

Online Course Retention Policy 03/06/2015 (updated 02/10/2017)

PURPOSE:

With the continued growth of the use of the learning management system (Blackboard) for online courses and as a supplement to face-to-face courses at Bridgewater State University, the question of what to do with all the archived data and course sites must be addressed. Limited space within the Blackboard learning management system mandates the need for a policy that can provide access to recent courses without increasing user costs. After consultation with members of Academic Affairs' Blackboard 9 Implementation Pedagogy Committee, Information Technology's Teaching and Technology Center, as well as research on how other institutions manage this issue, the following retention policy has been established.

GENERAL DEFINITIONS:

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

- **Archive:** Complete record of the course stored offline for retention of student work. (Note: archives do not include SafeAssign data.)
- **Course Site:** Space created within Blackboard that is specific to a single course being offered during a specific semester.
- **Offline:** Data storage for archive purposes and not accessible.
- **Restoration:** Offline data restored to the production Blackboard servers so that it is accessible.

PROCESS:

1. **No sooner than 14 days after final grade are due, current semester course sites are made unavailable to students.** Instructors can still access their course sites, but students will not see them listed in their Blackboard course lists. In special circumstances, such as an incomplete grade, a student can be granted access to the course site by the instructor on an as-needed basis by temporarily changing the course availability within the course site's Control Panel.
2. **After course sites are made unavailable to students, the course sites will remain on the system with all student data and course content intact for a period of 2.5 years.** After the 2.5 year period, course sites will be archived, exported to offline storage, and deleted from the BSU Blackboard system. They will no longer be available within the Blackboard system.
3. **Archived course sites will remain in offline storage for one year before being permanently deleted.** After permanent deletion from offline storage, restoration will no longer be possible. Archived course sites can be restored during the one year period by contacting the TTC at ttc@bridgew.edu; however, please be aware that the restoration process is labor-intensive and time-consuming.

PERSONAL ARCHIVING RECOMMENDATIONS:

Faculty who wish to retain course materials have the option of generating a personal archive through the following storage options:

- Your BSU **Department G: drive** or **OneDrive folder**
- A personal storage medium, i.e. USB drive or CD/DVD

To generate a personal archive of your course site(s):

1. Enter the Blackboard course site you want to archive
2. In the Control Panel, under Packages and Utilities, click Export/Archive Course
3. Click Archive Course
4. Click Submit (maintain the default settings)
5. It will take ~30 seconds to create the archive. You will receive an email when complete. Click the Refresh button and your archive file should appear
6. Click the .zip file link
7. Save the .zip file to a folder location of your choice

If you have any questions or need assistance, please email ttc@bridgew.edu.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Faculty will be notified via the all-faculty email listserv when all course sites are made unavailable, when 2.5-year-old course sites are archived, and when course sites are to be deleted.

EXAMPLE COURSE SITE LIFE CYCLE:

