



# Common Platform: Computer-Mediated Communication and File Transfer

## University of Saskatchewan

### Objectives for Innovation

Common server and client software platform for computer-mediated communication and file transfer supported by print

### Intended Audience

Post-secondary sector

### Results Achieved

Common system for province-wide online instruction

Print manuals for instructors, students and technical support staff using FirstClass

Streamlined approach to computer-mediated courses among the province's post-secondary education institutions

### Partners

University of Regina, SIAST

### Implementation

July 1996

### Additional Benefits

Positive comments by students:  
“depth of learning and the ongoing reflection upon the thoughts shared by my fellow students has enriched and will continue to enrich me in my academic life” and  
“valuable capability of being able to take time over individual input and discussion prior to contributing”

This program is a cooperative effort between the two universities and SIAST to implement a common technical vehicle for courses using computer-mediated communication. The partnership provided access to the FirstClass server and client software and developed, pilot tested and evaluated instructional guides for instructors, students and technical support staff in using the software.

Learning how to use a new technology is a significant challenge for learners in technology-enhanced courses. The common platform helps the institutions to expand their online instruction capacity by ensuring system-wide compatibility.

FirstClass features group conferencing and private e-mail facilities. It supports interaction in issues-based courses and easy distribution of documents.

A common platform also makes it easier for students taking online courses from either university or SIAST, in that they only have to adjust to one software package.

### Contact

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