

Sakai CLE Executive Summary

The Sakai Collaboration and Learning Environment (Sakai CLE) serves as an education management system and is used by many institutions. Unlike UC Irvine's Electronic Educational Environment (EEE) which is focused around its tools like "Quiz" and "GradeBook", Sakai CLE is centered on the concept of "sites".

A Sakai CLE site can be created for a university course, a project, or a portfolio. These sites and their tools are mostly isolated and do not interact with each other. This means that a Sakai CLE user cannot see all of his or her available quizzes from the "Quiz" tool but instead must open the tool in each site to view available quizzes from those particular sites. However, an EEE user can view all of his or her available quizzes from all classes from the Quiz tool.

For every Sakai CLE site, the site administrator can choose which tools like "Gradebook" and "Forums" will be enabled. These tools are better integrated with each other in Sakai CLE than in EEE. One example is the ability to export assignments in the "Assignments" tool to the "Gradebook," "Calendar," and "Announcements" tools. Many Sakai CLE tools offer similar functionality to their equivalents on EEE. Some EEE tools are not available in Sakai CLE by default, and some Sakai CLE tools are not available in EEE.

Project sites can be created for project collaboration among instructors, researchers, and students. These are not limited to classes and may be used by student organizations, thesis committees, and other such groups. Portfolio sites are available for students and instructors to publish work and assess student learning. Project and portfolio sites are not provided by EEE in any capacity.

Sakai CLE provides greater interaction among users with built-in user-to-user private messaging and a social networking system with contacts, profiles, and privacy controls. EEE offers user profiles but nothing else.

End-user help documentation for Sakai CLE is adequate but is lacking in comparison to EEE which offers greater detail and screenshots. An implementation of Sakai CLE would require additions to the help documentation.

Sakai CLE can be installed and supported by an in-house team or through a commercial provider. There is a sufficient amount of community support and documentation.

Sakai CLE offers some statistics for instructors such as the number of visits per tool and active users, but the data offered is not extensive and lacks features like the detailed activity logs available for EEE's Quiz and DropBox tools that display every user action. Such information can be viewed by administrators through non-user friendly logs and database information.

Sakai also offers the Sakai Open Academic Environment (OAE) which is a separate but similar product from Sakai CLE. It is newer and has a greater focus on collaboration and social features such as instant messaging among users. Because its first release was less than a year ago, it has less community and commercial support. The Sakai Foundation still develops for and supports both products.

EEE vs. Sakai CLE toolset comparison chart

<i>Feature</i>	<i>EEE</i>	<i>Sakai CLE</i>	<i>Details</i>
Managing teaching assistant permissions	Yes (Assistant Editor)	Kind of (through a participants list; tool permissions are done through tools)	Tool to add assistants and manage their tool permissions.
Calendar	Yes (Calendar)	Yes (Schedule)	A calendar with appointments such as classes or due dates of assignments.
Add any appointment?	Yes	No (tool-created events only)	
Chat	Yes (Chat)	Yes (Chat)	Real-time chat rooms between instructors and students.
Chat logs	Yes	Yes	
Specific permissions	No	Yes	
Multiple chat rooms	Yes	Yes	
Multi-course chat rooms	Yes	No	
Class mailing lists	Yes (ClassMail Manager)	Kind of (through the Email tool)	Management of mailing lists for easy email to the entire class.
Dropbox for uploading and sharing files	Yes (DropBox)	Yes (Dropbox and Resources)	File sharing tool for instructors to make class files available and for students to upload work.
Editable files on site	No	Yes (for HTML, text files, and citation lists)	
Desktop support	No	Yes (through WebDAV)	
Deadlines	Yes	No	
RapidReturn-like functionality	Yes	No	
Groups	Yes	Yes (not tool-associated)	

Instructor and TA evaluations	Yes (Evaluations)	No	Evaluations of instructors and teaching assistants initiated by them or their department.
Gradebook	Yes (GradeBook)	Yes (Gradebook)	Tool for instructors to input grades and (optionally) display grades to students.
Multiple gradebooks per course	Yes	No	
Import/export	Yes	Yes	
Categories & weights	Yes	Yes	
Grade distribution	Yes	Yes	
Statistics	Yes	Yes	
Access logs	Yes	No	
Integration with other tools	No?	Yes	
Different grade scales (per assignment)	Yes	Yes	
Grade overrides	Yes	Yes	
Message boards or discussion forums	Yes (MessageBoard)	Yes (Forums)	Place for instructor and student discussion.
Gradebook integration	No	Yes	
Moderation tools	Yes (in an upcoming update)	Yes	
Security (passwords and access control)	Yes	Yes	
Multiple courses per forum	Yes	No	
User tracking	Yes	Yes	
Email notifications	Yes	Yes	
Attachments	Yes	Yes	
Calendar for recurring events	Yes (MyPlanner)	No	A calendar for weekly recurring events.
Quizzes	Yes (Quiz)	Yes (Quiz)	Quizzes and tests.
Templates	Yes	Yes	

