

Best Practices Course Review

For Online, Hybrid or Technology Enhanced* Courses

Weber State University

Process

1. Review your own course using this document.
2. Identify areas of your course that are strengths.
3. Identify best practices components that are missing from your course or need improvement.
4. Revise your course to include missing items or make improvements. Include your instructional designer if desired via email, phone, or an in-person meeting.
5. Once your course meets all required areas, schedule a meeting with your instructional designer (and department chair if desired**). Allow two weeks prior to appointment for your instructional designer to review your course.
6. The stipend will be processed once your course is approved by the instructional designer.

**Face-to-face instructors are required to use technology (Canvas) to deliver or manage a significant portion of their course content in order to qualify for a stipend.*

***Fully online courses successfully reviewed by the instructional designer with both the instructor and department chair qualify for an additional department stipend of \$250.*

Disclaimer: This rubric follows the design of Chico State Rubric for Online Instruction. The best practice suggestions were provided by the department of WSU Online at Weber State University in conjunction with the Instruction Design Tips for Online Learning by Chico State.

1. Learner Support and Resources

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
<p>1.1. Course contains extensive information about being an online learner and links to campus resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide successful tips in your online class ● Include the following campus resources in your course (in the syllabus and/or elsewhere): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Canvas technical support: (801) 626-6499 (Email: wsuonline@weber.edu) ○ Chi-tester support: (801) 626-6477 ○ Chi-tester proctoring: (801) 626-8623 ○ IT Help Desk: (801) 626-7777 (Email: csupport@weber.edu) ○ E-tutoring support: (801) 626-6499 (Email: wsuonline@weber.edu) ○ Library circulation: (801) 626-6545 ○ Library reference: (801) 626-6415 	
<p>1.2. Course provides a variety of course-specific resources, contact information for instructor, department, and program.</p>	<p>Provide the following information (if applicable) in your course syllabus and/or elsewhere:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructor's contact information ● Instructor's preferred contact (e.g., Canvas email or weber email; phone) ● Expected instructor response turn-around time ● Program contact information and/or webpage ● Department contact information and/or webpage ● Publisher's contact information and/or webpage ● Course prerequisites 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Technology requirements ● Information on course materials, etc. 	
<p>1.3. Course offers access to a wide range of resources supporting course content and different learning abilities.</p>	<p>Provide <i>relevant</i>, supplemental materials to support the course content. For example: links to websites, videos, open educational resources (e.g., Merlot, Khan Academy, YouTube, TedTalks, Ted-Ed), additional articles and publications, etc.</p>	

2. Online Organization and Design

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
<p>2.1. Course is well-organized and easy to navigate. Students can clearly understand all components and structure of the course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organize the course by modules, weeks, or topics using the “<i>Modules</i>” feature in Canvas for navigation purposes ● Give a descriptive name to each module or week ● Organize the materials within the modules, weeks, or topics consistently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use “<i>Text Header</i>” in the “<i>Modules</i>” feature in Canvas to label course materials (e.g., readings, activities, assessments) ● Use “Start Here” (or other identifier) on the course homepage to inform students how to begin the course 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List important materials (e.g., course syllabus, schedule, instructor, support, etc.) on the course homepage ● Keep the homepage short, structured, and organized 	
<p>2.2. Course syllabus identifies and clearly delineates the role the online environment will play in the total course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include a statement on how this class is conducted online. For example: <i>The class will not meet in a physical classroom. Students will access all course materials (e.g., lectures, activity, discussion, assignment, etc.) in the Canvas learning management system. Students are expected to manage their time to learn the content and complete assessments on time... .</i> ● Ask an instructional designer for a syllabus template/boilerplate 	
<p>2.3. Aesthetic design presents and communicates course information clearly throughout the course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be organized and consistent with the design throughout the course materials (e.g., font size, font type, color, headings, names, etc.) ● Use an easy-to-read typeface (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Canvas-default Helvetica) and sufficient font size (e.g., 12px or 14px) ● Restrict use of many colors on a page (two high color contrasts for text and background) ● Use relevant images that support the content ● Keep each page at a comfortable length 	

<p>2.4. All web pages are visually and functionally consistent throughout the course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be consistent with the design of each page (e.g., font size, font type, color, headings, names, etc.) ● Check for broken links and spelling errors ● Create navigation to other pages ● Make sure the content is updated and accurate 	
<p>2.5. Accessibility issues are addressed throughout the course. (Including: sight, mobility, hearing, cognition, ESL, and technical.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the tools in Canvas to build your course to achieve accessibility of material ● Produce class materials in different formats (e.g., text, video, audio, etc.) to accommodate different learners ● Provide transcript of the class video ● Include alternative text in all images ● Avoid using unnecessary slangs, jargons, and technical terms ● Use of tables for page layout may reduce accessibility if information within the tables is not structured properly for screen reader ● Provide the contact information of the Office of Students with Disabilities: (801) 626-6413, TDD (801) 626-7283, Email: ssd@weber.edu 	

