

Interaction and Engagement

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
Introductory video or text is provided on the course website to establish the instructor presence in the online course.	Help students get to know you with a welcome message. Students who "connect" with their instructor are more likely to log in and do the coursework.	A video welcome message allows the student to see and hear their professor discuss the course he/she might do in a face to face course.
Students are divided into appropriate-sized groups to encourage interaction and engagement.	It can be difficult for students to work together and interact effectively in groups that are too large or too small.	Group size may vary depending upon the activity. Set up groups that are small enough so that each person can make a significant contribution, but not so small that the group stagnates if one or two people do not contribute.
The course provides opportunities for students to engage with other students in a variety of communication and interaction experiences.	Student-student interactions can help students engage with the course material as well as each other.	Students can interact with each other through group discussions, small-group projects and peer review.
The course provides opportunities for students to engage with instructor in a variety of communication and interaction experiences.	Students appreciate personal attention from their instructor.	A discussion board set up for questions about the course content is an easy way for the instructor to answer questions. Provide feedback to students about their coursework as frequently as possible.

Interaction and Engagement Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
Student background and experiences are valued and used as part of the course.	Students are more engaged in course material when they can relate it to personal experience.	Provide opportunities for students to share experiences through discussions. Allow them to choose a paper or project topic that relates to them personally.
Students participate in collaboration and evaluation.	Give students opportunities to practice the real-world skills of team-work and critique.	Possible group collaboration activities include: discussions, small-group projects, problem-solving activities and role-playing. Peer review can be included as part of a group or solo work.
Students typically receive responses within 48 hours.	Feedback is most helpful to students when it is received in a timely fashion so that they can learn what they did well and not so well in time to apply it to the next assignment.	When it is possible, grade student work quickly. In large classes, self-tests that include detailed feedback can provide a quick turnaround.
Supporting Research		
<i>Improving online social presence through asynchronous video.</i> Jered Borup, Richard E. West, Charles R. Graham Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology Brigham		
Authors:Schwartzman, Roy1 docroy@classicnet.netSource: <i>Journal of Instructional Psychology</i> ; Mar2006, Vol. 33 Issue 1, p3-14, 12p		
<i>Student–instructor communication: The role of email</i> Elkafi Hassini DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ont., Canada L8S 4M4		

Course Overview and Introduction

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
The instructor starts the course with a welcome and review of the syllabus, course schedule and other important information for the course.	It is helpful to give students an outline of work that they will be doing with a thorough syllabus. A welcome message helps students connect with the instructor of the course as a human being.	Record a video message from the instructor. Require reading of the course syllabus that includes course outline and UF policy.
The role that the online environment and technology will play in the course is clearly stated at the start of the course.	Instructors need to provide the students with clear information regarding how technology will be used in the course. This is especially important for hybrid courses.	Including specifically what is necessary (For ex: programs, or devices like video cameras, etc) at the start of the course gives students time to determine if they have the necessary equipment or will need to purchase or borrow it.
In the course site, students are immediately presented with an obvious starting location and explanation on how to navigate the course.	A clear starting point saves students time and frustration. Information on how to navigate through the course material can reduce the number of questions sent to the instructor.	A "Start Here" link or section provides a clear point of reference. A detailed tour of the course features can show students how to access the materials and outline tasks that much be done each week.
The syllabus, schedule and other important course documents are easily located.	It should be easy for students to locate the syllabus, course calendar and any other documents that students use regularly.	A list of the important documents, clearly named can be placed on the course home page.
The syllabus contains all the relevant elements from the UF syllabus policy.	A complete syllabus provides clear answers to questions about course policies and procedures. Clear information in the syllabus and accompanying documents can reduce questions sent to the instructor.	Use the suggested online course syllabus template as a guide: http://teach.ufl.edu/resources/syllabus-templates/
All course deadlines are included in the course schedule.	A comprehensive listing of the course deadlines can help students to see the "big picture" as well as making it easy for them to plan weekly work.	Provide a spreadsheet example that includes Due Dates for the entire semester.

