



COURSE DESIGN REVIEW

INTRODUCING THE AUSOM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW TOOL

This course review tool is modeled after national standards in online teaching and learning and has been adapted to fit online, blended, and web-enhanced classes at Anderson University. There are 24 quality indicators, and each can be marked as Sufficiently Present or Needs Revision.

If you successfully complete the tasks in the AUSOM Design and Development training, you should meet these standards. When your course is built, your instructional designer will confirm that quality indicators are met through a review of the course using this instrument. You will need to make revisions if there are aspects that do not meet one or more of the quality indicators below. As part of the review, an action plan will be developed for each aspect that needs revision.

AUSOM COURSE REVIEW ANNOTATIONS AND RESOURCES

Standards and Annotations	Resources and Ideas
1. Course Overview and Information	
<p>1.1 Course includes Welcome and Getting Started content</p> <p><i>By welcoming learners to the course and providing context for what they will be learning, the instructor sets a tone for success from the start of the course.</i></p>	<p>Learners benefit from an overview of the course, with general information about the nature and purpose of the course, the course activities, grading structure, and where to find the specific information on each. Course introduction can be done via text or an instructor introductory video with accompanying script for ADA compliance. Give a general course overview introducing the learners to the course topic and sequence.</p> <p>Other important elements of the course welcome content:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make clear how students are to get started and what they should do first.• Consider creating a FAQ (or a self-test/quiz) addressing important elements in the course.• Create avenues and set expectations from the beginning of the course to demonstrate active teaching, learning, and support.
<p>1.2. An orientation or overview is provided for the course overall, as well as in each module. Students know how to navigate and what tasks are due.</p> <p><i>Learners benefit from knowing what they are about to learn, as well as the scope of work and time commitment expected from them. For many distance learners, such "advanced organizers" help them plan around conflicting priorities and manage their time.</i></p>	<p>For a course overview, it is helpful to include a description of the types of learning activities learners will engage in. A general expectation of time commitment (e.g. "Please expect nine hours per week...") is appropriate.</p> <p>For module overviews, a more detailed, shorter term description of upcoming activities are helpful. Due dates for assignments, even if stated elsewhere, keep some learners on track.</p>
<p>1.3. Course provides access to AU technical and academic resources (technical help, tutoring, etc.).</p> <p><i>Having easy access to support prepares learners for success in the online environment and reduces frustration.</i></p>	<p>Technical and academic support for online students includes access to library resources, tutoring, the writing center, or online/blended student support materials (e.g., at AUCIDL.com under Student Resources).</p> <p>Learners should have access to academic support services and resources from within the course or the learning management system.</p>



1.4. Course information states whether the course is fully online, blended, or web-enhanced.

Make clear what the course format is- completely online, blended or web enhanced. This information should be included in the syllabus or course information area. For blended courses, learners will need a clear understanding of the ratio between synchronous and asynchronous requirements.

Fully online: All interaction, communication, assignments, assessments, and course related information is shared through the online course shell. Learners have the expectation of interacting only through the online course.

Blended (or Hybrid): Interactivity between the instructor and learners occurs in both the synchronous (face-to-face) and asynchronous (online course shell) environments. "Seat time" is usually required at a specific threshold (50%), depending on the requirements of the campus.

Web Enhanced: Instructor/Learner interaction occurs in the synchronous environment mainly, with resources accessible in an accompanying online course shell, used at the discretion of the instructor. No "seat time" is expected to be replaced by online activity, unless clearly expressed by the instructor.

1.5. Appropriate methods and devices for accessing and participating in the course are communicated (mobile, publisher websites, secure content, pop-ups, browser issue, microphone, webcam).

Include any known information or help documents on accessing the course on different devices or operating systems, and include clear requirements and help links for any other hardware or software used in the course.

If learners use 3rd party software, documentation and resources might include:

- Required technology for this course;
- Purchase your subscription for...;
- Support site for...;
- How you will use ... in this course;
- Troubleshooting discussion thread.



<p>1.6. Course provides contact information for instructor, department, and program.</p> <p><i>Provide opportunities for private communication with the instructor. Include department and program information.</i></p>	<p>This helps learners, especially those who are completely online, get a sense of orientation and inclusion with the instructor and the overall program.</p> <p>Email address, office phone number, office hours, etc. should be prominently displayed in course and/or syllabus.</p>
<p>1.7. Course goals and student learning outcomes are clearly defined, measurable, and written from the student perspective.</p> <p><i>Learners need to know how what they are learning and what they are required to demonstrate. Goals and student learning outcomes should be from the learners' perspective and appropriate to the level of rigor for the particular program of study.</i></p>	<p>Avoid "busy work" or assignments not clearly aligned with stated outcomes.</p> <p>Use verbs that are measurable in describing outcomes. "Learners will understand" is not measurable. How will learners demonstrate "understanding"?</p> <p>Note the perspective used communicating the outcomes. An outcome such as "Students will be introduced to..." states what the instructor will be doing and not the student. State clearly and measurably what the student will be able to do.</p> <p>Poorly Written: Students will appreciate the awesome power of nature.</p> <p>Accurately Written: Students will be able to analyze historical and geologic records to predict natural disaster events.</p>



1.8. Student learning outcomes are aligned to course goals.

Course goals and student learning outcomes should all be aligned to one another. The student learning outcomes should be more specific than course goals.

