BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

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Library & Information Technology Services

Guide to Cleaning Up Moodle

Please review the following in full before beginning to clean up Moodle. If you have any questions about cleaning up Moodle, contact the Help Desk (help@brynmawr.edu or x7440).

If you haven't already, please review the Top 11 Tips for Cleaning-Up Your Files: http://techdocs.blogs.brynmawr.edu/6416

Purpose of Moodle

Moodle is the College's Learning Management System, the software faculty and students use to share course materials and communicate outside of the classroom. Faculty have pages for each course they teach and the students enrolled in those classes automatically get access to the course materials, including syllabi, readings, assignments, etc. Some groups on campus may also use Moodle for non-academic purposes such as sharing meeting minutes, agenda items, and documents for job searches.

What Belongs on Moodle?

Moodle is not meant to be a long-term storing solution, but rather a communication and collaboration tool for faculty, students, and staff on campus. Examples of materials appropriate to store on Moodle include:

- Course materials
- Links
- Documents that you will share/collaborate on

Certain types of sensitive data are not permitted on Moodle. Please see the Data Handling Policy and the Data Handling Storage Guidelines for more details. If you have further questions about whether a file is permitted to be stored in Moodle, please contact the Help Desk.

Cleaning Up Moodle To-do List

Below are a few recommended tasks to complete to clean up your Moodle course(s):

1) Delete files from Moodle that do not belong there or are no longer needed

- Consider deleting old versions of files before importing the content into the next semester's page – since you know the syllabus will have to be updated before the next semester, perhaps you don't need to copy the old one to Moodle going forward. This is also true of articles that may quickly become out of date and/or need to be removed in the future.
- Delete anything that was not used/will not be used in the future before exporting your new semester's course shell
- Delete any duplicate files, resources, or activities.
- Target the big courses! Because Moodle only has a file size limit for individual files and not the entire course, course pages tend to grow quite large very quickly. Make sure you need all of the files that are in there before you import all of the content into a new semester's page and consider if the particularly large files (e.g. videos, other media) need to be hosted on Moodle or if they can be posted elsewhere and a link be placed in Moodle

Note: LITS recommends that all employees follow existing file retention policies for digital files. See the College's Record Retention Policy here: http://www.brynmawr.edu/humanresources/Internal/Record_Retention_List.pdf. Please consult your supervisor with any questions.

2) Transfer files from Moodle that do not belong there but you'd like to retain

- Backup Moodle course files to use in future semesters.
- Save a backup of your course page to your H: drive before you make any irreversible changes.

If there are files you need to remove from Moodle but do not want to delete, there are various options for archiving or storing your files in a different location. Certain storage media are best used for more temporary storage, whereas other media are better suited for longer-term storage. Please see this Tech Doc for a list of suggestions: https://techdocs.blogs.brynmawr.edu/files/2009/07/Protecting-Your-Data-0215.pdf

Note: *Please be mindful of the Data Handling Policy and Data Handling Storage Guidelines when considering how to store files with sensitive data.*

3) Other Things to Consider While Cleaning Up Your Files

- **Be consistent about how you name your files, and follow file naming best practices.** Naming your files in a consistent manner will improve your ability to efficiently find them later and understand differences in your files. Following file naming best practices – such as avoiding special characters (e.g. <, >, : , ?, *) — will prevent potential issues. Read more here: http://techdocs.blogs.brynmawr.edu/4952.
- Moodle will not let you upload two files with the same name, so if you are updating a document, make sure to rename it appropriately so that Moodle does not continue to link to the older version of the file. Also it is recommended that you delete the existing file on Moodle before uploading the new version to ensure that the correct version of the document is the one on Moodle.
- When considering what action to take with a file, ask yourself the following questions:
    - **How often will I need to use this file?** If it's unlikely that you'll need to use a file on a recurring basis or at all in the near future, consider deleting it, archiving it, or moving it to a folder on your H: drive.
    - **Did I create this file?** During your cleanup, you may come across files that someone else had created. If you do, find out if they need the file(s) before taking action.
    - **Can I access this information somewhere else?** If you're storing data on Moodle that you can access elsewhere (e.g. BiONiC, the College website), consider deleting the file, especially if it contains sensitive data.
    - **Should this file be archived?** Certain types of files are required to be archived. Contact the Help Desk if you have questions.

Additional Resources:

- Documentation on how to back up and restore courses on Moodle: http://techdocs.blogs.brynmawr.edu/2749
- Documentation on how to import content from one Moodle course to another: http://techdocs.blogs.brynmawr.edu/3504