

Suggested Elements for Review of Online Instruction

This document provides a list of elements to consider when reviewing online course instruction. The concept of this tool is that it would provide useful feedback to the faculty member delivering the course. It is not designed to be rigid or prescriptive, but rather to be informative, helpful, and constructive. A corollary experience would be that of having a manuscript peer-reviewed prior to publication in a professional journal. The procedure followed may vary by academic discipline, but the intention is to provide constructive review for the overall benefit of the profession. These suggested elements for review might be used for self-review of a course, peer review, or formal departmental review.

These “Suggested Elements for Review” are compiled from literature, research, and published best practices from professional organizations including the Sloan Consortium, WCET (Western Cooperative in Educational Technology), and NUTN (National University Telecommunications Network). One primary source has been the Quality Matters www.qualitymatters.org project, sponsored in part by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education, through Maryland Online. Special thanks to doctoral student, Rick Aman, for his help with initial drafts. A literature review is available upon request, describing sources for the best practices standards.

These elements for review of online instruction are divided into seven sections with suggested review standards in each section. We encourage revision and adaptation of these elements to fit the needs of the situation and the academic department. Although these elements have a solid basis, please do not view these as “set in stone,” and do feel free to adapt them to increase their usefulness to you.

As a service to the departments who provide online curriculum, Ecampus will gladly participate in review teams, as requested by the department chair, to work toward our common goal of providing quality instruction to OSU students. In this case we would recommend that this review of instruction be completed by a team made up of one or more content experts assigned by the department, an expert in online course design and instruction from Ecampus, and perhaps another successful online instructor in the same content area or in a related area. It is suggested that the team (1) have a preliminary meeting with the instructor to review the syllabus, learning outcomes, and course design, (2) use this instrument to form the basis of a thorough review of the course online, and (3) summarize the outcome in a discussion with the instructor and department chair.

OSU Extended Campus welcomes your suggestions for improving this evaluation tool. We are also interested in knowing how this process has worked for you and if it has proven to be helpful.



1.0 - LEARNING OUTCOMES and ONLINE DELIVERY STANDARDS

Specific Review Standards	Comments/Observations
1.1 All course teaching objectives, learning outcomes, and requirements were clearly presented. If this course is BACC Core or WIC, appropriate standards were clearly articulated.	
1.2 Course documents described the functions of the online teaching and learning portal (i.e. Blackboard) to the student (how to post assignments, communicate with the instructor, etc.). Clear standards were set for instructor response and availability during class (turn-around time for email, grade postings, office hours, etc.).	
1.3 Students were given information describing course requirements at the outset of the	
1.4 All student assignments and their expected due dates, as well as exams and exam dates, were posted at the beginning of the course, including any requirements for proctored exams. Instructions for completing assignments were clear.	
1.5 Students receive clear instructions to save and retain copies of all assignments and submissions.	

Comments and Recommendations: The following comments and recommendations by the review team are designed to assist in improving the quality of this course by pointing out areas that could benefit from implementation of online instruction best practices.

2.0 – COURSE CONTENT and ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT STANDARDS

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
2.1 Course content was appropriate and up-to-date relative to the discipline, level of course, and pre-defined learning outcomes.	
2.2 Course content was complete as presented (including online information, student learning materials, evaluation tools, etc.).	
2.3 The intended learning outcomes for this course were clearly stated, aligned with the course syllabus, measurable, and applied.	
2.4 The instructional materials contained in this course or referenced by the instructor have appropriate depth in content and are sufficiently comprehensive for the student to master course objectives.	
2.5 The instructor and this course implemented measures to promote academic honesty, for example, use of proctored exams, random question generation, individualized writing assignments, or projects.	

2.6 Standards for the assignment and grading were provided and defined.

Comments and Recommendations:

3.0 – INTERACTIONS WITH LEARNER

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
3.1 The instructor encouraged regular and ongoing interaction between teacher and students, among students, and between students and the learning environment.	
3.2 Students were offered opportunities for active learning that permitted learners to engage and participate in activities and tasks that enhanced comprehension, understanding, and knowledge.	
3.3 The instructor set and maintained the expectations and standards for appropriate student conduct.	

Comments and Recommendations:

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4.0 - LEARNING RESOURCES and SUPPORTING MATERIALS

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
4.1 The instructor directed students to resources and services they needed to meet learning objectives.	
4.2 Instructional materials, (including supporting materials such as: textbooks, readings, manuals, videos, and computer software) were made available to all learners and were clearly identified. These materials were consistent in organization and level for the specific instruction.	
4.3 The instructor presented or identified supplemental tutorials, websites, library services, readings, research materials or other resources for required learning activities.	

Comments and Recommendations:

5.0 - ASSESSMENT and MEASUREMENT

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
5.1 The instructor applied assessments methodologies and techniques that measured achievement of stated learning outcomes and were clearly derived from assigned readings and learning activities.	
5.2 Feedback to students concerning assignments and questions was constructive and provided in a timely manner. (Standard for email reply is within two days, evaluation results within seven days).	
5.3 Evaluation of student performance included a variety of assessment methods (both formative and summative) such as: evaluation and rating of student projects, student interaction, assignments and activities, performance on quizzes and tests, and other assessment techniques.	
5.4 Students were encouraged to ask questions and request clarification of course requirements to the instructor.	
5.5 Students were provided an opportunity to evaluate both the instructor and the course (e.g., OSU Student Evaluation of Teaching).	

Comments and Recommendations:

6.0 – COURSE TECHNOLOGY

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
6.1 Technology selected and used by the instructor appropriately facilitated the achievement of the learning outcomes.	
6.2 Media and technology enhanced, rather than detracted from, the learning experience.	
6.3 The instructor is sufficiently skilled in the use of the OSU teaching and learning management system (Blackboard) and email to effectively present the teaching objectives and facilitate the learning outcomes.	

Comments and Recommendations:

7.0 - STUDENT SUPPORT STANDARDS and LEARNER SUPPORT

<i>Specific Review Standards</i>	<i>Comments/Observations</i>
7.1 The instructor provided information and/or linkages to the University's academic and student support services.	
7.2 The instructor provided direction to technical assistance, including the use of Blackboard, and direct access to technical support staff.	

Comments and Recommendations:

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