

Self-Check Rubric for Online Instruction

Complete prior to PEER REVIEW for Online Course Readiness

Note: It is not necessary for all characteristics listed below the sub-category to be present---these are examples of methods which you, as the developer/instructor may have selected to provide.

Category 1 - Learner Support & Resources

1-A. Information about being an online learner

- Tips for being a successful online student
- Quiz to self-assess readiness to be an online student
- Link to Library resources
- Instructions for how to conduct online research
- Instructions on how to write a research paper
- Guidelines for APA/MLA format of papers and/or citations
- Link to college Academic Support Center
- Information/tutorials on "how to use" software required by class assignments
- Contact information for technical support or Help Desk
- Checklist for workstation setup or other method for common troubleshooting tips
- Minimum computer hardware and software requirements
- Tips for avoiding and dealing with computer viruses
- Sources for any required plug-ins (and links)
- Tutorial(s) or job aids for how to use the IMS tools
- FAQs for IMS Netiquette guidelines
- Information on basic technical skills for online learners - email & attachments, save files, copy & paste, work with multiple web browser windows, presentation, spreadsheet, & image editing software.

IMS=Instructional Management System – D2L

Please note that SCC South Central Online / eLearning maintains a Learner Support and Resource module for instructor to use as in-course references – this satisfies most of Category 1-A design indicators.

1-B. Course specific resources

- Contact information for the instructor
- Contact information for academic department or advisor
- Information on additional related courses
- Pre-requisites of course
- Textbook information and Link(s) to Bookstore(s) to order textbooks or other instructional materials
- FAQ site on course information
- Technical Skills required for the course
- Estimated amount of time needed for completing course requirements

1-C. Resources supporting course content

- Link(s) to web sites with supporting information relevant to course content
- Link(s) to web sites of organizations or associations related to course content
- Glossary of terms or links to definitions of new vocabulary
- Link(s) to learning objects (external to course, such as MERLOT)

Category 2 - Online Organization & Design

2-A. Course navigation and organization

- Syllabus is easily located
- Course grading policy
- Instructor expectations & instructor responsibilities -what students can expect from the instructor
- Links to other parts of the course or external sources are accurate and up-to-date
- Instructional materials required are easily located -make sure students know how to get started
- Numbers identify sequenced steps; bullets list items are not prioritized or sequential
- Course content is organized in a logical format
- Topics are clearly identified and subtopics are related to topics
- Sequential (vs. concurrent) topics are annotated with dates
- Course activities schedule is available in a printer-friendly format for student convenience
- Organization and sequencing of the course content is logical and clear
- Resources are separated into “required” and “optional” categories

2-B. Course files, such as the Syllabus, include

- Course outcomes and learning objectives
- Course completion requirements
- Expectations of students’ participation, honesty, etc.
- Accessibility statement as required by SCC
- Timeline for student participation is clear
- Faculty member(s) introductory information
- Expectations of availability of and feedback turnaround time as well as contact with instructor
- Course schedule is summarized in one place

2-C. Aesthetic design

- Typeface is easy to read
- Sufficient contrast between text and background makes information easy to read
- Appropriate images supporting course content add visual interest
- Design keeps course pages to a comfortable length with white space

2-D. Consistency in course

- Layout of course is visually and functionally consistent
- Navigation is clear, simple and user friendly
- Spelling and grammar are consistent and accurate
- Written material is concise
- Language of written material is conversational and supportive
- Clear directions are given for each task or assignment
- Sentences and paragraphs are brief but clear

2-E. Universal accessibility

- Universal accessibility concerns are addressed throughout course, providing transcripts of any non-text objects
- Images are optimized for speedy display and include alternative text and long descriptions text
- Alternative formats of materials provided (e.g., scripts & long descriptions of media objects, optional print packet of extensive reading materials, CD of audio clips used in course, etc.)
- Use of color adds interest but does not disadvantage those with color blindness or other visual limitations
- Link to college ADA policy/guidelines & how students access <http://southcentral.edu/academic-policies/disability-rights.html>
- Link to Academic Support Center <http://southcentral.edu/academic-support/academic-support.html>
- Includes ADA compliance statement from IMS
<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/accessibility/standards/>
<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/accessibility/resources/>
<http://www.desire2learn.com/products/accessibility/>

Category 3 - Instructional Design & Delivery

3-A. Promote interaction and communication

- Students introduce themselves
- Students are encouraged to respond to classmate introductions
- “Ice-breaker” activity to get acquainted
- Instructor introduces himself/herself to model interaction
- Students’ input is not evaluated as “right” or “wrong”
- Netiquette described and enforced
- Student participation is tracked and “wallflowers” drawn in to the discussions
- Students are prompted by facilitator to expand on relevant points
- Facilitator may play “devil’s advocate”
- Reading and writing requirements are consistent with student abilities and course unit load

3-B. Outcomes aligned to learning objectives

- Pace of course content delivery is managed
- Course content is “chunked” for more manageable learning
- Instructional design is made clear (e.g., is it self-paced, or group-paced)
- Expectations for synchronous vs asynchronous activities are clearly spelled out

