Ecampus Essentials

Partnering with faculty to develop high quality online and hybrid learning experiences for Ecampus students is our goal. This document provides information about the research-based standards used at OSU to design online and hybrid courses, based on the **Quality Matters** Higher Education Rubric (7th Edition). All new and redeveloped Ecampus courses are expected to meet essential-level standards and are strongly encouraged to meet exemplary-level standards. Ecampus instructional designers support and partner with faculty to ensure standards are met.

Course Introduction and Navigation

A clear introduction to the course and logical, student-centered navigation help students find what they need and look ahead to anticipate future work, reducing frustration. These elements help students to avoid missing important instructions or assignments and to plan out their time.

Essential

- Course is structured into intuitive sections (weeks, units, etc.) with all materials for each section housed within that section (e.g., one page with that week's learning materials rather than a long list of files in the module). Course is organized with student-centered navigation, and it is clear to students how to get started in the course.
- All OSU-required syllabus information is present, including instructor's name, OSU email address, contact information, grading policies, and course learning outcomes. If applicable, outcomes and special curricular instructions for Bacc Core and Core Education, WIC, and DPD are included in the syllabus. Course descriptions match the OSU catalog verbatim.
- In addition to OSU-required syllabus information, the syllabus for the online or hybrid section addresses information necessary for online and hybrid students, including how to access technical support, communication guidelines for the course, the instructor's communication policy, and the following statement about instructor response time for questions and assignment feedback:

  Response times: Students can expect responses to questions within 24 hours during the work week and graded assignments with feedback within five days. If I need to deviate from this schedule, I will inform the class.

- A course schedule with due dates is provided in the syllabus, as a separate document, and/or the Syllabus summary is turned on.
- Module release schedule allows students to see *at least* the current week and the subsequent week. Discussion, assignment, and quiz availability dates are used to restrict early access only when necessary for academic integrity purposes.

Exemplary

- An introduction to the course topic, purpose, and structure and/or instructor is available (such as in an introduction video).
- All course modules are available to students, and discussion, assignment, and quiz availability dates are used to restrict early access only when necessary for academic integrity purposes.

Learning Outcomes and Alignment

An OSU course is an OSU course, regardless of the modality in which it is taught. Learning outcomes are the roadmap for the course. Clear, measurable outcomes indicate exactly what should be covered and at what depth. Weekly or module/unit learning outcomes help students understand how that week's coursework relates to course outcomes. The OSU Faculty Senate's Curriculum Council has approved a course title, description, and learning outcomes for each course through a rigorous curricular review process. Documentation is recorded in the university's [CIM system](#).

Essential

- Online and hybrid courses meet the same course learning outcomes as sections taught in other modalities.

Exemplary

- Learning outcomes are measurable and observable (avoiding ambiguous verbs such as "understand" or "comprehend").
- In addition to course-level outcomes, weekly or unit-level outcomes are provided that are aligned with course-level outcomes.

Assessment and Feedback

Clear expectations help students to succeed. Assessments should be aligned with outcomes to ensure that outcomes are being met. Designing assessments in a way that allows students to build their learning throughout the term and monitor their progress along the way helps them to know if they are on track for success.

Essential

- Assessments (assignments, exams, projects, discussions, etc.) are aligned with course and unit or weekly outcomes in content and cognitive level.
- Assessments are sequenced in a way to give students an opportunity to build knowledge and learn from instructor feedback.
- Specific and descriptive grading information for each assessment is provided (e.g., detailed grading criteria and/or rubrics).

Exemplary

- Assessment types are varied.
- The course includes formative and summative assessments.
- Each assessment explains its purpose and value in the context of the course and/or discipline.

Instructional Materials

Materials for online and hybrid classes should be created specifically for the audience of online and hybrid students. Instructional materials should prepare students for assessments. Research shows that using best practices for presenting instructional materials helps students learn more effectively (e.g., "chunking" content and providing a variety of types of learning materials).

Essential

- Instructional materials align with the course and weekly outcomes.
- Online instructional materials drawn from other sources have been through a fair use assessment, and copyright permissions have been requested for any items deemed not to fall under fair use guidelines. (Instructional faculty provide source information for non-original content; Ecampus assists with fair use assessment and permissions requests.)
- All multimedia is designed and produced for an audience of online and hybrid students (no recordings of in-class materials).
- Any multimedia used or created has clear audio and visual quality.

Exemplary

- Instructional materials are appropriately cited.
- A variety of instructional materials are used to appeal to many learning preferences (readings, audio, visual, multimedia, etc.).
- When pre-recorded lectures are utilized, content is brief and integrated into course learning activities, such as with interactive components, discussion questions, or quiz questions. Longer lectures should be shortened to less than 20 min. chunks.
- Multimedia has been used to address the course's main concepts, to help students master especially challenging concepts, and to effectively communicate concepts that are best conveyed in multimedia format.
- Weekly introductions to provide context for learning materials and activities are provided.

