



Leveraging the LMS

Managing a Student Workforce
Through Blackboard

SUNYLA 2020

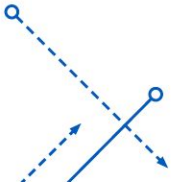
Background

This project represents the development and implementation of a learning management system (LMS) course for student employees in a large multi-campus academic library. The course was originally created to retrain the University at Buffalo Libraries' student workforce for July 2019's Alma migration, but has since broadened in scope. Further development was designed to mitigate inconsistent training and communication within a large workforce spread across multiple locations and shifts, with frequent turnover.

UBLearns hosted by Blackboard, the University at Buffalo's LMS, was suited for this task because:

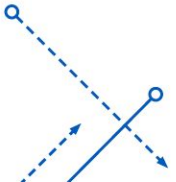
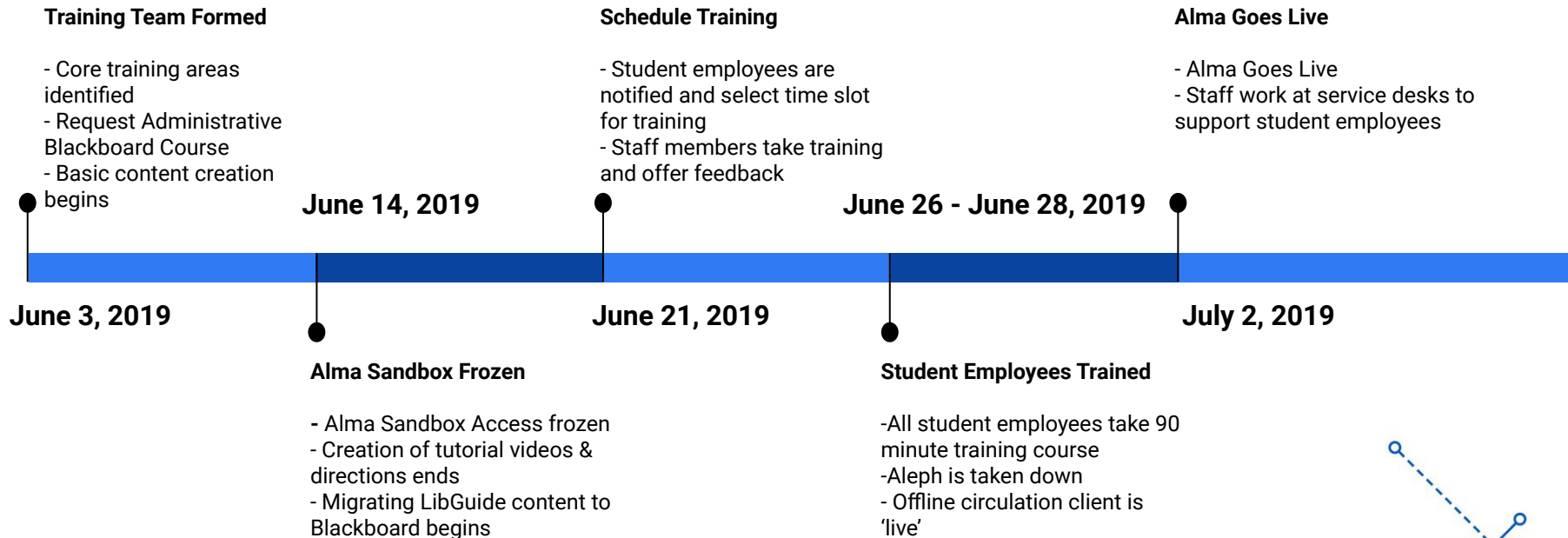
- It is restricted to current employees and staff
- It uses personal login credentials
- Students are already familiar with accessing and navigating the platform

The LMS course supports three central management functions: centralized communication, orientation and training, and an expanded repository of tutorials for ongoing employee support and reference. This poster reports the results of the initial phase of the project, details continued development, and explores future plans for building a more robust and interactive training program.



Phase One: Objective & Timeline

Objective: At the time of the Alma migration, student employees will feel comfortable performing basic fulfillment transactions at the service desk with minimal staff assistance.



