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OPALS Basics
An Introduction to the Updated OPALS System

The Online Provisioning and Approvals for Learning Systems (OPALS) application has undergone updates to improve the end user experience. To do so, UCT’s application development team reinvented the user interface to streamline the course request and provisioning process. To acquaint faculty and staff with the new user interface, we created the following guide to course requests and provisioning in the new OPALS system.

Getting Started/Accessing OPALS

Begin on the UHCL website home page. Locate and click the Blackboard link, located near the top of the page, just above the University of Houston – Clear Lake name.
You will then see the Blackboard login page, from which you can quickly access many support resources for Blackboard, including a link to OPALS. Locate the For Faculty box on the login page and click the “OPALS Course Request & Provisioning” link.

University of Houston Clear Lake

Welcome to UHCL Blackboard

Looking for your FA18 course(s)? Those Blackboard offerings are still located on our old 2018 Blackboard system.

FOR STUDENTS
- Is My Course Ready?
- Blackboard - Getting Started
- Blackboard Quiz Tips
- Submitting Assignments
- More Blackboard Support

FOR FACULTY
- OPALS Course Request & Provisioning
- Blackboard Training Info
- RESPONDUS
- More Blackboard Support

RESOURCES
- Blackboard Browser Check
- Technical Specifications
- Blackboard Blog
- Playing Video/Audio Content
- Contact the Support Center

Blackboard Maintenance/System Updates
Blackboard maintenance occurs every Sunday 7-9am. During these 2 hours you will not be able to log into Blackboard. We apologize for any inconvenience.
Getting Started/Logging into OPALS

The following screen capture shows the OPALS login page, featuring three important areas of information. The first area (1) contains links to OPALS video tutorials. The second area (2) is where you can find OPALS news and announcements. The third area (3) is where you enter your login credentials.

Getting Started/OPALS Landing Page

The following screen capture shows the OPALS landing page, which is what you will see after logging into the OPALS system. In the screenshot are three main areas. The first area (1) contains all of the OPALS navigation tabs; by default, you will be taken to Home tab or page upon login. The second area (2) is where you can access the OPALS training videos, similar to what you saw on the OPALS login page. The third area (3) contains the Quick Links menu that you can use to begin basic OPALS tasks, such as course requests and provisioning, as well as to access documentation about OPALS.
Getting Started/OPALS Navigation Tabs

Use the Approvals tab to view any course requests that are pending your approval.

Use the Classes tab to see what courses you are designated in eServices as being assigned for a given semester, in this case Spring 2019, and their status.
Use the **Course Request** tab to access pending course requests to see where your requests are in the online approval process.

Use the **Master Courses** tab to see all of the master courses that you own or have access to.
Use the **Semester Offerings** tab to see a list of your current and previous semester offerings and whether or not they may be used from which to provision again in the future.
Course Requests/Requesting a New Blank Master Course

At the OPALS landing page, select the Request a Course link under Quick Links.

The New Course Request screen will appear and your name, email address, and phone number should be automatically filled in. You are free to edit the email address and phone number, if needed.
Next, go down to the College field and select which of the four colleges the course that you are teaching falls under. Depending on your choice, you may need to specify either a program or department chair, and even a division chair if you are in the College of Science and Engineering. In this screen capture, we have selected the College of Education and we can then turn our attention to the second area of the screen, Course Information.

We begin our work in the Course Information section by selecting the desired semester from the Select a Term drop down menu. For this example, we have selected Fall 2019.
Next, we need to specify the four-letter rubric or subject and the catalog number for the course that we will be teaching. Be very careful when making your selections in this area as typing, rather than selecting from the drop-down menus, can cause your course request form to fail. As you start to type the rubric or subject, you will see that some rubric and course number options begin to appear. Once you see the desired course rubric and number combination, select it from this menu by rolling over it, clicking, and then letting OPALS fill in the course name.

![Course Information]

When will you teach your course?

