

LEARNING NEWSFLASH

Innovative Strategies and Tools to Enrich Knowledge

In this Issue:

- What is learning data?
- Implications of current handling of learning data.

Learning Data and Privacy: An overview

An article titled “How Learning Data Impacts Privacy” was recently published by the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative as part of a series called *7 things you should know about...*

Learning data refers to information gathered from “learning content, assessment and evaluation data, human added-value content, and platform tracking content.” While some of these types of data are currently protected by regulations or policies, others are not. Also, most of learning data resides outside of universities’ internal network and is being stored in cloud services by service providers or other vendors. This raises the issue of privacy rights being respected by third-parties.

While some colleges have started building awareness of the situation, such programs are in their early stages. For example, a tool that gives students the choice to opt out of analytics services using their data is currently being developed at University of California, Berkeley. Such systems are still in the works, but they are starting to raise concerns. While students can reduce their exposure to privacy risks by opting out of analytics services, this choice could result in incomplete or skewed data sets.

Overall, while applications stemming from learning analytics have the potential to significantly improve student success in the near future, institutions are expected to develop measures to balance students’ privacy and innovation.

The full article is available at the following link:

<https://library.educause.edu/~media/files/library/2017/5/eli7144.pdf>