. The "conference location" will be in Sakai, and we will be using Sakai tools such as Lessons, Forums, etc. to facilitate interaction among attendees. If you are comfortable in Sakai, you will easily engage in this virtual experience.

Our keynote speakers for the event are:
Dr. Malcolm Brown, EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative
Dr. Charles Severance, University of Michigan

The program is still being finalized. However, there will be information sessions, interactive and small-group/unconference discussions, a UX testing track, and a two-hour Spanish language track prior to the main conference. Find out how your peers are using Sakai at their institutions! Presentations will focus on effective teaching and learning practices, online pedagogy, and engaging students using technology.

The Sakai Virtual Conference is a unique opportunity to network with your peers and share stories and best practices in an online venue. Register today and stay tuned for publication of the full program!

2) Opencast Community Meetings
 - The Opencast Adopters Meeting takes place every last Wednesday of a
   month. The meeting is held at 3pm UTC in the Adobe Connect at
   http://emeeting.campusdomar.es/room/opencast

 - The Opencast Technical Meeting is held every Tuesday at 15:00 UTC
   at http://matterhorn.bigbluebutton.org/matterhorn
   (password=welcome).

3) VII Spanish Sakai Murcia '15
El grupo de usuarios de Sakai en español (S2U - Spanish Sakai Users), formado por Universidades Españolas y Afiliados comerciales, está organizando su VII Encuentro Spanish Sakai '15 los días 2 y 3 de noviembre de 2015. Dicho encuentro está previsto que tenga lugar en la Universidad de Murcia.

Entre los participantes se encuentran expertos e instituciones nacionales de contrastada experiencia y prestigio a nivel nacional e internacional que nos harán partícipes de las últimas novedades de Sakai y de las posibilidades de esta plataforma. Está confirmada la asistencia de D. Ian Dolphin (Executive Director Apereo Foundation) y de D. Charles Severance (PMC Chair -Sakai Project Management Committee- y Profesor de la Universidad de Michigan).

El primer día, lunes 2 de noviembre, será una jornada abierta (es necesario registrarse) donde se presenten los últimos avances de Sakai, se compartan experiencias, se informe sobre otras herramientas de software libre relacionadas con la Educación Superior y se debata sobre otros temas novedosos impulsados por la Fundación Apereo (a la cual pertenece el proyecto Sakai). El segundo día, martes 3 de noviembre, está reservado para sesiones de trabajo entre los miembros del grupo S2U.

Si estás interesado en participar presentando tu experiencia con Sakai o cualquier otro tema que pueda resultar de interés para el grupo, ponte en contacto con nosotros a través de spanishsakai@gmail.com para que un equipo de expertos revise tu propuesta.

El registro para las sesiones abiertas estará disponible en web del evento.

Más información en: http://eventos.um.es/go/spanish-sakai-murcia

- English summary
VII Spanish Sakai Murcia '15

The S2U Team (Spanish Sakai Users) is organizing their VII Spanish Sakai '15 event for the 2nd and the 3rd of November 2015. The event will take place at the University of Murcia (Spain) and it will be primarily in Spanish, including a brief presentation from each institution in English. Spanish presentations will include slides in English so that non Spanish speakers can better understand. Thanks to the collaboration of the Apereo Foundation, Ian Dolphin and Charles Severance will also join the meeting. Presentations will be on Monday the 2nd, the 3rd is reserved for group work between S2U members and anyone interested in joining.

More information: http://eventos.um.es/go/spanish-sakai-murcia

José Mariano Luján
S2U Representative
jmariano@um.es

4) Unicon Webinar: Getting Started with Open Learning Analytics
Getting Started with Open Learning Analytics – Learn from a Unicon IT Expert - Webinar
Thursday, October 15, 2015, 2:00 p.m. EST/ 11:00 a.m. PST
Details to come. Register at: http://www.unicon.net/about/events/open-LA-webinar.

Announcements

5) Apereo FARM
The idea behind FARM (Funding and Resource Management) is to help community members "self-start" improvements and enhancements to Apereo projects by collaborating, resource sharing, and best practices. A group of eleven of us have been working on this idea for several months. We are in the process of getting input from the Sakai PMC and other Apereo projects. There will be a presentation at the Sakai Virtual Conference and we will keep the community informed. If you have questions or input for the group, please email neal.caidin@apereo.org .