3. Instructional Design and Delivery

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
<p>3.1. Course offers ample opportunities for interaction and communication student to student, student to instructor and student to content.</p>	<p>Increase interaction time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● student-instructor (e.g., online office hours, open online discussion, and other synchronous and asynchronous meetings) ● student-content (e.g., formal instruction, supplemental materials, and guided discovery learning) ● student-student (e.g., threaded discussions, group project, and peer-review) 	
<p>3.2. Course goals are clearly defined and aligned to learning objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The course goals must be realistic and achievable, not necessarily measurable, given the available time and resources. ● Learning objectives are derived from the goals. ● Learning objectives are concise and measurable. ● Use common terms and language in learning objectives to help students understand specific learning outcomes. If complex and technical terms must be used, provide a complete definition of those terms. 	
<p>3.3. Learning objectives are identified and learning activities are clearly integrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning activities support the content and the achievement of the learning objectives. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning activities help students master knowledge and skills specified in the objectives. ● Learning activities are meaningful and practical to assist learning transfer. 	
<p>3.4. Course provides multiple visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities to enhance student learning and accessibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use different activities (e.g., documentary video, audio, interview, crossword, Quizlet, low-stake quizzes, etc.) to enhance learning experiences ● Provide choices in learning activities to accommodate individual learning differences (e.g., class presentation or written essay, video presentation or audio recording, etc.) 	
<p>3.5. Course provides multiple activities that help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use discussion, debate, case study analysis, peer-review, problem-solving, or compare-and-contrast activity to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills ● Alternate the use of the above activities throughout the course. Do not use only one type of activity. ● Encourage learning reflection (e.g., one minute paper, muddiest points, one-sentence summary, reflective paper, concept map, etc.) 	

4. Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
<p>4.1. Course has multiple timely and appropriate activities to assess student readiness for course content and mode of delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use low-stake quizzes, pre-course assessments, or pre-module assessments to assess learning readiness ● Use graded or ungraded survey in Canvas Quizzes to collect feedback on preferred delivery modes 	
<p>4.2. Learning objectives, instructional and assessment activities are closely aligned.</p>	<p>Assessments are to assess the achievement of objectives. If an objective focuses on memorization of facts, an assessment question(s) also focuses on memorization, not analytical skills. Example: Defining terminology does not require a three-page essay. Instead, use multiple-choice questions.</p>	
<p>4.3. Ongoing multiple assessment strategies are used to measure content knowledge, attitudes, and skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use multiple ways (e.g., discussion, essay, quiz, presentation, interview transcript, field-trip report, etc.) to assess learning ● Focus the assessment on the mastery of the intended knowledge and skills 	
<p>4.4. Regular feedback about student performance is provided in a timely manner throughout the course.</p>	<p>Provide a timely and concise feedback to improve future learning. Feedback should be constructive and sensitive that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive aspects 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Misconceptions ● Explanations of misconceptions ● Recommendations to correct misconceptions 	
4.5. Students' self-assessments and peer feedback opportunities exist throughout the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide opportunity for learning check and self-assessment (e.g., auto-graded quizzes, crosswords, rubrics, model assignments, etc.) ● Provide opportunity for peer feedback (e.g., peer review, discussion, debate, group project, etc.) 	
4.6. Assessment instructions are clearly stated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide clear instructions on each assignment and quiz, including the deadline, points, and other submission requirements ● Provide clear grading policies (e.g., late submission, make-up exam, attendance, etc.) 	

5. Innovative Teaching with Technology

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
5.1. Course uses a variety of technology tools to appropriately facilitate communication and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use email (e.g., Weber email or Canvas email), Canvas Announcements, or Canvas Discussions to remind or/and communicate with students about expectations, instruction, and other information of the course 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use Canvas Discussions, Canvas Conferences, Canvas Chat, and other technologies for asynchronous and synchronous meetings to facilitate learning 	
<p>5.2. New teaching methods are applied and innovatively enhance student learning, and interactively engage students.</p>	<p>Consider adopting different teaching methods (e.g., learning contract, self-directed learning, collaborative learning, student-led discussion, student-generated content, etc.)</p>	
<p>5.3. A variety of multimedia elements and/or learning objects are used and are relevant to accommodate different learning styles throughout the course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce class materials in multiple formats (e.g., text, audio, video, PowerPoint, etc.) to accommodate learners ● Provide links to external resources that support learning ● Video transcript is encouraged to accommodate students who are aurally impaired. 	
<p>5.4. Course optimizes Internet access and effectively engages students in the learning process in a variety of ways throughout the course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create class videos using the WSU-Kaltura instant (videos.weber.edu) to accommodate students' bandwidth issues (if applicable) ● Upload class videos to WSU Kaltura (videos.weber.edu) to accommodate students' bandwidth issues (if applicable) ● Keep the size of course materials (e.g., files, pictures, diagrams, videos) small for quick download and preview 	

6. Faculty Use of Student Feedback

Criterion	Best Practice Suggestions	Comments
<p>6.1. Instructor offers multiple opportunities for students to give feedback on course content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use graded or ungraded survey in Canvas Quizzes to collect student feedback on the course content regularly ● Use other methods (e.g., discussion, email, ChiTester, suggestion box, WSU CampusLabs) to collect the feedback 	
<p>6.2. Instructor offers multiple opportunities for students to give feedback on ease of online technology and accessibility of course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use graded or ungraded survey in Canvas Quizzes to collect student feedback on the course technologies and accessibility regularly ● Use other methods (e.g., discussion, email) to collect the feedback ● Follow the accessibility checklist when creating various documents (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, PDF) (http://www.hhs.gov/web/508/accessiblefiles/checklists.html) ● Follow the accessibility guidelines for videos and audio (http://www.digitalgov.gov/category/content/video/) 	
<p>6.3. Instructor uses formal and informal student feedback in an ongoing basis to help plan instruction and assessment of student learning throughout the semester.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use tools (e.g., survey, discussion, email, etc.) to collect feedback on instruction and assessment ● Consult the past and current assessment results and other feedback to modify the course content, activities, assessments for future course offerings 	