**Mayville State Online Course Evaluation**

**Rubric Guide**

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Best Practices** |
| 1. **Course Overview and Introduction**

The overall design of the course, navigational information, as well as course, instructor, and student information are made transparent to the student at the beginning of the course. |
| 1.1 |  A strong continuity exists between the syllabus, textbook, and course materials. |  |
| 1.1a | The course syllabus is updated and written for an online audience. | The process of importing courses in Moodle can make it easy to forget to make changes to documents and links within the new course shell. Confirm that your syllabus and links are updated and working. |
| 1.1b | The course materials are updated to avoid the use of broken web links, the wrong year in the header/file name, or references to pages/sections or chapters in older editions of a textbook or links to websites. |
| 1.2 | A statement introduces the students to the purpose of the course.  | The Purpose of the Course statement goes more in-depth than the Course Description in the catalog.  |
| 1.3 | If necessary, instructions make it clear how to get started in the course. | A *Getting Started* section giving students step by step instructions can eliminate confusion.A *Getting Started* document could include the following:1. Welcome/Intro
2. Read the syllabus
3. Read/watch/listen to the instructors introduction
4. Write and submit your introduction
5. Check the course schedule to make sure you have the time you need to be successful in this course.
6. Do the practice items in the [**Distance Student Orientation**](http://lms.ndus.edu/course/view.php?id=5569) to ensure that you know how to submit assignments and retrieve the information posted in Moodle.
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| 1.4 | If not obvious, visual design of the course makes it clear where to find course components. | Too much information on your main course page can be confusing. White space and headings can help your course be student-friendly. |
| 1.5 | Clearly stated expectations/protocols defining or explaining required levels of student participation are provided. | Students will need to know what is required for posting to forums, blogs or other types of interaction with classmates and/or instructors. What to include:* Rules of conduct for participating in the discussion board.
* Rules of conduct for email content
* Spelling and grammar expectations, if any.
* A course activity which includes awareness of the communication expectations for the course.

Where to include it:* Syllabus – include a section entitled “Expectations of Students” which covers expected levels of participation in all activities.
* Moodle – create an HTML block or a Moodle “web page”
* Assignments – in addition to including expectations in the syllabus and Moodle, make sure each assignment is clearly and thoroughly described in the Assignment description in Moodle; even if it is described elsewhere. This may seem redundant, but it can be very helpful for students.
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| 1.6 | A timeline clearly indicates the existence of student coursework submission deadlines throughout the duration of the semester. |  |

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| 1. **Learning Objectives**

Learning objectives are clearly defined and explained. Objectives help the learner to focus on learning what the instructor intends for them to learn. |
| 2.1 | The course learning objectives are specific and clearly stated. | Clearly defined objectives describe the **desired results of instruction** rather than the **process of instruction** as demonstrated below: Examples of objectives describing the **process of instruction**:* Show a documentary on the history of the peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
* Deliver a lecture on the nutritional value of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Examples of objectives describing the **desired results of instruction**:* The student will be able to list the steps of making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
* The student will be able to assemble a peanut butter and jelly sandwich from scratch.
 |
| 2.2 | All learning objectives are promoted by learning activities. | This standard speaks to the issue of course alignment. Every objective in a course should have at least one corresponding learning activity. There are times when a learning activity may not be directly related to course outcomes, such as new issues or research in the field that should be discussed. Generally, all activities should be related to one or more of the outcomes of the course.  |

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| 1. **Evaluation of Student Performance**

Grading strategies are established to measure effective learning and learner progress. |
| 3.1 | The course grading policy is stated clearly. | A clear, concise grading policy can be placed anywhere in your course. Moodle’s HTML blocks make it possible to display the policy in plain sight if you like. |
| 3.2 | Descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and, if applicable, participation. | When *you* know exactly what *you* mean, it can sometimes be a challenge to write clear instructions. It may help to get feedback from others to make sure what you are saying is clear. It is also a good idea to place the set of instructions within the description section of the Moodle assignment so that the student has less looking around to do.A rubric states what it is that the instructor wants the student to know and do. It is a scoring guide composed of criteria used to evaluate performance, a product, or a project. A rubric allows for standardized evaluation according to specified criteria, making grading and ranking simpler and more transparent in a reliable, fair, and valid manner. Writing a rubric is an exercise that helps not only the student, but also makes grading easier for the instructor. |
| 3.3 | A mechanism is in place that allows the students to monitor their course progress and performance. | In addition to utilizing the grade book in Moodle or an Excel spreadsheet, instructors can communicate with students about their progress in the course in the following ways:* Instructor participation in a discussion assignment
* Writing assignments that require submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement
* Self-mastery tests and quizzes that include informative feedback with each answer choice.
* Interactive games and simulation that have feedback built in.
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| 3.4 | The conflict resolution statement in the course syllabus has been updated with the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of the division Chair and VPAA.  | The course template covers this – should we take this out? |