Fall 2019

Course Lookup:

INST 3313 - Survey of Instructional Technologies

| INST 3313 | Survey of Instructional Technologies | #003230 |
| INST 4355 | eLearning | #003234 |
| INST 4357 | Multimedia for Instruction | #047142 |
| INST 4365 | Web Development | #003235 |
The final choice that needs to be made under Course Information is the delivery mode in which your course will be taught or supported by your Blackboard shell. You have two options, either a fully online-approved course or a partially online shell, which can be used for both web-supported and partially online courses in the schedule. Partially online masters may be requested at any time. However, if you are interested in requesting a fully online course, we recommend that you close your course request and contact your designated instructional designer (ID) for guidance before submitting a request. Fully online-approved courses have specific course request deadlines and must be completed and submitted for Quality Assurance (or QA) review before students begin registering for that class. Your ID can discuss these timelines and other considerations to ensure that you are aware of special requirements regarding new fully online courses. In this example, I have selected the Partially Online delivery mode.

Under Resource Allocation, you will see the question, "Would you like to request the use of your own or another faculty member’s course?" For this example, I have checked “No” because I am requesting a new blank master. In a later section of this guide, we’ll demonstrate how to request contents from your own or another instructor’s existing Blackboard course.
Finally, double check the entire New Course Request screen and make sure everything is correct. Having confirmed that all of the information shown is correct, finish by clicking the Submit button. You should then see a green confirmation banner at the top of the screen that indicates the request is underway and is going through the electronic approval chain.

Once you've submitted a course request, make sure that you regularly check your UHCL email account because your UHCL email address is what OPALS is going to use to notify you as things are approved, and then once the course is being created. So do keep an eye out for those emails.

Please do not reply to this email.

Dear OPALS Approver,

You're receiving this message because you are an approver of Blackboard Course Requests.

A Course Request submitted by Willis-Opalenik, Jennifer Joyce requires your approval for the following step: SOE Approval Process - Associate Dean

Course Request Details:

- **ID:** 7948
- **Term:** Fall 2019
- **Title:** Assistive-Adaptive Computer Applications
- **Course:** INST 5011
- **Instructor:** Willis-Opalenik, Jennifer Joyce
- **Details URL:** https://testapps.uhcl.edu/OPALS/CourseRequest/7948#approvalHistory

To respond to this request, please visit the following URL: https://testapps.uhcl.edu/OPALS#approvals

If you choose to ignore this email, another notice will be sent at different intervals to remind you that your approval is required. Please keep in mind, any delay in the approval process may cause delays in the course's approval and development schedule and may have a significant impact on enrollment.

If you have any questions regarding the process or the use of the OPALS application, please contact the Support Center by email at SupportCenter@uhcl.edu or by telephone at (713) 282-2828.

Warm regards,

OPALS
Course Requests/Requesting a Course with Borrowed Contents

At the OPALS landing page, select the Request a Course link under Quick Links.

The New Course Request screen will appear and your name, email address, and phone number should be automatically filled in. You are free to edit the email address and phone number, if needed.
Next, go down to the College field and select which of the four colleges the course that you are teaching falls under. Depending on your choice, you may need to specify either a program or department chair, and even a division chair if you are in the College of Science and Engineering. In this screen capture, we have selected the College of Education and we can then turn our attention to the second area of the screen, Course Information.

We begin our work in the Course Information section by selecting the desired semester from the Select a Term drop down menu. For this example, we have selected Fall 2019.
Next, we need to specify the four-letter rubric or subject and the catalog number for the course that we will be teaching. Be very careful when making your selections in this area as typing, rather than selecting from the drop-down menus, can cause your course request form to fail. As you start to type the rubric or subject, you will see that some rubric and course number options begin to appear. Once you see the desired course rubric and number combination, select it from this menu by rolling over it, clicking, and then letting OPALS fill in the course name.

