# Best Practices for Administrative Evaluation of Online Faculty

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**Abstract**

This introductory-level presentation demonstrates how to evaluate the materials and teaching in online courses. Topics covered include similarities with evaluation of on-ground teaching, factors unique to online courses, technological considerations, helping administrators unfamiliar with online courses, and national standards, rubrics, and benchmarks.

**Introduction**

Much research has recently been done regarding the effectiveness of online teaching and learning in higher education. At the local level, several institutions have evaluated specific courses in terms of best teaching practices in particular disciplines. From a more global perspective, accrediting agencies in the United States are now seriously considering how to evaluate online programs in terms of the quality of the education they provide to students. Most efforts at defining competencies for online teaching focus on the ways in which instructors can best assess student performance.

There has not, however, been a concomitant increase in research about how administrators can best evaluate the performance of the instructors whose courses they are tasked to assess. Fortunately, several of the instruments that have been created for purposes other than evaluating faculty performance contain criteria and questions germane to the traditional administrative tasks of rating instructors and suggesting improvements.

Toward such an end, this report seeks to define the best practices for online instruction, generally, and to extrapolate the questions administrators can ask in evaluating their instructors' performance in online learning. In addition, this report will outline specific examples of measurable instructor behaviors that point to competence in online teaching.

**Online vs. Classroom Instruction**

Most administrators are familiar with the evaluation of site-based classes. A typical scenario sees the administrator making an appointment to observe the classroom performance of an instructor on a set day. The administrator asks ahead of time for a copy of the course syllabus, and perhaps a copy of the reading and assignments on which students will be working during the classroom observation. The administrator arrives in the classroom and sits in the back, taking largely subjective notes on the instructor's "classroom presence," which includes the instructor's rapport with students, the amount of student discussion during the class, the number of student questions raised, and the type and quality of the instructor's supplemental media usage (e.g., writing on the board, showing videos, discussing readings, using real models).

After the classroom observation, the administrator writes up an evaluation, often using a summative instrument to mark the instructor on a set scale with regard to presentation skills, professionalism, material coverage, and media usage. The administrator also writes some more general comments about the instructor's abilities, and afterward sits down with the instructor to discuss how the instructor can continue good practices and amend deficiencies.

For online instruction, however, administrators may raise several questions about the process of evaluating instructors:

- How do I "visit" the classroom for a set period of time if the classroom is asynchronous?
- What should I look at to prepare myself for the discussions that the class will have?
- How can I evaluate the instructor's classroom presence in an online course?
- In order to say I have evaluated the instructor, where should I visit in the course shell, how often, and why?
- How can I ascertain the quality of the class discussion and whether the instructor is taking enough of a part?
- Should the online instructor use more multimedia than a classroom instructor?
- A lot of the questions from my classroom-visit rubric don't seem to apply. What questions are cognate?
- How can I evaluate an online course if I've never taught online, myself?

The answers to many of these questions are, fortunately, simpler to answer than might appear on first glance. For example, taking the first question into consideration, visiting an online course in order to observe instructor-student interaction can be set up, not according to time (as in the traditional classroom observation) but according to course unit. If a one-hour classroom visit shows the administrator one out of the forty-five contact hours that constitute a three-credit course, then a

similar chunk of an online course should be opened to the administrator.

Another question that administrators must increasingly face is that of satisfying regional accrediting organizations by evaluating online instruction. How can this be done in a satisfactory way, especially given some of the challenges identified recently by Shannon Loane, such as determining "if a course offered online is equivalent to a traditional classroom based course?" Keeping these administrative concerns in mind, we can now set up a sample situation in which an under-prepared administrator observes an online course.