Saved Q&A (question pool)	Yes	Yes	
Image support (within questions)	Yes	No	
Attachment support (within questions)	No	Yes	
Security	Yes (via enrollment restrictions and participation password)	Yes (via password, IP address restrictions, group selection)	
Timed window	Yes	Yes	
Feedback/release options	Yes	Yes	
Late submissions	No	Yes	
Multiple submissions (and limit)	Yes	Yes	
Question randomization	Yes (randomize order)	No	
Anonymous grading	No	Yes	
Mark individual answers for review	No	Yes	
Import	No	Yes (XML, ZIP)	
Creation with markup (option)	No	Yes	
More options	No	Yes	
Rosters	Yes (Rosters)	Yes (Roster)	List of enrolled students in the class (for instructor/TA use).
Sign-up sheets	Yes (SignupSheet)	No	Tool for participants to sign up for items or choices.
Surveys	Yes (Survey)	No (can be done through Evaluation System tool, Wizards tool or Polls tool)	Tool for surveys.

Class websites	Yes (WebsiteManager and its sub-tools)	No (but the Sakai site is a website in itself, and they can be made for clubs and portfolios)	Custom websites to display information, upload class files and assignments, etc.
Wiki	Yes (Wiki)	Yes (Wiki)	Collaborative document creation.
Site-specific wiki	No	Yes	
Access controls	Yes (UCInetID needed)	Yes (change for each role)	
Internet bookmarks	Yes (Bookmarks)	No	List of favorite websites or bookmarks.
Podcasts	Yes (Podcasts)	Yes (Podcasts)	Tool to make available audio or video podcasts.
RSS feed	No	Yes	
File upload	No	Yes	
URL link	Yes	No	
List of classmates	Yes (Classmates)	Yes (through Roster tool; not sure about privacy settings)	List of students in the class (for students).
Archive of emails from instructors and TAs	Yes (MyClassMessages)	Yes (through Email Archive - may include only emails sent through Sakai's Email tool)	Email archive of class-related emails.
Announcements	Yes (Announcements)	Yes (Announcements)	Tool to make class announcements to students.
Timed announcements (range of dates)	No	Yes	
WYSIWYG editor	No	Yes	
Attachments	No	Yes	
Email notifications	No	Yes	
RSS URL	No	Yes	
Search	Yes	No	

Profile page and/or social networking	Yes (MyEEE Profile)	Yes (Profile)	Social networking feature with privacy controls so that only you or your connections (friends/contacts) can see photos, staff info, student info, social info, etc.
Privacy controls	Yes (but limited)	Yes (very in-depth)	
Social networking	No	Yes	
Notification controls	No	Yes	
Private messaging	No	Yes	This is separate from the private messaging tool.
Room locator	Yes (RoomFinder)	No	Tool to locate rooms on campus.
Assignments	No	Yes (Assignments)	Tool to create assignments for students.
Cross-tool export	No	Yes	
Built-in RSS feed viewer	No	Yes (News)	Tool to display an RSS feed within the Sakai site.
Built-in web content viewer	No	Yes (Web Content)	Tool to display an external website within the Sakai site.
Section/discussion information	Kind of (automatically associated through enrollment)	Yes (Section Info)	Information on sections and discussions.
Glossary	No	Yes (Glossary)	A list of terms and definitions.
Private messaging	No	Yes (Messages)	Private messaging from user to user on Sakai.
Portfolios	No	Yes (Portfolios)	Portfolios are a means to display information (like a resume) or show work (like art and writing, just as you would in a normal portfolio). It has privacy/publishing controls, statistics, etc.

Custom site stylesheet	No (on EEE, yes on EasyWebsite or AdvancedWebSpace)	Yes (Styles)	Custom stylesheet to change the look of the site.
Syllabus	No	Yes (Syllabus)	Tool to display or provide a download for a syllabus.
WYSIWYG editor	No	Yes	
Attachment support	No	Yes	
Tools for displaying information	No	Yes (Wizards and Matrices)	A means of displaying information over a series of pages, like showing students how to do an assignment or a biology concept.
Site statistics	No	Yes (Statistics)	Site statistics like how many users accessed this site, how many visits per tool, etc.
Basic Learning Tools Interoperability support	No	Yes (BasicLTI)	Support for tools that use IMS Basic Learning Tools Interoperability standard.
Post'Em support	No	Yes (Post'Em)	Tool supporting the Post'Em program, an external grades/feedback tool.
Evaluations (for reviewing work)	No	Yes (Evaluation System)	A tool to evaluate student submitted work.
Project site	No	Yes	A site (separate from a course site or portfolio site) that is used for collaboration on projects.
Activity Logs	Mostly yes	Kind of	
Participant's own activity	A little	No	
Owner's logs	Yes	No	
Admin logs	Yes	Not easily accessible	