



Online Course Checklist for Faculty Developers and Instructional Designers

The intent of this document is to serve as a tool for faculty developers and instructional designers to use during the course development process. This is not a Blackboard tutorial. It is a conceptual exercise intended to assist developers in moving through the process of developing a course for online delivery.

Part One

The Center for eLearning recommends developing your course in a specific sequence as follows:

- _____ 1) Develop your course syllabus. Your syllabus should align with your department requirements and standards as well as university requirements and standards. Your syllabus should include:
 - _____ a) Clear contact information – how will the online students contact you?
 - _____ b) Course-level objectives that are measurable and student-centered.
 - _____ c) A detailed course schedule that outlines what materials will be covered during what time periods, along with due dates for required activities and assessments (you may wish to complete the following steps and come back to this).
- _____ 2) Divide or “chunk” your course into smaller segments or “modules.” You may wish to have modules that align with the number of weeks the course runs, or modules that align with specific topics or units covered in the course.
- _____ 3) Create a course map that shows [alignment](#) for each module. Before you begin, you will need to create [measurable, student-centered learning objectives](#) for each module. These module-level objectives should align with the course-level objectives in your syllabus.
- _____ 4) Once you have the content of your map filled in, you will make sure your course content, activities, assignments, and assessments align with your module level objectives. Indicate next to each item which module level objective it aligns with. Module level objectives should note which course level objectives they each align with as well. Examples of course map templates can be found in the Faculty Online Teaching and Design (FOTD) course or requested by emailing eLearning@csuohio.edu.
- _____ 5) Once you have determined the structure of your modules, you will have to build out each one. Use our CSU Course Template as your starting point. The template provides structure and consistency for students and helps to ensure that you include all materials necessary to effectively deliver the course while also setting expectations for students at the beginning of the

course. The template includes a Start Here: Course Information section that contains placeholders/guides as well as standard information for online students. Some items include welcome and meet your instructor, expectations for students, ultra navigation tutorials, technical requirements and support, course information items, and student/university resources items. The template also includes a sample module that models how to create a learning module for your course. The CSU Course Template Request form can be found at:

<https://www.csuohio.edu/center-for-elearning/csu-course-template-shell>.

- _____ 6) Build out the learning modules making sure that all content (reading materials, presentations websites, other references, etc.), activities (discussions, blogs, group activities, etc.) and assessments (assignments, quizzes, tests, papers, etc.) are consistent with the module level objectives. Create a module organizer for students listing all required activities and assignments for each module that will be used as the opening document of that module.
- _____ 7) Determine the technologies and media formats you will use to deliver the items in each module. For example, will you use a Panopto video to deliver a mini-lecture? Will paper submissions require use of SafeAssign or Turnitin? Will you require the use of electronic course reserves or library resources?
- _____ 8) Develop grading rubrics for all graded activities. Rubrics should be used and made available to students for all graded activities.
- _____ 9) Review each module to ensure active user engagement and interaction. Ideally, each module will involve some level of student-content, student-student, and student-instructor interaction.
- _____ 10) Develop a communication plan with [regular and substantive interaction](#) in mind. How will you interact with students throughout the course, prompt them, remind them and give them general course feedback? Some instructors use announcements or email/messaging to deliver a weekly message. Others use video or audio formats. Which assignments and activities will you give detailed, individualized feedback? The idea here is to create an instructor presence and go the extra mile to assure your students that you are available to them. This goes a long way in an online course.
- _____ 11) Develop an evaluation plan. Other than the course evaluation, how will you receive feedback from your students? How will you assess whether your students are achieving the learning objectives?

Part Two

Online courses are evaluated primarily by the degree to which they meet Quality Matters (QM) standards. QM is a nationally recognized set of standards that focuses on course design. Additionally, the eLearning faculty senate committee endorsed the use of a modified [Online Course Assessment Tool \(OCAT\)](#), which measures both online course design as well as online teaching. The checklist below includes the QM standards. It is highly recommended that instructional designers and faculty course developers and instructors become familiar with both the QM Rubric and the OCAT to gain a deeper understanding of designing and delivering quality, online courses. There is a significant overlap in the two instruments, although they have slightly different purposes.