Course Overview and Introduction Standard

Standard	Annotation	Example
Synchronous and asynchronous requirements for participating in the course are clearly outlined.	Clearly state the expectations for participating in course activities. Determine how students will receive credit for participation and whether or not makeup opportunities are available.	Expectations for participation in activities and Discussion Boards (and their points/grade value) are clearly communicated within the course and in the Due Dates document, particularly for synchronous requirements.
Instructions for course participation are clearly provided and easily found in the course site. The instructions define how students get started and where to find components of the course.	Instructions that outline how to access any tools can help to reduce the numbers of questions sent to the instructor. If the tool is located outside of the course management system, provide a link to the tool along with tutorials explaining its use.	For example, a course that uses VoiceThread might provide a link to an introductory VoiceThread that explains how the tool is going to be used in the class. The introductory VoiceThread could point out the tutorials that are shown on the user's MyVoicepage.
Students are provided with information explaining when feedback will be provided, the type of feedback, and mode of communication they should expect from the instructor.	Students are better able to manage their course participation if they know when faculty will provide grades and feedback for assignments and assessments. Providing this information to students early helps to reduce unrealistic expectations.	An instructor who teaches a writing course might let students know that assignments will be evaluated with a grading rubric within 3 days of assignment submission.
Students and instructors are provided with space to introduce themselves to each other.	Encouraging interaction between students (and with instructors) helps to eliminate the feeling of isolation in an online course.	A humanities course asks students to introduce themselves to their discussion group. The assignment asks them to post their major and what they hope to learn from the course.
Consistent terminology is used for tools referenced in the course management system.	It is best to use the default names for tools that are part of the course management system. Consistent naming gives students a frame of reference from course to course and raises their comfort level.	For example, always refer to "Discussion Boards" as just that. Calling them "Discussion Forums" or "Discussion Area" interchangeably can be confusing to students.

Course Overview and Introduction Exemplary

Exemplary	Annotation	Example
An introductory quiz provides students with an opportunity to check their understanding of the syllabus, course requirements, and required tools and technologies.	Students who complete a syllabus quiz have a better understanding of course policies than students who do not.	The first quiz in a chemistry class checks student knowledge of the course policies outlined in the syllabus. The students can take the quiz up to three times (this reduces e-mails asking for a re-set due to students who accidentally open the quiz when they are not ready to take it.)
Instructor monitors and welcomes students as they start the course.	Instructors actively welcome students and are available to them as the course launches.	In a humanities course, the professor has created a Welcome video in which she reviews course policies that some students find confusing.
Students typically receive responses within 48 hours.	Students feel more in touch with instructors when their questions are answered in a timely manner.	Monitor your email frequently, setup up email templates containing the most commonly asked questions and create a spreadsheet with a listing of the most commonly used links used for the course.
A student survey during the course evaluates students' ease of navigation.	All instructors can benefit from student feedback about their experiences with the course site.	Ask students to complete a survey to get a better understanding of their experiences with the course site. Assigning points (even bonus points) to the survey will ensure that they complete it.
Course materials and aesthetic design are visually pleasing and consistent throughout course, and promote clarity and continuity of course structure and information.	A consistent look and feel helps keeps a course site user-friendly and uncomplicated.	Use available resources at UF (Instructional Design Services) to help keep your site looking organized and professional.

Supporting Research

Raymark P. The Syllabus Quiz. Teaching Of Psychology [serial online]. November 2002;29(4):286-288. Available

Examining online teaching, cognitive, and social presence for adult students Fengfeng Ke, University of New

Looney M. Using an Online Survey Tool to Enhance Teaching. Measurement In Physical Education & Exercise

Course Goals and Objectives

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
Overall course goals are clearly stated.	The course goals give students the big picture regarding what they should get out of the course	Goals are clearly stated in the syllabus in order for students to understand what they will learn in the course.
Course goals are relevant to the course purpose/level.	Course goals need to be appropriate for the content that is to be covered and the academic level of the students who are expected to take the class.	A lower 1000 or 2000 level course will most likely require students to be familiar with a body of information. A higher level undergraduate or graduate course will most likely expect students to perform tasks related to synthesis, analysis and evaluation.
Learning objectives are measurable and can be utilized as a measure of student performance/success in the course.	Learning objectives state what students will be able to do when they complete a segment of learning. These objectives are measured by assessments.	In an introductory astronomy class, many of the objectives use keywords such as, identify, list, summarize, discuss, and demonstrate.
Learning objectives align with the learning activities and assessment activities.	Activities and assessments are designed based on the objectives in order to measure student understanding.	A sample objective in an introductory astronomy class might be: The student will identify 8 types of stars with 100% accuracy. Such an objective could be measured through a quiz or test.
Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
Learning objectives are posted in the weekly overview or subsections of the course. These objectives also relate to the overall course goals.	It is a good idea to provide the learning objectives in the module, chapter, or unit where they will be used.	The first week of instruction in an introductory astronomy course might list objectives that support a terminal objective for the module. Each successive week would build upon the knowledge and skills learned during the first week.
Assignments and assessments specify the learning objectives that are relevant to the task/assignment.	As part of the assignment instructions, include the learning objective that is supported by the assignment.	In an introductory astronomy class, the students evaluate a model sun and its solar system for astronomical anomalies. Supporting objectives require students to: identify stars, outline physical properties of planets, and list current theories about the evolution and death of stars.
Supporting Research		
MIT Teaching and Learning Laboratory. Learning Objectives. Retrieved from: http://web.mit.edu/tll/teaching-materials/learning-objectives/index-learning-objectives.html		
Jones.J. Putting Learning Goals Into Your Syllabus. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> . August 2009. Retrieved from: http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/put-learning-goals-into-your-syllabus/22614		