The student learning outcomes should use specific, observable terms in smaller, discrete pieces that are consistent with the course goals.

Example

Course Goal: Students will apply principles of financial accounting.

Aligned Student Learning Outcome: Students will identify credit and debit errors in an accounting spreadsheet.

2. Course Layout and Technology

2.1. Technical skills required for participation in course learning activities scaffold in a timely manner (orientation, practice, and application - where appropriate).

Learners should be provided ample time to set up, practice, and troubleshoot 3rd party tools.

For third party content (publisher websites, subscriptions), learners should be provided links to the relevant resources provided by those companies. If learners are required to use technology (microphone, webcam, etc.), the requirements for usage should be in the course information documents (e.g., syllabus) at the beginning of the course.

If your course uses a remote proctoring solution, for example, you should make sure students have a chance to use the practice quiz before using the software for a graded assessment.

2.2. Frequently used technology tools are easily accessed. Any tools not being utilized are removed from the course menu.

Not removing links in the Canvas sidebar can confuse students and make it harder to find or access the most frequently used tools.

In Canvas, you can control which links appear in Course Navigation in the course settings. By default, all links are enabled for all courses. Please note that links cannot be renamed.



2.3. Any course media meets accessibility standards.

All media in the course should be accessible by learners who are visually or aurally impaired. For images, tags for alternative text should be activated so that the visually impaired learner will be able to identify the object as an image by using a screen reader. For media that produces sound, captioning (adding subtitles, scripts) will ensure accessibility for hearing impaired learners.

There are several online resources available for help with making content accessible to all learners. A good starting point is this EDUCAUSE page: <http://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/1/ada-compliance-for-online-course-design>.

As well, in considering accessibility concerns, think broadly of ways to ensure equal opportunities for all students using a framework like [Universal Design for Learning](#).

2.4. A logical, consistent, and uncluttered layout is established. The course is easy to navigate (consistent color scheme and icon layout, related content organized together, self-evident titles).

Create a cohesive course structure that is logically sequenced and paced. This includes consistency in the design of learning modules, assignments, and rubrics.

Sequence course content and learning activities/tasks, interactions, collaborations into logical Learning Modules. These should take into account the learning goals/ outcomes, higher-order knowledge acquisition and application, and the options and limitations of the online teaching and learning environment.

Redundancy (the same documents appearing in several locations) is favored, as such repetition helps learners navigate easily to relevant information without searching extensively.



3. Content and Activities	
<p>3.1. All content and learning resources (readings, viewings, web sites, third party/publisher tools, etc.) are all connected clearly to learning the course goals and student learning outcomes.</p> <p><i>Connecting goals and student learning outcomes to activities provides context and relevance. Learners engage in these activities more readily when relevance to the course content is clear to them.</i></p>	<p>Student learning outcomes and resources all align in a clear manner. The resources and course material provide students the means to meet the course learning goals and/or student learning outcomes.</p> <p><i>Example</i></p> <p>Student Learning Outcome: Students will identify credit and debit errors in an accounting spreadsheet.</p> <p>Aligned Learning Resource: Interactive online exercise that models how to find common errors of credit and debit in a spreadsheet</p> <p>Misaligned Learning Resource: Article on the history of accounting firms</p>
<p>3.2. Course provides content or activities that emulate real world applications of the discipline, such as experiential learning, case studies, and problem-based activities.</p> <p><i>Relevance is central to learning. When the learner can apply a learning activity to practical value beyond the duration of the course, relevance is established between the stated learning outcome, the learning activity, and the assessment of that activity.</i></p>	<p>Experiential learning - Many online instructors assign "offline" activities to learners, and have the learners "debrief" in the online environment. Many online Nursing courses have "clinical study" requirements that require learners to document their experiences in the online environment. Foreign language learners could be required to have interactions with native speakers (online) and summarize their experiences. Case studies - These are often leveraged best as small group activities or discussion forum artifacts.</p> <p>Problem-Based Learning is an instructional strategy in which students learn the subject matter of a course and the related skills by solving real-world problems and reflecting on their experiences of solving the problem/s.</p>



3.3. Course provides activities for students to develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, such as critical reflection and analysis.

Allow learners to the chance to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and practice. Where the learner thinks critically, he or she goes through the process of constructing knowledge, inquiring, exploring, and thinking.

Create activities that allow learners to reflect individually and as a group about what they are learning, how they know they are learning, and what is helping and hindering their learning.

Create activities that provide opportunities for learners to be puzzled (the notion of adequate challenge and perplexity), giving them the opportunity to recognize problems and construct knowledge through collaboration and interaction (collaborative inquiry).

Repurposing an exercise like the six-word memoir format as an academic exercise has unlimited possibilities using mobile devices and the affordance of texting and social media. In online/blended courses, the six-word memoir may be implemented using a variety of repositories such as an LMS, a blog, social media space, etc.

