



Online Course Quality

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Quality in Online Education

- How can we define it, measure it, ensure it?

http://usapetal.net/misc/RGPortfolio/quality_in_online_education.pdf

- Highlights of Article

- Adhering to Design Standards for consistency in design and quality
- Implementing Best Practices
- Standardizing on Process & Procedures
- Applying successful Behaviors and Habits





Online Course Quality

- Quality Matters Program: A national benchmark for online course design

<https://www.qualitymatters.org/higher-education-program>

- National Standards for Quality Online Teaching

<http://www.onlineprogramhowto.org/quality/inacol-standards/online-teaching/>

- Evaluating Online Education: The Quality Scorecard

<http://www.onlinecollege.org/2012/01/17/evaluating-online-education-the-quality-scorecard/>



Recent Developments & Trends

- More Pupils Are Learning Online, Fueling Debate on Quality

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/06/education/06online.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

- Udacity Cancels Free Online Math Course, Citing Low Quality

<http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/udacity-cancels-free-online-math-course-citing-lack-of-quality/38998>



Course Design & Online Pedagogy

- Course Design & Online Pedagogy
 - <http://fsweb.bainbridge.edu/gaview/Quickstart.html>
 - <http://fsweb.bainbridge.edu/gaview/pedagogy.html>
 - <http://teach.ucf.edu/pedagogy/best-practices/>
- Key Points
 - Start with the pedagogy
 - Design for Easy Navigation
 - Learn your LMS
 - Model Courses



Course Design & Online Pedagogy

- Ease of Navigation
- Course element are consistent & clearly marked
- Course elements are easy to follow
- Content titles are clear
- Design elements do not distract from course content (color, image, text, layout)
- Dates are clearly listed (multiple Locations)

... Shaprio, 2011

Instructional Design Role

- The “Interior Designers” of online courses
 - Instructional Designer Job Description
 - Provide instructional design and program design expertise for the development and support of online courses
 - Share pedagogical methods such as flipped classrooms, project-based learning and other active learning methods.
 - Instructional Developmental Designer
 - Designs, develops, and implements curricular materials and courseware.
 - Consults with faculty and administrators in the design, development and evaluation of the curriculum, instructional methods and materials, and research projects.



Tips for Online Course Preparation

- Organization and Presentation of Content
 - “Welcome” message
 - “Start Here” message in content
 - Logical Grouping by Unit or Week
 - Due Dates/Course Calendar
 - Presenting information in “bite size” chunks
 - Personalize and Connect with your students
 - Place a photo in your welcome message
 - Week one “Introduce Yourself” discussion for students



Tips for Online Course Preparation

- Navigation
 - The concept of user-centered design
 - The concept of intuitive navigation
 - “Simplicity is best”
 - Welcome News Item
 - Using News item as a weekly reminder/instructions



Tips for Online Course Preparation

- Engaging Students
 - Ice Breaker Exercises
 - Introduce yourself
 - Groups
 - Virtual Break Room/Lounge
 - Input from your instructor commentary to students ...

- Discussions
 - “1 Plus 2” Model of Posting
 - One-to-many approach

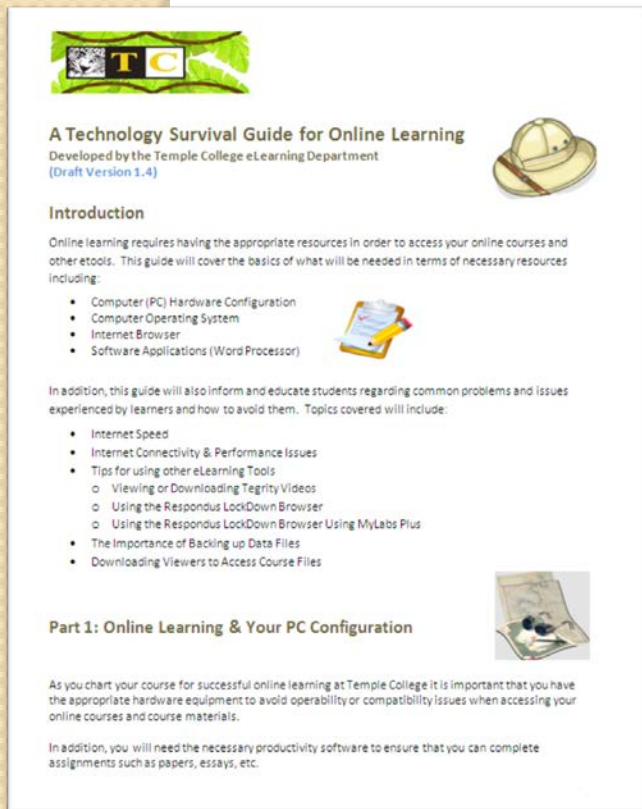


Technology/Media Integration

- Technology Integration
 - Web Links
 - Media
 - Etc.
 - FilmsOnDemand
- ADA Compliance
 - 504
508
 - Transcripts
 - Closed Captioning