**How to Fool an Administrator in Three Easy Steps**

Dean C. I. Bineerawile is in charge of a well-established faculty at a large four-year college. One of her instructors is Sal Monella, a tenured faculty member who teaches food safety courses in the hotel-management B. A. program, and another instructor is Mel Ted Butter, an adjunct faculty member who teaches film history in the liberal-arts program. Both Monella and Butter recently began to teach online courses for the college. Both took the required online-instructor training provided by the computer-support folks on campus, and both instructors have developed syllabi, lecture notes, and class discussion topics for their online classes. Both Monella and Butter have been teaching online since 2000, but neither has yet been evaluated on his performance in the online classroom, despite both having been evaluated at least once per year for their classroom-based courses.

Dean Bineerawile, anticipating the upcoming visit from the college's regional accreditation association, wants to demonstrate that she is evaluating the performance of her faculty in online as well as face-to-face courses, so she asks both instructors to allow her to observe their online classes.

Monella invites Dean Bineerawile to come into his course shell at any time without first making arrangements. He provides the dean with a copy of his syllabus and asks her to "drop in" for an hour whenever she likes. The dean studies the syllabus, and she notes with satisfaction that it contains all of the required elements for college syllabi: faculty contact information, course objectives, textbooks, and a course calendar with due dates and assignments. The dean, with help from one of the computer-support techies, looks in on Monella's class on a Thursday afternoon. She sees Monella's home page, which contains a short video clip introducing himself to the class, and it appears professionally designed, with a maroon background that helps to tie the whole site together visually. Dean Bineerawile visits Monella's threaded discussion for Unit 3, where she discovers that Monella has answered every one of the students' questions; his name appears on almost every other line. Finally, the dean looks at Monella's "webliography," where she finds over 60 links to outside resources--plenty of help for students.

The dean contacts Butter to ask for a copy of his syllabus in anticipation of a visit to his online course. Butter provides not only the syllabus, but an "expectations sheet" for Unit 3 that lists the tasks students should do in the order in which they are expected to do them. Butter requests the dean to visit the course as if she were a student engaged in Unit 3's assignments. The dean notes that Butter's syllabus deviates from the typical model, omitting due dates for assignments and including sections on how to submit work online and "netiquette." When the dean visits Butter's course on the next Thursday afternoon, she goes first to the course home page (where she notes only text with a white background); then to the lecture notes (same format); then to the PowerPoint slides (mostly text with a few pictures); and finally to the class threaded discussions, where she notes that Butter seems to be somewhat AWOL. His postings appear only once in eight or ten postings. Dean Bineerawile notes that a student asked a question on Monday, and Butter has responded with his thoughts on Thursday. Granted, many other students have attempted to help in the meantime. Although Butter did not ask the dean to visit his "webliography," she finds there only 15 links, all posted by students and not by Butter.

Dean Bineerawile, using the traditional rubric for evaluating instructor performance, gave high marks to Sal Monella, and wondered whether perhaps Mel Ted Butter might need a little help in getting his classroom back under control.

This is admittedly an extreme example, but one which highlights the need for administrators either to be themselves online instructors or to have online-specific questions and rubrics for evaluating the performance of online instruction. Sal Monella, in his hypothetical food safety course, displays all of the outward signs of good classroom teaching: he has a syllabus that is tied to the academic calendar, he uses the "glitter factor" of multimedia to hold his students' interest, he is quick to respond to students questions, and he provides a wealth of resources to help students to achieve. Mel Ted Butter, on the other hand, seems not to evince these traits, going so far as to let students questions sit for days at a time. It appears as though the students in Butter's class are having to teach themselves.

Just to be sure she had a complete picture of how things were going, Bineerawile telephoned a few students in each class, and was surprised to find that the students in Monella's course complained that he did not give students enough time to get a discussion going online before he gave the "right" answer. They also noted that his syllabus did not contain the URL for his class or instructions about how to log in or what to say in the class discussion. Some of Monella's students felt bored because they were just going through exercises in order to complete them; few things in Monella's course felt like learning challenges.

Students in Butter's class, conversely, felt that his assignments asked them to construct their own ways of learning, and they appreciated his allowing them to talk with each other and him. His style made them feel as though their learning was valued

enough to become a part of the teaching materials for other students. When the dean asked them about the syllabus, many students said that having the initial "heads up" about how to "be" in an online class was helpful without being restrictive.