Assessment and Measurement

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
Assessments measure the stated learning objectives.	The performance verb of the learning objective should suggest the method that will be used to assess the objective.	An objective that requires the student to "identify" something might be matched with a quiz that uses images for identification questions.
Assessments are consistent with the course materials, activities, and resources.	The course material must support the objective and ultimately, the assessment of that objective.	In a biology class, students were given flashcards with photos of different organisms to study. The exam to test this knowledge included images in the questions.
Expectations and requirements for student performance are clearly provided (guidelines, rubrics, checklists).	Clear expectations and requirements are provided by using guidelines, rubrics, and/or checklists.	An art class that requires a final project, provides interim deadlines with specific elements due at those times. Students peer review each other using a rubric before turning in the final project.
Assessments are given in an appropriate time period after the learning activities have taken place.	Assessments and learning activities are related to each other and are completed within a short time frame of each other.	In a math class, students learn about probability during the 3rd week of the semester. They have a quiz on what they have learned the following week.
Courses that have more than 50% of the grade from online quizzes and exams use appropriate online security measures.	Quizzes follow best practices with randomized questions and answers and exams are proctored.	A geology course assigns 30% of the course grade in quizzes and 70% of the course grade divided between a proctored midterm and final.
Feedback about student performance is provided in a timely manner throughout the course as stated in the syllabus.	Feedback is provided many times throughout the course, not just at the end, and within a reasonable time of assignment completion	An English course assigns a writing assignment each week. The first draft is returned within 2 days of the deadline. The final draft is returned within 3 days of the deadline.

Assessment and Measurement Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
Ongoing, multiple assessment strategies are used to measure content knowledge, attitudes and skills.	Different types of assessments are given through out the course to measure student learning.	An anthropology course gives weekly low-stakes quizzes, a weekly discussion, 4 papers and a final project.
Assignments or project-based assessments encourage students to utilize critical thinking skills.	Assignments ask students to understand content at a deeper level.	An engineering course requires students to create a proposal as a final project.
Student's achievement of stated learning outcomes is documented and provided to the student as feedback on their learning activities and assessments.	Feedback is provided to students that directly addresses their understanding of learning outcomes.	In a German language course, the instructor meets with each student several times during the semester to review assignments and progress.
Supporting Research		
American Association of Higher Ed. <i>Principles of Good Practice to Assess Student Learning</i> . Retrieved		
Glenn, D. Online Courses Should Always Include Proctored Finals, Economist Warns. <i>The Chronicle of</i>		
Hattie, J. and Temperly, H. The Power of Feedback. <i>REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH</i> . March 2007 vol.		

Instructional Materials

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
Course materials are presented to students in manageable segments.	Long paragraphs of wordy text is harder to retain than short segments.	Color code, use bullets, or use charts with concise chunks of content.
The instructional materials and learning activities support achievement of the learning objectives and are appropriate to the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes being learned.	Everything that a student does within a course should relate to a specific learning objective.	In an Astronomy course, one objective is to identify the 7 types of stars. The learning activity asks them to visit a star chart website and categorize the different features. Students are not asked to find literary references to star types.
The instructional materials are current.	Textbook, journal articles, videos and any other course resources reflect the current thinking about the topic.	In an Astronomy course, articles that reference Pluto indicate that it is no longer categorized as a planet.
All resources and materials in the course are appropriately cited.	Set a good example for your students by providing proper citations for any supportin materials.	Images of star charts come from the NASA website and are cited at the end of the PowerPoint presentation.
There is a clear distinction between required and optional materials.	Students should not have to ask which materials are mandatory or optional.	Students are required to review the starcharts on a specific website. Additional websites with more information about stars are also provided and labeled "optional."
Detailed instructions for student work are provided and clearly outline expectations and requirements (guidelines, rubrics, checklists)	Giving students as much information about an assignment saves the students time and frustration. It also can reduce the number of e-mails the instructor receives.	A discussion about types of stars lists requirements for the initial post and two responses. Sample posts and a grading rubric are also provided.
Access to a wide range of resources supporting course content is clearly provided.	Learning is multifaceted. Providing your students with different view points and multiple formats increases their ability to incorporate the learning into their own knowledge base.	The module on star types contains a video overview, a link to the NASA website on star identification, and a journal article detailing the identification process of a specific star.