Addressing Technology Issues (1 of 2)

- Technology Survival Guide



A Technology Survival Guide for Online Learning
 Developed by the Temple College eLearning Department
 (Draft Version 1.4)

Introduction

Online learning requires having the appropriate resources in order to access your online courses and other eTools. This guide will cover the basics of what will be needed in terms of necessary resources including:

- Computer (PC) Hardware Configuration
- Computer Operating System
- Internet Browser
- Software Applications (Word Processor)

In addition, this guide will also inform and educate students regarding common problems and issues experienced by learners and how to avoid them. Topics covered will include:

- Internet Speed
- Internet Connectivity & Performance Issues
- Tips for using other eLearning Tools
 - Viewing or Downloading Tegrity Videos
 - Using the Responsus LockDown Browser
 - Using the Responsus LockDown Browser Using MyLabs Plus
- The Importance of Backing up Data Files
- Downloading Viewers to Access Course Files

Part 1: Online Learning & Your PC Configuration

As you chart your course for successful online learning at Temple College it is important that you have the appropriate hardware equipment to avoid operability or compatibility issues when accessing your online courses and course materials.

In addition, you will need the necessary productivity software to ensure that you can complete assignments such as papers, essays, etc.

PC Configuration

PC Configuration	Good	Better	Best
CPU	Pentium	Dual Core	Dual or Quad Core
Primary Memory Size	2 Gbytes	4 Gbytes	4-6 Gbytes
Hard Drive Size	320 Gbytes	500 Gbytes	720 Gbytes

Addressing Technology Issues (2 of 2)

- Internet Service – Challenges in our area!

Selecting an Internet Provider and Speed Package – *The Need for Speed*

Internet service availability and quality of service can be a challenge in the Central Texas region; learners must be cautious when selecting an Internet service provider. Many Internet services are promoting their services as being “high speed” when in fact they are no faster than a low end DSL connection. Online learners should have at least a 1 Mbps Internet speed as a minimum requirement. To determine your Internet speed you can use a variety of Internet speed tests such as <http://www.speedtest.net> The speed test will check your upload and download speed. Since online learning requires the need for fast uploading your upload speeds should be similar.

It is strongly recommended that your Internet connection speed at least meet the “Good” category configuration.

	Good	Better	Best
Internet Speed	1 Mbps	1.5 Mbps	Greater than 1.5 Mbps

If your Internet speed is less than 1Mbps, you will be susceptible to performance issues such slow Internet page display, slow Internet portal performance, slow playback of course videos, the inability to play videos, slow online quiz performance when saving answers or submitting, online quiz lockups, etc. If you are attempting to do any of the activities mentioned, you do so at your own risk. You should expect that problems will occur and you should be prepared to make alternative plans for completing your online coursework. Please also note that wireless Internet is subject to signal strength and reception issues (similar to a car radio).

Course Maintenance

- “Oil Change”
 - Updating Dates
 - Updating Web Links that are bad or missing
 - Updating Publisher materials to match the edition of the textbook
 - Unit 1 is due by ...
 - Take Exam 1 between ...
 - Using “Breadcrumb” Trails
 - Go to quizzes and take quiz 1 ...
 - Go to the drop box and upload assignment ...

Etiquette (1 of 4)

- Course Readiness Day on Day 1
 - News item “Course Starts on ... or Under Construction ... please stand by”
- Providing links to needed viewers
 - Adobe PDF
 - Microsoft Word
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Calculating time allowed for a quiz or exam
 - Suggested Formulas
 - T/F (2 minutes/question)
 - Multiple Choice (3 minutes/question)



Etiquette (2 of 4)

- Determining time window of availability for quizzes, exams assignments
 - Reasonable availability window is 24-48 hours for online to allow for students who may be working
 - Online versus Hybrid versus Web-Enhanced
 - Avoid real-time windows such as 2 hours from x to y time of day unless exam is being taken in a classroom online



Etiquette (3 of 4)