Dean Bineerawile had something a quandary on her hands. Her evaluative instrument told her that Monella was the better instructor, but the students seemed to favor Butter. What has Monella done that allowed his performance to rank so high on the evaluative instrument? It seemed that quantity was the driving factor. Monella

· had a lot of discussion,
· posted a lot of documents,
· used a lot of flashy multimedia, and
· generated a lot of web links to outside resources.

However, his students seemed to want not just the information, but wanted to know how to assess, use, and create more of it themselves-something that Butter seemed to able to provide. The dean makes a few assumptions about online learning that echo those warned against in Susan Colaric and David Jonassen's The Web in Higher Education, such as "when a teacher asks students to use the Web to find an answer, the teacher most likely (a) assumes that the student is using problem-solving skills to define the problem, and (b) expects that the student will extrapolate the information from the various sites that are found" (163). Likewise, Colaric and Jonassen relate that they "have witnessed numerous presentations of instructional Web sites that proudly point to a number of other informative Web sites. What is disturbing is that these [course] authors too often convey credibility in the links that they list without critically evaluating the information contained in those Web sites" (165).

This scenario mirrors the findings of Elaine Allen and Jeff Seaman, whose 2003 report for the Sloan Foundation finds that "overall, attitudes of faculty at all schools (as perceived by academic leaders at those institutions) remain more conservative with regard to the quality of online education and its ability to equal face-to-face learning" (23). Their report also indicates that administrators at all levels of higher education predict that, going forward, online learning will become an increasingly important part of the offerings of their institutions, and that they will be responsible for guaranteeing the quality of their online offerings to regional and national accreditation agencies (11).

Another possible negative aspect of Dean Bineerawile's assessment is that students in Butter's course can compare notes with those in Monella's course very easily, given the electronic means of creating and grading assignments. In reviewing the Open University's policies about online courses, James Cornford and Neil Pollock discover that without online-specific evaluative tools, academic freedom can be eroded:

The tutor's comments are simply encoded in electronic form rather than in ink. However, the effect of this re-coding, coupled with the availability of email to the students, is to make those comments far more mobile. . . . The effect on the university is to create a pressure to standardize not just the marking schema (which it has always done) but also the amount and format of the tutors' comments. (Cornford and Pollock 73)

Based on this outlook, it is imperative to create a list of principles to guide online-instructor evaluation, as well as a measurable rubric for online-instructor performance.

**Principles of Online Instruction and Instruments for Measuring Them**

Judith Eaton, in a 2002 report about the future of the accreditation of distance learning, established several principles which good DL programs share. Although these principles are aimed at entire programs, it is instructive to see how well many of them help to answer some of the questions with which we began:

· Learning is dynamic and interactive, regardless of the setting in which it occurs; . . .
· Institutions undertake the assessment and improvement of their quality, giving particular emphasis to student learning. (Eaton 26)

Charles Graham, Kursat Cagiltay, Byung-Ro Lim, Joni Craner, and Thomas M. Duffy published "Seven Principles of Effective Teaching: A Practical Lens for Evaluating Online Courses" in 2001 (this adaptation of the "Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education," originally published in the AAHE Bulletin in 1987, remains the best overview of the special instructional demands of online courses). The authors provide lessons for online teaching that can be demonstrated for an evaluation. Better still, the authors give concrete examples of each principle in practice, an especially helpful guide to administrators. Figure 1 outlines the recommendations of the authors.

**Figure 1. "Seven Principles of Effective Teaching: A Practical Lens for Evaluating Online Courses"**

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|---|
| *Principle 1: Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact* |
| Lesson for online instruction: Instructors should provide clear guidelines for interaction with students. |
| Establish policies describing the types of communication that should take place over different channels. Examples are: "Do not |

send technical support questions to the instructor; send them to techsupport@university.edu." Or: "The public discussion forum is to be used for all communications except grade-related questions." Set clear standards for instructors' timelines for responding to messages. Examples: "I will make every effort to respond to e-mail within two days of receiving it" or "I will respond to e-mails on Tuesdays and Fridays between three and five o'clock."

