

Learning Management System Storage Policy

The University System of Georgia (USG) recognizes the importance of a consistent and stable learning management system (LMS) in the facilitation and innovation of teaching and learning. The LMS is designed to be the official system used by instructors to deliver online content, assignments, and other course materials to students for teaching and learning. To optimize the performance of this system and to operate within product licensing limits, data and content stored within the LMS must be limited.

The LMS is not a repository for permanent storage of course materials and not intended to be used as a document retention solution. Therefore, all course materials should be preserved by instructors at the end of each semester to another approved institution file storage solution. Storage outside LMS is required to ensure that USG's record retention policies are satisfied. For information on USG's record retention policies, please refer to [USG Records Retentions Schedule](#).

Effective January 2025, official LMS courses generated by our student information system (SIS), or any other courses with students enrolled, may be deleted from the LMS five years following the end of the semester in which they are taught. For example, a course taught in fall 2020 may be permanently and irreversibly removed at the end of December 2025. The institution will be notified at least one semester prior to course deletion of the courses that are scheduled for deletion. *The institution is charged with communicating a 30-day notice to all faculty and department leadership when courses are scheduled for removal. Institutions must also make a request for any special circumstance during the 30-day notice. This will give the instructor(s) an opportunity to save any important documents or data to locations outside of the LMS.* Institutions are responsible for exporting or archiving course materials and student work that must be kept for accreditation or record retention purposes beyond the five years.

Course Storage Policy FAQ

- Why do we need to remove older courses from our learning management system?
 - System health / Optimization: USG adopted D2L Brightspace as its official LMS in 2012. Since that time, the number of courses and storage space used has grown to unsustainable levels which may lead to performance and functionality issues.
 - Contractual Agreements: Our contract requires that we operate within product licensing limits. The LMS was never designed, equipped, nor contracted for long term or unlimited storage.
 - Privacy and security: The more data retained in any system means greater cybersecurity risks.
- What content will not be removed from the LMS?
 - Video or other content stored in third party services integrated with the LMS. This content will remain in third party storage, subject to the retention and storage policies of these services.
 - Courses generated by our student information system (SIS) or any other courses with student enrollments during the past five years.

- When will the courses be removed?
 - Courses generated by the SIS or any other courses with students enrolled may be removed after five years from the official end date for the semester in which the course was offered.
 - In special circumstances, requests may be made that certain courses be retained in the LMS for longer than five years. Such requests may be made from the Primary LMS administrator to the USG ITS LMS team via a support ticket during the 30-day notice.
- Can removed courses or content be recovered?
 - Once a course has been removed through this policy, the course or associated content will not be recoverable.
- How do instructors or students save course content?
 - Please see [GeorgiaVIEW's Archiving Student Data in Brightspace Guide](#) for assistance.
- How was the policy developed?
 - This policy was drafted in accordance with University System of Georgia best practices with regard to system data security. This policy was also reviewed and approved by USG Academic Affairs.
- How do I know which courses will be removed?
 - The institution must notify the instructor(s) via email at least thirty days in advance of any course removal reminding them to save any important documents or data to locations outside of the LMS.
- Why was five years selected?
 - USG's five-year retention period has been adopted because most academic programs are four years. Also, five years is comparable to other higher learning institutions.
 - Reducing the storage, database, and system load on the LMS will lead to greater performance and reliability for current and future classes.