**Mayville State University**

**Instructional Design Online Course Evaluation Rubric**

**for Blackboard Courses**

Approved by Faculty Senate 09/25/13

Updates drafted 11/28/18

**Instructions for Developers**

* 1. Do not complete the “Yes/No” column. This column will be completed by the evaluators to indicate whether he or she thinks the course meets the rubric standard. Comments will be inserted where necessary for detailed feedback.
  2. The “Location” column is for the Developer to enter the location of each item so that the reviewers can save the time it would take to look for the item. This helps speed up the process of evaluation.
  3. Reviewers will give feedback using the “Comments” row. Many times you will see that you have met a standard and below in the Comments the reviewer will give suggestions. These are items that you should consider including in your course to make it even better, but as-is the course meets that standard anyway.
  4. When you are done developing, send the rubric to the Director of Instructional Design and Technology to indicate that you are ready to have the course reviewed.
  5. When you make changes to your course based on the reviewer comments, please write an explanation in the “Response” row for each section of the evaluation form. If you decide not to make a suggested change, please indicate the reason in the same area.

**Instructions for Evaluators**

1. Ask a Blackboard Administrator to add you the course you are about to review as a non-editing teacher and student (you must be a student in the course to obtain access to any Tegrity videos).
2. If you are the content evaluator, you are only asked to evaluate the highlighted items. You are welcome to evaluate the other items as well but it is not required and you will not be compensated for doing so.
3. The “Yes/No” column is for you to indicate whether you think the course meets the rubric standard. Where necessary, insert comments in the “Reviewer Comments” box for the section in which you are working.
4. If the developer does not use the “Location” column, feel free to use it yourself to indicate the location of certain items if you like.
5. Please make recommendations for improvement in areas where you believe the course is lacking. Remember to include both positive and negative feedback using language that is respectful of your colleagues' work and academic freedom.
6. When you are done reviewing the course, please send the completed form to the Director of Instructional Design and Technology.

Please note: All referenced items are linked in the Resources section at the end of this document.

