

## Preliminary Set-Up of Your Moodle Course

This document covers important preliminary steps that you need to take when first setting up your Moodle course. Following the instructions below will help you understand more about how Moodle courses are set up and work, and will insure that your academic supervisor (typically the chair of your department) has access to your course for purpose of academic oversight and reporting. Reading the instructions will take a great deal longer than actually changing the settings!

### Understanding how courses are set up in Moodle

When you go to your Moodle Dashboard, you will see a list of your courses for the current semester. You will notice that there may be multiple sections for each course. These sections are generated by PowerCampus based on the sections that exist in the Student Self-Service (SSS). Note that:

- **Moodle versus the SSS**

Moodle is *independent* of the SSS. To check *actual* enrollment, always consult the SSS. This is important because sometimes students withdraw from a course, but this may not be evident in Moodle. Note too that final grades cannot be submitted via Moodle. You must do it via the SSS.

- **Section designations**

Sections will be designated differently depending on whether the students in the section are enrolled in an online degree program or are enrolled in a degree program on the main campus. Examples of the different designations are:

- If enrolled students are in an online degree program: **Module 1 ONLN**
  - Example: "PSY 306ONLN1 Psychology of Religion (FA17 Module 2 ONLN)"
- If enrolled students are main campus students enrolled in the online course: **FULLSEM ONLN**
  - Example: "PSY 306ONLN1 Psychology of Religion (FA17 FULLSEM ONLN)"

The screenshot below shows what the dashboard may look like. Multiple sections of the same course must be merged in Moodle. Instructions are given below.

## Merging Sections in Moodle

Merging your sections in Moodle will not only reduce confusion, but it will reduce your work considerably. Follow these instructions:

- It is important to create your course only in **one** place (so that you don't have to manage multiple course sites for the same course!).<sup>1</sup> For the sake of uniformity, when you create your course, you should create it in the **online section, which is labeled "Module 1 (or 2) ONLN."** Please do not create it in the FULLSEM ONLN section.<sup>2</sup>
- Connect your sections by creating a **meta link** between the sections. A meta link will allow you and students from connected sections to see the course, engage in all course activities, and see course grades. Their experience (and yours!) will be seamless, once the meta link is created.

### How to create a meta link to connect sections:

1. From the main page of your created course, go to the **Administration** menu.
2. Click on **Users**.
3. Click on **Enrollment Methods**.
4. Scroll to the bottom of the screen where you will see a dropdown menu labeled **Add method**.
5. In the dropdown menu, select **Course meta link**.

<sup>1</sup> Remember that if your course has existed in previous semesters, you can import your course material. You do not need to completely recreate it each semester. Ask for instruction if you do not know how to do this!

<sup>2</sup> If you have already created your course in the FULLSEM section, it is no problem. You will tell students which site to access. You can change it next time around.

6. You will then see the Course meta link screen that opens. At the top there is a dropdown menu containing all the courses currently offered. Click on the dropdown menu and scroll down until you find the other section of your course. (If you make a mistake, you can also delete a meta link from this page.)
7. When the selected course shows in the field as “selected,” go to the bottom of the screen and click on **Add method**. The link is now created. Students in the “unused” section will now see the other section in their course list on their dashboard in Moodle.
8. You can now deal with all the students in your course from the section that contains your course materials. Main campus students in the FULLSEM section will now see both course sites (FULLSEM and Module # ONLN) in their list of courses in their dashboard. Be sure to send a note to your students from the **News Forum** on the main course page to inform them to choose the **Module # ONLN** section to access for their course content. You can do this in your first email to students before a course begins. For example, write to students to say that they need to go to “PSY 309 FA17 FULLSEM ONLN” to access the course. Carefully type the correct course designation to avoid confusion.

### **Enroll Your Department Chair/Academic Supervisor in Your Course**

For purposes of academic oversight, instructors report to the chair of the department in which their course is “housed.” At the beginning of each term, you must make sure that your chair is enrolled in your course. To enroll him or her in your course, follow the same steps you would follow to add a student or teaching assistant. (Remember, however, that enrolling someone does not mean that he or she is taking your course. Only the SSS shows actual enrollment!) Here are the steps:

1. From the main page of your created course, go to the **Administration** menu.
2. Click on **Users**.
3. Click on **Enrolled Users**.
4. At the upper right of the screen click on the link that says **Enroll users**. Click on it.
5. A dialogue box will open. At the top you will see a dropdown menu that says **Assign roles**. Click on it and select the role that says **Course Activity Viewer**.
6. Scroll to the bottom of the dialogue box. You will see an empty field that with a link to **Search** at the right. Type your chair’s name in the search field. (It may be helpful just to type his or her last name.) Click on **Search**. Moodle will bring up the name (or list of names) that matches your entry.
7. At the right of each name in the list you will see a link that says **Enroll**. Click on it.
8. At the bottom of the dialogue box click on **Finish enrolling users**.
9. Once someone is enrolled in the course, you can manage his or her roles from the list of enrolled users. Ask if you need further help.