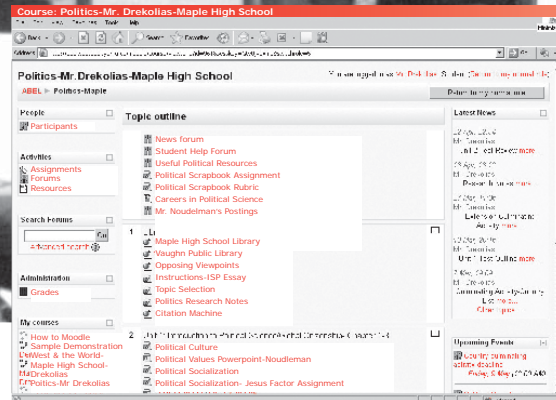# Moodle @Maple HS

Students using Moodle portal and print resources in the school library.

Nadia Sturino and Themi Drekolias

Moodle is an online class management system (CMS) that can provide another opportunity for collaboration between classroom teachers and teacher-librarians.

The York Region District School Board is part of the ABEL (Advanced Broadband Enabled Learning) Program, through York University. This affiliation gives all teachers in our board the ability to set up ABEL accounts to access various tools. One such tool is Moodle, which allows educators to provide online learning environments. Using Moodle, classroom teachers can set up their courses online, post events, and even add new categories for student use. Students can tap into the site to check course work, review assignment due dates, etc.

Mr. Drekolias teaches history at Maple High School and had been actively using Moodle for his courses. Ms. Sturino is the teacher-librarian. When it came time for his senior history class to begin their culminating task for "West and the World," we decided to add a little more than the traditional library visits. In addition to having the students come to the school library to use print sources, we decided to add a library button to their course Moodle site.

For more information about Moodle, visit www.abelearn.ca.

We selected a few links the students might need to help them with their research. We included a direct link to our IPAC so students could check our holdings at any time. We also included links to online resources, such as our history encyclopaedia, *Europe, 1450-1789: An Encyclopaedia of the Early Modern World*, in e-book format, the EBSCOhost historical database, and various reputable links to specific figures and topics. A link to our local public library was posted so that students could check other resources and request books from home. Students liked having access to the school library "at their finger tips".

Moodle can provide a customized extension of the school library, which allows for use all day at school and at home during the evening and on weekends. Another valuable Moodle feature is blogging, which is excellent as it allows students to interact with information, with the teacher-librarian, and with each other. The teacher-librarian can indicate specific times that he or she would be available online to students to answer questions or guide them through their research. This is invaluable to those students who might be too shy to ask questions face-to-face or who simply do not have time to go to the school library during the day. Both of us found that Moodle kept students engaged and interested in their course and their research.

As part of our examination of student engagement in learning, Mr. Drekolias surveyed the students, asking whether they liked using Moodle for both their course and their research. When students were asked whether they wanted to keep using Moodle, 100% of them responded YES. Most of them said they liked it because they could refer to their research or other assignments at any time and could catch up on missed work. Well over half of the students surveyed said they liked being able to ask for help with their research.

This first attempt at adding a school library component to Moodle opened a door, allowing us to look further into 21st-century learning at our library. We are now exploring re-designing our school library page to make it interactive for students, allowing them to not only look for information, but also to be active participants in creating information and discussing what they find with their peers and their teachers. We hope our efforts with this new platform will give our library a new vision, allowing us to tap into the needs of today's learners. ⬜