*Principle 2: Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students*

Lesson for online instruction: Well-designed discussion assignments facilitate meaningful cooperation among students.

In our research, we found that instructors often required only "participation" in the weekly class discussion forum. As a result, discussion often had no clear focus. We have developed guidelines for creating effective asynchronous discussions, based on substantial experience with faculty members teaching online. In the study, we applied these guidelines as recommendations to encourage meaningful participation in asynchronous online discussions:

- · Learners should be required to participate (and their grade should depend on participation).
- · Discussion groups should remain small.
- · Discussions should be focused on a task.
- · Tasks should always result in a product.
- · Learners should receive feedback on their discussions.
- · Evaluation should be based on the quality of postings (and not the length or number).
- · Instructors should post expectations for discussions.

*Principle 3: Good Practice Encourages Active Learning*

Lesson for online instruction: Students should present course projects.

Projects are often an important part of face-to-face courses. Students learn valuable skills from presenting their projects and are often motivated to perform at a higher level. Students also learn a great deal from seeing and discussing their peers' work. While formal synchronous presentations may not be practical online, instructors can still provide opportunities for projects to be shared and discussed asynchronously.

*Principle 4: Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback*

Lesson for online instruction: Instructors need to provide two types of feedback: information feedback and acknowledgment feedback.

We found during the evaluation that there were two kinds of feedback provided by online instructors: "information feedback" and "acknowledgement feedback." Information feedback provides information or evaluation, such as an answer to a question, or an assignment grade and comments. Acknowledgement feedback confirms that some event has occurred. For example, the instructor may send an e-mail acknowledging that he or she has received a question or assignment and will respond soon.

*Principle 5: Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task*

Lesson for online instruction: Online courses need deadlines.

One course we evaluated allowed students to work at their own pace throughout the semester, without intermediate deadlines. The rationale was that many students needed flexibility because of full-time jobs. However, regularly-distributed deadlines encourage students to spend time on tasks and help students with busy schedules avoid procrastination. They also provide a context for regular contact with the instructor and peers.

*Principle 6: Good Practice Communicates High Expectations*

Lesson for online instruction: Challenging tasks, sample cases, and praise for quality work communicate high expectations.

Communicating high expectations for student performance is essential. One way for instructors to do this is to give challenging assignments. Another way to communicate high expectations is to provide examples or models for students to follow, along with comments explaining why the examples are good. Finally, publicly praising exemplary work communicates high expectations. Instructors do this by calling attention to insightful or well-presented student postings.

*Principle 7: Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning*

Lesson for online instruction: Allowing students to choose project topics incorporates diverse views into online courses.

In several of the courses we evaluated, students shaped their own coursework by choosing project topics according to a set of guidelines. As instructors give students a voice in selecting their own topics for course projects, they encourage students to

express their own diverse points of view. Instructors can provide guidelines to help students select topics relevant to the course while still allowing students to share their unique perspectives.

Given these general principles and their usefulness to instructors in designing online learning activities, the administrator's question now become one of how to evaluate online instruction in a manner similar to that used to assess classroom instruction. In other words, what sorts of outcomes-driven rubrics are available for use and modification? Three examples may serve as best-practice models for determining the extent to which instructors fulfill the seven principles outlined by Graham, et al.

At California State University at Chico, Jon Knolle has created a self-assessment instrument for online instructors that shows promise. Knolle's instrument defines online instruction principles such as "emphasis on time-on-task" and "asks open-ended questions." For the time-on-task principle, Knolle inquires "How effectively were you able to use the technology available to emphasize time on task in your class?" (3) and then asks the instructor to identify the specific tools provided by the course management system (in this case, WebCT) the instructor used to put the principle in action. By listing the specific tools available to instructors, Knolle essentially asks them to provide a principles-based road map to their courses, one which administrators can then use to "observe" a class in action. Knolle provides a sample assessment already filled in with uses for specific WebCT tools:

· Goals: Post course goals and learning objectives, then ask students which two are meaningful to them and why.
· Calendar: Set time-achievement expectations that are laid out at the beginning of the course.
· Tracking: Monitor student activity on content pages and provide feedback to students based on their activities; permit students to track their own progress through the content.
· Discussions: Set limits for the number and type of postings by each student; limit the length of each message.
· E-mail: Keep messages succinct; be sure that the subject lines are specific and meaningful; avoid over-reliance on attachments; set guidelines for file format of e-mailed attachments, require virus-checking of all attached files; require progress reports from students periodically.
· Bookmarks: Maintain accurate and up-to-date links to external sites. (3)

Perhaps more useful for administrators is the "Checklist for Online Interactive Learning (COIL)," authored by Dennis W. Sunal, Cynthia S. Sunal, Michael R. Odell, and Cheryl A. Sundberg (Appendix A). The COIL is centered on measurable outcomes of online instruction, with focus on four major areas: student behavior, faculty-student interaction, technology support, and the completeness of the learning environment (40). The best feature of the COIL is its high degree of objectivity: most of the statements in the instrument are verifiable in terms of course output or content, and thus predict a high correlation with actual instructor quality.

The most important variable in any online instructor's methods is the level of interaction among the students, the instructor, and the outside world (either virtually or in "real time and space"). M. D. Roblyer and Leticia Ekhaml have compiled an excellent rubric for determining interactivity, one of the defining characteristics of online learning from the COIL checklist. Administrators should look for the following measurable attributes:

Few interactive qualities: the instructor does not encourage students to get to know one another on a personal basis. No activities require social interaction, or are limited to brief introductions at the beginning of the course. Instructional activities do not require two-way interaction between instructor and students; they call for one-way delivery of information (e. g., instructor lectures, text delivery). Fax, web, or other technology resource allows one-way (instructor to student) delivery of information (text and/or graphics). By the end of the course, all students in the class are interacting with instructor and other students only when required.

Minimum interactive qualities: in addition to brief introductions, the instructor provides for one other exchange of personal information among students, e.g., written bio of personal background and experiences. Instructional activities require students to communicate with the instructor on an individual basis only (e. g., asking/responding to instructor questions). E-mail, listserv, bulletin board or other technology resource allows two-way, asynchronous exchanges of information (text and/or graphics). By the end of the course, between 20-25% of students in the class are initiating interaction with the instructor and other students on a voluntary basis (i.e., other than when required).

Moderate interactive qualities: in addition to providing for exchanges of personal information among students, the instructor provides at least one other in-class activity designed to increase social rapport among students. In addition to the requiring students to communicate with the instructor, instructional activities require students to work with one another (e. g., in pairs or small groups) and share results within their pairs/groups. In addition to technologies used for two-way asynchronous exchanges of text information, chat room or other technology allows synchronous exchanges of written information. By the end of the course, between 25-50% of students in the class are initiating interaction with the instructor and other students on a voluntary basis (i.e., other than when required).

Above average interactive qualities: in addition to providing for exchanges of personal information among students, the instructor provides several other in-class activities designed to increase social rapport among students. In addition to the requiring students to communicate with the instructor, instructional activities require students to work with one another (e. g., in pairs or small groups) and share results with one another and the rest of the class. In addition to technologies used for two-way, asynchronous exchanges of text information, additional technologies (e. g., teleconferencing) allow one-way visual and two-way voice communications between instructor and students. By the end of the course, between 50-75% of students in the class are initiating interaction with the instructor and other students on a voluntary basis (i.e., other than when required).

