RATIONALE AND NEED FOR POLICY

The Learning Management System (LMS) is mission-critical technology that is central to accomplishing the strategic goals of the University and its teaching and learning activities. This policy is designed to provide a foundation for the development and implementation of checks and balances to protect information and ensure a common understanding about services, priorities, responsibilities, guarantees, and expectations for the system.

DEFINITIONS

Learning Management System (LMS): Software application used to manage, track, report, and deliver information and coursework.

LMS Course-level Data: Course-level summary statistics or records routinely captured by the system such as assignment submission dates, course access information, activity reports, etc.

Student Information System (SIS): A software application to manage student data.

Third-party Applications: External software applications that integrate with the LMS.

Tier I Technical Support: Front line support for basic client (instructors and students) technical support issues.

Tier II Technical Support: Advanced technical analysis and troubleshooting to investigate elevated technical issues.

User: An individual using the LMS and related third-party applications.

THOSE AFFECTED BY THE POLICY

TWU administrators, faculty, staff, students and authorized guests

OWNER

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
POLICY

The LMS is intended to support the teaching and learning needs of Texas Woman’s University by providing virtual space for:

- Teaching courses
- Tracking grades, participation, etc. for coursework
- Creating meeting and communication spaces for faculty, staff, and student groups
- Delivering learning content rapidly
- Supporting multiple media formats
- Leveraging technology
- Allowing flexible access to training resources.

The LMS Policy provides a framework for the governance and support of the University’s LMS including oversight and protection of content and interactions of data in accordance with TWU security policies.

Security and Accessibility Standards

TWU’s LMS and related third-party applications must meet the University’s security requirements for vendors who obtain protected data (see Policy 9.11 Application Service Providers) as well as adhere to the University’s Information Resource Accessibility Policy (Policy 9.19).

Governance and Support

The Division of Academic Affairs provides support and assistance to individuals using the LMS and associated third-party applications through the following units:

- Learning Technologies Support:
  - Operational management of the LMS and associated third-party applications
  - System administration of the LMS and associated third-party applications
  - Technical training
  - Engagement management to ensure the delivery of contractual services between TWU and LMS and associated third-party vendors
  - Tier II technical support for the LMS and associated third-party applications
  - Tier III technical liaison with third-party vendors

- Teaching and Learning with Technology:
  - Course development and design
  - Pedagogical support for courses and activities
  - Quality Matters training and support
  - Education and training on using technology for teaching and learning

- Client Services-Office of Technology:
  - Tier I support for the LMS and associated third-party applications through the Service Desk
These groups utilize their specific expertise and capacity to provide advice representing technical, pedagogical, and support concerns related to the LMS and associated third-party applications.

**LMS Oversight Committee**

The complex nature of decisions impacting the LMS requires collaborative input from three groups: Office of Learning Technologies Support, Office of Teaching and Learning with Technology, and Client Services-Office of Technology. To meet this need, the LMS Oversight Committee is charged to govern, coordinate, research and recommend, develop procedures, and provide input to TWU administrators. Membership of this committee is as follows:

- **Learning Technologies Support**
  - Director
  - Associate Director
  - LMS System Administrator
- **Teaching and Learning with Technology**
  - Director
  - Associate Director
  - Instructional Designer Representative (selected by the TLT Director)
- **Client Services-Office of Technology**
  - Representative - Service Desk (selected by the Director of Client Services)
  - Representative – Dallas (selected by the Director of Client Services)
  - Representative – Houston (selected by the Director of Client Services)

Additional members may be appointed as needed to provide expertise on specific projects and subject matters. The TLT and Client Services representatives are appointed annually.

**LMS Oversight Committee Meetings**

This committee will meet on a weekly basis. Meetings will use existing technologies, allowing meetings to occur across different locations. Responsibility for meeting logistics will rotate across units (TLT, LTS, and Client Services-Office of Technology) on an annual basis. Members may appoint a designee to attend meetings as necessary. Decisions will be determined by group consensus.

**LMS Oversight Membership Responsibilities**

- Review current information on LMS features and functionality;
- Review information on potential upgrades to LMS;
- Develop and implement a functional testing protocol for LMS upgrades;
- Investigate integration of third-party applications with LMS;
- Oversee LMS features, functionality, and integration requirements;
- Develop LMS procedures and guidelines;
- Define desired outcomes and measure results against requirements; and
- Other duties as determined by the Senior Associate Provost or the Chief Information Officer.