![Course Information](image)

Course Information
When will you teach your course?
Fall 2019

Course Lookup:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Catalog Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INST 3313</td>
<td>Survey of Instructional Technologies</td>
<td>003230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INST 4355</td>
<td>eLearning</td>
<td>003234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INST 4357</td>
<td>Multimedia for Instruction</td>
<td>047142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INST 4365</td>
<td>Web Development</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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The final choice that needs to be made under Course Information is the delivery mode in which your course will be taught or supported by your Blackboard shell. You have two options, either a fully online-approved course or a partially online shell, which can be used for both web-supported and partially online courses in the schedule. Partially online masters may be requested at any time. However, if you are interested in requesting a fully online course, we recommend that you close your course request and contact your designated instructional designer (ID) for guidance before submitting a request. Fully online-approved courses have specific course request deadlines and must be completed and submitted for Quality Assurance (or QA) review before students begin registering for that class. Your ID can discuss these timelines and other considerations to ensure that you are aware of special requirements regarding new fully online courses. In this example, I have selected the Partially Online delivery mode. You may then move on to the last section of the course request screen, Resource Allocation.

Under Resource Allocation, you will see the question, "Would you like to request the use of your own or another faculty member’s course?" You have the option in this area of the screen to either request contents from one of your own existing Blackboard courses, or to borrow contents from another faculty member. For this example, I have checked “Yes – Another faculty member’s content” because I am requesting that my course use contents copied from another instructor’s (Dr. Jana Willis’) existing Blackboard course.
Once you select one of the “Yes” options, a new field will appear in Resource Allocation, prompting you to “Please enter the faculty member you would like to request content from.” You can enter the content owner’s name, UHCL email address, or employee ID in this field. In this example, I entered Dr. Willis’ email address, which enabled OPALS to locate her information. A drop down menu below the field will show the instructor’s record. Click on that menu item to proceed.

Once you select the instructor from the drop down menu, the screen will expand, displaying a list of courses from which you may request contents. Locate the course from which you want to borrow contents and check the radio button located to the left of its information.
Finally, double check this entire New Course Request screen and make sure everything is correct. Having confirmed that all of the information shown is correct, finish by clicking the Submit button. You should then see a green confirmation banner at the top of the screen that indicates the request is underway and it is going through the electronic approval chain.

Once you've submitted a course request, make sure that you regularly check your UHCL email account because your UHCL email address is what OPALS is going to use to notify you as things are approved, and then once the course is being created. So do keep an eye out for those emails.

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**Course Request Details:**

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- **Course:** INST 5011
- **Instructor:** Willis-Opalenik, Jennifer Joyce
- **Details URL:** https://testapps.uhcl.edu/OPALS/CourseRequest/7948#approvalHistory

To respond to this request, please visit the following URL:
 https://testapps.uhcl.edu/OPALS#approvals

If you choose to ignore this email, another notice will be sent at different intervals to remind you that your approval is required. Please keep in mind, any delay in the approval process may cause delays in the course's approval and development schedule and may have a significant impact on enrollment.

If you have any questions regarding the process or the use of the OPALS application, please contact the Support Center by email at SupportCenter@uhcl.edu or by telephone at (713) 281-2828.

Warm regards,

OPALS
Provisioning/Basic Provisioning

At the OPALS landing page, select the Provision a New Course Offering link under Quick Links.

The Provision a Course screen will appear where you will begin by selecting the semester for which you want to provision. For this example, I selected the Spring 2019 semester.

The Session field will then appear, prompting you to select a session. For this example, I selected the regular 15 weeks session.
The screen expands again, revealing “Step 2: What would you like to do?” In this step, you must specify whether you want to create your new offering based on a master course or from a previous semester course offering. NOTE: You can only provision from a previous semester offering once; for more information about this limitation, please watch our team’s short video, Relationship Between Master Courses and Semester Offerings [2:26]. For this example, I selected the option to provision from one of my master courses.

**Step 2: What would you like to do?**

Choose how you want to provision your course:
- Create a semester offering based on content from my master course
- Create a semester offering based on content from the last time I taught the class

The screen expands once again, revealing “Step 3: Content Selection,” which provides a list of my master courses from which I can borrow contents for my new semester offering. Click the radio button located to the left of the course from which contents should be copied.

