

SIUE New REALITY eLearning Work Team Reporting
Template

Final Reports are due by December 23,
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Work Team.: eLearning – Assessment and Evaluation Sub-Committee

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Summarize what SIUE has been doing in the area under consideration by your work team. Please investigate the scope and success of SIUE's prior efforts. (Bullet points are fine.)

We considered practices regarding three distinct but complementary areas: assessment and evaluation of course design; the instructor; and learning outcomes.

- Faculty members designing a proposed course for online delivery receive feedback and guidance from the instructional design team in ITS. If, however, the course has been previously approved a faculty member could offer the course without formal consultation from ITS in online course design or delivery.
- ITS's Summer Institute is a successful and valued feature of SIUE's support for faculty development regarding online teaching and learning.
- End-of-semester evaluations of courses for online courses are determined by the departments' or Schools' policies. The current common core student evaluation of teaching is not required in online courses. Though some validation work has been done with the 11-item core in online courses, additional work is needed. A review committee will move forward with this effort in Spring 2014.
- Learning outcomes for online courses are treated as any course in a major program would be. Currently, there is no systematic effort to collect learning outcomes data to compare outcomes in online versus face-to-face sections.

Describe promising models from other universities that could be modified, adapted or enhanced for our campus.

We have reviewed the approach to and the support of online teaching/learning at other universities and find that the following general principles are common across institutions:¹

1. A well-designed and organized interface

- Course site is user-friendly and well-organized.
- Interface uses reliable media.
 - University supported media: Blackboard, student response clickers, streaming media server, LIS Databases, etc.
 - Third Party Products: YouTube, Google Drive, Textbook publishers content (including e-Textbooks), outside databases, etc. (Use with the understanding of FERPA laws and that the university cannot offer tech support for outside products).

2. Technical support and resources for students (includes, but not limited to)

- Students understand the hardware/software requirements.
- Links to technical help and tutorials are available on the course site.
- Whenever necessary, students are made aware of the expectations for the online course and given an online readiness quiz.

3. Student-centered design that encourages interaction and active learning (includes, but not limited to)

- The course promotes some combination of the student-student, student-instructor, or student-material interactions.
- The course values collaborative problem solving.
- The course focuses on active learning.

Regarding end-of-semester student evaluations of teaching, there are few validated instruments for online courses specifically.

Although there are thousands of studies that compare learning outcomes in online versus face to face settings, we were unable to identify universities that routinely and systematically make these comparisons (or that share them publicly).

Using what you have learned, please outline innovative ideas of your own. Again, please list these as bullet points.

The sub-committee would encourage that we monitor NSSE data that might relate to students' perceptions of faculty engagement as more courses and programs are offered online or in hybrid formats. Maintaining and improving faculty engagement and the use of active learning strategies are critical to student success.

¹ APPENDIX A provides a selected list of approaches to online teaching/learning at various universities.

Expansion of the Peer Consultants program to offer services specifically to professors teaching online would be beneficial, if supported appropriately.

The sub-committee would encourage ITS and the Office of Academic Innovation and Effectiveness to develop online modules related to course design.

Please describe two short-term initiatives that your team views as priorities for SIUE. You should include a rationale and description of resources needed.

We include three short-term initiatives since our charge has three distinct objectives.

Review and evaluate the extent to which an adaptation of the common core should be tested and proposed for online courses. Work with the SET Continuous Review committee to test proposed changes and recruit participants for a validation study in Spring 2014. See Appendix B.

We propose a task-force to conduct a study of learning outcomes in online courses at SIUE and to compare those outcomes with appropriate controls and limitations to face-to-face sections of the same course. The results of this study will be shared with the Office of Academic Innovation and Effectiveness, the Faculty Senate, and in other venues.

The University Quality Council or appropriate groups should review current NSSE items that could be monitored over time and set targets for improvement.

Please describe other short-term initiatives that your team would like to recommend.