**LMS User Roles and Privileges**

Privileges in the LMS are determined by user role. There are seven standard user roles:
• **Student**: The Student role is assigned by the SIS through an automated process. Students have access to all areas in the course that contain content and assessments. Students cannot access any sections of the administrative areas of the course. Students may access their own work and any public work posted to a discussion board, wiki, or other tool. Students will have access only to their grades and to feedback provided to them by the instructor.

• **Instructor**: The Instructor role is assigned by the SIS through an automated process. Instructors have access to all areas of the course including administrative functions and content. Instructors have full ability to track student participation and activities across all sections of the course.

• **Course Manager**: The Course Manager role is assigned by the Instructor. This role has access to all areas of the course including administrative functions and content. Course Managers have full ability to track student participation and activities across all sections of the course.

• **Teaching Assistant**: The Teaching Assistant role is assigned by the Instructor. Teaching Assistants have access to most administrative areas of the course. This includes the ability to develop test questions, verify grades, manage users, and many others. Teaching Assistants may access a course that is unavailable to Students and may not remove the Instructor from the course.

• **Grader**: The Grader role is assigned by the Instructor. Graders assist in the grading of assessments. Graders cannot access non-graded content.

• **Course Builder**: The Course Builder role is assigned by the Instructor. Course Builders have access to all course functions except the grade book.

• **Guest**: The Guest role is assigned by the Instructor. Guests are invited by the instructor to participate or observe in the class.

Other roles may be defined and created as needed. The University assigns certain departments and individuals the responsibility of assessing, analyzing, upgrading, enhancing, maintaining, and assuring quality for the LMS and related third-party applications. During the normal course of their assigned duties and responsibilities, these individuals have special access privileges to the electronic content that resides within the LMS, to related third-party applications, and to the activities of all users. The University will strive to protect individual privacy by ensuring that the number of individuals with this level of system administration access is strictly limited and that individuals placed in these positions are selected for their judgment and ethics, as well as their technical expertise.

**Course Management**

The TWU SIS is the sole repository of available courses, identification of instructors of record, and inclusion of students into course rosters. The SIS is also the sole repository for official course grades and rosters. The LMS is not the official record of course rosters and grades. The designated instructors of the course are responsible for the electronic data available in the course. Courses will be retained on the LMS for two academic years.

**Organization Management**

University faculty, academic and administrative units, and student organizations may request organization accounts. The requested organization must be related to official university business or activities. The designated leaders of the organization are responsible for the electronic data available in the organization.

**LMS Access**
Users permitted access to the LMS and other related third-party applications will have a TWU portal account. The TWU portal account allows access to SIS-defined electronic data. Institution roles, system roles, and the access to electronic data allowed by each role are managed by the LMS Oversight Committee. Instructors, organization leaders, and system administrators granting guest access permit non-enrolled individuals to review materials, communications, and other electronic data contained within the LMS.

**Privacy and Security of Information**

Activities and information in TWU’s learning management system are considered private to the fullest extent permitted by law. Access to individual courses is restricted to Instructor of Record, enrolled students, and authorized roles as assigned by the Instructor of Record.

Users should take precautions not to compromise the privacy of others and should familiarize themselves with the degree of class and public access that various choices in the system will permit. Instructors/organization leaders should understand that granting guest access may allow non-enrolled individuals access to course materials and communications. Information and content placed in TWU’s learning management system are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the TWU Regents’ Policy on Intellectual Property and applicable state and federal copyright laws and regulations. All activities are subject to applicable state and federal laws, the Texas Woman’s University Code of Student Conduct and the University’s Computer and Software Acceptable Use Policy.

**Course/Data Access**

Course access is normally restricted to the SIS-defined Instructor of Record and enrolled students as well as individuals with system administrator privileges during the course of diagnosing technical difficulties. Additional users such as teaching assistants, co-instructors, or guests may be added only by the Instructor of Record.

Course access may be granted without Instructor involvement by written, academic component leader approval in the case of faculty incapacitation; accreditation/reviews; appeals; grievances; complaints; or violations of University, state, or federal policies. Whenever possible and legally permissible, notification will be given to the Instructor of Record or the affected student. In cases where the faculty member disagrees, the decision on access will be reviewed by the dean.

Requests for LMS course-level data for faculty or students require written approval from a dean or higher.

**CROSS-REFERENCES AND RELATED MATERIALS**

- TWU Policy 2.43 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- TWU Regents’ Policy on Intellectual Property
- Texas Woman’s University Code of Student Conduct
- TWU Policy 9.01 Computer and Software Acceptable Use Policy
- TWU Policy 9.05 Application Service Providers Standards Policy
- TWU Policy 9.19 Information Resource Accessibility Policy