

# Catalina De Silva (Faculty - GSI Manager in Spanish)



"I take advantage of everything I can on the web."

## Background

**Age:** 49

**Occupation:** Professor, on-track for tenure

**School:** Faculty of Arts, Spanish, University of California, Berkeley

**Technology level:** Very LMS-savvy and comfortable doing lots of research on the web

## Main Points

- Innovative user and proponent of LMSs
- Very organized, with "everything online"
- LMS Champion and "go to person" for her department
- Wants to be a guide to students in their learning

## Goals

- Guide students in their learning of the Spanish language
- Get tenure
- Make a positive impact in the Spanish-speaking community
- Balance research and teaching
- Efficiently evaluate TAs' performance
- Help her TAs become better teachers
- Effectively utilize technology available for teaching and collaboration

## Frustrations & Pain Points

- bSpace performance - Gradebook is especially slow
- Current bSpace Quiz & Survey tool "not robust enough"
- Forum tool in bSpace is "cumbersome"
- Would like to get more people to use bSpace project sites she's set up to share materials and teaching knowledge
- Wishes she could copy sections from last year in bSpace
- Wishes bSpace interfaced with clickers

- Uploading files in bSpace
  - Takes a long time--she has to upload on Sunday morning so it's quicker
  - File size for upload is too small. She wants to upload 5 - 10 minutes video clips but can't because they are too big
- She'd like to be able to color-code tabs and folders in bSpace to help parse all her different courses, sections and types of content
- She's not sure how hiding materials works in bSpace's Resources
- She likes to make content PDFs but visually impaired students, using screen readers, can't read them
- No good survey mechanism on campus
- Dealing with instances of academic dishonesty/tracking cheating cases

## Scenarios

- [Hide time-sensitive material in LMS](#)
- [Create shared site on LMS](#)
- [Upload documents to LMS](#)
- [Compare media material](#)
- [Receive student audio files](#)
- [Notify users of new LMS site content](#)
- *Future.* [Would like to see student view of LMS](#)

Catalina has been a professor in UC Berkeley's Spanish department for the last five years, and is on track for tenure. She lives with her husband in north Berkeley, where they like to spend time at home reading and working in their garden. They also try to take advantage of all the activities the bay area has to offer, socializing with friends when they get a break in their busy schedules.

She's been teaching for 10 years and has been at UC Berkeley for the last five. Along with teaching classes, she oversees the curriculum and all the TAs for 1st and 2nd semester Spanish. She's extremely busy with these management responsibilities along with teaching her own classes and staying on top of her research. Not to mention the numerous other committees she gets asked to work on, like the Academic Senate.

Catalina prides herself on being organized which is required in her various management roles. She feels it's important so that logistics and administration don't take up too much time so that she (and those she supervises) can really be in the business of teaching, and students can learn.

## Teaching

Catalina practices "student-centered" teaching, which means she spends a significant amount of time prepping for classes. She thinks of herself as a guide to students and their learning. Even though she often teaches the same class across terms, she likes to keep the content fresh and is continuously looking for new things to bring into the classroom. Though she may reuse some content across semesters, she likes the course to appear to unfold and doesn't want students to see all the course content at the beginning of the semester. She provides students with current event articles, videos and websites along with typical readers and books. She feels the diverse perspective helps her students learn more deeply. She likes to allow students to build on their learning. For example, she usually allows for several iterations on a written paper, giving students detailed feedback on each iteration. She's trying something new this semester by having students watch a video about a current event in a Spanish-speaking country and then discuss on-line via the discussion board.

She takes a special interest in Heritage Speakers, who live in a primarily or solely Spanish-speaking home, and might not have the same access as many other Berkeley students. They may not have access to computers at home for instance. She's also concerned with equal access for everyone. She likes to present course content as PDFs on the course site so that folks without Microsoft Office can access it, but is concerned that screen reader users can't access PDFs.

Catalina organizes her day using email as her "to do" list. Since she's notified by email of everything that happens in the section course sites, this also helps her supervise sections. In her TA management role she attends classes and monitors the course and/or section websites to help her evaluate her TAs' work. She has head TAs that run the class and help manage the course site as well as TAs that mostly focus on grading (Graders).

## LMS Experience

Catalina was previously at the University of Minnesota where she used Blackboard. That made it easy to jump right into using Blackboard when she got to Berkeley. Since then Berkeley has moved to Sakai. She was one of the early pilot users a couple years ago and is fairly happy with the switchover. However, there are a couple things she misses about Blackboard, like being able to color code her content folders. She's also a little "sick of relearning systems." Her colleagues consider Catalina a "go to" person for questions they have about using the LMS. In some cases, when team teaching, she handles the management of their on-line presence.

Because of her experience with LMSs Catalina is quite innovative in getting the system to do what she wants. For instance, she often has 2 browsers open for bSpace so she can continue with a different task while waiting for the system to complete the previous task. She also keeps all her course content on-line and carries it forward from one semester to the next so she can easily access it if she decides to use it. She may also personally want to access previous content but not muck up the site for all the participants, so she tries to keep the content in hidden folders. She only wants students to be presented with relevant information so is also careful in tool selection for the site, only turning on tools that she's currently using.

Catalina often has a need to share the same content/information with everyone in the department or a subset, like all the instructors for a certain class or all the 1st year TAs. For instance, since sections are taught by a variety of instructional staff, the curriculum is shared by all of them. She creates project sites for the various groups to share and collaborate on information and considers them "resources for instructors." She also creates a "starter site" for all the 1st year Spanish classes. Each instructor then manages the site for their courses -- adding and subtracting content as needed. Although Catalina can copy some material from site to site by using a project site she created as a "template," this still seems like too much of a manual process.

Catalina is very "pro-LMS" because:

- It creates a sense of community that wasn't available before.
- It allows for more than just "1 hour of class." If there is a heated discussion in class, she'll open a forum and let the class continue discussing.
- Instructors become tools, and students are the protagonist.
- It allows her to bring the world into the classroom.

## Scenarios

- **Hide time-sensitive material in LMS:** Automatically hide time sensitive material in the LMS that is no longer relevant, like announcements older than 3 weeks.
- **Create shared site on LMS:** Create a shared site on the LMS to allow all Spanish I instructors to share and collaborate on curriculum. The curriculum is then shared by all sections being taught.
- **Upload documents to LMS:** She likes to upload all documents for a site at once. Because the performance issues with the LMS make this difficult, she often does this early Sunday mornings when system usage is low so she can get better performance.
- **Compare media material:** Compare media material on a topic written from a Spanish and English perspective -- BBC Mendo versus NPR for instance.
- **Receive student audio files:** Allow students to turn in audio files of them speaking Spanish.
- **Notify users of new LMS site content:** Notify users once when she uploads lots of content to the LMS site at once.
- **Future: Would like to see student view of LMS:** Would like to see what students see, particularly while setting up the site in the LMS.