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An Overview of Concourse

What Is Concourse?

Concourse is an online syllabus system that provides a common organization of course information. Concourse provides institutions with a standard way to display course syllabus information, review syllabus progress, and archive syllabi. Concourse is integrated with the LU webpage to allow syllabi searches, and with Blackboard for easy access, as well as being available through a Concourse website. Some features of the system include:

- **Consistent Structure**: It may look like a paper syllabus, but Concourse is an electronic repository. Breaking the syllabus down into its already standard categories makes reporting, reviewing, and searching possible.
- **Ability to Archive**: Easy access to historical syllabi for importing course information to current syllabi.
- **Easy Updates**: Making changes to your syllabus is as easy as editing in MS Word.
- **Ease of Access**: Concourse allows access to course information for review and evaluation.
- **Editable Syllabus Items**: With permissions, we can designate who has the ability to edit and view syllabus at a refined level. Instructors can modify their contact information, but aren’t able to edit course descriptions.
- **Mobile Access**: Formatted for the small screen, Concourse makes it easy to have all your course information at your finger tips, anytime, anyplace, and on any mobile device.
- **Account Integration**: Faculty can access Concourse through Blackboard.

The Parts of Concourse

The fundamental unit in Concourse is the institutional template, which refers to a syllabus that contains boilerplate language for all syllabi.

Lamar Institutional Template

2018 Section Template 04/26/2018 to 04/24/2020 Modified 06/21/2018

Institutional Policies

Academic Honesty Policy

Lamar University expects all students to engage in academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.

The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include failure of the assignment and/or course up to suspension or expulsion from the university. The penalty may vary by instructor.

Additional information is available on the Academic Policy website.

Course Drop Policy

Students may drop a course and receive a grade of "Q" during the penalty-free period of the semester or session. For drops after this penalty-free period, grades are recorded as "Q" or "F," indicating the student was passing or failing at the time of the drop. A grade of "Q" may not be assigned unless an official drop has been processed through the Records Office. Students may drop a course online up to the census day by logging into Self-Service Banner. After the census day, courses must be dropped through the Records Office. For additional help, contact the academic advisor or the Records Office at records@llamar.edu. **Students may not drop a course during the last 20 percent of the term.** Students should check the academic calendar at https://www.lamar.edu/academic-calendar for specific dates.

Students with Disability Policy
Course information is layered, meaning:

1. The basic syllabus layout, information for all college syllabi, is created in the LU institutional template.
2. Information specific to the course is entered on the course template by the student information system (Banner).
3. Faculty Members add the third layer, section specific information.

Every syllabus in Concourse contains the same headings in the same location on the document, as well as standardized course titles and division and department names. This allows LU section syllabi to have the same look and feel across all divisions. The syllabi are archived which makes updating new section syllabi easier. Items, such as contact information, can be copied or imported to new section syllabi, so it doesn’t need to be retyped each semester.

Section Syllabus

Prior to the beginning of the semester, the section syllabi are created through a system-generated process. During this process, faculty are assigned to the syllabi for the courses they are scheduled to teach, with the necessary permissions to add information specific to their section. Faculty are required to update their section syllabus prior to their section start date shown in Banner.
Logging in to Concourse

LU faculty, students, and staff can access Concourse through Blackboard.
Accessing and Editing Syllabi

Division and/or department staff will have access to update course information on the master course template. The purpose of this section is to familiarize you with the instructor’s dashboard.

When you log in to Concourse, you will see your “dashboard,” the page that lists all of the courses for which you are registered. If courses are listed, it means you are either teaching the course(s), or you are registered as a student. This is an important distinction, because an instructor can only edit the syllabi for the courses they are teaching, not the syllabi of the courses that they are registered for as a student.

A sample of how a Concourse dashboard may look for an instructor is below:

Please note that the instructor’s sections for which they are currently scheduled to teach appear in the “My Courses” section of the dashboard. Sections the instructor previously taught or for which they were registered as a student appear in the “Past Courses” section of the Concourse dashboard.

Open Syllabus Items for Editing

To edit a syllabus for a certain course or section, click on the title of the syllabus to be edited. This will open the actual syllabus page, where edits can be made to the various elements of the Concourse syllabus.
Editing the Syllabus Items

After opening the course, click on “Syllabus” in the top left corner, and select “Edit.” Clicking “Edit” will open all of the elements of the syllabus.