- Designing quizzes/exams to prevent cheating
 - Strategies
 - Random Question Types
 - Random Question Types in separate sections
 - Bank of Similar Questions but not identical to test on concept mastery
 - Critical Thinking Questions versus regurgitation responses
- Solutions Being Researched
 - Respondus Monitor Product



Etiquette (4 of 4)

- Instructor Availability
 - Communicate terms in your policy

- Providing Feedback & Response Time
 - 24 -48 hours

Quality Check List Tools (1 of 2)

- Tips for Online Instructors

**TIPS TO INSTRUCTORS
FOR
ONLINE COURSE PREPARATION & SEMESTER STARTUP**
(Version 1.1)

High quality standards and a positive user experience are key elements of online course preparation. Please review the following readiness checklist to ensure that your online course meets the highest quality standards to facilitate a positive learning experience:

1. **Communicate Software Requirements!**
Include in your course description and syllabus any software type or titles required or suggested.
2. **Provide links to the necessary software viewers or players!**
Ensure that learners can access and view their respective course content files by providing notifications to students with links to the appropriate utilities or viewers (examples include Adobe Viewer, Word 2007 Viewer, PowerPoint 2007 Viewer, RealPlayer, iTunes, etc.) Avoid the use of PowerPoint files whenever possible. Publisher's course cartridges often include very large PowerPoint files. Instead, use a flash format which has a smaller file size and is easier and quicker for learners to view. Convert PowerPoint Presentations to Flash format using Adobe Professional or iSpring to make it easier for learners to access and view.
3. **Update the dates in your course syllabus, course schedule and other documents.**
Copying and importing content from a previous semester course shell does not change the dates of any of the content materials nor does it update the access/restriction dates for lessons, discussion questions, quizzes, exams, etc.
4. **Check ALL links!**
Test all links in the various sections of your course to ensure that they function correctly, are still active and linked to the appropriate course files or web links. Sometimes web links change or are removed by sources including publishers. Check the following areas:
 - a. News
 - b. Content
 - c. Discussions

Quality Check List Tools (2 of 2)

- Tips for Creating a Positive Online Learning Experience

Tips for Creating a Positive Online Learning Experience

By: [Errol Craig Sull](#) in [Online Education](#)

Here are a few tips to ensure your students have a positive online learning experience:

1. **Personal introductions.** By using the personal introductions of students, an instructor can get to know his/her students better, thus allowing interaction with individual students in a more personal manner. When students see that the instructor is reaching out to them on a personal basis, it helps establish a rapport and put the student at ease.
2. **Constant presence in the classroom.** When students see that the instructor is very active and visible in the class—in discussion, in class postings, etc.—it reassures them that instructor is real, is interested in the class, and is there for individual students. This will have a big impact on student success because they know the instructor is around for questions and concerns AND it gives them a more positive feeling about being in the class.
3. **Timely response to all student postings and assignments.** First, responding in a timely manner will keep students from having hold assignments until they get clarification from the instructor. It is also crucial that the instructor give thorough and immediate feedback on all assignments so students can learn how to improve and can go on to the next assignment in a timely manner.
4. **Be clear in all “housekeeping” aspects.** Grading criteria, all contact information, policy on late submissions, “netiquette,” and other such items need be clearly defined so there is a minimum of confusion later on in the class. As I have taught more classes over the years, I have compiled an extended list of these based on student queries; posting these early in the class cuts down on student confusion and student emails asking about these items—a big time-saver for both student the instructor.
5. **Give assignment feedback that is positive and that helps the student improve.** Students must have feedback on assignments that lets them know how they are doing in the class (i.e., their grade), what they need do to improve, and what they are doing right. I give individual item feedback that is made up of three parts: what is wrong, why it is wrong, and how it can be made right; I also will give positive feedback for individual points that are outstanding; and I always include an overall positive comment at the end of the assignment.
6. **Share tips, ideas, information, and personal perspectives to make the students feel more comfortable.** All of these have one goal: to give additional understanding of the subject being discussed, written about, etc. Personal perspectives are especially helpful, including those of the students: it puts the subject matter in a “real life” context, it gets more students actively and enthusiastically involved in class, and creates a stronger rapport between the students and the online instructor.



Future Direction

Phase 1: Education & Awareness Training (FA2013)

Tips & Checklists (SP2014, FA2014)

Source additional information & Share (SP2014, FA2014)

Phase 2: Faculty Training Workshops (SP2014, FA2014)

Special Event/Trainer (TBD)

Leverage Regional Service Center (TBD)

Phase 3: Peer Reviews (TBD)

Phase 4: Standardized Course Review (TBD)

Q & A Session

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