3-C. Integrated learning objectives and activities

- Reading assignments match learning objectives
- Activities lead to learning desired concepts
- Tasks and activities are designated as synchronous or asynchronous; sequential or may be completed in any order (clarified)
- Instructional material may be reviewed repeatedly (built-in redundancy)
- Summary provided frequently, particularly at the end of topics (learning plans), to reinforce learning

3-D. Activities to enhance student learning - (*addressing multiple learning styles*)

- Video clips of interviews, movements
- Historical audio clips of famous speeches
- Screen animations for instructional exercises using software
- Personal interview reports
- Crossword or word search puzzles
- Matching and game-show-style trivia games
- Online scavenger hunt / WebQuest
- Annotated bibliography
- PowerPoint presentations as assignments
- Flash simulations
- Animated timeline
- Virtual or 3D simulations
- Log sheets, journaling, or electronic portfolios
- All materials and resources used in course are properly cited

3-E. Activities to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills

- Discussions center on questions without a single correct answer
- Compare and contrast exercises
- Case studies
- Critique classmates’ assignments
- Collaborative exercises
- Portfolios (building one activity upon another) to share/peer review

Category 4 - Assessment & Evaluation of Student Learning

4-A. Assess student readiness for learning

- Pre-requisites are defined and enforced
- Acceptable methods for completing assignments are identified (group work, open book, etc.)
- Consequences of cheating or plagiarism; academic integrity guidelines provided
- Course grading policy
- Students complete assessments or demonstrate mastery before advancing to the next level (module) of instruction

4-B. Assessment activities are aligned with learning objectives

- Criteria used to evaluate participation in online discussion groups
- Study questions or self-tests are available
- Learning and practice is encouraged by posted activities
- Quantity and scope of graded assignments is reasonable
- Learning activities and assigned work prepares the student for the assessment tasks
- Authentic assessments; scoring guidelines or rubrics are provided

4-C. Multiple assessment strategies

- Students' bibliography or reference list includes a variety of materials such as URLs, books and journals, and videos
- When possible, options among assignments are provided to allow for different interests, backgrounds, and personal learning styles
- Students are not assessed solely on tests/quizzes but are provided ample opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in different ways

4-D. Regular feedback

- Rich and rapid feedback - self-grading assignments released immediately
- Frequent and substantial feedback from the instructor
- Samples of assignments illustrate instructor's expectations
- Detailed instructions and tips for completing assignments
- Due dates for all assignments
- Rubrics for all assignments identify assessment guidelines
- Grading scale
- Instructor models assignment

4-E. Self-assessment and peer feedback

- Self-tests similar to the final evaluation instruments
- Students pose discussion questions, respond to others' discussion topics, later post answers to their own questions and respond to others' comments on their discussion topic
- Peer review opportunities
- Students apply rubric to their own work and may describe/defend their score
- Clear guidelines for peer review, if applicable

Category 5 - Appropriate & Effective Use of Technology

5-A. Appropriate tools to facilitate communication

- Discussion boards
- Synchronous “chats”
- Email
- Listserv
- Teleconferencing
- Group discussion areas, when appropriate for group activities
- Instant messaging

5-B. New teaching methods

- Instructor is open to trying new methods of delivery of instruction -chat, webinars, or group work
- Instructor has made an attempt to include preferred learning styles by using various strategies and activities

5-C. Multimedia elements

- Flash animations
- Tutorials with screen captures & voice over
- Audio clips
- Graphics
- Video clips
- PowerPoint presentations
- CD-ROM/DVD supplemental materials
- Other learning objects, simulations or interactivities

5-D. Multimedia elements

- Students off-campus with modems are provided with low-bandwidth alternatives for downloading media
- Technology is used to engage students in learning, not just for viewing but for interacting with other students or with the course content - Spell out every plugin or software specific to the course that is needed to complete the course

Category 6 - Faculty Use of Student Feedback

6-A. Course content

- Evaluation survey at end of course
- Student input sought at regular intervals
- Open ended questions
- Students falling behind are prompted to determine what might be delaying their progress
- Students prompted to find web-based resources supporting the topic to share with classmates; the highest quality resources incorporated into the course

6-B. Online technology

- Instructor has an open door to students to point out flaws of delivery of instruction using technology
- Instructor invites feedback on how delivery can be more effective for student learning (i.e., Feedback topic)

6-C. Instruction and assessment

- Instructor is willing to modify course (live) as needed to improve or fix inadequacies
- Instructor is able to modify elements (e.g., fix bad quiz questions, extend deadlines, review methods of achieving course objectives)

As is determined to be appropriate to your course, characteristics/design indicator examples listed in each category may be found in the online course you developed --- not all are required. You are encouraged to include a variety of approaches to address learner diversity.

CREDITS: Characteristics and design indicators integrated in our review rubric are based on the *Instructional Design Tips for Online Instruction* as developed by Joan Van Duzer of Humboldt State University. These were originally used in conjunction with the Rubric for Online Instruction developed by CSU, Chico. Categories one through six correspond to the categories of the Rubric for Online Instruction currently in use at South Central College.