**Step 3: Content Selection**

Select the content you would like to use:
- EDUC4310.v6.willisopenlinik.online (Partially Online) EDUC 4310 - Theories of Educational Everything
- GEOL1301.v1.willisopenlinik (Partially Online) MATH 1312 - Intermediate Awful Math
- INST5011.v6.willisopenlinik (Partially Online) INST 5011 - Assistive-Adaptive Computer Applications
- INST5011.v1.willisopenlinik (Partially Online) INST 5011 - Assistive-Adaptive Computer Applications
- INST5130.v6.willisopenlinik.online (Partially Online) INST 5130 - Learning Theory and Instr
- INST5233.v5.willisopenlinik (Partially Online) INST 5233 - Human Performance Technology
- TCED5031.v6.willisopenlinik.online (Fully Online) TCED 6031 - Application of Tech in Classroom

“Step 4: Select the classes you would like to provision for” will appear below Step 3. In this demonstration of a basic provisioning job, I have selected the first option, “Create a separate shell for each of the selected course sections.” Later in this guide, you will see a tutorial that explains how to use these two options to handle situations in which you need to teach multiple sections or courses from the same Blackboard contents.

**Step 4: Select the classes you would like to provision for**

Select how you want to provision your semester offering:
- Create a separate shell for each of the selected course sections
- Combine selected course sections into one shell
The screen expands, revealing a list of courses that you are scheduled to teach in the semester that you specified in a previous step. Check the box located to the left of the desired class of students who should be loaded into your new semester offering. In this example, I have selected my INST 3313.08 class.

The screen expands one final time, revealing “Step 5: Confirmation.” Take a moment or two to review the entire Provision a Course screen, making sure that you have correctly selected both the source of the contents for your new offering and the class/section of students who should be added to the new offering. When everything is correct, check the “I confirm” box and then click the Submit button.

You will be returned to the OPALS Home tab, where you should see a light blue banner, indicating that your provisioning job has been scheduled and will be processed shortly.
Provisioning/Provisioning Multiple Courses or Sections with the Same Contents

In addition to the simple one course/one section provisioning described previously, OPALS provides faculty with the flexibility to create a single semester offering containing one set of contents that will be shared by students in two or more similar (cross listed) courses or multiple sections of the same course.

At the OPALS landing page, select the Provision a New Course Offering link under Quick Links.

The Provision a Course screen will appear where you will begin by selecting the semester for which you want to provision. For this example, I selected the Spring 2019 semester.
The Session field will then appear, prompting you to select a session. For this example, I selected the regular 15 weeks session.

The screen expands again, revealing “Step 2: What would you like to do?” In this step, you must specify whether you want to create your new offering based on a master course or from a previous semester course offering. NOTE: You can only provision from a previous semester offering once; for more information about this limitation, please watch our team’s short video, Relationship Between Master Courses and Semester Offerings [2:26]. For this example, I selected the option to provision from one of my master courses.

The screen expands once again, revealing “Step 3: Content Selection,” which provides a list of my master courses from which I can borrow contents for my new semester offering. Click the radio button located to the left of the course from which contents should be copied.
“Step 4: Select the classes you would like to provision for” will appear below Step 3. For this example of combining multiple classes/sections into a single offering, I have selected the second option, “Combine selected course sections into one shell.”

The screen will expand once again, revealing a list of my assigned courses in PeopleSoft for which I may provision using my selected partially online master course. Notice that it doesn’t prevent me from provisioning a course with a different course number and rubric combination than the selected master. The only limitation that the OPALS system will impose is that relating to delivery mode. You may not provision for a section that will be taught fully online from a master or previous semester offering that is partially online. For this demonstration, I don’t have two sections of the same course to use, so I’ll pretend that I have two classes that are cross listed and need to be combined into a single Blackboard offering. I have checked the boxes for BOTH INST 3313.03 AND WRIT 3312.01.
The screen expands one final time, revealing “Step 5: Confirmation.” Take a moment or two to review the entire Provision a Course screen, making sure that you have correctly selected both the source of the contents for your new offering and the classes/sections of students who should be added to the new offering. When everything is correct, check the “I confirm” box and then click the Submit button.