Phase One: Development

Content

- Customer Service
- Patron Accounts & Loan Policies
- Fulfillment Services in Alma

Format

- Videos
- Step-by-step written directions
- Charts

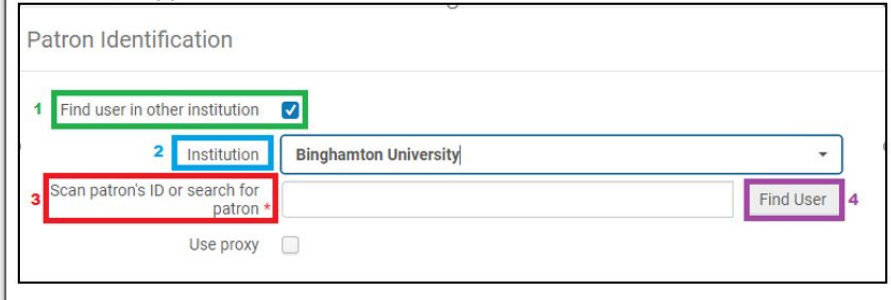
Assessment

- 1 quiz per content area
- 80% required to pass
- Unlimited attempts



	General Collection	Multimedia	Equipment	Max # of Loans	Max # of Requests	Account Blocked
FRANK UB FACULTY MEMBER UB Faculty/Staff & UB Law Faculty/Staff	Initial Loan Periods: 16 weeks Renewals: (from initial loan date) Unlimited	30 days Unlimited* <small>*will not auto-renew; must submit a renewal request</small>	7 days No Renewals	Unlimited ✓	Unlimited ✓	10 days overdue ⊗ <small>(Resource Sharing items only)</small>
GRACE UB GRADUATE STUDENT UB Graduate Student & UB Law Graduate Student	Initial Loan Periods: 16 weeks Renewals: (from initial loan date) 64 weeks Overdue Fines: None	30 days 60 days None	7 days No Renewals \$10/day	Unlimited ✓	Unlimited ✓	10 days overdue ⊗ <small>Recalled Materials: \$20/day</small>
BRAD UB UNDERGRAD STUDENT UB Undergrad Student & UB Law Undergrad Student	Initial Loan Periods: 16 weeks Renewals: (from initial loan date) None Overdue Fines: None	30 days 60 days None	7 days No Renewals \$10/day	Unlimited ✓	Unlimited ✓	10 days overdue ⊗ <small>Recalled Materials: \$20/day</small>

You will be taken to the **Patron Identification** screen.
Select **Find user in other institution (1)**.
Select the **Institution (2)**.
Swipe the patron's ID or **search (3)** for them using person number/name.
Select **Find User (4)**.



