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Department/School: The Law School, School of Continuing & Professional Studies

Please provide a description of the requested change or new feature. [200 words]

This proposed new feature would provide the ability to automatically trigger an email alert to key stakeholders when a student has not made any progress in a lesson. It would be an opt-in enhancement, requiring the course designer to turn it on and set the notification criteria. The criteria to enter would consist of three components: 1) the last acceptable date of inactivity, 2) the course role(s) to receive the email alert, e.g., Course Builder, Instructor, Instructional Designer, Student, Teaching Assistant, and 3) the alert message text. The message box could be pre-populated with a standardized default warning. The course designer would have the ability to customize the text if needed. Additionally, it may be possible to have separate message boxes for particular roles, e.g., Instructor and Student. The Instructor role would then receive a single email alert for all inactive students in a course.

Please provide any background information that prompted this request. [200 words]

There is an increasing movement in the education industry to use big data in an attempt to identify at-risk students by tracking their level of engagement with online content and activities. A small workgroup consisting of representation from the Law School, the School of Continuing & Professional Studies, the Provost’s Office, and Information Technology Services have been meeting on a regular basis to discuss this issue and possibilities for data mining both the learning management system (Sakai) and student information system (LOCUS). The group agreed to explore the feasibility of developing and testing this new feature on 12/2/14.

Please share the anticipated course- or program-level impact. [150 words]

The Law School and School of Continuing & Professional Studies expect to use this new feature to better monitor student engagement and overall progress. The assumption is the instructor or other key stakeholder will follow-up with any student triggering an inactive alert. This is only one component of a larger learning analytics initiative to increase student retention.

Please share (if any) the anticipated university-level impact. [150 words]

This new feature will be made available in all course and project sites. Moreover, appropriate and timely “how-to” documentation will be published and readily accessible university-wide. The Law School and School of Continuing & Professional Studies agree to share their experiences using the inactive alert, including learned best practices and any perceived impact on student success.

Completed forms can be emailed to ITRS@luc.edu. Please include any additional documentation or resources to support your request. All requests are reviewed jointly by the Office of the Provost and Informational Technology Services, with input and prioritization from the Academic Technology Committee and IT Executive Steering Committee. You will receive email confirmation of your submission. Requests typically take 6-8 weeks to receive formal approval. A project timeline will then be created with a targeted completion date. More information about the Sakai Change Process can be found at www.luc.edu/SakaiChange.
Additional supporting resources:
The following visuals provide a suggested location for this new feature and possible interface changes.