



Learning Management System (LMS) Course Access Policy ACA 10.0 Academic Affairs

Policy Type: Administrative
Applies to: Full-Time Faculty, Academic Leadership

POLICY DATES

This policy supersedes and replaces all other policies prior to this revised date

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Revised Last:

Edited by: Bill Cunion/Stephen Craig

Reviewed:

Purpose

This policy outlines access guidelines for academic leadership to all faculty LMS courses, ensuring transparency, continuity, and appropriate academic oversight.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Learning Management System (LMS)	A learning management system, also referred to as LMS, is a software application used for instruction in support of delivering, organizing, and managing courses and course material. A LMS facilitates the delivery of educational content in various formats, including online. It also includes tools to track a learner's progress and assess performance.
D2L/Brightspace	Brightspace is the product name for the platform Mount Union uses for their Learning Management System. D2L is the company that owns Brightspace
LMS Course	An LMS course is the digital course site created within the University of Mount Union's Learning Management System. It serves as the official online environment for a specific class section in a given term. Each LMS course includes tools for posting content, delivering assessments, recording grades, facilitating communication, and supporting student learning. Rosters are automatically populated from the Student Information System, and instructors are able to develop and manage the instructional materials within the LMS course.

Policy Details

LMS Course Access by Academic Leadership

To support appropriate academic oversight and student success, access to LMS courses may be granted to:

- Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA)
- Academic Deans
- Department Chairs
- Program Directors/Coordinators
- The Office of Digital Learning and Design
- The Office of Information Technology

Access may be provided for purposes such as:

- Program accreditation
- Student learning outcome assessment

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- Addressing student concerns or access issues
- Instructor transitions or absences
- Course observations or faculty mentoring
- Ensuring alignment with accreditation or institutional goals

Certain roles have access to program/course data through the LMS data analytics tools such as D2L Insights and Achievement +. Insights and Achievement + house data concerning UMU student activity within the LMS such as engagement with LMS tools and mastery of learning outcomes. They are not authorized to enter LMS courses or view instructional content. This limited access is granted to:

- Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Director of Retention
- Senior Director of the Center for Student Success

Guiding Principles for LMS Access

- LMS access must support student learning, academic quality, and institutional transparency.
- Access by academic leaders should be purposeful, limited in scope, and aligned with official responsibilities.
- Faculty intellectual property and student privacy must be respected at all times.
- All access must comply with FERPA, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and university policies.
- No individual may alter course content unless explicitly authorized and only in cases of continuity or emergency support.

Faculty Notification of LMS Course Access

Academic leadership may occasionally need to access LMS courses for the following reasons:

- To address student concerns
- Meet accreditation requirements
- Ensure instructional continuity
- Support program review

In situations where immediate access is required, prior notice may not always be possible. Whenever feasible, faculty will be notified in advance of such access. If advance notice cannot be provided, faculty will be informed afterwards so that there is transparency around when and why access occurred.

For questions about course accesses contact the Office of Digital Learning.

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Access to Concluded LMS Courses and Departed Instructor LMS Courses

To ensure academic continuity, maintain institutional records, and support student needs, the following guidelines apply to courses that have ended or are associated with instructors who are no longer employed by the University of Mount Union:

Concluded LMS Courses

Access to completed LMS courses may be granted to academic leadership (e.g., VPAA, Deans, Chairs, Program Directors) for purposes including:

- Program review and assessment of student learning outcomes
- Verification of grades or academic disputes
- Responding to student access requests or accommodation needs
- Accreditation reporting or documentation

LMS Courses Taught by Departed Instructors

If an instructor is no longer employed at the university, their LMS courses may be accessed by designated academic leaders in order to:

- Preserve course components that were collaboratively developed with the faculty members academic program
- Facilitate onboarding or mentoring of new instructors teaching the same or similar courses
- Ensure compliance with record retention policies and accreditation expectations

UMU will make an effort to inform the departed instructor of this access when appropriate. This would be done in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Policy:

“As a general rule, faculty own the content they create within the LMS, except as otherwise provided in a written agreement with the University. Faculty-developed LMS course content will not be reused, redistributed, or modified without the permission of the faculty developer unless:

- *They are ensuring instructional continuity during an unplanned instructor absence*
- *Meeting contractual or compliance obligations*
- *Addressing legal, accreditation, academic integrity, or student rights matters*

This policy does not apply to specific course elements that were created collaboratively with the intent to be shared such as program-approved rubrics, key assessments, or other standardized elements required across multiple sections of a course.”

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Justification

The LMS serves as a centralized platform for content delivery, grade tracking, communication, and compliance documentation. Authorized and appropriate LMS access:

- Enables academic leaders to gather evidence for program review, accreditation (e.g., HLC), and continuous improvement.
- Enables designated individuals to review course structure and content for alignment with learning outcomes, accreditation standards, and institutional objectives.
- Allows departments to provide continuity in instruction if an instructor is unexpectedly unavailable, preserving student learning without delay.
- Ensures that Mount Union complies with relevant laws such as FERPA and ADA, and upholds best practices in digital accessibility, data security, and academic recordkeeping.

This policy is designed to support faculty by ensuring continuity, reducing administrative burdens during unforeseen circumstances, and fostering a shared infrastructure that enhances student learning and engagement across all academic programs.

Student Access to Deactivated Courses

Students who request access to past courses that have been deactivated may be granted temporary access to the deactivated course with the instructor's permission. If the instructor is no longer at UMU the student may receive permission from the Chair or Program Director.

PROCEDURE

Access to LMS courses is automatically granted to faculty and adjunct instructors as part of the standard hiring and onboarding process.

Additional access for academic leadership or other designated individuals may be requested through the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). Such access will only be provided once the individual has completed training on this policy and its requirements.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Academic Affairs	Policy Updates

Resources

Please be aware and adhere to the following policies:

- Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy - [Technology Resources Acceptable Use Policy.pdf](#)
- Information Security Policy - [POLICY](#)
- Account creation Policy - [POLICY](#)
- Intellectual Property Policy- [POLICY](#)

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Academic Affairs

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy Guidelines	Academic Affairs	(330) 823-2596	cunionwe@mountunion.edu

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
LMS Resources	Digital Learning & Design	(330) 823-4895	craigst@mountunion.edu