Access to Faculty LMS/Course Shells: Process Overview for Supervisors & Faculty

Purpose: This document is intended as a reference for supervisors, faculty, and staff supporting instructional technology operations related to "technical issues" and "significant concerns or complaints," as referenced in:
- Section 9.5 of the Adjunct Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement (Part-Time Faculty Unit), and
- The Letter of Agreement on Administrative Access to Course Shells (Full-Time Faculty Unit).

Common Definitions

- **Technical Issue:** An LMS/platform malfunction such as broken settings, sync errors, or other system-based failures that prevent the course from operating as intended. Student misunderstandings, syllabus discrepancies, or complaints about content availability, due dates, grading, or instructor communication do not qualify as technical issues unless they are directly tied to a clear and reproducible system error. Supervisors who suspect a technical issue may encourage the student or instructor to contact the Technology Learning Center (TLC) directly. *The TLC retains the ability to investigate potential technical issues brought before them*.

- **Significant Concern or Complaint:** A substantial student issue suggesting a major policy or procedural violation or pattern of non-compliance. Does not include routine questions, one-off minor issues, or dissatisfaction best addressed through student-faculty conversation.

Guiding Principles

- Student-faculty communication is typically the first step toward resolution.
- Supervisor access to faculty LMS/course shells should normally occur when other avenues of resolution have been exhausted.
- All access decisions and actions should reflect a commitment to transparency, respect for faculty rights, and FERPA compliance.

Student Issue Resolution Flowchart

Step 1: An issue is reported to a supervisor (by a student or staff)

▶ Does it appear to be a technical problem?
(e.g., LMS not functioning properly, error messages)

→ **Yes → Refer the student to Canvas Support**
→ **No → Continue to Step 2**

Step 2: For concerns or complaints not related to system errors

▶ Student concern or complaint appears non-technical
→ Encourage student to first contact their instructor to resolve the issue directly.

Step 3: If the concern remains unresolved
→ The **Supervisor** contacts the instructor to seek clarification or resolution.

Step 4: If the instructor is unresponsive or concern persists
→ The **Supervisor** determines if this qualifies as a **Significant Concern** (*see above*) that would necessitate LMS/course shell access.
If yes, proceed to Step 5.

Step 5: Supervisor submits LMS access request to Director of Online Learning and Instructional Technology (DOLIT)

- Provide brief rationale (no sensitive information)
- Notify the instructor at least one full workday in advance of LMS/course shell access

Step 6: DOLIT facilitates and logs the request

- Based on Supervisor request:
    - DOLIT (or designee) enters the LMS and grants Supervisor access to the specific course shell(s) requested by manually enrolling the Supervisor in the appropriate role based on the request
- Supervisor page access and review are limited to the minimum necessary scope in each case.
- Supervisor notifies the DOLIT (or designee) when the review is complete, triggering a manual unenrollment from the requested course shell(s) by the DOLIT (or designee).
- DOLIT (or designee) notifies Supervisor and instructor that the unenrollment has been processed.

Requests for specific faculty activity logs or access to the Canvas inbox are considered a form of administrative access and should follow the same notification and justification procedures outlined in this document. This provision does not apply to assessment data required by accreditation.

LMS Access Request Log (maintained by DOLIT)

For every administrative access request to a course shell, the following information is documented:
- Type of issue (technical or significant concern)
- Date and time of request
- Requesting administrator
- Rationale provided by administrator
Course number, section, and term of course shell(s) that are being reviewed
- Date/time access was granted and removed

Records will be retained for a minimum of 3 years.

For questions or support, contact the Technology Learning Center at HCCTLC@heartland.edu