It may be useful to establish a committee to develop rubrics to assess effective course design elements. We imagine that these could inform the design of online courses and more traditional courses, with some exceptions. (We recognize that there are a variety of rubrics in existence. Nevertheless, having a conversation among faculty on this campus to discuss collective beliefs about effective course design could be beneficial and important.) For example, we should consider emphasizing the Chickering and Gamson principles or others on our campus and encourage faculty members to employ these strategies and design elements in face-to-face, online, and hybrid/blended courses. Furthermore, we could develop a website shows actual instruction or case studies from our faculty members in all settings that demonstrate these elements.

We would like to create a symposium to showcase effective course design and online course instruction/facilitation. The Symposium would focus on active learning techniques, regardless of format or modality.

We would like to create opportunities for more informal discussions regarding online teaching and learning. Perhaps, a learning community for faculty interested in these issues could be supported by the Office of the Provost or other group.

Please list and describe three long-term initiatives that SIUE should consider to improve in the area under consideration by this work team.

We strongly encourage all Schools/College to address the role of online course development and delivery in the review process. They should consider how these activities are rewarded in the annual merit and promotion and tenure review processes. Minimally, we would encourage each School/College to initiate discussions of how these issues are currently built into the promotion and tenure process and consider how to move forward. Perhaps, these discussions could be systematically documented by the respective Deans and shared with the Provost.

We should encourage establishing an institute or center to support teaching and learning. Though there are a variety of faculty development opportunities, this sub-committee would encourage further centralization and greater support for pedagogical innovation and support for scholarship of teaching and learning.

Develop a website to share the common elements of strong course design and develop a check-list that can be submitted with Form 94s for online course proposals. Though these elements would not be required, having the check-list would allow the faculty member to reflect on whether these critical design elements have been addressed.

There should be a website for students and faculty to help persons in each group determine their readiness for taking or teaching an online course.

APPENDIX A: Detailed example guidelines and checklists for best practices in online teaching/learning at selected universities

- **Best Practices for Administrative Evaluation of Online Faculty** (by Thomas J. Tobin):
<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/summer72/tobin72.html>
- **Central Michigan University Quality Assurance Checklist:**
<http://www.cel.cmich.edu/cid/quality-checklist.html>
- **Grant MacEwan College's Criteria for Evaluating the Quality of Online Courses:**
<http://elearning.typepad.com/thelearnedman/ID/evaluatingcourses.pdf>
- **Illinois Online Network for Quality Online Course Initiative Rubric and Checklist:**
<http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/initiatives/qoci/rubric.asp>
- **Michigan Community College Association's Online Course Development Guidelines and Rubric:** <http://www.mccvlc.org/~staff/content.cfm?ID=108>
- **Monterey Institute for Technology and Education's Online Course Evaluation Project (OCEP):** <http://www.montereyinstitute.org/pdf/OCEP%20Evaluation%20Categories.pdf>
- **University of Southern Mississippi's Online Course Development Guide and Rubric** (http://ablendedmaricopa.pbworks.com/f/LEC_Online_course+rubric.pdf)
- **Online Course Assessment Tool (OCAT) and Peer Assessment Process** (Western Carolina University).
http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/facultycenter_OCAT_v2.0_25apr07.pdf
- **Quality Matters Rubric:**
http://www.moodlerooms.com/sites/default/files/slideshow/slides/kari_walters_qm_rubric.pdf

Appendix B:

CURRENT SET QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDED CHANGES:

The course requirements were clearly communicated in the syllabus

The instructor was available to help students ~~outside of class~~

The instructor provided timely feedback on student work

The instructor provided useful feedback on student work

The ~~class-course~~ was well organized

~~The instructor was prepared for class~~ Technical information, assignments and resources were available when I needed them.

The instructor was responsive to student questions

The instructor explained difficult material clearly

The instructor used teaching strategies that enhanced my understanding of course content

The activities/assignments were useful in helping me learn

Overall the instruction in this course enhanced my learning of the course content