Interaction and Engagement

Research shows that active learning opportunities, as well as the three forms of interaction, are effective in online and hybrid classes and for adult students.

Essential

- Learning activities are aligned with course and weekly learning outcomes.

- Three forms of interaction are present, in some form:
  - Student/content (such as discussions, readings, video, research projects)
  - Student/instructor (such as discussions, responses to assignments, inclusion of a Q&A forum that the instructor will facilitate)
  - Student/student (such as discussions, group projects, peer-reviewed assignments)

    Note: In hybrid courses, the three forms of interaction are present in both the classroom and online elements of the course. Additionally, the course design integrates classroom and online learning through the ways that the classroom and online elements are sequenced and explicitly linked to one another. For instance, a weekly discussion that begins online may be continued in the classroom, or an online reading may be the basis of group problem solving in a subsequent class session.

Exemplary

- Opportunities for active learning (meaningful action + reflection) are provided.

  Note: In hybrid courses, active learning opportunities are provided both face-to-face and online.

- The instructor's plan for regular interaction with students in substantive ways during the course is clearly articulated.

Course Technology

Using educational technology appropriately is an important aspect of designing and facilitating effective hybrid courses. Reliability, security, record keeping requirements, FERPA and accessibility compliance are all important and complex concerns. All Ecampus courses are delivered through Canvas. When external educational technologies are used, integration with Canvas provides improved usability for online and hybrid students. And, providing privacy policies for outside tools helps students understand and manage their privacy in online spaces.

Essential

- The tools used in the course are used intentionally, thoughtfully, and in support of learning outcomes (e.g. tools are not used superfluously and take into careful account any cost to students, the learning curve required to use them, etc.).
- Assignments and student progress are tracked through Canvas, including completion of work through tools used outside of Canvas. Grades are communicated to students through the Canvas gradebook.
- Tools outside of Canvas are used in FERPA-compliant ways.
- Students are provided instructions and support resources for using any outside tools.

Exemplary

- When available, a Canvas integration is used for outside tools so students have a single point of access.

- Privacy policies for any tools used outside of Canvas are provided.

Student Support

Providing student support information within online and hybrid courses ensures that students have ready access to support when they need it. Online student fees provide access to Ecampus-specific student services such as online tutoring. Some student services, such as disability access services, are required by law.

Essential

- Information about general student support is provided, such as the Ecampus Student Services course menu link.
- Information about student support specific to the course (e.g., links to the Writing Center in a writing course, information about TA open office hours, etc.) is provided.

Exemplary

- Where appropriate, research and Lib guides are embedded in Canvas.

Accessibility

Providing accessible content is required by law. Using a universal design approach during course development is better for students, is more inclusive for diverse learners, and is more efficient than retrofitting an inaccessible course.

Essential

- Text in the course site is accessible (e.g., Word documents are preferred over PDFs, PDFs have document tags, heading styles are used appropriately and consistently in Canvas pages and course documents, there is sufficient color contrast between backgrounds and text).
- Images in the course are accessible (e.g., alt text or long description for images).

Exemplary

- The course design facilitates readability (e.g., simple font and color schemes are used, similar content is grouped together, white space is used, naming conventions are consistent).
- All video content is accurately captioned (not simply auto-captioned without review); transcripts are offered as an alternative for audio content.

Academic Integrity

The design of online and hybrid courses can help deter academic integrity violations.

Essential

- Academic integrity expectations for students are defined and communicated within the course, including if or when external resources and tools may be used.
- For courses with online exams:
  - Multiple choice and short answer questions must have randomized question sequences (questions and/or answers are randomized or the exam uses question banks) to help guard against academic integrity violations.
  - Exams delivered without proctoring are available during a specific timeframe (48-72 hours, including one weekend day) and are time-limited to help guard against academic integrity violations.
- If a course uses academic integrity tools (e.g., Proctorio and TurnItIn), they are used in a manner that is consistent with institutional, department, and course-level policies and standards.

Exemplary

- An academic integrity plan for use during course facilitation (e.g., a schedule for revising or adding to exam questions banks) is documented on an instructor-only page in the course.
- A culture of academic integrity is demonstrated throughout the course, including, but not limited to: providing specific information in the Start Here module; weaving in reminders about academic integrity at multiple points in the course; articulating at the activity and assignment level how academic integrity expectations apply in context; and using a developmental approach to help students understand academic integrity expectations.
- The course offers opportunities for students to engage in conversations about what integrity looks like in the course and in the field.