

Best Practices for Online Teaching

Self-Assessment Checklist

Version 1, June 2019

This checklist was compiled using best practices for online teaching & learning from a variety of resources. Use the checklist below to review your online course, or while you are developing a new course. Please contact the CETL for direct assistance.

Course Readiness			
Component	Description	Present	Not Present
Accuracy	Ensure accuracy in all written materials, (i.e., they should be of exemplary quality, free of grammatical and spelling errors, and include accurate due dates and content).		
Activities, Assignments & Assessments	Activities and assignments should help students tap into prior knowledge, experience and passion, and be aligned with learning outcomes, assignments, and assessments. Significant activities should be included early in the course to discern student engagement and provide an opportunity for formative feedback. All activities and assignments should directly tie into learning outcomes and include accurate due dates and specific grading criteria (i.e rubric).		
Balance	Consistent workload throughout course with many opportunities for faculty and students to engage in academic discourse.		
Collaboration	At least one content-focused activity that requires collaboration among students is encouraged to be present weekly. For example, discussion boards, video conferencing, group work etc. Synchronous/Asynchronous sessions using Collaborate.		
Course Overview & Introduction	Course is organized in a way that makes the process of getting started clear and easy to navigate. All course expectations are clearly outlined including communication in discussion forums, late works, minimum technology requirements, computer skills required, prerequisites etc.		
Description &	Design the course based on the outcomes associated with the course description, outcomes, and		

Outcomes	program standards.		
Gradebook	The Blackboard Ultra gradebook should mirror the syllabus and be set up using an aggregation method that can be understood by the instructor and students. Using weighted mean is a common approach that many professors find straightforward.		
Instructional Materials	Confirm whether the course has a standard textbook. All materials should be tied into achieving the course outcomes, be current, free from copyright infringement, and represent a variety of formats.		
Syllabus	Upload an updated syllabus into Blackboard Ultra . The syllabus should include all require policy information, course schedule, and expectations .		
Technology	A variety of directly linked and valid technologies are used to achieve the learning outcomes for the course. Merrimack uses the following tools: Collaborate for web conferencing, Panopto (video hosting), and Respondus Lockdown Browser (testing).		
UDL/ADA	Course and course materials meet accessibility requirements and universal design standards. For example, media is hosted and captioned through Panopto, PDFs and other documents are crafted with built in tools for clarity for screen readers.		
Teaching Presence and Engagement			
Component	Description	Present	Not Present
Interaction	Faculty's plan for student interaction should be clearly stated, the requirements for student interaction should be clearly stated. For example, on average how long will it take to respond to students' questions (24 hours).		
Contact Information	Professors should upload a professional photo and bio to their Blackboard Ultra profile and encourage students to do the same.		
Welcoming Students	Post a welcome announcement prior to the start of the semester for your students. The first week of the class includes a space for students to introduce themselves.		
Feedback	Grade student work and provided detailed feedback for improvement within 7 days of the		

	assignment being due. <i>If the time frame cannot be honored, communicate with students and inform them when they can expect to hear from you.</i>		
Facilitate Community	Manage and facilitate discussion, forums, virtual classes, etc. to actively promote critical thinking, community building, and experience-sharing. Treat online interactions with students as the heart of the classroom in online, blended, or hybrid classes.		
Professional Expertise	Bring your expertise and experience to the classroom in course content, resources, and discussions.		
Evaluation, Student Support, and Student Issues			
Component	Description	Present	Not Present
Student Support	Course provides clear instructions for students on how to request assistance. Services should include: information technology, academic support, counseling, advising, accessibility etc.		
Student Course Evaluation	Encourage students to complete an evaluation at the end of the semester (include information on that here).		