Category 1 - Learner Support and Resources

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 the testing center
   - Link to campus remedial resource center
   - Link to student disability resource center
   - Information/tutorials on how to use software required by class assignments
   - Contact information for technical support or Help Desk
   - Checklist 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 LMS tools
   - FAQs for LMS
   - Netiquette guidelines

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
   - Link(s) to Bookstore(s) to order textbooks or other instructional materials
   - FAQ site on course information
   - Estimated amount of time needed for completing course requirements

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 and Design

A. Course navigability and organization
   - Syllabus is easily located
   - Links to other parts of the course or external sources are accurate and up-to-date
   - Instructional materials required are easily located
   - 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 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

B. Syllabus includes
   - Course objectives
   - Course completion requirements
   - Expectations of students’ participation, honesty, etc.
   - Timeline for student participation is clear
   - Faculty member(s) introductory information
   - Expectations of availability of and turnaround time for contact with instructor
   - Course schedule is summarized in one place

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.

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

E. Universal accessibility
   - Universal accessibility concerns are addressed throughout the course, including transcripts of any non-text objects
   - Images are optimized for speedy display and include alternative text
   - Alternative formats of materials provided, when possible (e.g., 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
Category 3 – Instructional Design and Delivery

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

B. Goals and alignment to learning objectives
  - Pace of delivery of course content 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

C. Learning objectives and activities are integrated
  - 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, to reinforce learning

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

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 and Evaluation of Student Learning

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

B. Assessment activities are aligned with learning objectives
- Criteria used to evaluate participation in online discussion groups
- Study questions
- Quantity and scope of graded assignments is reasonable
- Authentic assessments

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

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

E. Self-assessments 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 describe/defend their score
- Clear guidelines for peer review, if applicable
Category 5 - Innovative Teaching Technology

A. Appropriate tools to facilitate communication
   - Discussion boards
   - Synchronous “chats”
   - Email
   - Listserv
   - Teleconferencing
   - Group discussion areas, when appropriate for group activities
   - Instant messaging

B. New teaching methods
   - Instructor is open to trying new methods of delivery of instruction
   - Instructor is open to accepting new methods of students preferred learning styles

C. Multimedia elements
   - Flash animations
   - Tutorials with screen captures and voice over
   - Audio clips
   - Graphics
   - Video clips
   - PowerPoint presentations
   - CD-Rom or DVD supplemental materials
   - Other learning objects, simulations or interactivities

D. Engage students throughout the course
   - 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

Category 6 - Faculty Use of Student Feedback

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
B. Online technology
- Instructor has an open door to students to point out flaws of delivery of instruction using technology
- Instructor solicits feedback on how delivery can be more effective for student learning (e.g., a Discussion Topic for Feedback)

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)

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References


General Information

www.elearn.tnstate.edu (TSU courses - Section 98).

www.elearn.rodp.org (RODP courses - Section R50 - R5n).

Check your Class List frequently during the first couple of weeks and send an e-mail (MyTSU) with login instructions to students that have not logged into the system; you must submit an “x” grade for students that never log into your course.

Post a Welcome Message to your students the first day (this increases retention the first week of classes).

Please make sure you contact the University Testing Center (963-7111) if you plan to have proctored exams (i.e., midterm and final).

Remember to:

• Initiate at least three e-mails per week with your students.
• Answer e-mails within 24-36 hours.
• Grade assignments and exams within a two week period.
• Monitor your discussion board (no appropriate conversations).
• Embedded Librarian - contact Barbara Vanhooser at 963-5206 for more information.
• Refer students to the Academic Enrichment for tutoring.
• Refer any students to Office of Disabled Student Service (963-7400) for ADA (Disabilities) Support and Assistance.
• Encourage students to complete the course evaluations at the end of the semester.

Need Assistance?
Contact: Brook Sutton, Instructional Designer
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