

The following checklist to assist faculty in identifying key elements that contribute to promoting excellence in elements contained in this checklist are based on research and best practices in quality assurance in online learning.

Course Design

- Provide students with a syllabus with clearly stated student learning outcomes.
- Provide clear instructions regarding what students need to do to begin the course. Suggestion: Insert a START HERE button for easy navigation.
- Provide students with information about yourself (include biographical information).
- Use clear and consistent navigation. Use the “News” tool on your Course Homepage for the timely posting of important messages.
- Provide a course calendar (D2L has a built-in calendar feature) or use another tool to inform students where deadlines can be clearly identified.
- Make an effort to ensure that your course is ADA compliant (e.g., use ALT tags, provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content, etc.). If you need further information about how to make your course ADA compliant, contact the Distance Education Council or the Disabilities Office.
- Provide Copyright Disclaimer on your Course Homepage: “Materials used in association with this course may be subject to copyright protection.”
- Provide students with the university’s academic policy on plagiarism.

Course Content

- Develop content for your class and use the D2L content module to deliver lessons to students in small segments. Lessons in modules can be used to emulate lectures in face-to-face sessions.
- Use a variety of media (e.g., web sites, PDF, audio, Mediasite, etc.) to deliver your content to maintain students engagement and address the needs of students with various learning styles.
- Make appropriate links and resources available as part of course content and verify links on a regular basis to ensure they are current and available.
- Follow copyright law in posting of course materials.
- Provide students with links to appropriate Mansfield University policies (e.g., Academic Integrity policy, Copyright Policy, Responsible Use of Computing Resources, etc.).

Suitable Communication

- Provide a welcome/introductory message to your students. This could be done in a module or using the “News” area.
- Invite students to introduce themselves by asking them to post a bio. This could be done in a number of ways- their own homepage, blog, wiki, etc.
- Develop activities for your course that promote faculty-student and student-student interaction. This might include the use of the following tools such as: Discussions, Assignments, e-mail, Chat, Student Presentations.
- Allow more time for an activity since online communication takes longer than classroom communication.
- Set clear expectations for professor response time and availability (e.g., expected time for receiving response to student e-mail inquiries, feedback on assignments, etc.).
- Provide guidelines for appropriate behavior online including use of communication tools (e-mail, discussions, etc.).
- Notify students when guests will be visiting your online classroom. Contact the **HelpDesk at 570-662-4357 (HELP)** for procedures regarding guest access.

Suitable Evaluation

- Create assignments/activities that encourage learners to maintain regular access to your course.
- Provide assignments that are aligned with course objectives and which encourage critical thinking skills and measurable learning outcomes.
- Provide assessment and evaluation strategies that are designed to provide feedback to the student.
- Provide learners with sufficient opportunities for self-assessment.
- Clearly state minimal levels of student participation and how participation will be assessed.
- Utilize exams and quizzes when appropriate.
- Provide rubrics for grading of assignments and activities.
- Create clear and easy to understand assessments.
- Design assignments and projects that require students to make appropriate and effective use of external resources including print, library, and the Web.
- Solicit feedback from students by means of surveys or other communication methods for the continuous improvement of the course.

Suitable Technology

- Provide students with information as to how they may contact you. This should include various methods of contact (e.g., D2L e-mail, MU e-mail, in-person and “virtual” office hours, and telephone number) and expected time frame for receiving responses.
- Advise students how they may obtain technical assistance and support for online courses. Note: students may call **570-662-4357 (HELP)**.

- Provide students with a link to the Mansfield University Libraries website, “Library Services for Distance Learners” which provides information on using and accessing a variety of library related services.
- Provide students with links for downloading the required software or plug-ins for viewing your course content (e.g., QuickTime, Windows Media, Real Player, Flash, Adobe Acrobat Reader, etc.).

Effective Fall 2010 students must be aware of the required textbooks and course materials and their cost prior to registration. If students are required to acquire software for your course, information will be made available to them prior to registration.

References

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