Instructional Materials Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
Students engage with course content in a variety of ways.	Keep in mind that students learn content in different ways.	To teach students about the different types of stars, students are given a short video overview, a textbook reading, and an assignment to visit the NASA website.
Instructional materials and learning activities encourage critical thinking skills when appropriate.	Use instructional materials that are dynamic and can be expanded upon. Students will get more out of content if they have to do more than simply recall what they read.	Challenge students to use higher order thinking skills with the content and activities that are used in the course. Use Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs as a guide.
The instructor uses formal and informal student feedback in an ongoing basis to help plan instruction and assessment of student learning throughout the semester.	Listen to what students are saying about the course. Their opinions are valuable to the success of the course.	A language course requires students to fill out 3 surveys during the course of the semester. Students meet with their instructor privately 3 times during the semester through Skype. Feedback from the surveys and meetings is used to update assignments and assessments.
Supporting Research		
http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/targeting-growth.pdf		
http://teach.ufl.edu/resources/copyright/		
Toward deep learning for adult students in online courses Fengfeng Kea, Kui Xieb, 1, a MSC05-3040, Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology, College of Education, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, 87131, United States		

Course Technology

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
Provisions are in place to allow for potential failures of technology, and are clearly expressed to students.	The professor has explained what students are to do if there is a technology failure.	A section in the course explains to students what they are to do if technology fails.
Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.	The course layout is easy to navigate in order for students to be successful in the course.	The assignments are in an order that allows students to easily find the correct assignment(s) for the correct module.
The technology tools and media support the learning objectives of the course.	Use tools and media that support student learning.	The discussion tool provides students with a way to interact on a variety of topics within a course.
The technology used in the course is readily accessible and available to students.	Check to make sure that all components of the course are ready and available.	Course assignments and documents are made available as students need them.
The tools and media are compatible with prevailing standards and formats.	Students are able to access tools and media on a variety of devices.	Students are able to use the discussion tool in Sakai on a computer, as well as, on mobile devices.
Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
Faculty have opportunities to develop course content using technology.	Faculty use available tools to develop course content.	Use of Camtasia to record content for the course.
Technology use encourages higher level thinking and activity.	Use of technology in the course requires students to use higher levels of thinking.	Use of student blogs in the course may require students to create new information to share with the class.
Supporting Research		
Panagiotis Zaharias. Usability in the context of e-learning: a framework augmenting 'traditional' usability constructs with instructional design and motivation to learn. <i>International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction</i> . 5.4 (October-December 2009) p37.		
Moller, L., Huett, J. B., & Harvey, D. M. (2009). Learning and instructional technologies for the 21st century: Visions of the future. New York, NY: Springer.		

Accessibility

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
The course employs accessible technologies and provides guidance to students on how to obtain accommodations as defined in the UF syllabus policy (use of the sample course syllabus as a guide provides the necessary information).	All students are able to access the course material.	In a biology course, the .pdf handouts can be read by a screen reader. The syllabus contains information on how to request accommodation.
Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
The course contains equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.	The course contains both visual and auditory content.	In a humanities course, the videos, including student presentations are closed captioned.
The course uses fonts, formatting, and design elements to facilitate readability by all students and assistive devices.	Course elements follow a hierarchy and are consistent from page to page. Any images provide alternative text. Text can be read by a screen reader.	
The course design accommodates the use of assistive technologies for visual, hearing and motor impairments as needed.	All students are able to access the course material.	

Course Design Evaluation

Standard		
Standard	Annotation	Example
The learning design is evaluated on a regular basis for effectiveness from both the student and instruction perspectives.	Student surveys and instructor feedback guide in determining effectiveness of the course.	Students complete a survey during the middle and end of the semester to provide feedback.
The results of the evaluation are tied to a plan for continuous review and improvement of the course.	Evaluation results guide in improving the course.	Evaluation results are used to make improvements to the course.
Exemplary		
Exemplary	Annotation	Example
The evaluations are part of the documentation of the course.	Evaluations are kept with the course to provide information on effectiveness.	A spreadsheet of the evaluation results is created to be part of the course documentation.