

Online Course Self-Assessment and Peer-Mentoring Guide

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	ELEMENTS
Course Information	Information about how the course is structured and the procedures that students should follow in order to be successful.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course syllabus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Description • Prerequisites • Learning objectives / outcomes • Description of learning activities • Grading policy • Getting started – how to access course materials and what to do first 2. Instructor Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to the course • Instructor profile / biography • Instructor contact information (telephone, e-mail) • Real-time availability (office hours and other times when instructor can be reached) 3. Course policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments and how to submit them • Policies for late assignments and make-up work • Expected grading turnaround time • Code of conduct regarding plagiarism and cheating • Netiquette policies – guidelines for maintaining a positive, supportive learning environment 4. Resources / support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research resources (e-Reserve link, link to library databases, web links) • Online student services contact information and the process for requesting disability accommodations • Technical support contact information 5. Calendar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing of events and due dates 6. FAQs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of common student questions and answers

Content	The information, materials, activities, and processes that will make up the course.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials are organized logically and consistently (by Unit, Week, content type...) and students are given clear instructions on how to access what they need. 2. The content and activities lead students to reach the learning objectives and are linked to the assessments. 3. Supplemental materials, digital or otherwise, are used effectively. 4. All of the course materials and web links are current. 5. Appropriate copyright references / citations are provided for content, including articles, book chapters, pictures, audio, video, etc.
Design	Effective design makes it possible for all students to equitably and efficiently access course content and participate actively, regardless of learning style preferences or disability.	<p><i>Interface usability / organization</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The naming / selection of course menu buttons, links and other navigation aids is logical and the various components of the course are easily found. 2. Students can access course materials efficiently, with minimal clicking through multiple hierarchical levels. <p><i>Information design (structure and flow)</i></p> <p>Text modifiers (bold, italics, change in font size or style, color, etc.) are used purposefully and consistently rather than as arbitrary embellishments. (For example, text modifiers are used for emphasis, to signal the relationship between concepts, and to facilitate an appropriate flow as students read the material.)</p> <p><i>Accessibility (ADA compliance and Universal Design concepts)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course materials are available or can readily be made available in alternate formats for students with disabilities. 2. Technology used meets requirements for use by students with disabilities. Reference: <i>Academic Access: A Desk Reference for Accommodating Students with Disabilities (University of Maine System)</i> http://www.maine.edu/pdf/disaccinbdbk.pdf
Interaction	Communication between: Instructor - Student Student - Student	<p><i>Student - Instructor</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The instructor is very present in the digital classroom; students are not left to their own devices unless appropriate. 2. Announcements are used effectively (clear language, timely, and easily found) 3. There are clear directions for how students may interact with and receive feedback from instructors and clear guidelines about turnaround time. 4. The instructor sets clear expectations for how long students should expect to wait for instructor replies to phone messages and e-mails. <p><i>Student - Student</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Team projects are used to encourage student collaboration when appropriate. 2. The grading policies for interactive activities are clearly stated.

		<p>3. Discussion, as appropriate, is dynamic and effectively guided</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion policies are clearly stated regarding quality, frequency, length, and timing of posts. There is evidence that the instructor is/will be appropriately engaged in moderating and facilitating discussions, and the level of instructor participation that students can expect is described up front. There is evidence that the instructor provides/will provide feedback on students' participation in discussions.
Assessment	<p><i>Formative (student)</i> Providing feedback and self-assessment opportunities during the course, assisting students to make adjustments in order to aid learning.</p> <p><i>Formative (course)</i> Gathering information to determine the effectiveness of the course itself in order to make improvements.</p> <p><i>Summative</i> Evaluation of the extent to which students are achieving the course learning objectives for the purpose of grading.</p>	<p><i>Formative (Student work)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment supports learning: timely feedback is provided and, when appropriate, opportunities for revision and remediation are included. Self-assessment opportunities are provided when appropriate to help students approach mastery. <p><i>Formative (course)</i> The faculty gathers input from students on how the course is progressing in order to make improvements during the semester and for the next time the course is offered.</p> <p><i>Summative</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The course includes appropriate assessments for at least the most important goals and objectives of the course. Assessments are aligned with the course goals and objectives. All assessments have adequate instructions and grading criteria are clearly described. The integrity/security of the assessments is maintained in order to prevent/minimize plagiarism and cheating. Appropriate instructions are given when on-site proctored exams are included. A reasonable balance is struck between the quality of assessments and faculty workload.
Getting Started	Information that students need to start the course successfully.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contact students by introductory letter or e-mail prior to the start of the course letting them know about the technology requirements of the course, how to obtain course materials, how to access the course, how to reach Technical Support and what to do first. Post a first announcement to greet students and describe how to get started in the course. Depending on your course requirements, use online activities to ensure student readiness with the course management system. Examples: have students send an e-mail, post a thread to a discussion board, take a practice test, submit a practice assignment.