High level of interactive qualities: in addition to providing for exchanges of personal information among students, the instructor provides a variety of in-class and outside-class activities designed to increase social rapport among students. In addition to the requiring students to communicate with the instructor, instructional activities require students to work with one another (e. g., in pairs or small groups) and outside experts and share results with one another and the rest of the class. In addition to technologies to allow two-way exchanges of text information, visual technologies such as two-way video or videoconferencing technologies allow synchronous voice & visual communications between instructor and students and among students. By the end of the course, over 75% of students in the class are initiating interaction with the instructor and other students on a voluntary basis (i.e., other than when required). (Roblyer and Ekhaml)

It is tempting to take the need for online-specific instructor-evaluation instruments to its extreme and call for an entirely separate means of assessing the performance of online instructors. The outcomes of any course, regardless of the medium in which it is delivered, should remain the same in every iteration. In fact, the means by which students evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction seems not to need changing between classroom-based and online courses. Indeed, when student-evaluation instruments were tested against delivery medium in early 2004, the results, published in the Journal of Interactive Online Learning, are helpful in defining the reasons for making medium-specific changes to the instruments used in any evaluation:

An overwhelming majority of students perceived the evaluation used for traditional courses to be appropriate for distance education courses (over 90%). Of those few students (less than 8%) who did not feel that the Web form was appropriate for distance education courses, none provided suggestions when given the opportunity. Using the online course evaluation, students gave both the courses and instructors very high ratings. Ratings from the first testing of the online version evaluation exceeded a rating of 9.0 on a 10-point scale. This is supportive of the belief that the evaluation form used for traditionally taught courses is appropriate for distance education courses, as judged by the students completing the form. The Web-based course evaluation form has now been accepted by the university as appropriate for distance education courses. (Holcomb, King, and Brown 10)

In terms of what to change and what to retain in administrative evaluation instruments, another resource is enlightening. The Innovations in Distance Education (IDE) "Emerging Set of Guiding Principles and Practices for the Design and Development of Distance Education" is an excellent primer for administrators unfamiliar with how online courses are designed, built, and taught, since it provides not only a good rubric for success, naming several principles that online courses should show, but it also gives examples of what good practices might be. It also notes that "'author' is not necessarily the same as 'instructor.' The author creates the course content; the instructor teaches the course or program. Someone can 'author' a course or a program but may not necessarily teach it-and by 'authoring' we include the preparation of electronic, as well as print-based media" (4). The role of an instructor in distance education is likely to be somewhat different than in resident instruction and requires some specialized skills and strategies: "distance education instructors must plan ahead, be highly organized, and communicate with learners in new ways. They need to be accessible to students, work in teams when appropriate, and play the role of facilitator or mentor in their interactions with learners. Finally, they may have to assume more administrative responsibilities than is true in a residential model" (4).

**Conclusion**

Alan Woodley and Adrian Kirkwood, writing on "Evaluation in Distance Learning," have created a system for measuring the effectiveness of online courses, one which takes into account the variables that often discourage administrators from undertaking such assessment. In brief, Woodley and Kirkwood suggest that administrators encourage the following general practices:

· Critical commenting: create narrative summaries of the strengths and weaknesses of the instructor from administrators and peers.
· Developmental testing: during the preparation of online materials, encourage "dry runs" to test the effectiveness of techniques.
· Revision of materials in light of formative evaluation: build in a feedback mechanism for faculty to make changes based on the sum of student, peer, and administrative evaluation.
· Feedback from students: require that student evaluation of instructor performance carry significant weight in the overall assessment.
· Definition of the extent of utilization: ask instructors to list the resources absolutely necessary for the completion of essential course tasks, and review their validity and currency on a regular basis. (291-98)

Each of these general recommendations summarized above seems to be a logical starting point for moving into the specific questions of the COIL checklist. Indeed, had our fictional Dean Bineerawile been forearmed with the COIL checklist, much of her confusion might have been avoided, and earlier rather than later.

In sum, it appears that the ever-changing technical qualifications for online instructors makes "the development of competencies for online teachers a continuous process and demands continuing professional preparation and training for online teachers" (Spector and de la Teja 4). However, the basic skills needed by every good asynchronous instructor can be mapped, measured, and ranked. The North Central Association Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NCACIHE)'s web site "Guidelines for Distance Education" includes an expectation that administrators will "assume responsibility for and exercise oversight over distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction." The rubrics and practices outlined in this report allow administrators to assume such responsibilities with the confidence that accompanies excellence in online education.