6) Sakai Mighty Project Site Group
Ever wish you could see and explore what other institutions are doing with Sakai? Do you feel you may be using project sites in a unique way and wondering who else out there may be doing the same? Then consider joining the Mighty Project Site group!

This group originated as a result of a session at 2014's Sakai Virtual Conference, and has been meeting monthly ever since. This collaborative and supportive group includes teaching faculty, educational technologists, and IT personnel, which spans back-end/administrator, front-end/trainer, and teacher expertise with Sakai. This range of perspectives allows us to probe a wide variety of questions regarding Sakai.

The mission of the Mighty Project Site group is to work towards benchmarking standards of use of project sites in Sakai through collaboration and showcasing of our institutions' instances of Sakai.
Our meeting topics have included: comparing tools used in project sites, custom roles created for use within project sites, different integrations used, and a more general exploration of the Apereo 2015 conference materials available online. Though our primary focus is project sites, we regularly discuss topics relevant to teaching with Sakai, be it via course or project sites.

We typically meet once a month on a Monday at 12 PM Eastern Time. Our most recent meeting was Monday, October 5th, at 12PM EDT. With new members, we would be happy to adjust this plan as needed to suit all attendees!

Please email Rebecca Taylor atrtaylor@cmcc.ca if you are interested in joining this group!

Project News & Releases

7) GradebookNG Available on Experimental Nightly Server
Since early 2015, the GradebookNG team has been working hard on a new interface for the Sakai Gradebook tool. We are pleased to announce that the this is now available in the experimental nightly server: https://experimental.nightly.sakaiproject.org/portal

The GradebookNG Project represents a joint effort between NYU, Notre Dame, Longsight, and SCRIBA. We would like to acknowledge our partners in helping to make this project a reality.

GradebookNG provides a number of enhancements, centered around a new spreadsheet-style interface. Features include:

◦ Faster Grade Entry - Grades can be entered directly into the spreadsheet interface, allowing instructors to quickly enter scores as they would in a traditional spreadsheet application. Scores are automatically validated and saved.
◦ Simplified Layout - Menus and screens within the Gradebook have been simplified and consolidated, with many existing functions now available within the spreadsheet interface.
◦ Improved Import/Export Process - A simplified and consolidated import/export process provides the ability to import scores and comments for existing items, as well as to create new Gradebook items via an improved workflow.

The team will be finishing up some remaining features and resolving bugs over the coming weeks and months. For more information on GradebookNG, including functional/technical overviews and a video walkthrough of the tool, visit the [Gradebook Enhancements Project wiki page](). Also note that the team will be presenting on the new Gradebook at the upcoming Sakai Virtual Conference.

- The GradebookNG Team

8) Apereo CAS v. 4.1.0 Release
The Apereo CAS server version 4.1.0 is released. This version presents a large number of features and is the culmination of a year-long effort to bring together many improvements and extensions that previously existed in the community and in parallel to the platform itself. The project has made extensive efforts to ensure that emerging and common use cases in the CAS community are met and that deployment and build practices of the software are done easier than ever. A few notable features of this latest release are:

- A brand new services management web application that allows CAS adopters to register applications with CAS in an easy mobile-friendly way.
- CAS applications can now be modeled using a JSON syntax, which allows immediate changes to configuration to be auto-reloaded and configured.
- A new ticket storage backend is now provided by CAS directly that is based on the Hazelcast technology. This is expected to ultimately supplant the Ehcache storage service and the like.
- Session affinity requirements are removed via updates to Spring Webflow, such as idle timeouts on the CAS login no longer expire the user session.

Additionally, many other improvements exist that affect logging, monitoring, attribute filtering and release while integrations with CAS Clearpass and the Shibboleth Identity

Provider are improved substantially.

The CAS project continues its development towards version 4.2.0 with myriad of new enhancements, particularly around automatic module configuration and integration with 3rd party solutions such as SAML SPs, ADFS, and more. We hope to have this release available by the Open Apereo conference of 2016, if not earlier.