**Step 5: Confirmation**
Please confirm that the above selections are correct and that you wish to proceed with provisioning your course(s):

The following semester offerings will be scheduled for creation once submitted:

- INST3313.08.SP19.15W willisopalenik: SP19 15W INST 3313.08/WRIT 3312.01 Survey of Instructional Techn

I confirm

You will be returned to the OPALS Home tab, where you should see a light blue banner, indicating that your provisioning job has been scheduled and will be processed shortly.

**Provisioning/Adding a Course/Section to an Offering.**

There are instances in which an instructor has already provisioned and is then assigned an extra section (or has a section changed). In such cases, OPALS makes it easy to simply add students from the new/changed course or section to an already provisioned offering.

At the OPALS landing page, select the Add Class to Provisioned Course link under Quick Links.

The add a section of students to an already provisioned course screen will appear. You will first need to select the semester for which you need to make the change. For this example, I selected the Spring 2019 semester.
Add a section of students to an already provisioned course

Step 1: Term Selection

Semester:

--- Select a Term ---
--- Select a Term ---
Fall 2018
Spring 2019

The Session field will then appear, in which you will select the session in which the course will be taught. For this example, I selected the Regular Fifteen Week session.

Step 1: Term Selection

Semester:

Spring 2019

Session:

--- Select a Session ---
--- Select a Session ---
Regular Academic Session (15W)
Eight Week - Second (8W2)

Unable to retrieve Semester Offering data for the selected Term and Session.

A new area, “Step 2: Content Selection,” will be revealed. From this section, select the existing semester offering to which you want to add students from the new course/section. For this example, I have selected ECED1354.01.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik.

Step 2: Content Selection

Select the course offering you would like to add one or more classes to:
- ANTH4301.03.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ANTH 4301.03/PSYC 6839.01 Studies in Cultural Diversity
- ARTS2371.03.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ARTS 2371.03 Digital Photography
- BIOL1107.01.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W BIOL 1107.01 Lab for Biology II
- ECED1354.01.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ECED 1354.01 Dev Theories of Young Child
- ENVR5333.01.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W INST 3313.03 Pollution Control Technology
- TCED4322.03.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W TCED 4322.03 Science Methods for EC-6
- TCED4378.04.SP19.15W.v0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W TCED 4378.04 Pre-Service Internship I
The screen will expand again, revealing “Step 3: Select the classes you would like to provision for.” Here, you will select the additional course(s)/section(s) that you wish to add to the existing offering that you specified in Step 2. NOTE: The system will permit you to add a course/section with different rubric; however, you will NOT be able to add a fully online course/section to an existing partially or web supported offering. For this example, I have elected to add students from my BIOL 4289.04 class to my existing ECED 1354 Blackboard offering.

Step 2: Content Selection
Select the course offering you would like to add one or more classes to:
- ANTH4301.03 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ANTH 4301.03/PSYC 6639.01 Studies in Cultural Diversity
- ARTS2371.03 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ARTS 2371.03 Digital Photography
- BIOL1107.01 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W BIOL 1107.01 Lab for Biology II
- ECED1354.01 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W ECED 1354.01 Dev Theories of Young Child
- ENVR5533.01 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W INST 3313.03 Pollution Control Technology
- TCED4322.03 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W TCED 4322.03 Science Methods for EC-6
- TCED4378.04 SP19.15Wv0.willisopalenik (Partially Online) SP19 15W TCED 4378.04 Pre-Service Internship I

Step 3: Select the classes you would like to provision for:
Select the course sections you want to provision:
- Greyed/out courses are not eligible for provisioning with the selected semester offering.
- Courses sections must have a compatible instruction mode with the selected semester offering to be eligible.
- Only unprovisioned courses scheduled for the selected semester and session are shown below.