From there you can add your own text, graphics, links, etc.

Click on the plus icon next to the name of the syllabus item, to enter the information. Items may have “Comments” with notes for the instructor (comments are shown in the yellow box under each heading). These notes will alert you to important information regarding that part of the syllabus. The comments in a Concourse syllabus are only viewable to the editor in the syllabus edit mode; they will not be viewable to students.

After you have clicked on the plus icon next to the syllabus item you wish to edit, the “Edit Item” box will appear. Use this area to edit the information for that part of the syllabus. Information can be entered manually into the syllabus, or can be copied and pasted from an existing document. Click “Save” to keep the information. Click “Cancel” to leave without saving the changes.
After you’ve entered information and saved it, if you want to make revisions, click on the pencil icon ☰ to open the item for revisions.
Copy and Paste into Concourse from External Document
Concourse supports rich text editing, so you can copy and paste formatted text from an external document directly into the Concourse syllabus. To do this, just paste your text into the appropriate rich text field within the “Edit Item” dialog box.

Add External Links to Your Syllabus
To add external links to your section syllabus in Concourse:

1. In the Edit box, highlight the word or phrase on the syllabus where you want the link to appear. For accessibility purposes, do not type the URL in the text of the syllabus.
2. Select the Insert/Edit Link icon within the rich text editor.
3. Enter or paste the URL in the URL field.
4. Select New Tab in the Target field.
5. Click Ok.
6. If you need to change the hyperlink, highlight it and click the Insert/Edit link icon to make the revisions. To remove the link, highlight the hyperlink and click the Remove Link icon.

Evaluation Criteria Ranges
Criteria: The criteria item in your syllabus includes the grading criteria and weight percentages that have been established for your course. Required criteria may be identified in a shaded comments box in the Notes column. If applicable you must use the required criteria and percentages that have rolled into your section syllabus from the master course template to calculate students’ grades.

Criteria Weight Ranges: If the percentage is a range, you must click on the pencil icon to identify the specific percentage weight you will use in your class. The specific percentage for your section must fall within the range identified for the course. (i.e., If the range is 20-50%, you could enter 30%, but not anything lower than 20% or higher than 50%). If the range begins with 0%, it is not a required criteria, but you have the option to use it within the range specified. If you are not using that criteria, enter 0%.

Please verify that the sum of all your criteria weights equals 100%.
Add Tables to a Concourse Syllabus

Tables can be added to the section syllabi. To add a table:
1. Open the “Edit Item” dialog box for the item you would like the table to appear.
2. Click the down arrow next to the Table icon. Select Table, and choose the number of columns and rows by highlighting the cell boxes.
3. Once placed, you can click on the cells to enter information in the table. The table automatically adjusts in size and appearance as text is entered in the cells.
4. Use the table editor icons that appear above the table to add or remove rows or columns.
5. For accessibility purposes, highlight the top row in your table. Click on the down arrow next to the Table icon, select “Row”, and “Row Properties”. In the Row Properties box, change the Row Type to Header. Click Ok.

Additionally, tables may be copied from Word or Excel and pasted into the syllabus, although some formatting may be lost. If you do paste a table from Word or Excel, please identify the header row in the table as noted in step 5 above.

Import Content from Another Syllabus in Concourse

Concourse includes a tool that allows users to import content from one syllabus into another. This can be helpful for importing instructor-specific information. Note: the imported item(s) will overwrite any information that currently exists in the syllabus.

1. Open the syllabus that will receive the imported information.
2. Click on Syllabus in the upper left corner.
3. Select Import.
4. Click on the Advanced button.
5. Type your name in the Instructor text field and click Search.
   Tip: Filling out additional fields will narrow down the search results further.
6. Select the **items** that you want to copy, from the previous syllabus and click **Import**.

**Be careful!** Any information that is on your current syllabus will be overwritten with the imported information, and this cannot be undone!

**Who to Contact for Assistance?**

For assistance with technical issues, such as accessing your section syllabus in Blackboard or any other technical issues with the Concourse system in general, email blackboard@lamar.edu

For assistance with editing your Concourse syllabus, email klwood2@lamar.edu or tknowles@lamar.edu

For questions regarding division and department policies and procedures regarding syllabi, including the use of Concourse, please contact your division or department office.