

Online Course Readiness Checklist

Course Name/Number _____

Instructor/Designer _____

Category I- Learner Support and Resources

A. Information about Being an Online Learner

- Tips for being a successful online student
- Link to Student Resources — <http://www.sou.edu/distancededucation/students/index.html>
- Link to Hannon Library — <http://hanlib.sou.edu/>
- Link to SOU Academic Support Services — <http://www.sou.edu/access/>
- Link to Disability Resources — <https://www.sou.edu/dr/index.html>
- Link to Enrollment Services Center — <http://www.sou.edu/enrollment/>
- Link to Student Code of Conduct — <http://www.sou.edu/ssi/index.html>
- Contact information for Student Help Desk — helpdesk@sou.edu or call 541-552-6900

B. Course-Specific Resources

- Instructor contact information (phone, email, office hours, preferred communication method, expected response time)
- Academic Department contact information
- Course title, course description, and prerequisites
- Textbooks and other instructional materials
- Link to SOU Bookstore — <http://bookstore.sou.edu/home.aspx>

C. Resources Supporting Course Content

- Links to web sites with information related to course content
- Links to professional organizations or associations related to course content

Category II - Online Organization and Design

A. Course Navigation and Organization

- Syllabus can be easily located
- Links to external sites are active
- Course materials are organized in a clear, logical manner
- Course materials are easily located (within three clicks)
- Course content is labeled appropriately and consistently
- Delivery of course materials is consistent and evenly paced

B. Course Syllabus

- Follows SOU syllabus template
- Includes expectations of instructor availability and response times
- Delineates instructor's expectations of students
- Outlines entire course schedule
- Includes policies on cheating and plagiarism

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C. Site Aesthetics

- Font style is consistent and easy to read
- Images support course content
- Pages are not text-heavy and feature adequate white space
- Uses contrasting text and background colors

D. Design Consistency

- Course layout is consistent
- Navigation is clear
- Spelling and grammar are consistent and correct
- All written materials are concise
- Written communication is friendly and supportive
- Clear instructions are provided for each module and related tasks

E. Accessibility

- Images are optimized for quick downloading
- Images include text descriptions
- Materials are available in alternative formats
- Transcripts of audio and video files are available
- Links to files and web pages are self-describing
- Color is not used as the sole way to identify or categorize information

Category III- Instructional Design and Delivery

A. Promoting interaction and communication

- Conducts an online “icebreaker”
- Students and instructor introduce themselves and respond to one another in first week
- Student input is not evaluated as “right” or “wrong”
- Student participation in discussions is tracked and comprises a percentage of final grade
- Students are engaged in course site consistently throughout the course

B. Clarifying Goals and Aligning with Learning Objectives

- Goals are clearly defined
- Course goals are aligned with learning objectives
- Expectations for communication and participation are clearly identified
- Course content and related activities and assessments are presented in small modules/units

C. Aligning Objectives with Activities

- Learning objectives describe measurable outcomes
- Steps for achieving learning objectives are clearly stated
- Assignments are aligned with learning objectives
- Course materials are reviewed repeatedly for reinforcement

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D. Engaging Students with Content

- Addresses multiple learning styles through the use of varied activities, such as:
 - Audio or Video
 - Expert Interviews
 - Matching Exercises
 - Webquests
 - Student Self-Check Tests
 - Crosswords or Word Searches
 - Animations
 - Student-Created Media

E. Activities for Developing Higher-Order Thinking

- Includes a variety of activities that appeal to various learning styles, such as:
 - Asynchronous Discussion
 - Online Debates
 - Collaborative Projects
 - Journaling/Blogging
 - Compare/Contrast
 - Peer Review
 - ePortfolios
 - Problem-Solving

Category IV- Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning

A. Assessing Student Readiness for Learning

- Course pre-requisites are clearly stated and enforced
- Course includes early assessments to determine student readiness for the online environment as well as the course content
- Methods for completing and submitting assessments are clearly defined
- Consequence for cheating or plagiarism are clearly stated

B. Aligning Assessments with Learning Objectives

- Learning objectives are aligned with instructional activities
- Learning objectives are aligned with assessment activities
- Quantity and scope of assessments are appropriate
- Assessments are authentic

C. Assessment Strategies

- When appropriate, students have opportunities to select from various types of assessments
- Assessments are sequenced and varied
- Students are not assessed solely on tests and quizzes
- Due dates are posted for all assessment activities

D. Feedback

- Opportunities for immediate feedback provided through self-grading assignments
- Frequent and substantial feedback offered from instructor
- Samples of assignments and instructor's commentary on their quality are posted

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E. Self-Assessments and Peer Feedback

- Rubric is provided for evaluating online discussion
- Rubrics are provided for each assessment activity
- Opportunities for immediate feedback provided through self-grading assignments
- Students are encouraged to pose questions to one another
- Students have opportunities to provide peer feedback (with guidelines)
- Students conduct periodic self-evaluations (with guidelines)

Category V- Innovative Teaching with Technology

A. Facilitating Communication and Learning

- Communication tools support learning objectives and course content
 - Discussion Board
 - Email
 - Web-Conferencing
 - Synchronous Chat Room/Office Hours
 - Announcements
 - Tele-Conferencing
- Instructions for using communication tools and media are provided

B. Appropriateness of Teaching Methods

- Teaching methods enhance student learning
- Teaching methods interactively engage students with instructor, classmates, and content

C. Selection of Appropriate Tools and Media

- Media selection supports learning objectives and course content
 - Animation
 - Podcasts
 - Graphics/Photos
 - CD or DVD Supplement
 - Screen Captures
 - Video
 - PowerPoint Presentations
 - Web Sites
- Instructions for using tools and media are provided (as necessary)

D. Varying Internet Use and Engagement Practices

- Students with slow internet connections have alternatives to downloading media
- Internet is used not only as a resource, but also to engage students with content and with one another

Category VI - Faculty Use of Student Feedback

A. Course Content

- Provision made to conduct end-of-course evaluation
- Students have opportunity to provide feedback at intervals
- Students are encouraged to share resources related to course content; resources can be incorporated into future offerings of the course
- Instructor solicits open-ended feedback from students

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B. Online Technology

- Instructor invites students to point out unclear instructions or glitches in technology
- Instructor demonstrates willingness to promptly resolve content or technology problems within the course
- Instructor solicits feedback on how to use technology to improve student learning

C. Instruction and Assessment

- Instructor is willing to modify elements of the course during delivery
- Instructor demonstrates willingness to modify aspects of the course based on student feedback

Adapted from:

Sederberg, L.J. (2003). *Rubric for Online Instruction*. Chico, CA: California State University, Chico. Retrieved September 22, 2008 from <http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/resources/rubric/rubric.pdf>.

Van Duzer, J. (n.d.). *Instruction Design Tips for Online Learning*. Retrieved October 2, 2008, from <http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/resources/rubric/instructionalDesignTips.pdf>.