4. Interaction

4.1. Expectations for timely and regular feedback from the instructor are clearly stated (questions, email, assignments).

By setting learner expectations upfront, instructors avoid having a lot of questions asked via the Ask a Question discussion area or by email, thus reducing time on extra tasks. Learners will experience less frustration if they know what to expect.

Information clearly indicates instructor response time for interactions, including e-mail turnaround time, time expected for grade postings, etc. This also includes instructor availability, including virtual office hours / when email will be read and availability via other media (phone, in-person) if applicable.



4.2. Expectations for student interaction are clearly stated (netiquette, grade weighting, models/examples, and timing and frequency of contributions).

Expectations for assignments, class participation, proctoring, due dates, and attendance requirements should all be clear to the learner. A clear statement of requirements should indicate the criteria for interaction that includes frequency, length, timeliness, etc.

Learners expect and benefit from understanding the parameters and rationale of the learning activities in a course up front. Outlining clear expectations for timing and frequency of contributions, as well as what type of standards should be upheld when working on particular activities helps learners to be successful and reduces frustration caused by ambiguity. For blended courses, provide clear guidelines for synchronous (in-class) and asynchronous (online) participation.

Suggestions:

- Reference netiquette info throughout the course in appropriate places.
- Clearly outline the expectations for discussion participation, for example, the timing and number of contributions.
- Indicate how learner participation will be graded at various levels of performance.

4.3. Course contains resources or activities intended to build a sense of class community, support open communication, and establish trust (at least one of the following: Café/Water Cooler, Bulletin Board, Meet Your Classmates, Ask a Question discussion forums).

Design opportunities to build and encourage rapport with and between online learners and the instructor via the communication tools available in the LMS.

Building a sense of community mitigates the solitude of the online learner. Courses that promote class community help learning occur in a social context and mitigate the perception of a correspondence course.

Create opportunities for social, non-course related discussion. Design a way for learners to introduce themselves personally (requesting a profile/contact image/avatar, likes/dislikes, hobbies, interests, etc.).



4.4. Course offers opportunities for student to student interaction and constructive collaboration.

By requiring learners to engage with each other, the design of such activities requires them to assume more responsibility for their own learning.

Encouraging such interaction and collaboration often leads to a deeper level of engagement. The instructor's role changes more to facilitator, moderating and evaluating the quality and quantity of interaction between learners.

- LMS features: discussion forums, peer reviewed assignments
- Third party tools: Google Drive, Zoom
- Learning activities: discussions (with rubrics), debates, collaborative writing assignments, learner-led discussions (requiring learners to form their own prompts)

5. Assessment and Feedback

5.1. Assessments are aligned with course goals and student learning outcomes.

The assessments, as ways of confirming mastery, align with the course goals and student learning outcomes. It is clear that if the students can successfully complete the assessments, they will have met the goals and outcomes.

Assessments and student learning outcomes align in a clear and direct way between course goals and student learning outcomes. The assessment formats provide a reasonable way to measure the stated learning outcomes.

Example

Student Learning Outcome: Students will identify credit and debit errors in an accounting spreadsheet.

Aligned Assessment: Submission of a corrected spreadsheet.

Misaligned Assessment: Multiple choice quiz on the history of accounting.



<p>5.2 Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course information area or syllabus.</p> <p><i>Learners need to know how their work will be assessed in a clear and transparent manner.</i></p>	<p>Make grading policies explicit and easy to find in the course documents, such as the syllabus.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of rubrics with noted point values• List of criteria with noted point values <p>Expectations on participation in discussions needs to be included. These criteria should include required number of posts, quality of posts, responses or replies expected, format (e.g., MLA or APA)</p>
<p>5.3. Course includes frequent and varied methods to assess students' mastery of content.</p> <p><i>Consistent and regular assessments help learners demonstrate their progress and deficiencies. Multiple strategies are used to allow a variety of ways to demonstrate mastery and accommodate diverse learners.</i></p>	<p>Varied assessment tools in both online and face-to-face classes are used to determine if students are learning. The assessments provide multiple avenues for students to demonstrate their learning.</p> <p><i>Examples</i></p> <p>Does Not Meet: Only one form of assessment is provided such as only multiple-choice tests.</p> <p>Meets: A multiple-choice quiz, discussion, and project assess mastery.</p>
<p>5.4. Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, exemplary work).</p> <p><i>Establish and communicate clear grading schema.</i></p>	<p>Create rubrics and rubric-related instructions, guidelines, and documentation available in the Course Information area so that learners can access it prior to the activity. Provide examples of how the rubric is applied in model student works; create links to them in appropriate/relevant locations in the course.</p>



5.5. Students have opportunities to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (pre-tests, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.).

Self-assessment has been shown to play a role in self-efficacy as it fosters learners' abilities to construct meaning and promotes metacognition.

Learning takes place when opportunity to interact with the content presented takes place. Students need feedback on their learning to help them assure they are on the right track and learning what needs to be learned.

Examples:

- Self-Checks
- Interactives
- Multiple attempts on assessments
- Models or samples of expected work