APPENDIX B

DEFINITIONS


Accessibility - for persons with disabilities entails providing for a universal text version without relying on frames, tables, or images.

Analyzing and tracking - facilities for statistical analysis of student-related data; the ability to display the progress of individual students in the course structure.

Apple Server - an Internet server running the Apple Computer Operating System.

Application sharing - the ability to run an application on one machine and share the window view across the Web. May also include provisions for sharing mouse control of the application.

Asynchronous sharing - the exchange of data and files where the correspondents are not online at the same time.

Authorization tools - tools that assign access and other privileges to specific users or user groups.

BBS file exchange (Bulletin Board Service) - facility for downloading files and uploading/posting files over the Web.

Bookmarks - Bookmarks identify Internet locations. This category covers the creation, display, management and updating of bookmarks.

Building motivation - facilities for self-help (and possibly other help such as a “buddy system”) to provide encouragement and enhance morale.

Building knowledge - facilities to accumulate and share the knowledge gained by individual instructors through their experience with distance education. Examples range from simple Q&A files to extensive database style data warehouses of tips, workarounds, and class exercises.

Chat - a feature that allows the exchange of text (e.g., Internet Relay Chat).

Client Platform - the program on the users machine that allows it to interact with the server, usually a browser or a proprietary program specific to the server application.

Client - Client tool installation includes both the student client and the instructor client software.

Course managing - facilities to enable instructors to collect information from or about students related to their progress in the course structure also to permit/deny access to course resources.

Course monitoring - facilities that provide information about the usage of course resources by individual students and groups of students.

Course tools - instructor tasks related to bringing course materials together and managing the student’s use/access of those materials.

Course planning - tools that enable at least initial course layout and or structuring.

Crash recovery tools - facilities to recover from communications or server hardware
failure without loss of data (in addition to the tools provided by the operating system).

*Customize settings* - the ability to reconfigure menus, command buttons, and other features of the product to suit an individual user.

*Data tools* - tools for marking online, managing records, analyzing and tracking.

*Disk Space* - the amount of hard disk storage space required for the program to operate.

*E-mail* - Electronic Mail using the Internet protocols (unless otherwise indicated).

*Ease of use* - the “naturalness” of the interface for the task at hand and the training required to be able to use the product.

*Exit Considerations* - factors that are only important when changing from one application to another, these often involve translating data from a proprietary format to a common format so that the new application can read the data from the old application.

*Exporting* - sending/uploading files or data from the product to other applications/products.

*Extra Considerations* - information or restrictions beyond the evaluation criteria category scheme.

*Group browsing* - a group tour of Web sites with a shared browser window; some interaction capability between the members of the group and the tour leader.

*Help desk tools* - tools that assist the technical administration personnel in handling trouble calls and requests for technical assistance.

*Hits Rank* - the rank order of the number of times a page is accessed or relative popularity.

*Importing* - bringing/loading in of files or data from outside the product.

*Integration* - The part of the application design that facilitates efficient (seamless) transition between tasks and/or modules using the same user interface.

*Installation tools* - facilities that are used in the initial setup of the application or in upgrading from a previous version.

*Instructor Tools* - facilities primarily intended for use by instructors, markers and course designers.

*Instructor support tools* - facilities to assist technical support personnel in providing technical assistance to instructors using the application.

*Instructional designing* - facilities to help instructors create learning sequences.

*Learner tools* - Tools/facilities used by the student learner at their location, the client side of distance education.

*Lesson tools* - tools that facilitate the development and deployment of instructional sequences smaller than a whole course, like assignments, modules, topics, etc.

*Limitations of package* - capacities and restrictions on the usage of the application software.

*Managing records* - facilities for organizing and keeping track of course-related information.
Marking online - facilities that support the marking of student generated material while online.

Minimum Level - lowest level of browser that can be used with the application. level1 is text only browser, level2 is equivalent to Netscape 2.0, level3 is equivalent to Netscape 3.0, level4 is equivalent to Netscape 4.0 etc.