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**Appendix A: Checklist for Online Interactive Learning (COIL)**

**Category 1: Student Behaviors Meet Criterion**

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|---|---|
| 1. Demonstrate their prerequisite technology skills at beginning are adequate for hardware, software and web site use. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Seek opportunities to, and support for, interacting with instructor and other students. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Actively participate in all online activities. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Actively involved through writing and interaction in web-based courses (improves student writing performance). | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Use a variety of communication techniques to enhance online learning. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Personalize themselves by publishing online biographies and photographs to allow other members of the class to visualize them. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Seek assistance in understanding and mastering different learning strategies. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Demonstrate prerequisites and become more proficient in technology communication skills. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **Total Section Rating:** | _____ |

**Category 2: Faculty-Student Interactions**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9. Provide clear and adequate guidance. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Use action research regularly to evaluate the success/failure of the course and meet student concerns. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Personalize communications by/with student-student and student-teacher. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Use variety of communication techniques to provide for greater empathy and personal approach than e-mail and web site alone. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Plan for increased time for student interactions as compared to traditional courses. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. Clearly delineate institutional policy on cheating and plagiarism at start of course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. Maintain separate e- mail account for web courses. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. Forward responses to frequently asked questions to all students to avoid duplication. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. Give faculty reduced load and increased support to develop course materials. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 18. Provide students with continuous, frequent support, feedback. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 19. Scaffold virtual discourse construction. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 20. Emphasize importance of good study skills throughout course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 21. Closely monitor each student's progress. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 22. Create opportunities to coach and facilitate student construction of knowledge. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 23. Give negative comments to students privately, preferably by phone. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 24. Clearly delineate course requirements. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **Total Section Rating:** | _____ |

**Category 3: Technology Support**

| | |
|---|---|
| 25. Insure a low level of technological difficulties in accessing web site and communication. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26. Provide adequate, friendly, easy, continuous technical support. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **Total Section Rating:** | _____ |

**Category 4: Learning Environment**

| | |
|---|---|
| 27. Use structured activities to provide an effective framework for online learning. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 28. Mandate smaller class sizes for online courses to give faculty appropriate time to deliver quality instruction board. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 29. Use flexible deadlines to motivate students, maintain communication, and allow for technical problems. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 30. Create social interaction through group collaboration to facilitate high achievement. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 31. Use streaming audio for reading online. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 32. Present course content in a manner that hierarchically structures the sequence of information. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 33. Organize web site to enable student to interact with the content, other students, and instructor. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 34. Create welcoming, safe, nurturing online environment. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 35. Present problem-solving situations in a realistic context. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 36. Provide opportunities for students to question instructor to insure accuracy of understanding. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 37. Create opportunities for students to communicate with each other to share understanding of course content. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 38. Provide opportunities to collaboratively construct knowledge based on multiple perspectives, discussion and reflection. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 39. Provide opportunities for students to articulate and revise their thinking to insure accuracy of knowledge construction. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 40. Insure equitable environment exists for gender differences in learning styles, reduction of barriers to participation, and communication. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 41. Include cooperative and collaborative learning to distribute workload through group and support female students' preferred method of connected learning. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 42. Promote gender equality by encouraging females to post messages while asking males to subside if a patterns of male domination is noticed. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 43. Insure an equitable learning environment exists for all. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 44. Allow time for reflection at end of course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 45. Include "warm-up" period with light-hearted exercises aimed to help student get to know one another. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 46. Start online course with all students together at the same time. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 47. Provide equal access to the shared conversation in the course. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 48. Provide opportunities for students to control online learning and structure it for themselves. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 49. Provide discussion forums encouraging open and honest dialogue. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 50. Conduct a teleconference during and at the end of the course to discuss successes and problems. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 51. Use computer conferencing to develop overall critical thinking skills. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **Total Section Rating:** | _____ |
| **Total Score:** | _____ |

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