

MCC Course Design Guidelines

The following guidelines help to provide a roadmap for instructors during the course design process or as a "self-evaluation" tool to assist with the revision of an existing online course. This research-informed list is based on the [Quality Matters](#) rubric and the [Universal Design for Learning Principles](#). It highlights key components essential to a high quality learning experience for students

1. Course Learning Objectives

Learning objectives for the course are measurable and clearly stated.

The course employs chapter/unit/module-level learning objectives which are consistent with the course learning objectives and describe measurable outcomes.

Assignments and assessments are based on the stated course learning objectives.

2. Orientation and Syllabus

The course includes a welcome announcement which describes next steps.

The course includes orientation material which guides the student through all necessary steps to be successful in the course.

The course includes a syllabus based on the MCC Instructor Plan template. You can find a copy of the template on SharePoint. An [outline](#) of what should be included in the instructor plan can be found on the MCC website.

3. Instructional Content and Navigation

Course content is aligned with the stated course (and unit) learning objectives.

The content is "chunked" in manageable, well organized segments, and clearly labeled. Navigation throughout the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.

The purpose of instructional content and how it is to be used is clearly explained.

Instructional content presents a variety of perspectives.

Instructional content is appropriately cited and complies with MCC Copyright Policy.

The content is represented in multiple formats, providing students with options for engagement and comprehension. See [UDL Principle of Multiple Means of Representation](#).

Course tools and media foster student engagement with content through active learning.

4. Social Presence and Interaction

Instructor establishes a social presence at the beginning of the course; via an introduction on the discussion board, an introduction email message, or a welcome video announcement.

Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.

The instructor clearly states the plan for instructor response time and feedback on assignments.

The requirements for student interaction are clearly articulated.

The instructor creates a tangible presence throughout the course.

5. Universal Design for Learning and Accessibility

The course content and assignments are designed to be flexible so as to meet the varied needs of diverse learners.

The course contains equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content; via transcripts, subtitles or closed captioning.

The course design facilitates readability and minimizes distractions.

The course complies with the MCC ADA policy for accessibility.

6. Assessment of Learning

Assessments measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.

Assessments are designed to provide students a variety of options for expressing knowledge and skills. See [UDL Principle Multiple Means of Expression and Engagement](#).

Assignment expectations and instructions are thorough and clear.

Students are provided clear directions on where, how (both academically and technically), and when (including date and time) to submit assignments and assessments.

Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for both the evaluation of students' work and participation, and are aligned with the grading policy.

Formative assessment techniques are used, providing students with frequent feedback on their learning.

Based with permission on the Online Course Design Guidelines from the University of Toronto and the Online Course Guidelines from the University of Vermont.