

## Checklist for Basic Course Review

The following checklist includes statements that describe some of the characteristics or components that the eCollege Instructional Design Staff consider to be essential to “good” online course construction and teaching. We find these items useful to consider when we develop courses, and we trust that you will find them worthy of your consideration. It is important to note that we are not suggesting that one has to use all the features listed to be successful. Some of these may not be appropriate for your course, your teaching style, your content, or your objectives. Again, please note that the absence of any particular item should not necessarily be construed as a shortcoming.

### **Course Home**

- Includes a welcome statement on the Course Home Page
- Provides brief text Course Overview/Introducing statement about the course
- Provides supplementary link to audio or video introduction/welcome/course overview
- Uses Announcements to welcome, alert or update students about important information
- Provides clear steps for “getting started” with the course
- Reminds students to take the Orientation Course before proceeding in the course (Note that students in eCollege sites get an Orientation Course to prepare for participating.)\*
- Prompts students to carefully read and printout syllabus information\*
- Prompts early interaction amongst participants by having them introduce themselves in a “Class Lounge”/ Threaded Discussion
- Provides an image(s) that creates a visually inviting Homepage environment
- Requires students to demonstrate basic communication and technical competencies during first week of class (e.g. by emailing all class members and sending an attachment)

(\*These items might apply to Course Home or Syllabus.)

### **Syllabus**

- Provides instructor bio
- Provides a detailed course description
- Provides detailed course objectives/and or outcomes in the Syllabus
- Provides a clear, detailed grading policy

- Provides attendance guidelines
- Provides clear instructions on how student work should be submitted
- Clearly states when instructor will monitor and respond to emails (or other communication tools)
- Provides additional policies and procedures relevant to the course and/or educational institution (e.g. plagiarism, academic honesty, disabilities accommodation, etc)
- Provides clear directions to students with regard to navigating the course
- Makes students aware that the Helpdesk is available 24x7 and can be contacted for any technical problems

## **Units**

### ***Unit Pages***

- Provides an introduction, unit overview and/or unit objectives on the unit page
- Provides transition statement that bridges past activities and current ones
- Gives clear instructions for navigating through and participating in units
- Provides relevant and interesting unit titles

### ***Content Presentation and Assignments***

- Includes presentation and lecture material (text, slides) that concisely convey key points in course
- Additional Resources: Employs hypertext links to WWW to amplify main points or to provide related supplementary, optional material
- Text presentation is broken into short paragraphs for easier onscreen reading
- Employs case studies or other problems solving activities
- Includes interactive content or interactive exercises that accompany presentations
- Utilizes offline assignments that complement course material (e.g. field trip, interview with local expert)
- "Chunks" content into "digestible" segments for easy onscreen reading

### ***Interaction and Communication***

- Encourages student-to-student interaction with Threaded Discussion and/or Chat assignments
- Provides opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction via email or Journal assignments
- Encourages Learners to critique each others' work
- Asks students to contribute to knowledge-base of course by researching, submitting and critiquing web sites for the course Webligraphy
- Includes self-assessment activities
- Gives clear, detailed directions in assigning learning activities and how they will be submitted
- Employs a collaborative learning activity (e.g. ask students to jointly create a paper using the document sharing tool)
- Provides redundant instructions and information in various locations
- Formulates thoughtful questions that elicit critical thinking in threaded discussions, chats, and/or journal assignments
- Encourages students in threaded discussions to respond to peer responses in addition to initial questions
- Following discussion activity in a threaded discussion, asks students to summarize the interaction and conclusions

### ***Beyond Text***

- Provides relevant images (e.g. photos, diagrams) to illustrate concepts and to create a visually engaging environment
- Uses brief (e.g. 2-5 minutes) audio or video --"Expert Commentary," or "Points to Ponder"
- Provides supplementary link to audio or video unit introduction/ overview on Unit Page
- Provides audio annotations to PowerPoint slideshows or text outlines
- Provides models (e.g. excel spreadsheet, forms, tables)

### **Evaluation**

- Utilizes a variety of measures to assess student learning and performance, beyond just exams and a paper (e.g. Journal entries, discussion posts, research projects, practice quizzes)
- Assessment: Gives significant weight (e.g. 20%-25%) to participation for threaded discussions and other collaborative efforts