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| 1. **Resources and Materials**

Instructional materials are designed and prepared by a qualified person that is competent in the field. (Materials, other than standard textbooks are produced by recognized publishers, are prepared by the instructor or distance educators skilled in preparing materials for distance learning.) |
| 4.1 | Resources and materials are easily accessible to and usable by the learners. | If some of the course resources, including textbooks, videos, CD-ROMS, etc., are unavailable within the framework of the course shell, investigate how students would gain access to them, and examine their ease of use.Examples:* If textbooks and/or CD’s are used, titles, authors, publishers, ISBN numbers, copyright dates, and information as to where copies can be obtained, should be listed.
* An area on the syllabus and a place in the course shell is devoted to required resources.

Required software plug-ins are listed, along with instructions for obtaining and installing the plug-ins. |
| 4.2 | If applicable, instructions on how to access resources at a distance are sufficient and easy to understand. | Materials used in a face-to-face class may not work well in an online course without modification. Students who have the required technical equipment and software should be able to view the course materials online. Examples of some format problems:* New versions of software may be incompatible with old versions.
* Students ignore the technology requirements i.e. using Macs
* Text size may be too inconsistent for typical View/Text Size setting
* Science lab courses may include learning activities that are not easy to format for online learning.
* Large text files are presented without table of contents or unit numbering: hyperlinks may improve students’ access to information.
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| 4.3 | Instructional materials are designed for an effective online environment. | Uploading PowerPoint slides does not an online course make. Suggestions for creating instructional materials for the online environment:* Utilize PowerPoint slides add audio right in PowerPoint
* Take it another step further and add audio and graphics like arrows and gestures to highlight a point (Wimba, VoiceThread).
* Record a lecture in a classroom while you’re presenting it to your on campus course (Wimba, CourseCast)
* Record yourself with video and audio (Wimba).
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| 1. **Learner Engagement**

The effective design of instructor-learner interaction and meaningful learner cooperation is essential to learner motivation, intellectual commitment, and personal development. |
| 5.1 | Learning activities foster instructor-student and content-student interactions. | The learning activities in the course should support the following types of interaction:* Instructor-learner: Self-introduction; discussion postings and responses; feedback on assignments; evidence of one-to-one communication via course mail and email, etc.
* Learner-content: essays, term papers, group projects, etc. based on readings, videos, and other course content; self-assessment exercises; group work products, etc.
 |
| 5.2 | A mechanism is in place to allow for optional student-student interaction. | * Learner-learner (if appropriate): Self-introduction exercise; group discussion postings; group projects; peer critiques, etc. These can be accomplished online using instant messaging, emails, video conferencing and web conferencing.
 |
| 5.3 | Instructor expresses willingness and has provided a preferred method to engage with student questions and concerns. |  |
| 5.4 | Clearly defined statements inform students what to expect in terms of instructor response time regarding academic feedback and other questions/problems. |  |
| 5.5 | A mechanism has been designed to provide regular and substantive\* interaction between the instructor and students through the use of synchronous and/or asynchronous tools.  |  |

\* Significant instructor and student interaction that fosters an instructor/learner relationship

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| 1. **Course Technology**

To enhance student learning, course technology should enrich instruction and foster learner interactivity.  |
| 6.1 | The tools and media support the learning objectives. |  |
| 6.2 | Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent and efficient. |  |