We welcome all CAS adopters to upgrade to this brand new release. As always, feedback and comments are especially welcome, via the CAS mailing lists [1]

[1] http://jasig.github.io/cas/Mailing-Lists.html

9) Apereo Open Academic Environment Releases OAE Kingfisher (v. 12)
The Apereo Open Academic Environment (OAE) project is proud to announce a milestone release of the Apereo Open Academic Environment; OAE Kingfisher or OAE 12.
OAE Kingfisher is one of the most significant releases of the Open Academic Environment software and includes many new features geared towards making OAE a truly global system that is capable of connecting the whole of academia. Next to these features, OAE Kingfisher also includes significant improvements to the search experience, the ability to delete and archive users and many usability improvements and bug fixes.

Changelog

Invitations
The most important new feature in the Kingfisher release is the ability for users to invite anyone in the world to a group, content item or discussion using an email address. While it used to be a requirement for a person to have an account before they could be invited into collaborations, the invitation feature now opens the door to including anyone you want to work with and truly pushed towards the OAE vision of creating a connected and global network for academic collaboration.

When invited users can be matched to an existing tenancy and institution, they will be invited into that tenancy and will be able to collaborate from their institutional account. When invited users can't be matched to an existing tenancy, they will be invited into a "Guest" tenancy.

Multi-tenancy improvements
Apereo OAE now offers support for 1,000s of tenancies and institutions on a single installation, allowing for collaboration between people at a large number of institutions all around the world. In order to support this, OAE Kingfisher includes a wide range of general performance improvements as well as various improvements to the administration interface.

Email verification

Users signing up for a new account or users coming in through an authentication source that does not provide a verified email address are now required to verify their email address before they are able to use the system. This will ensure a much higher level of trust in OAE accounts and the people you collaborate with and reduces potential abuse. Similarly, existing users changing their email address will also need to go through the email verification workflow before their changes take effect.

Search
Up until OAE version 11, searching through the OAE would return results that encompass everything you're allowed to see, including results from the institution you're a member of and public results. While being able to search and discover across the entire network is one of the unique features of the OAE software, it sometimes caused results from the collaborations you're directly involved in to be buried.

Therefore, OAE Kingfisher offers a significantly enhanced search experience in which it is possible to toggle between results from only the groups, content items and discussions you're involved in, results from your institution or results from the entire network. This should make it much easier to find the specific items you're looking for, while still making it possible to cast a wider net and discover interesting groups, people, content items and discussions throughout the network.

Navigation improvements
OAE Kingfisher introduces a number of navigation improvements, which should significantly enhance the overall experience. For example, a better top navigation has been put in place for mobile devices and users now automatically land on their personal activity feed when going to the system, resulting in less clicks overall and more direct access to the information they're looking for.

Delete users
OAE Kingfisher makes it possible for tenant administrators to delete users, allowing for inactive or unused user accounts to be removed from the system. Deleted users are not removed from the system entirely though, but are archived instead and all of their groups, content items and discussions are retained. Therefore, deleted user accounts can be re-activated by an administrator at any point in time.

Try it out
OAE Kingfisher can be experienced on the project's QA server at http://oae.oae-qa0.oaeproject.org. It is worth noting that this server is actively used for testing and will be wiped and redeployed every night.

The source code has been tagged with version number 12.0.0 and can be downloaded from the following repositories:
Back-end: https://github.com/oaeproject/Hilary/tree/12.0.0
Front-end: https://github.com/oaeproject/3akai-ux/tree/12.0.0

Documentation on how to install the system can be found at

https://github.com/oaeproject/Hilary/blob/12.0.0/README.md.
Instruction on how to upgrade an OAE installation from version 11 to version 12 can be found at https://github.com/oaeproject/Hilary/wiki/OAE-Upgrade-Guide.
The repository containing all deployment scripts can be found at https://github.com/oaeproject/puppet-hilary.

Get in touch
The project website can be found at http://www.oaeproject.org. The project blog will be updated with the latest project news from time to time, and can be found at http://www.oaeproject.org/blog.

The mailing list used for Apereo OAE is oae@apereo.org. You can subscribe to the mailing list at https://groups.google.com/