- BIOL 4289.04 (Face to Face) - Independent Study in Biology
- CENG 4389.01 (Face to Face) - Ind Stu in Comp Sys Eng
- ENVR 5533.01 (< 50% online) - Pollution Control Technology
- FINC 3331.03 (Face to Face) - Business Finance
- INST 3313.08 (100% Online) - Survey of Instructional Technologies
- LEGL 4355.01 (Face to Face) - Torts
- MATH 5034.01 (100% F2F/w/supplmntl web) - Calculus-Math Tchrs Gr 10-14
- MGMT 3301.05 (100% Online) - Mgmt Theory And Practice
- MKTG 4391.01 (100% Online) - Select Topics Mktd
- PSDL 4345.02 (100% Online) - Strategic Planning
- WRIT 3312.01 (100% Online) - Written Communications in Business
- WRIT 3312.07 (< 50% online) - Written Communications in Business
The screen expands one final time, revealing “Step 4: Confirmation.” Take a moment or two to review the entire Add a section of students to an already provisioned course screen, making sure that you have correctly selected both the existing semester offering and the class/section of students who should be added to it. When everything is correct, check the “I confirm” box and then click the Submit button.

You will be returned to the OPALS Home tab, where you should see a light blue banner, indicating that your provisioning job has been scheduled and will be processed shortly.
Approvals/Approving a Request to Borrow Contents

In cases in which you, or another instructor, have requested a course be created with contents copied from one of your existing Blackboard shells, you will need to complete the Content Owner approval step in OPALS before the request can be processed.

At the OPALS landing page, click the Approvals tab.

A list of course requests that are pending your permission to use your existing course contents will be displayed. In the screen capture below, you will see two requests from me, for which I want a new course created with contents from one of my already existing courses. Even though it’s from my own course to another course that will belong to me, the system still requires that I process this approval step. The more common instance is that you will see a request from another instructor (e.g., Jenn Ray, as shown below) who wants to borrow your contents. To approve one of these pending requests, simply click the Approve button that is located to the left of the course information.

The Content Approval screen will appear. Make sure that you note whether the pending request is for a fully online course and, if so, for what semester. For fully online requests for the current or next upcoming semester, you MUST select the delegation option, “Yes – Permit full use of my course content for one term only,” or the option, “No – Deny the use of my content.” You may only choose the option, “Yes – Permit full use of my course content” for partially online course requests or for fully online course requests that are submitted by the deadline on the university’s current Course Development Calendar. For more information about course request deadlines for fully online courses, please refer to our team’s short video, Understanding the Course Development Calendar (Fully Online Courses Only) [3:38].

To approve the pending request, click the “Yes” option that meets the above requirements and that suits your preferences. For this example, I granted Jenn Ray “limited delegation” (one semester only)
permission to borrow my contents, which means that she will receive a copy of my contents in her semester offering, but she will never be able to provision again from that semester offering in future.

Content Approval

Course Request ID: 7708
Course Request: INST 3313

Term: Spring 2019
Delivery Mode: Fully Online

Instructor:
Ray, Jenn Marie

Approval Step:
Faculty Content: IN5130.v6.willsopalenik.online

Status:
Approved

Content Delegation:
- Yes - Permit full use of my course content.
- Yes - Permit full use of my course content for one term only.
- No - Deny the use of my content.

You also have the option to enter any comments to the requestor in the Comments field.

Status:
Approved

Content Delegation:
- Yes - Permit full use of my course content.
- Yes - Permit full use of my course content for one term only.
- No - Deny the use of my content.

NOTE: Should the requesting instructor need to teach the course again in later semesters, you will need to approve another similar request in OPALS.

Comments:

Comments or notes regarding your approval...
To finish your approval, check the I Confirm box and then click the Submit button.

A green banner, indicating that your content approval has been submitted, will appear briefly at the top of the Approvals page.

You may then continue with other tasks in OPALS, or sign out of the system.
Conclusion/For More Help

On behalf of UCT’s Course Development & Support Team (instructional designers and learning technology administrators), we hope that this user guide has been of value to you in learning how to complete tasks in OPALS. Should you require any assistance beyond that covered in this document, you may contact your designated instructional designer (ID) directly, or just contact the Support Center, either at SupportCenter@UHCL.edu or by telephone at 281.283.2828. If you contact the Support Center, your information will be entered into UCT’s help ticketing system and that ticket will then be assigned to your designated ID, who will then contact you directly.