**Online courses will meet all of the following requirements.**

**Course Name and Semester being reviewed: Reviewer:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| 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 | The course syllabus is easily located in Blackboard. |  |  |
| 1.2 | The syllabus requirements in policy M490 are met [See Policy Manual Policy M490: Section A – Syllabi]. |  |  |
| 1.3 | The course syllabus is written for an online audience. (Phone numbers are complete with area code, time zone is listed, no classroom locations listed, etc.) |  |  |
| 1.4 | 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 and/or publisher provided resources. |  |  |
| 1.5 | A statement provides the purpose of the course. This should be a summary of the objectives of the course. (The Purpose of the Course is different than the Course Description which is a duplication of the information in the academic catalog.) |  |  |
| 1.6 | Instructions make it clear how to get started in the course and are located at the top of the main course page. For example, a “Getting Started” section or a Course Guide. |  |  |
| 1.7 | A valid, academically related Enrollment Verification Activity exists for the first 10 days of the course. Examples: quizzes, assignments, online discussion forums or knowledge pre-tests. *Please note:* Logging into Blackboard and/or viewing course materials is NOT sufficient to verify attendance. [See Appendix A: Minimum Usage Agreement and the Federal Student Aid Handbook. Section – Counting excused absences as days in attendance] |  |  |
| 1.8 | Navigation of the course makes it clear where to find course components |  |  |
| 1.9 | Visual design of the course is logical, consistent and efficient with important information placed in a prominent area of the Blackboard course shell. |  |  |
| 1.10 | A *schedule* clearly indicates the existence of student coursework submission deadlines throughout the duration of the semester. [See e-Code of Federal Regulations 600.2 Section – Distance education] |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| 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-level objectives are specific, clearly stated and support the purpose of the course. [See Policy Manual Policy M490 Section B – Standards of Instruction.] |  |  |
| 2.2 | All course-level objectives are promoted by evaluated learning activities. |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes/No** | **Location** |
| 1. **Learner Support**   Courses are effectively supported for learners through fully accessible instructors, resources and other learner support. | | | |
| 3.1 | Instructor expresses willingness to engage with student questions and concerns and has provided a preferred method of contact. *Recommendation*: The preferred method of contact can be displayed as part of the **Your Instructor** page. |  |  |
| 3.2 | Clearly defined statements inform students what to expect in terms of instructor response time regarding questions, concerns and problems. |  |  |
| 3.3 | Clearly defined statements inform students what to expect in terms of instructor response time regarding academic feedback. [See Policy Manual Policy M490 Section B – Standards of Instruction.] |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| 1. **Student Performance Expectations and Evaluation**   Grading and evaluation strategies are established to measure effective learning and learner progress. | | | |
| 4.1 | The course grading policy is stated clearly. (A=100-90, B=89-80, etc) [See Policy Manual Policy M490 – Section A Syllabi] |  |  |
| 4.2 | A detailed breakdown of all graded materials is provided at the start of the course. Example:  Breakdown of Grades – Total points possible = 500  4 exams = 50 points each for a total of 200 points – 40% of final grade  Research paper = 100 points – 20% of final grade  Presentation = 100 points – 20% of final grade  Discussion Forum 10 posts & responses = 10 points each = 100 points total – 20% of final grade  [See Policy Manual Policy M490 – Section A Syllabi] |  |  |
| 4.3 | If participation is graded, a detailed explanation of expectations is provided. |  |  |
| 4.4 | A clear and detailed explanation of expectations for each assignment is provided. For example, a grading rubric. [See the MSU Syllabus Template] |  |  |
| 4.5 | A mechanism is in place that allows the students to monitor their course progress and performance. For example, the Blackboard Grade Center or a spreadsheet for students to use to track their grades. |  |  |
| 4.6 | The Important Student Information document is available on the My MaSU page in Blackboard and accessible by students. [See the MSU Syllabus Template] |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| 1. **Resources and Materials**   Instructional materials (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.) | | | |
| 5.1 | If online resources or materials are required, they are easily found and instructions are clear. |  |  |
| 5.2 | Instructional materials are designed for an effective online environment. For example, a variety of multimedia elements are used; text should not be the only instructional medium (PowerPoint slides alone are not sufficient); video, audio, and other elements like quizzes and discussion forums, offer students more than one way to learn the material. |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| 1. **Learner Engagement**   The effective design of instructor-learner interaction and meaningful learner cooperation is essential to learner motivation, intellectual commitment, and personal development. | | | |
| 6.1 | 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. This can be accomplished by providing students a method to submit their work and instructors to give feedback throughout the duration of the semester. Examples: forums, homework and regular and consistent deadlines. [See e-Code of Federal Regulations 600.2 Section – Distance education] |  |  |
| 6.2 | Learning activities foster content-student interactions. This can be accomplished by assigning forums, homework, practice quizzes, projects and/or papers throughout the *duration* *of the semester*. [See e-Code of Federal Regulations 600.2 Section – Distance education] |  |  |
| 6.3 | A mechanism is in place to allow for optional student-student interaction. For example, discussion forum. |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

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

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Yes / No** | **Location** |
| **VII. Accessibility \***  Access to course resources is in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and US copyright laws are followed. | | | |
| 7.1 | Alt text or some other means of description is included for all images related to evaluated materials.\*  ***Descriptive images****: ALT text is the alternative text for images that gets read by screen readers. This description should be succinct, accurately represent the image and/or convey the purpose of the image. For recordings, provide a verbal description of visual materials.* |  |  |
| 7.2 | The course title is formatted as H1 in HTML code and the section titles are formatted with H2 or H3 HTML code to make the course navigation screen reader friendly.  ***Notes on Screen Readers:*** *Headings written in HTML code provide vital information to a screen reader user. Headings use a hierarchy. There are six levels of the heading hierarchy: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6.* ***H1*** *tells the screen reader, "The following information is the most important thing on this page." Many screen reader users skim a Blackboard page by tabbing from header to header. If your course does not use HTML Header code, and you rely on formatting to emphasize headings, a screen reader can't "see" this so the heading will not be announced any differently than normal paragraph text. Every main course page in Blackboard should have ONE H1 heading - the course title. This design practice also helps users easily skip content that is not needed at that time. If headers are not on a Blackboard page, the learner will have to wait for the screen reader to read through everything that falls above the desired item on the page.* |  |  |
| 7.3 | All hyperlinks in the course use descriptive text such as the title of the document or webpage (“Blackboard Course page”), instead of “click here” or the URL (http://www.google.com).  ***Note****: Screen reader users can browse through Blackboard pages by calling up a list of links to navigate. Non-descriptive link text such as ‘click here’ should be avoided at all costs as it makes no sense whatsoever out of context.* |  |  |
| 7.4 | When using colored text, additional formatting is added for emphasis by using bold, italic and/or underline to accommodate color blind learners. |  |  |
| 7.5 | 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). |  |  |
| 7.6 | Readable fonts such as Arial, Calibri, Verdana, or Times New roman are used. |  |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | | |
| Developer Response |  | | |