Patron Identification

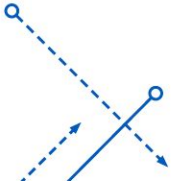
1 Find user in other institution

2 Institution Binghamton University

3 Scan patron's ID or search for patron *

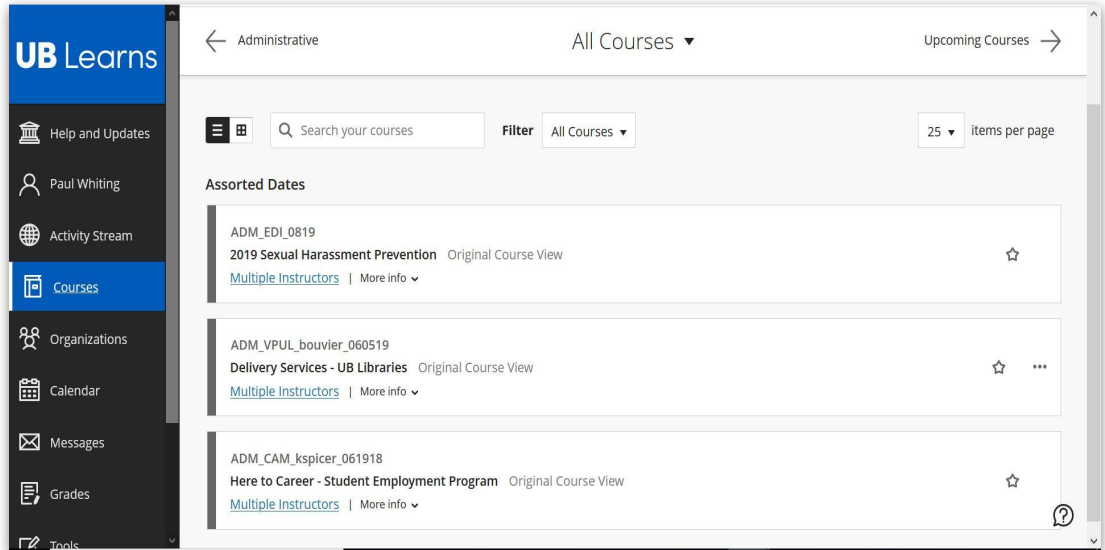
Find User 4

Use proxy



Phase One: Implementation

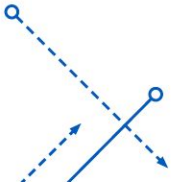
- 90 minute paid, staff-proctored sessions
- 44 student employees attended June 26th-28th
- Approx. 45 student employees attended August 19th-23rd
- Student employees self-registered into the “Delivery Services” Blackboard Course



The screenshot displays the Blackboard user interface for the 'All Courses' page. The left sidebar contains navigation options: 'UB Learns', 'Help and Updates', 'Paul Whiting', 'Activity Stream', 'Courses' (highlighted), 'Organizations', 'Calendar', 'Messages', 'Grades', and 'Tools'. The main content area shows a search bar, a filter set to 'All Courses', and a '25 items per page' dropdown. Below this, the 'Assorted Dates' section lists three courses:

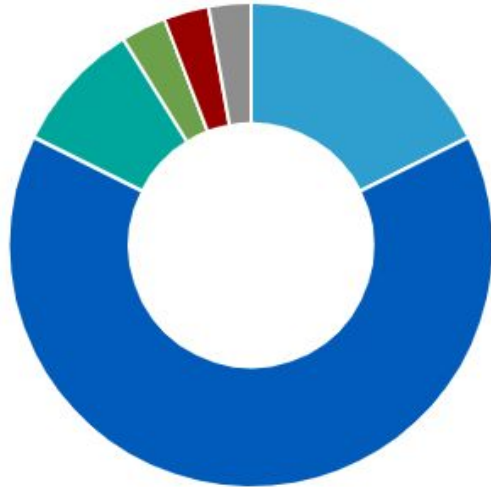
- ADM_ED1_0819
2019 Sexual Harassment Prevention Original Course View
[Multiple Instructors](#) | [More info](#) ☆
- ADM_VPUL_bouvier_060519
Delivery Services - UB Libraries Original Course View
[Multiple Instructors](#) | [More info](#) ☆ ⋮
- ADM_CAM_kspicer_061918
Here to Career - Student Employment Program Original Course View
[Multiple Instructors](#) | [More info](#) ☆

A question mark icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the course list area.



Phase One: Results

I feel confident that I can work independently at the service desk post Go-Live

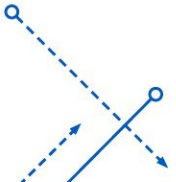


- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Not Applicable

98% student employee compliance

82.35% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident to work at the service desk post-migration

[Full training summary](#)



Phase Two: Development

Objective: Expand previous Alma training module into a comprehensive student employee management platform by unifying previously disparate management tasks.

Training

- 1:1 sessions = high demand on staff time
- Time of need scheduling: typically first week of Fall
- No measurable assessment: staff “signed-off” based on one training session observation
- Knowledge gaps: inconsistent content coverage; often limited to as-needed info just to function independently on a service desk

Documentation

- Manuals, etc. for employee reference were in various places
- Many hosted on LibGuides: staff-friendly, not student-friendly
- LibGuides was password protected with a general staff email, resulting in infrequent access

Communication

- Primary method: listserv email
- In-Person updates: sporadic and dependant on staff member presence
- Blog on LibGuide: infrequent access led to infrequent updates
- Slack: student requested; never used

Phase Two: Development

Training

- Mixed Methods: mixed self-paced tutorials and 1:1 training
- Groups of 3-4 students scheduled
- Assessments built into Blackboard; results guide staff mediated training
- Greater consistency in content coverage



Documentation

- Migrated manuals, policies, guides, etc. for employee reference
- Students are familiar with accessing and navigating Blackboard
- Restricted to library personnel, with personal login credentials used