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| 1. **Learner Support**

Courses are effectively supported for learners through fully accessible modes of delivery, resources and learner support. |
| 7.1 | The standard statement regarding technical support within the course shell has been left undisturbed. |  |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Best Practices** |
| **VIII. Accessibility \***Access to course resources is in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and US copyright laws are followed. |
| 8.1 | Captions are included for images.  |  |
| 8.2 | There are no flashing elements (graphics or text) that may cause seizures (content should not flash more than 3 times in any 1 second period).  |  |
| 8.3 | Links are readable, using the title of the document or webpage, instead of “click here” or the web address. |  |
| 8.4 | If needed, HTML headers are used in the course, rather than regular text, to enable ease of use for screen reading applications. (See the Office of Instructional Technology for assistance.) |  |
| 8.5 | Paragraphs and headings are separated by blank lines. |  |
| 8.6 | Text boxes are limited in length so users do not have to scroll to the right to continue reading. |  |
| 8.7 | Readable fonts such as Arial, Calibri, Verdana, Helvetica or Times New Roman are used. |  |
| 8.8 | When using colored text, add additional emphasis by using bold, italic and/or underline to accommodate color blind learners. |  |

**APPENDIX A**

**Technology Integration Matrix**

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| Traditional activities | Technology integrated activities | Asynchronous Tools | Synchronous Tools |
| Q&A | Surveys, questionnaires, polls, instant messaging | Moodle (Choices activity) Poll Everywhere (polleverywhere.com)Survey Monkey | Wimba Classroom (soon to be Blackboard Collaborate)Blackboard Instant Messenger ( Bb IM - was Pronto) |
| Reading textbooks, etc. | PDFs, DVDs, screen readers, audio books | Kindle, cell phones |  |
| Reflective writing | Blogs – for individuals; wikis – for groups | **Blogs** – Wordpress, Blogger, LiveJournal, Moodle, Edublog**Wikis** – Wikispaces, PB Wiki, Google Docs, Google Sites | Google Docs |
| Class discussion | Wikis, forums, podcasts | Wikis, Moodle discussion forums, Audacity |  |
| Ice breaker activities | Forum introducing self, poll asking a question related to the material which leads to discussion questions,  | Moodle forum, Moodle Choices or Poll Everywhere |  |
| In-class presentations | Real-time presentations; pre-recorded presentations | Voice Thread, Prezi, Audacity, PowerPoint,  | Wimba Classroom |
| Worked examples | Application sharing and recording, screen capture | Wimba Classroom, Bb IM, Jing, Screenr |  |
| Research papers |  | Google Scholar, Wikipedia, Library Resources |  |
| Group projects |  | Wimba Classroom breakout rooms, Pronto,  |  |
| Storytelling | Podcasts, avatars, videos, student made movies Webquests | Audacity, Voki, YouTube, TeacherTube, windows movie maker |  |
| Portfolios |  |  |  |
| Lecture/PowerPoint | Podcasts, application sharing and recording, instructor commentary, web quests | Audacity, Wimba Classroom, Blackboard IM, Prezi, VoiceThread |  |
| Guest speakers | Audio interviews, online webcasts | Audacity, Wimba Classroom |  |
| Role play |  |  |  |
| Simulations |  |  |  |

**Common Challenges**

The following problems are often found in online courses:

1. The syllabus is outdated or written for an on-campus rather than an online audience.
2. The outcomes/objectives are not specific and clear.
3. Expectations – instructor and student - are not clearly defined.
4. Instructional materials are limited and not compatible with the online environment (PowerPoint slides with no text or audio).

**Points to Remember**

Just like face-to-face classes, online instruction requires a variety of instructional and assessment strategies. So here are a few pointers to get the creative juices flowing and please feel free to ask the Instructional Technology department for support:

Add **audio** to your course using:

* Audacity -download for free at http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/
* Wimba Voice Tools - these tools are listed as “Activities” in each Moodle course shell.
* PowerPoint - PowerPoint has an audio editor that you can use within the program itself.

Add **video** or supplemental slides:

* YouTube
* streaming.discoveryeducation.com
* teachertube.com
* watchknow.org
* slideshare.net

Meet your students where they are – online! Offer **virtual office hours** and **tutoring** hours:

* Wimba Pronto
* Wimba Classroom
* Moodle Chat

Encourage your students to **write**:

Writing a **blog** can be a great learning tool for students. Since blogs are public (although they can be made private as well), students can publish their writings to the Internet and fellow students can easily make comments. Blogs are an interesting way to get discussions going. Below is a list of free blog sites:

* Blogspot.com
* Wordpress.com
* Moodle’s blog feature

**Wikis** can also be used for writing and they provide a nice space for group collaboration. With wikis student contributions can be easily tracked (which helps with grading).

* Wikispaces.com – free enhanced features for educational wikis
* PBwiki.com

These are just a few ideas for you to consider as you prepare to teach online. Please feel free to contact me at any time. Thank you for your time – enjoy your journey to high quality online instruction!