\* If a need arises, Student Services will contact the instructor and they will work together on behalf of the student.

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| **No.** | **Standard** | **Comments** |
| **VIII. Optional**  This section offers several options for improving your course. | | |
| 8.1 | Ongoing multiple assessment strategies are used to measure content knowledge, attitudes, and skills. |  |
| 8.2 | Students’ self-assessments and peer feedback opportunities exist throughout the course. |  |
| 8.3 | Course offers access to a wide range of resources supporting course content and different learning abilities. |  |
| 8.4 | Instructor offers multiple opportunities for students to give feedback on course content (For example, a “muddiest point” exercise). |  |
| 8.5 | Instructor offers multiple opportunities for students to give feedback on ease of online technology and accessibility of course. (For example, a Blackboard poll on use of the forum tool). |  |
| 8.6 | Instructor uses formal and informal student feedback in an ongoing basis to help plan instruction and assessment of student learning throughout the semester. |  |
| Reviewer Comments |  | |
| Developer Response |  | |

Evaluator signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Resources**

Minimum Usage Agreement Approved by Faculty Senate 9/25/13 Appendix A

[University Policy Manual](http://www.mayvillestate.edu/about-msu/more-info/reports-policies/) Policy M490 Sections A & B. *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

Chapter 1 of the [Federal Student Aid Handbook](http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsahandbook&awardyear=2013-2014). *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

[e-Code of Federal Regulations Title 34: Education Part 600.2](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div8&node=34:3.1.3.1.1.1.23.2)  *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

Alt Text by [*WebAIM*](http://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/) *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

Accessible Design by [*WebAIM*](http://webaim.org/intro/) *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

[Mayville State University Syllabus Template](https://my.mayvillestate.edu/ws/departments/academicaffairs/Shared/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fws%2Fdepartments%2Facademicaffairs%2FShared%2FSyllabus%20Template&FolderCTID=0x0120008A7E2B3203D4664D932E0BA8C57467DF&View=%7B0449F239%2D0993%2D4BFB%2D8F92%2DEBE90E31C9E8%7D&InitialTabId=Ribbon%2ELibrary&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence) *Retrieved December 10, 2014*

Moss, Trenton, Webcredible, [“Improving Usability for Screen Reader Users”](http://www.webcredible.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/web-accessibility/screen-readers.shtml) *Retrieved December 9, 2014*

**APPENDIX A**

## Minimum Usage Agreement

## Approved by Faculty Senate 9/25/13 (see meeting minutes)

The minimum level of technology usage by of all MSU faculty requires that each faculty member needs to:

* post syllabi and the majority of electronic course materials in the current LMS
* provide class cancellations and announcements (in the current LMS or Microsoft Outlook)
* provide enrollment verification and report unsatisfactory student perform and/or continuous absences in DropGuard
* send and receive e-mail from their secure MSU e-mail account (in Microsoft Outlook)
* check class rosters in ConnectND as directed by the Registrar
* submit final grades in ConnectND

for all courses. In addition to the minimums listed above, faculty teaching distance courses need to have their newly created or re-developed online courses pass the online course development rubric and have their more mature online courses pass a quality assurance review periodically.