Communication

- Email listserv used for time-sensitive information only
- Blackboard announcements used for primary communication; serves as homepage
- Memo system used to track employee compliance and accountability

BLACKBOARD

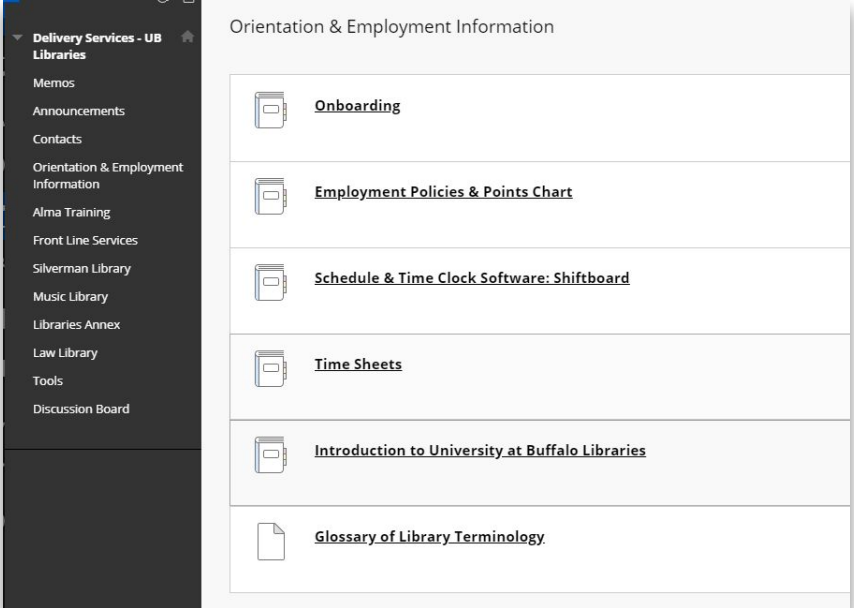
Phase Two: Training

Purpose: repository for hiring and training documents; training activities

Audience: newly hired student employees; current employees taking on new roles/promotions

Information Includes:

- Orientation Information
 - [Introduction to various libraries on campus](#)
 - Introduction to various services offered
- Human resources documents
 - Onboarding forms
 - [Scheduling instructions](#)
 - Time sheets
- Training Activities
 - Videos
 - Manuals & step by step guides
 - Assessments



The screenshot displays a web application interface. On the left is a dark navigation sidebar with the following items: "Delivery Services - UB Libraries" (with a star icon), "Memos", "Announcements", "Contacts", "Orientation & Employment Information", "Alma Training", "Front Line Services", "Silverman Library", "Music Library", "Libraries Annex", "Law Library", "Tools", and "Discussion Board". The "Orientation & Employment Information" item is highlighted. The main content area is titled "Orientation & Employment Information" and contains a list of documents, each with a document icon and a title: "Onboarding", "Employment Policies & Points Chart", "Schedule & Time Clock Software: Shiftboard", "Time Sheets", "Introduction to University at Buffalo Libraries", and "Glossary of Library Terminology".

