

Policy on the Archiving of Course Shells & Course Shell Storage Maintained by STaR

UALR's Office of eLearning, in conjunction with the office of Scholarly Technology and Resources (STaR) and Information Technology Services (ITS), has revised policy related to how long faculty have access to their course shells on the learning management system (LMS); the LMS UALR has contracted at present is Blackboard.

Purpose: To define how long academic courses contained in the UALR's LMS (currently BlackBoard), will be retained. This policy does not pertain to *development shells* or to *Organizations* on the LMS.

Scope: This policy covers courses contained in the Learning Management System(s) as well as backups of course shells stored on servers maintained by Information Technology Services (ITS), but managed by STaR.

Overview

STaR provides course access through the Blackboard dashboard for a two-year period (meaning the last six semesters from the current semester). Therefore, course shells and archive access options become unavailable with each advancing semester. The rationale for having this policy is that eLearning must manage the storage space on the LMS to avoid excess financial charges to the university. Additionally, this policy is designed to increase assistance to academic departments dealing with scheduling realities (e.g. having a course shell available to help an adjunct prepare for teaching a course).

Based on this, faculty are strongly encouraged to copy their course shells to their personal computers and/or external hard drives so that they will have an archived course to pull from when needed in the future. Blackboard course materials downloaded for course archives must remain in the "**ZIP**" file format if it is to be reinstated/reinstalled on the Blackboard LMS at a later date in a Blackboard shell.

Once course shells become unavailable (meaning removed from the LMS), course content can only be accessed for an additional nine-semesters (i.e. three years). This means each semester course shell data will be removed from the server archive managed by STaR, and will no longer exist.

Explanation of of LMS, to ITS Server, & Permanent Deletion Transition:

Based on the information above, course shells will become unavailable progressively with each advancing semester.

Course shells that have reached the end of the six semester period will be removed from the LMS on the day that grades are due for the current semester. Below is an example of the data retention schedule:

Semester	Removed from LMS	Permanently Deleted
Spring 2014	May 13, 2016	End of term 201710
Summer II 2014	June 29, 2016	End of term 201730
Summer I 2014	August 4, 2017	End of term 201730
Summer IV 2014	August 10, 2017	End of term 201730

Again, it is recommended that instructors archive their courses at the end of the term in which the course was taught and before they are scheduled for removal. Retaining copies of the syllabus, electronic grade book and electronic student work is the sole responsibility of the instructor. Instructors should always download student work or make copies of the grade book prior to the removal of courses from the LMS.

STaR will periodically notify the faculty community with general messaging of the courses scheduled for deletion and provide instructions for preserving course content off-line. These instructions are available at anytime by visiting <http://ualr.edu/star/> .

How to Request a Access to a Course Shell, no Longer on the LMS

In order to obtain access to a course that is no longer available on the list of courses on the Blackboard dashboard, a copy may requested from STaR's course archives (i.e. the three years of course shells beyond the two years on the LMS). The process of obtaining these data is complex and a significant use of STaR's resources, so this process should only be requested in rare circumstances as needed by the academic department. Please email STaR at star@ualr.edu in order to seek assistance.