The Center for eLearning recommends that prior to the delivery of an online course, all 3-point criteria from the QM rubric portion of the checklist should be met. In addition, all criteria should be met at the 85% level or above. Use of the CSU Course Template aids in meeting many of the general standards.

FROM THE QM RUBRIC 7th Edition:

1) Course Overview and Introduction

_____ 1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components (3).

_____ 1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course (3).

_____ 1.3 Communication guidelines for the course are clearly stated (2).

_____ 1.4 Course and institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated within the course, or a link to current policies is provided (2).

_____ 1.5 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided (2).

_____ 1.6 Technical skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated (1).

_____ 1.7 Required prior knowledge in the discipline and/or any specific competencies are clearly stated in the course site (1).

_____ 1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is welcoming and is available in the course site (1).

_____ 1.9 Learners have the opportunity to introduce themselves (1).

2) Learning Objectives (Competencies)

_____ 2.1 The course level learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable (3).

_____ 2.2 The module/unit level learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives (3).

_____ 2.3 Learning objectives are clearly stated, are learner-centered, and are prominently located in the course (3).

_____ 2.4 The relationship between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments is made clear (3).

_____ 2.5 The learning objectives are suited to and reflect the level of the course (3).

3) Assessment and Measurement

_____ 3.1 The assessments measure the achievement of the stated learning objectives (3).

_____ 3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly, available at the beginning of the course, and consistent throughout the course site (3).

_____ 3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work, and their connection to the course grading policy is clearly explained (3).

_____ 3.4 The course includes multiple types of assessments that are sequenced and suited to the level of the course (2).

_____ 3.5 The types and timing of assessments provide learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback (2).

_____ 3.6 The assessments provide guidance to the learner about how to uphold academic integrity (1).

4) Instructional Materials

_____ 4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated learning objectives (3).

_____ 4.2 The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completion of learning activities and assessments is clearly explained (3).

_____ 4.3 The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of instructional materials (2).

_____ 4.4 The instructional materials represent up-to-date theory and practice in the discipline (2).

_____ 4.5 A variety of instructional materials is used in the course (2).

5) Learning Activities and Learner Interaction

_____ 5.1 The learning activities help learners achieve the stated objectives (3).

_____ 5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning (3).

_____ 5.3 The instructor's plan for regular interaction with learners in substantive ways during the course is clearly stated (3).

_____ 5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated (2).

6) Course Technology

_____ 6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives (3).

_____ 6.2 Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning (2).

_____ 6.3 A variety of technology is used in the course (1).

_____ 6.4 The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy (1).

7) Learner Support

_____ **7.1** The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it (3).

_____ **7.2** Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and accommodation services (3).

_____ **7.3** Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course (3).

_____ **7.4** Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's student services and resources can help learners succeed (1).

8) Accessibility and Usability

_____ **8.1** Course navigation facilitates ease of use (3).

_____ **8.2** The course design facilitates readability (3).

_____ **8.3** Text in the course is accessible (3).

_____ **8.4** Images in the course are accessible (3).

_____ **8.5** Video and audio content in the course is accessible (2).

_____ **8.6** Multimedia in the course is easy to use (2).

_____ **8.7** Vendor accessibility statements are provided for the technologies used in the course (1).

Note: Transcripts and Closed Captioning of audio-visual material are provided on an as needed basis at CSU. When faculty are aware that they have a student who will need a transcript and/or closed-captioning, they should contact the office of Disability Services ([216.687.2015](tel:216.687.2015)) to initiate and coordinate the process. Audio-video lectures can take 1-2 weeks to close caption and transcribe and involve the services of an outside vendor. Students should use the university procedure for requesting accommodation through the Office of Disability Services.