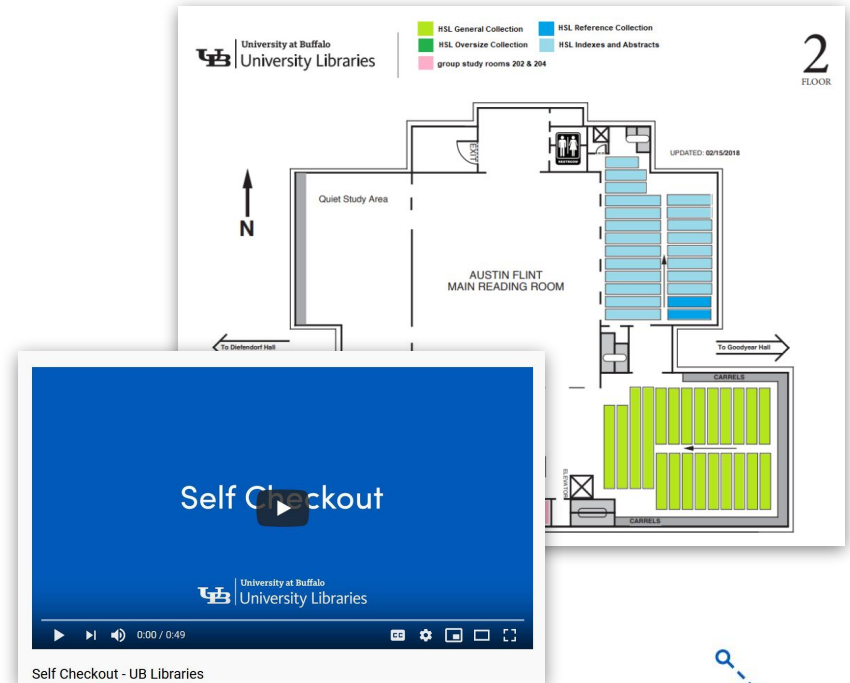
Phase Two: Documentation

Purpose: central repository for manuals, forms, etc. to be referenced on the job

Audience: all active student employees

Information Includes:

- [Opening & Closing checklists](#)
- Circulation manuals & instructional videos
- Location-specific [manuals](#)
- PDF maps of collections, light switches, etc
- Document Delivery manuals & instructional videos
- Multimedia equipment instructions and forms
- Internal/Staff documents: e.g. [training checklists](#)



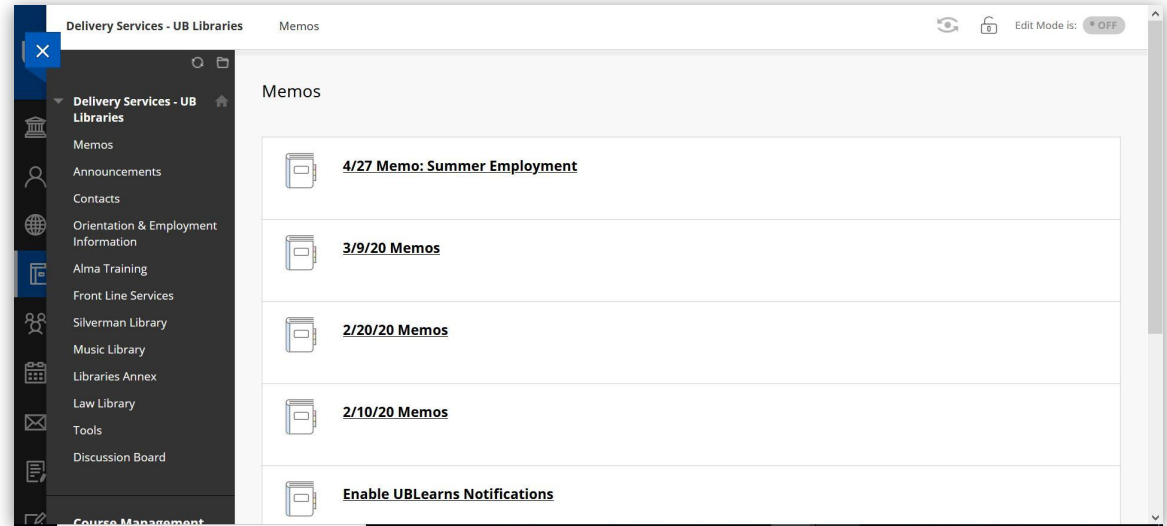
Phase Two: Communication

Purpose: centralized communication ensures consistent messaging and mitigates information gaps

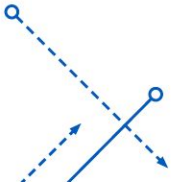
Audience: all active student employees and registered supervising library staff

Memo System:

- Memo created from [template](#)
- Posted to LMS on a scheduled basis
- Announcement alerts student employees to new memo and acknowledgement quiz
- 1 week to read and acknowledge
- If applicable, new policy enforcement begins only after 1 week period



