The LMS and LTI save the day during COVID-19, and not in the way you think.

Teaching and Learning Technologies

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The Learning Management System (LMS) at Utah State University is playing a unique role during COVID-19, and even more now that fall semester is about to start. The Teaching and Learning Technologies team at USU has built four unique Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) tools to help, faculty, students and administrators deal with accommodations and COVID-19.

#1 – The COVID Dashboard: Shows faculty which students in their class need an accommodation because they cannot attend in person due to quarantine or isolation. Data are pulled from Service-Now, where COVID case management operates.

#2 - Student Sign-Up: In fall 2020, physical distancing was the key in the classroom. This tool gave faculty the ability to allow students to sign up for the day of the week they wanted to be in the physical classroom. Faculty could set maxes for each classroom and also use it for labs and other events.

#3 Seating Chart: For 2021, USU cannot mandate masks and classrooms do not have physical distancing caps. To keep in-person classes meeting all semester, the goal is to contain any COVID outbreaks. To do that, you need to know who was sitting around someone who tests positive. This tool allows students to go into the Canvas course and specify the Row (A-Z) and seat number (1 - 70) they are sitting in for the entire semester. The seating chart can tell the Case Containment team who is sitting around any student who may have been exposed to COVID from a positive student.

#4. Class COVID Status System: Using adopted guidelines, if the Case Containment team figures the spread is too wide in a particular in-person class, they can change the status to RED, which means the class goes remote while they work to test student and contain the spread. This tool allows the containment team, after consulting with the faculty and administration, to change the status of a course to RED. This will send a Canvas announcement to the students, through their Canvas course, with instructions on what to do next. It also provides a way for the Case Containment team to get a class roster and see who was sitting around a COVID-positive student. It also provides a way to see the status of all courses, especially those changed to RED or ORANGE (recovery phase)

In case you are wondering— no. Neither Canvas nor the LTI tool are being used to store HIPAA data. We let the official systems approved to do that handle it. We just report on that data through a dynamic dashboard.

Yes, the LMS has played a crucial role in allowing teaching and learning to continue during COVID. However the ability to create LTI tools is allowing us to provide key information to faculty and students through the tool they are in every day - the LMS.

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