

Recommendation of the Academic Policy Committee (APC) on Policies for Online and Hybrid Courses

Rationale:

- **Using UWM’s Learning Management System (LMS).** Increasingly, UWM students enroll in a mix of online and in-person courses. It is important to maintain instructor autonomy in the design and delivery of courses, but we must balance that autonomy with meeting reasonable baseline expectations for our students; students reasonably expect that signing on to the official campus LMS will provide access to their courses.
- **Making LMS pages available.** Every semester advisors, department chairs, and others receive a flurry of messages from students who cannot locate their online and hybrid courses. The most frequent cause is that instructors have not yet made their courses available. While it is understandable that instructors may not have their courses completely constructed on a Monday for a class that doesn’t start until Wednesday, the LMS makes publishing (at least) a bare-bones version of the course simple. Publishing the course allows students to review syllabi and policies while waiting for additional course content. Providing students with an indication that they are in the right place and with basic information on the course greatly alleviates student confusion and anxiety.

Policy:

- **Use of UWM’s LMS.** Instructors of online and hybrid courses must use the official Learning Management System (LMS) that is provided by UWM. Instructors maintain the ability to use additional platforms as appropriate for achieving pedagogical outcomes but must use the official LMS as a foundational launch pad for all course activities.
- **Making LMS pages available.** Before the first day of the semester, instructors of online and hybrid courses must, at minimum, publish basic course elements including the syllabus and any book and/or material requirements on the LMS site. It is best for instructors to publish more than this minimum, and individual units may set earlier requirements.