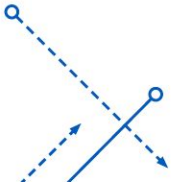
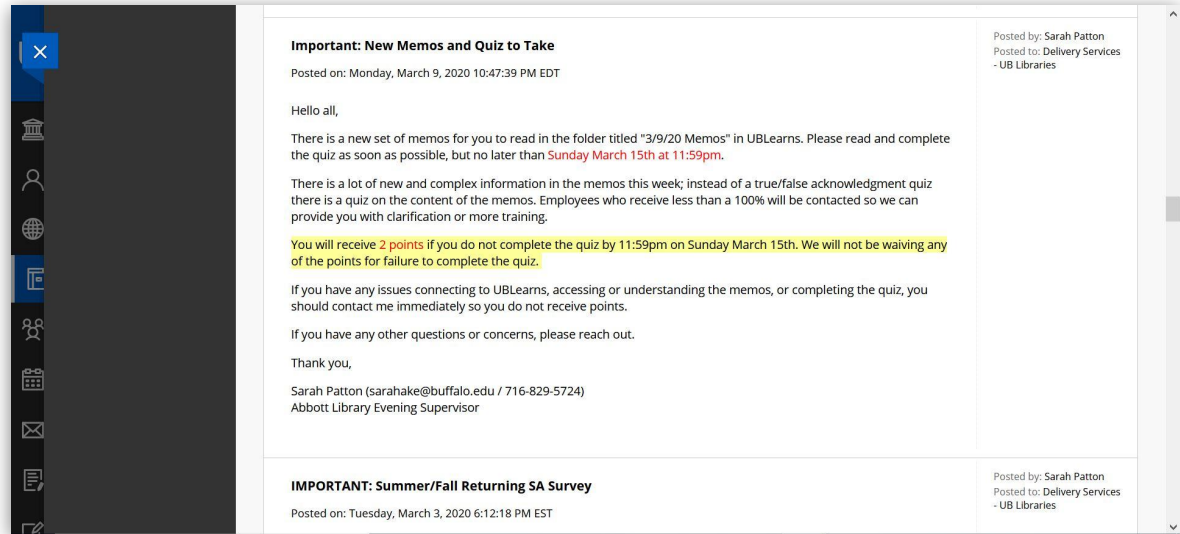
[See staff instructions for creating memos](#)



Phase Two: Communication

Benefits:

- Consistency
 - Large staff, multiple locations, multiple shifts, and high turnover lead to missed messages
 - Systematic messaging ensures all parties receive the information
- Accountability
 - Record of employee understanding and agreement to policies
 - Policy enforcement is equitable only if we ensure message has been received by all



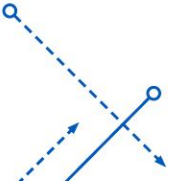
Phase Two: Further Development

Continual Development:

- Updates: as workflows and policies change, training and documentation will be adjusted
- Current Employees: refresh/reinforce skills; promotion training; new skill development
- Cross-training staff: create instructions and tutorials for other staff to manage the course

Future Projects:

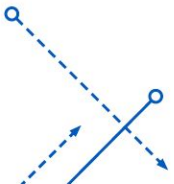
- Increase interactive training: expand training to include more interactive methods
- Collaborate with UB Student Life's Here to Career program to promote career readiness and offer mentorship possibilities
- Migrate internal employee records: points/kudos system is currently hosted externally on staffweb; we plan to investigate the possibility of LMS hosting



Implementation Considerations

An LMS is an excellent platform for centralizing student workforce management, as it combines the ability to host documentation, centralize communication, and track training progress. However, there is no one size fits all approach. Before embarking on this project, you may wish to consider:

- Staff Commitment
 - Developing a course is time consuming and may require new skill acquisition
 - Multiple staff should be able to access, create, and manage the course
- Manage, Don't Micromanage
 - Online tutorials and communications can be impersonal
 - Some features may not work for all workforces; i.e. a memo system requiring acknowledgement of new information works well for a ~90 person student workforce, but may amount to micromanaging among a staff of 10
- Support, Not Replace
 - 1:1 training and communication creates relationships; online tutorials do not
 - Self-paced training tutorials reduce staff time in training, but does not eliminate it
 - Specialized tasks will require more specialized training; not everything should be replicated in an online environment



DOCUMENTS

Slide 6: [Training Summary](#)

Slide 9: [Introduction to the Annex](#)

Slide 9: [Setting Availability](#)

Slide 10: [Opening & closing checklists](#)

Slide 10: [Manuals](#)

Slide 10: [Training Checklist](#)

Slide 11: [Memo Template](#)

Slide 11: [Memo Staff Instructions](#)

CONTACT

We encourage you to reach out to us with any questions, comments, or suggestions.

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