Motivation building - self-help tools and other facilities that provide direct encouragement to overcome difficulties that impede or impair student performance.

Multimedia - support for images, audio, video, and VRML files.

Navigation - the menu, command button, and right-click context menus that enable program functions.

Newsgroups - Newsgroups facility includes Usenet newsgroups and like functions.

Number - limits on the available resources determined by the software capacities or the license.

On-going Cost - continuing year to year application costs for licensing, service contracts, etc. beyond the start-up cost.

Openness - the extensibility of the interface to enable additional functions to be added such as with a macro facility, also the use of “open standards” versus proprietary formats for data and control.

Options - features of the application that are not necessary, but perhaps desirable add-ons to the basic package.

Other efficiencies - refers to the operating delays occasioned when switching from another task to the product or delays from the repetitive tasks such as many layers of menus without shortcut keys.

Other Limitations - limitations that stem from the application software situation such as version number where higher numbers usually indicate more mature (less buggy) software.

Presenting information - facilities for formatting, displaying, or showing course material over the Web.

Pricing - list price of the application software package varies among vendors in part because the pricing models are different.

Progress tracking - student’s ability to check marks on assignments and tests.

RAM - random access memory usually specified in KB (kilobytes) or MB (megabytes).

Rapid course revising - the ability to change the structure of the course and its assignments, exams, etc.

Remote access tools - tools for application system administration from more than one machine.

Resource tools - tools for building knowledge, team building, and building motivation among instructors.

Resource monitoring - the ability to display the disk space and CPU resources devoted to the application while it is being used.

Security tools - tools to prevent unauthorized access and/or modification of data. Includes a wide range of approaches and methods.
Security - Browser security refers to the support for secure transactions on the Web and to verify the security of downloaded code.

Self-assessing - facilities for self-assessment such as practice quizzes and other survey style assessment tools that may or may not be scored online.

Server Platform - the operating system of the Internet server machine.

Stability of interface - refers to the sameness of the interface that enables experienced users to continue using the interface in their accustomed ways in the context of upgrades and changes to the supporting software.

Startup - the task delay occasioned when using the function for the first time in a session.

Start-up Cost - initial cost of acquiring the application and getting it running locally.

Student tools - applications that cater to the special needs of telelearners.

Student support tools - tools that facilitate the tasks of an operator responding to requests for help by student users of the application.

Study skill building - Study skill building includes facilities that support effective study practices, which can range form simple review tools to mini courses in how to study.

System tools - authorization tools, security tools, resource monitoring tools, remote access tools, and crash recovery tools.

Target Level - level of browser that was intended to work best with the application. level1 is text only browser, level2 is equivalent to Netscape 2.0, level3 is equivalent to Netscape 3.0, level4 is equivalent to Netscape 4.0 etc.

Team building - the ability of instructors with common interests to communicate in a way that facilitates their forming a sense of group/team identity.

Technical admin tools - the setup and maintenance tasks involved on the server side of the application and extending to setup/configuration of client side software to work properly with the server side application (some of these tasks may be carried out by instructors in some situations).

Technical Support - customer service for technical administrators usually from the application vendor.

Teleconferencing - audio conferencing.

Testing - facilities to assist in the making up of practice quizzes, tests, exams, and other assignments.

Time efficiency - the speed of loading and using the product in the context of other concurrent tasks.

Unix Server - Unix server operating system software, sometimes customized to a specific hardware vendor i.e. Solaris for Sun Servers.

Videoconferencing - broadcasting video to users without a video input device.

Virtual space - MOOs, MUDs, and virtual meeting rooms.

Web Browsing - Tools for viewing HTML documents (also see Browsers)

Whiteboard - a shared text window that may also support shared drawing.

WindowsNT 4.0 Server - Microsoft Windows NT version 4.0 server operating system software (version 5.0 was recently renamed Windows 2000).